



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The Audacity of Faith

"Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

By now, you all know that the Green Sanctuary Program, created and nurtured by UU Ministry for Earth, will be managed by the UUA. This transition will not change the work in your congregations, but does integrate Earth Ministry as never before into the fabric of our faith. It's been interesting to hear the feedback from folks on this transition. Many people thought Green Sanctuary was already a UUA program. Some folks thought that this meant the end of UU Ministry for Earth as an organization, or that we were being "absorbed" by the UUA. Many others rightly viewed this change for what it is- part of a steady transformation of our faith into one that truly does more than give lip service to our Seventh Principle, "Respect for the interdependent web of existence of which we are a part".

The UU Ministry for Earth board thought long and hard about the decision to "let go" of Green Sanctuary management. It has become a highly regarded program both within our faith community and in interfaith circles as well. It has been a vehicle for membership for the organization to support our other work (yes, there is other work for us besides Green Sanctuary!). It felt like a risk to let it go, to trust that the UUA would manage it the way we would like, to give up the "caché" of such a successful program.

Yet, we decided to let it go.

We decided that our greater faith community would benefit from the higher visibility offered by it becoming a program of the UUA. We decided to

trust that the UUA staff and membership would honor the program by continuing to provide dedicated assistance to congregations striving to green their communities. We decided that we could now utilize our leadership experience to help build a new growing edge of religious environmentalism in our movement.

And, we decided to have faith that UUs across the country would choose to continue to support our vision, would yearn to deepen their spiritual journeys by engaging in the work of environmental justice, and would stretch themselves to live a faith that sometimes took them outside of their comfort zones.

We decided to embrace an audacity of faith, and to trust that our membership would also choose that same audacious, joyful, committed, sometimes uncertain and uncomfortable embrace of the possible. Plans for the next phase of the work of UU Ministry for Earth are described in this newsletter. Give thanks for the community that helps us to do this important work, and help us build this new growing edge of possibility for our faith, and for the Earth.

In Faith, *Barbara Ford* ♦

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ABOUT UUMFE

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VISION AND PLANNING

Looking to the Future

By Claudia Kern, Member, Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth Board

In this issue, UU Ministry for Earth is celebrating our accomplishments and charting a new course for the future. A transformation in thinking has taken place within our denomination and has led to the transfer of the Green Sanctuary Program to the Unitarian Universalist Association on July 1. We are witnessing increased commitment among congregations and UU leadership to making Earth care and celebration central to our faith.

How did we get here? Where are we going? In the fall of 2004, acknowledging the increasing response to the Green Sanctuary Program, UUMFE planted the first seeds of a Visibility Campaign when we met with the GA Planning Committee about the possibilities for Greening GA. Later that fall, we wrote to UUA President Bill Sinkford issuing a call for greater emphasis on environmental concerns and greater recognition of the Earth as a source of spiritual grounding. In March of 2005 we had a rewarding two-hour meeting with Rev. Sinkford and, as a result, launched a formal Visibility Campaign that spring. Membership responded with an effective letter-writing campaign to the UUA, and then our visibility skyrocketed when one year later at GA 2006, UUMFE found itself center stage and very visible during the intense debate on inserting substantive new language into the proposed Statement of Conscience on Climate Change which the delegates ultimately approved by an overwhelming majority. We can all be proud of how much we have accomplished since the birth of the Green Sanctuary Program and the Seventh Principle Project in 1999, and, most especially, in the last four years.

What roles will UUMFE assume now that Green Sanctuary has left the nest? The Board has been asking that question all year long and working with a growth and development specialist to help us develop a vision for the future of UUMFE. While we continue to support the Green Sanctuary program our new work will center around: Environmental Justice, The Spiritual Dimensions of Being Human on Earth and in the Universe, Shaping and Sharing Tools for Sustainable Living, and Creating a Meaningful Membership Community. As always, we welcome your participation, your gifts, and your suggestions as we set out together to explore new leading edges for Unitarian Universalism.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental justice challenges us to take action to address injustice that results from environmental degradation and natural resource exploitation. Poor and oppressed people in our communities and around the world are the first victims of pollution, toxic emissions, resource destruction, and natural disasters from climate change. Earth justice asks us to acknowledge and then to redress how environmental impacts fall first and most severely on those who receive the least of the benefits and are mostly powerless to effect changes.

Racism, economic exploitation, war and conflict, and environmental degradation are often addressed separately, when in fact the various injustices and oppressions are interrelated and synergistic. Environmental justice invites us to explore the intersections of these oppressions and to provide leadership in our congregations and our

1999	2004	2005
First Green Sanctuary Certification awarded	UUMFE proposed Greening GA	Petitioned UUA for greater Emphasis on Earth ministry

VISION AND PLANNING

communities for integrating our spiritual and religious identity with action to respond to such injustices.

With this understanding as our starting point, UU Ministry for Earth will make environmental justice one of our four emphasis areas for the coming year and beyond. Our work with Green Sanctuary congregations has shown that this is an area of confusion for many congregations. We know that a more complete theological framework and ethical grounding is needed to support individual and congregational efforts to respond to environmental injustices. We plan to develop tools and resources to help UUs better understand what environmental justice means and how we should respond. Leadership training is also needed to help UUs to become more effective allies to communities that suffer from related oppressions.

In addition, we have developed a preliminary design and are raising funds to sponsor a national conference and training event to galvanize and equip grassroots UUs to more effectively address environmental justice issues in their congregations and communities and to continue to spur change from the “bottom up” within our denomination. As we see it, this event can be a catalyst to raise our anti-racism, anti-oppression, social justice activism to a whole new level of energy and commitment.

THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSIONS OF BEING HUMAN ON EARTH AND IN THE UNIVERSE

When the seventh principle, “respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part” was quickly and easily added to the other principles being adopted by the UUA, Unitarian Universalists were putting in place the seeds of a radical new cosmological worldview that broke away from the western theologies that placed humans as somehow apart from, superior to, the rest of creation – an attitude that has contributed directly to our present planetary crises.

If we are to heal our suffering planet and respond justly and compassionately to the inevitable chaos that climate change is bringing, it seems very clear that we need a rapid evolutionary leap in consciousness. UUs can help to lead the way by growing the seed of our seventh principle into a new cosmology that transcends the world’s present traditional theologies and becomes a new universal story grounded in what our wondrous human brains have enabled us to learn about the age-old questions: Where did we come from? Who are we? and Why are we here?

UU Ministry for Earth believes that UUs have an important role to play in articulating a new “eco-theology” for the planet. We are committing ourselves to engaging our faith in a deepening of our collective and our personal spiritual understanding of what it means to be human in a world informed not just by reawakened native traditions and the metaphorical stories of the world’s faith traditions, but by the amazing new stories science has to tell about the origins of the universe and our intrinsic, interwoven place in that universe.

In the coming months and years, we will be inviting UU theologians, ordained and lay ministers, our UU schools of ministry, and you to engage in deep reflection upon what it means to be human in the context of the unfolding new story of the universe – the story that theologian Thomas Berry describes as “the only text without a context.” We will be presenting periodic reflections in homilies on our website, providing a blogging space for your thoughtful responses, and offering regular web-based mediations to help us grow our spirits and sustain our individual Earth ministries.

We hope that you will share your thoughts and ideas with us as we begin this serious and intentional spiritual quest. We welcome your input and participation, and invite you to begin your own reflection with two books: *Evening Thoughts: Reflecting on Earth as Sacred Community* by Thomas Berry (Edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker, Sierra Club Books, 2006) and *The View from the Center of the Universe: Discovering Our Extraordinary Place in the Cosmos*, by Joel R. Primack and Nancy Ellen Abrams (Riverhead Books, 2006).

(Continued on Page 7)

Our Vision

We, envision a world in which all people make reverence, gratitude, and care for the living Earth central to their lives.

Our purpose is to inspire, facilitate and support personal, congregational, and denominational practices that honor and sustain the Earth and all beings.

We affirm and promote the seven principles of the UUA, including: “*Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.*”

2006	2007	2008	2008
UUA Adopted SOC on Threat of Global Warming	Green Sanctuary Participation soars	UUA assumes administration of Green Sanctuary Program	Planning begins for Env. Justice Conf.



GREEN SANCTUARY SHOWCASE

Earth-Based Symbol Stimulates Seventh Principle Dialogue

First Parish Church in Northboro, Massachusetts devised a unique project for the worship element of their Green Sanctuary Program. The congregation decided to choose an Earth-based spirituality symbol reflecting the UU 7th Principle for placement in the sanctuary alongside existing world religious symbols (Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Unitarian Universalism, and Hindu).

They devised an in-depth process that engaged the entire congregation, first soliciting suggestions for the symbol, then giving a series of sermons reflecting on the significance of each of the proposed symbols. The sermons were followed by congregational dialogue about the symbols and how they would be rendered and displayed. Symbols considered included the Tree of Life, a

Native American dream catcher, and Celtic Triple Goddess spiral. A photographic image of Earth from space was also considered. By a congregational vote, members selected the Tree of Life and commissioned a local artist to carve a wood symbol to match the other symbols displayed above the altar.

While the symbol is not yet finished, the outcomes for this action are multiple and far-reaching. The process immersed the congregation in a several month conversation and exploration around expression of their commitment to the 7th Principle. When the artist has completed the new piece, the congregation will have a permanent symbol displayed in the sanctuary to honor our sacred relationship with the Earth. ♦

An Earth Day Event with Lasting Impact



Cedars UU Church, Bainbridge Island, Washington, Green Sanctuary Committee of was the primary sponsor of a major community-wide Earth Day celebration for 2006 that has led to multi-year community action. For the 2006 event, they were able to attract co-sponsorship from 14 civic, non-profit, environmental, arts, educational and community organizations.

The Sunday evening event consisted of a speech and multimedia presentation by Bainbridge Island author, David Korten, on the subject of his newly published book: “The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community.” Each co-sponsoring organizations hosted tables of literature and members who discussed their activities. More than 250 people attended. The Chair of Green Sanctuary Committee opened the meeting with a PowerPoint on the work of the 15 co-sponsors, and then assisted David Korten with the fielding of questions from the standing-room audience.

The co-sponsoring organizations included: Interfaith Council of Bainbridge Island and North Kitsap (representing approximately two dozen churches); Earth Ministry (a national organization providing resources to environmental initiatives at hundreds of churches); Bainbridge Graduate Institute (an MBA program for sustainable business), Yes! Magazine (which has its offices on Bainbridge), Trust for Working Landscapes (supporting local farms and farmers on Bainbridge), Bainbridge Island Land Trust (preserving open space); City of Bainbridge Island and its Mayor; Bainbridge Conservation Voters

(political action for conservation); BI Arts & Humanities Council; and the Network of Spiritual Progressives (a local group inspired by Rabbi Michael Lerner’s book: “The Left Hand of God”).

The Earth Day event resulted in a commitment by most of the co-sponsoring organizations to form a coalition with continuing meetings and joint activities. The group began to engage in periodic luncheon meetings hosted by the Mayor at City Hall, and co-sponsored a “Sustainable Bainbridge” booth at the community’s July 4th parade and community festival attended by thousands.

The new “Sustainable Bainbridge” organization held a series of community forums, educational workshops, speaker forums, and special projects. In January 2007, Sustainable Bainbridge was organized as a Washington nonprofit corporation, and elected its first board and officers. Barry Peters, chair of the Cedars Green Sanctuary Committee was elected President for 2007, and the organization obtained an IRS 501(c)(3) status later that year.

It has established a community presence, received thousands of dollars of funds from the City and other charitable donors for sustainability projects, established an extensive website at www.SustainableBainbridge.net, and a monthly newsletter, and has become the principal organizer of the community’s Earth Day events in 2007 and 2008, recycling events, energy conservation projects, green building initiatives, and more. ♦

Small Steps Make a Big Dent in CO2 Emissions



The UU Fellowship of Clemson, South Carolina, worked hard to encourage its members and friends to lower their environmental footprint and move toward sustainability in all areas of their lives. They started with a series of very short surveys to get a sense of what people were already doing and where there was room for improvement. Just circulating the surveys generated a lot of interest and conversation, and they made people more aware of wasteful habits. People started scrutinizing their own lifestyles and comparing them with what their friends were doing.

Based on the results of these surveys, the Green Sanctuary team created a list of 10 Individual Action Tips and presented them to the congregation at a Sunday worship service. Each member was given a booklet entitled “Small Steps, Global Effects” which contained the 10 Tips, together with the rationale behind each one, and how much CO2 and money could be saved by implementing each. It also contained references for more information and the name and phone number of a GS member to contact if they had questions. This booklet was so successful they had to go to a second printing! Based on this success, they made it available to the wider

community at a meeting of the local Sierra Club and at an Earth Day event.

To visually display how much CO2 could be saved if everyone adopted these and/or other energy-saving habits, the GS team painted a bare tree with no leaves on a 5-ft. tall piece of heavy foam board and set it up in the entrance hall of the sanctuary. Using green construction paper “leaves,” members identified what steps they were taking toward lowering their environmental footprint. They also calculated how many pounds of CO2 their actions saved annually before hanging their leaves on the tree. Much excitement was generated as the bare tree gradually filled out people could read what their friends were doing to change their lifestyles. It also generated a lot of conversation as they saw who was doing what and went to talk to that person or ask him/her questions about their experience.

The teen RE class calculated the total number of pounds of CO2 that had been saved by all of the actions and reported on this during a Sunday service 6 weeks later. Clemson members were astonished to hear that collectively they had saved over 275,000 pounds of CO2 emissions annually! ♦

Interfaith Event Fosters Earth Stewardship

The UU Congregation of Princeton, New Jersey Green Sanctuary Committee member Ellie Whitney helped organize an interfaith event with films and a “Meet the Trees” Walk. Members of a number of Princeton-area houses of worship attended the Earth celebration on the first Sunday in May, 2008.

The event included the film *Everything’s Cool*, an expose of the ways in which the current U.S. policy has attempted to cover up the seriousness of global warming and the urgency of taking corrective action. This led to a discussion of how to best move our government towards significant steps to reduce the nation’s greenhouse gas emissions and to assist other nations in doing the same.

Two children’s films were shown. *The Man Who Planted Trees* is a moving, fictional story about a man who single-handedly reforested a large area of treeless land by simply going out and planting tree seedlings every day. The other was *Ryan’s Well*, recounting a boy from Uganda who successfully campaigned to secure clean drinking water for a town.

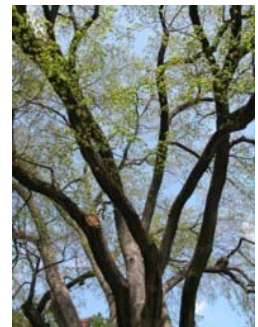
The “Meet the Trees” walk began with prayers by Cantor Murray Simon of the Jewish Center, offered in Hebrew and in English celebrating the Earth and ended with a song about the tree of life, traditionally used to conclude celebrations. Two groups then formed and walked through the Princeton University campus.

The group for adults was led by Laura Hawkins, a certified landscape designer and Master Gardener. The group for families with children was led by Ray and Beth Nichols, environmental professionals and educators. Walkers were encouraged to look at trees both with “hard vision,” studying

details and learning to identify the species, and with “soft vision,” relating to the trees with a thankful heart and respect for all living things. A highlight of the walk was a yoga session beneath a sugar maple, led by yoga teacher Andrea Sacchetti. At another point, biologist Ellie Whitney explained how important standing and growing trees are in sequestering carbon and thereby helping to curb global warming. Meanwhile, the children were fascinated by the variety of flowers and seeds that trees produce.

Ellie worked with leaders from Nassau Presbyterian Church, Trinity Episcopal, the Jewish Center of Princeton and the Witherspoon Street Presbyterian Church.

The organizers plan to continue working under the name Princeton Interfaith. The purpose will be to increase awareness of the link between our faith lives and the call to care for the environment as individuals, as congregations, and as a community of congregations. ♦





GUARDIAN OF THE FUTURE AWARD *UUs Nominate Local Heroes For 1st Annual Award*

Sixteen UU congregations have submitted nominations for the first annual Guardian of the Future Award. The following nominees all have inspiring stories of active, community-building Earth ministries and we congratulate and honor them all for their commitment and service. The Guardian of the Future honoree will be announced at the UUMFE Annual Meeting in June.

Award Nominees

Dennis Briley, UU Church West, Brookfield, WI
Susan Brown, Congregation of the Larger Fellowship
Jan Clement, Accotink UU Church, Burke, VA
Gerald Flakas, Lake Country UU Church, Heartland, WI
Marge Gonzalez, UU Church of Fort Myers, FL
Eldon Haines, UU Church of Eugene, OR
Rich Held and Elaine Vander Plate Held,
UU Cong of Monmouth County, Lincroft, NJ

Nancy Hough, Community Church of New York
Roger Johnson, UU Church of Atlanta, GA
D. Bruce Langmuir, First Parish, Sudbury, MA
Bill Martin, UU Cong. of the Upper Valley, Norwich, VT
Judy Moores, UU Church of Davis, CA
Bob Ringlee, First Unitarian Society of Schenectady, NY
Stefani Scott, UU Fellowship, Stony Brook, NY
Vivian Vilorio-Fisher, UU Fellowship, Stony Brook, NY
Sylvia Weaver, UU Fellowship, St. John, VI ♦



2008 Study/Action Issues *Ethical Eating and Nuclear Disarmament*

by Steve Maier and Terry Wiggins, UUMFE Board members

UU congregations have voted to place two proposed study/ action issues before the delegates at this year's General Assembly in Ft. Lauderdale. The chosen issue will then be the subject of a 3-year study process that can lead to the proposal and adoption of a statement of conscience. UUMFE members and friends may remember the process of proposing and adopting the global warming statement of conscience in 2006, which started as a proposed study/action issue in 2004.

The **“Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice”** proposal states, “Religious organizations throughout the world have discussed the production, distribution, and use of food. Some people enjoy many food choices while others remain hungry. The food industry produces wealth, but small farmers and farm workers are often poor. Food production and transportation contribute to many environmental problems.”

There are many environmental or Earth justice issues related to food production and consumption. The 2006 global warming statement of conscience, for example, includes the recommendation to “eat and serve energy-efficient food that is locally produced and low on the food chain.” If the Ethical Eating proposed CSAI is se-

lected, UUMFE could support the study process by gathering resources into a CD Action Kit, similar to what we have done with the Global Warming Action Kits 1 and 2.

The **“Nuclear Disarmament”** proposed CSAI asks, “Should the Unitarian Universalist Association work with other faith communities to advocate a dramatic reduction in the world’s nuclear weapons inventories, primarily those of the United States and Russia, in favor of reinvigorated nuclear arms control agreements and principles, such as those embodied in the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty?”

While this proposal does not refer to environmental issues, there is growing concern and debate about the connections between nuclear arms, nuclear power, and the options for producing power in a post-fossil fuel world. The UUMFE board is concerned about the proliferation of the idea that more nuclear power will be a necessary part of the solution to the climate crisis. Instead, we note the growing research and support for aggressive energy efficiency, renewable energy, and targeted localized energy production and distribution.

For more information on the proposed CSAIs, go to <http://www.uua.org/socialjustice/issuesprocess/currentissues/index.shtml> .♦

An Invitation: Become a Parent for the Planet

We Are Called

There is often a disconnect between the love for life that we experience so deeply and our will and ability to change our behaviors to ensure the future of life. Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth believes that what is needed to build the bridge between love and action is something more than new technologies or changing political and economic policies. We believe that we are being called to urgent, deep, religious work and spiritual practice. We are being called to develop moral imaginations that can envision a positive future. We are being called to align our actions, our time and energy, and our resources with our dreams for the future. We are summoned by the future to reconnect ourselves humbly, reverently, and joyfully with the web of life and to sustain one another through love and awe for the Earth.

Goals for Your Gift

Parents for the Planet is an invitation to support Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth in answering this call. We are seeking 100 Parents for the Planet who will each donate \$1000 in support of this leading-edge organization that has birthed and nurtured the Green Sanctuary Program so successfully that it has now become an official program of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Contributors will help build a new vision of Unitarian Universalism as a leading voice for Earth justice and for a future that is inclusive and respectful of all life. Parents for the Planet will insure that the diverse Unitarian Universalists voices speaking on behalf of Earth will be heard, that the number of lay and ordained Earth ministers will grow, that we will continue to produce quality resources to educate and inspire adults and children, and that advocacy and witness for Earth will become central to our faith.

Thank You

Donations for this program may be given over a two year period, and may be designated through the *Now is the Time* campaign of the UUA. Parents for the Planet will be listed in UUMFE materials and celebrated at General Assembly. Donors will receive a gift package containing CDs of our two self-published children's religious education curricula and two specially selected books on connecting our children with the natural world for you to keep or to donate to your congregation.

The future unfurls through us, for we are all *Parents for the Planet*. Our Earth home is imperiled, and we as Unitarian Universalists are called to find the vision, will, courage, and resources to act now for the future children and grandchildren of all species on Earth. ♦



Looking to the Future - continued from Page 3

TOOLS FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING

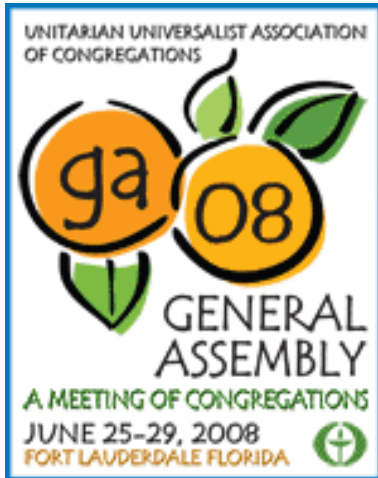
Congregations are anxious to hear what others are doing to “green” their communities. Hearing their stories helps us maintain hope and inspires us to further action. We have accumulated an outstanding collection of experiences from Green Sanctuary applications, so next year we will select examples to highlight on our website. Organized by the four Green Sanctuary Focus Areas, we'll provide brief descriptions of activities for worship, religious education, environmental justice, and sustainable living, along with a link to the congregation's website and contact information to learn more about the project. Watch our website for postings beginning next fall.

MEANINGFUL MEMBERSHIP COMMUNITY

Our membership community offers a connection with others who share our vision, and together we are raising a significant voice for Earth ministry. One way we connect is through the UUMFE Regional Coordinators. (See Page 10.) They are experienced volunteers who are available to assist with local and regional events and issues. We plan to expand that network to cover ALL districts within the UUA.

We welcome your ideas and talents to help strengthen this voice and vision. Please . . . Send your dreams, stories (with pictures!), and comments about UUMFE planning or programs to the mailing address or email address listed on the Back Cover of this Newsletter. ♦

GA2008 HIGHLIGHTS



Green Sanctuary Congregations Will be Honored at Plenary

Saturday, June 28, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 a.m.
Convention Center Hall AB
#3004 Plenary IV

Recognition of this year's new Green Sanctuary congregations will again be a part of a Plenary Session. Also, the UUA and UUMFE are scheduled for official recognition of the transfer of the Green Sanctuary Program to the UUA Office of Congregational Services.

Workshop: ***Environmental Justice in the Fields***

Friday, June 27, 3:15 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Convention Center 222-223

#3054 Restoring the Web of Creation: Justice and Joy

UUMFE will sponsor a workshop on environmental justice at General Assembly this year, providing the opportunity to explore the intersections of racial and economic justice and human rights in the context of environmental problems.

Many congregations are becoming familiar with issues of justice and food as they reassess the ethics of the global systems of food production and distribution and begin to make more conscious choices about the food they're willing to put on their tables. To add a dose of reality to what can sometimes be a rather abstract concept, we'll use the example of local activism by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, a Florida group working on behalf of local farmworkers.

This case study will consider the theological and moral guidance we find in our UU principles and how churches can provide leadership for integrating spiritual life and religious identity with activism in their communities. In small group conversations, participants will explore the application of lessons from this case to other issues of environmental justice in their own communities.

Rev. Katherine Jesch and UUMFE Board member Bob Keim will convene this workshop. They will be joined by Pamela Sparr, coordinator of UUMFE's planned environmental justice conference in 2009, and Brigitte Gynther from the Coalition of Immokalee Workers .



Workshop: ***The Great Turning - Living Earth Community***

Friday, June 27, 11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Convention Center Grand Floridian E

#3015 The Great Turning - Living Earth Community

Activists share innovative paths in the Great Turning toward Earth Community.

UUJEC and UUMFE leaders tell their individual and congregational stories and share some of the innovative paths that UUs are taking to participate in the Great Turning toward Earth Community. This creative activism is grounded in spiritual values. Transformation through social change moves away from domination and exploitation toward a just and sustainable world with community values and Seventh Generation perspective. Rev. Steve Wilson, Dick Burkhart, UUMFE's Barbara Ford, and Bill Scarvie will host this workshop.

UUMFE Annual Meeting *And Green Sanctuary Showcase*

Thursday, June 26, 11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Convention Center Grand Floridian H

#2020 Ministry for Earth + Green Sanctuary Showcase

A significant part of our annual meeting this year will showcase some of the best work of our newly accredited Green Sanctuaries. When the review process is complete at the end of May, we will select three projects to share in some depth. Representatives from the Green Sanctuary teams will offer short presentations and answer questions about the selected projects. The audience will see first-hand stories of effective leadership and integration of environmental elements in congregational life.

We will also present the first annual Guardians of the Future Award to a UU nominated by his or her congregation. (see boxed item in this newsletter for list of congregational eco-heroes who have been nominated!) ♦



Menu for The Future *from Northwest Earth Institute*

As Frances Moore Lappe says, "The act of putting into your mouth what the Earth has grown is perhaps your most direct interaction with the Earth."

NWEI's newest guide for small group discussion, *Menu for the Future*, released in April of 2008, is a six-session study guide exploring food systems and their impacts on culture, society and the Earth, and offers practical suggestions on creating and supporting a more sustainable food system. The course explores the effects of modern industrial agriculture on both human and ecological health, highlighting sustainable forms of agriculture and how individuals can make choices that cast a vote for a more sustainable food supply. Your small group discussions will explore powerful readings from visionary writers like Barbara Kingsolver, Michael Pollen, Wendell Berry, Frances Moore Lappe and others.

Speaking of her congregation's experience with the NWEI courses, The Rev. Laura Horton-Ludwig of the First UU Church of Stockton noted, "The NWEI classes have helped us both educate ourselves and create a community of activists." Building community, strengthen awareness and learning from one another is central to what emerges during these discussions. Making changes in our lifestyle can be challenging for many reasons, lack of information, lack of solutions, and even lack of support to do what needs to be done. But coming together with others to explore the issues and the solutions can be a very empowering and enriching experience. Now that UUMFE and NWEI have formalized a national partnership, there is an opportunity to build upon the previous success of the programs and to help expand the Green Sanctuary program nationwide. As you may know, many congregations have promoted these discussions as part of their Green Sanctuary action plans.

NWEI offers seven study guides for small

groups that can be implemented in workplaces, homes, libraries, faith centers, neighborhoods and community centers throughout the nation. In addition to their newest *Menu for the Future*, course topics include *Voluntary Simplicity, Choices for Sustainable Living, Global Warming: Changing CO₂ Course, Exploring Deep Ecology, Discovering a Sense of Place, and Healthy Children-Healthy Planet.*

Please download the Local Organizer guide from the UUMFE website for a complete listing of discussion course programs and descriptions of each course. For your convenience, we've bundled everything you need into one downloadable packet:

<http://uuministryforearth.org/files/NWEIOrganizersGuide2008.pdf>

Of course, after you download the PDF file, you can print only what you need. The packet contains:

Flyers: A colorful 2-page flyer for each course, to help you promote the courses

Organizer's Guide (6 pages) that explains how to set up the courses, forms to set up the course schedule and record registrants

Course Book Order Form (p. 30) to print and fax or mail to NWEI. **Using this customized version of the form helps support UUMFE.** ♦



Regional Coordinators Active from East to West

Jack Harper has been active in the Joseph Priestly District with a number of presentations on global warming and the planetary emergency, sermons for District churches, and testifying against a transmission line from coal-fired plants.

Reena Kondo has been active with the Green Sanctuary committee in her home congregation, Community Church of New York, as well as hosting a Metro NY District session with urban environmental activist Majora Carter who is helping transform the South Bronx with all sorts of sustainable projects.

Bruce Langmuir, Massachusetts Bay District, has been recovering from serious illness but has still been involved with others on the Green Sanctuary committee at First Parish, Sudbury, in making energy saving suggestions on the design of the Habitat for Humanity duplex home, with the result that the energy use of the home will be around 25% less than a typically-built home of the same size.

Pat McEvoy, St. Lawrence District, is stepping down as a Regional Coordinator after several years of creative activities around the District and in Saratoga Springs. Her work is greatly appreciated. ♦

Regional Coordinators Are A Valuable Resource

UUMFE Regional Coordinators (RC's) help congregations within Districts to provide environmental activities and programs, to work towards Green Sanctuary, and to deepen the connections to Earth ministry. With the transfer of Green Sanctuary to the UUA, there will be the need for Green Sanctuary consultants as well as RC's to help with the ongoing work of UU Ministry for Earth. Below is a list of these valuable volunteers.

Several districts are in need of Coordinators. Please suggest yourself or someone you know to fill an open position in the following districts: Central Midwest, Florida, Heartland, Mountain Desert, Pacific Central, St. Lawrence, Southwest, and Thomas Jefferson.

Sally Breen

Northern New England District
sallybreen@roadrunner.com

Kevin Carson

Ballou-Channing District
KMCarson@aol.com or kcarson@Hasbro.com

Marilyn Castriotta

Massachusetts Bay District
Castriotta@aol.com

Rina Fa'amoe

Pacific Northwest District
rina@earthtones.com

Denise Frizzell

Clara Barton District
dafrizzell@aol.com

Jack Harper

Joseph Priestly District (DC metro area)
jacksonharper@verizon.net

Wendy Irvine

Massachusetts Bay District
Wendy.Irvine@gmail.com

Reena Kondo

Metropolitan New York District
reena.kondo@verizon.net

Bruce Langmuir

Massachusetts Bay District
db.m.langmuir@worldnet.att.net

Vincent Pawlowski

Pacific Southwest District
uuvince@ultrasw.com

Sharon R. Roberts

Mid-South District
robersr@auburn.edu

Kath Schomaker

Clara Barton District
kathleen.schomaker@yale.edu

Nancy King Smith

Ohio-Meadville District
nancykingsmith@adelphia.net

Doug Walter

Prairie Star District
kbsi@cox.net

Portland Office Open - Meet Sabrina Harle



Sabrina Louise Harle joins the UUMFE staff as Office Manager on July 3rd and will be working out of our national office in Portland, Oregon. You may recognize Sabrina from her accomplishments as a founder of the Church of the Younger Fellowship. In addition to her understanding of your work within congregations, Sabrina will bring talent and creative thinking to our services and communications.

Sabrina will be available to assist and connect you to the UUMFE resources and personnel. Please contact her at:

Mail: Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth
1034 SW 13th Ave.
Portland, OR 97205

eMail: Office@UUMinistryforEarth.org

Telephone: 503-595-9392

This is now the official mailing address for UUMFE.

We will continue to monitor the Post Office box in Lyme, NH, but all mail will be forwarded to the Portland, Oregon office. The national office for UU Ministry for Earth has been open since 2007 in the Buchan Education Building at the First Unitarian Church in downtown Portland (a gold LEED certified green building!). Director of Environmental Ministry Rev. Katherine Jesch also works in this location.

Irene Keim, who has been the office manager since 2005 has been nominated to become a member of the Board for UUMFE beginning in July. She looks forward to continuing to be inspired by the work of the membership and friends. ♦

Book Review - IN DEFENSE OF FOOD

By Bob Keim, Member, UUMFE Board

Michael Pollan, in his book *In Defense of Food* says **"We are becoming a nation of orthorexics: people with an unhealthy obsession with healthy eating."** He argues that you can tell a lot about a society by the diseases that are prevalent, and ours speak volumes about how and what we eat. He calls it the "American paradox": **"...a notably unhealthy population preoccupied with nutrition and diet and the idea of eating healthy."**

While *In Defense of Food* is not as focused as Pollan's previous work, it's been described by literary critics as "light and fluffy, a delicious croissant compared to the chewy fiber-filled 12-grain loaf that was *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*." Even so, there's still plenty to think about and talk about in the 200 or so pages of the book.

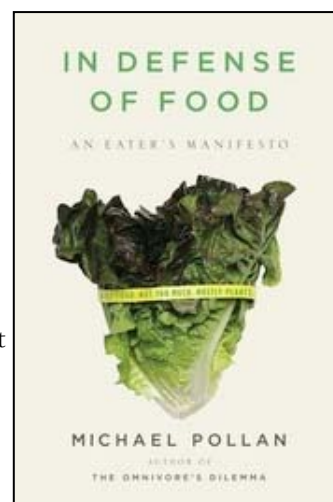
Much of the work deals with nutritionism, which looks at a food as the sum of its parts. Instead of seeing an apple as a whole, for example, proponents of nutritionism would see it as a collection of chemicals and nutrients. Pollan explains why regarding food in this way gives a "warped" view. He also talks about how other cultures eat and seems to particularly enjoy the fact that

the French have a pretty robust relationship with their food while maintaining better health habits than Americans, and suggests that we might learn from them. He advocates adopting the slow food movement – not just preparing food slowly, but also eating it slowly. And he gives some rules of thumb that make sense, including such as

"Avoid food products that make a health claim" and **"Eat whole foods from healthy soils."**

You may come away from *In Defense of Food* thinking that the best you can do, short of producing all your own food, is to not eat much of anything at all. Or you might throw caution to the winds, ignore the constantly altering flood of nutritional advice and health warnings, and employing wisdom from Wendell Berry, begin to rebuild your relationship with the Earth and enjoy its offerings.

Bon appetit. ♦





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Summer cooling with UUMFE Hand Fan

As a special gift for you or congregational friends, consider purchasing one or several of the new UU Ministry for Earth hand fan with the Earth from space on one side and the message

'Respect Life, Restore Earth and Renew Spirit' on the other side. The fans will be unveiled at GA2008 and will be for sale at the UUMFE booth in the Exhibit Hall. The booth also gives you an opportunity to meet and talk with UUMFE Board members, other volunteers and staff.

In addition, the UUMFE resources will be available for purchase. The fans will be available for purchase on the website in mid-July at www.uuministryforearth.org.

UUMFE Exhibit Hall Booth at GA2008

**Wednesday – Sunday, June 25-29,
Times vary, check Program Guide**



This Newsletter is a benefit of membership. If you have not already done so, please renew as soon as possible.