



## Environmental Justice Collaboration to Star at GA 2009

*First Stop — Get Passport & Register for Prizes !!*

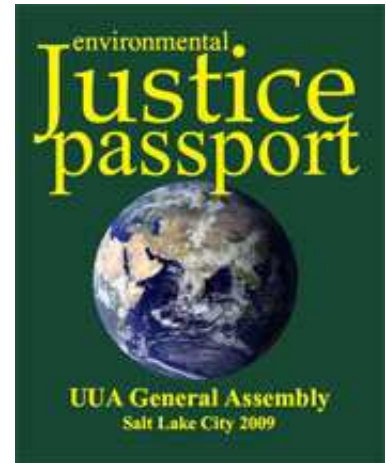
**UU Ministry for Earth (UUMFE), Booth #831**

**UU Service Committee (UUSC), Booth #718**

**Advocacy & Witness , Booth # 521**

**Congregational Services/Green Sanctuary, (CS), Booth # 431**

*Drawings daily for Earth-friendly prizes.*



The **Environmental Justice Passport** is being introduced at the UUA General Assembly to build understanding and awareness of the interface between justice and Earth ministry. UU Ministry for Earth, the UU Service Committee, the Green Sanctuary Program, and the Office of Advocacy and Witness are collaborating on this innovative program. To participate, attend any of the following not-to-be-missed programming and earn a stamp in your passport:

1. **Impact of Global Economic Crisis on Human Rights**, Workshop: 2015 Thursday 9:00 -10:15 am, Ballroom FH
2. **Principles in Mind, Fork in Hand: Ethical Eating**, Lecture: 3013, Friday 6:45 -8:00 pm, 255 D
3. **Global Problems Facing UUs - YOU Make the Difference**, Workshop: 3025, Friday 6:45 -8:00 pm, Ballroom FH
4. **Four Keys to a Sustainable Future**, Workshop: 4010, Saturday 11:00 am-12:15 pm, 251 E
5. **Ethical Eating: What are UU Congregations Doing?**, Workshop 4032, Saturday 3:30pm-4:45pm, 250 B
6. **Environmental Work is Justice Work**, Workshop 4047, Saturday 3:30 -4:45 pm, 255 F
7. **Ethical Eating: Talking with Mouths Full of Compassion**, Workshop 4061, Saturday 5:15 -6:30 m, 250B
8. **RE/Social Justice Programs Accelerating "The Great Turning"**, Workshop 5015, Sunday 11:00 am-12:15 pm, Ballroom EG
9. **Closing America's Food Gap: Sustainable Food for All**, Workshop 5020, Sunday 11:00am-12:15pm, 255B
10. **Going Green! Green Sanctuary Program and the UUA**, Workshop 5021, Sunday 11:00am-12:15pm, 253

In addition, Passports will be stamped during GA by declaring any or all of these actions:

Purchase carbon offset for GA

Walk or bike to the Convention Center

Pick up GA Program at GA

Use Salt Lake City Public Transit

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### ABOUT UUMFE

Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth is a nonprofit organization whose membership envisions a world in which all people make reverence, gratitude, and care for the living Earth central to their lives.

Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth is a 501(c)3 organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

### UUMFE BOARD

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## from the Board

### Toward Joyful Interdependence



Just recently I've had the great good fortune to move into an intentional ecovillage community, where values of sustainability, community, and democratic process are the core of our vision. We've worked together for almost two years, gone through conflict, rigorous training in consensus decision-making, and the lovely blossoming of friendship, mutual support, and a permaculture farm on the property. We are starting to share meals, gardening, and cars. The other day, a four-year-old member of the community (and his dad) came door-to-door, proudly collecting compost for the bins.

This joyful interdependence is evidenced in our faith more and more by the increasing collaborations in UU congregations and institutions on issues such as ethical eating, water rights, and other environmental justice issues.

One of the greatest lessons about being a part of this community is this - in community, I don't have to know it all or do it all. I can contribute my knowledge and talents, and trust that there are others in the community who will contribute theirs to fulfill the work of creating our vision for our home. I can cook dinner for forty, facilitate meetings, and take care of the bees (admittedly, I am a novice at this!), and others can manage the garden, do construction, prune the trees, figure out the finances, and set up the system for our work exchange. It's refreshing to know that we can choose to live our lives in joyful interdependence.

This joyful interdependence is evidenced in our faith more and more by the increasing collaborations in UU congregations and institutions on issues such as ethical eating, water rights, and other environmental justice issues. We, as individuals, congregations, and organizations, need to find ways to share the concerns, gifts, and talents collectively so that we can come to a place of deeper understanding, connectedness, and effective action for advocacy. In this newsletter, you will find out more about UU Ministry for Earth's new vision of collaborative work, as well as new collaborations and concrete examples of creative congregational actions.

I want to acknowledge with gratitude the work of Rev. Katherine Jesch, whose vision and efforts have helped to bring us to this exciting part of our faith journey. The board is figuring out how to weather the changes in our programming, but we are excited by the new possibilities for growing our garden of faith and justice. We invite you to consider what part you might want to play in this collective endeavor of honoring and healing our Earth home, and join with us in a community of joyful, creative, and justice-loving interdependence.

For the Earth,  
*Barbara Ford*  
UU Ministry for Earth Board Chair ♦

# Gratitude to Rev. Katherine Jesch A Decade of Earth Ministry



This month, UU Ministry for Earth bids farewell to Reverend Katherine Jesch, our Director of Environmental Ministry. For the past ten years, she has provided ministry, leadership, and consultation to the organization as we developed from a relatively small UU “interest group” into a respected, influential, and creative affiliate organization of the Unitarian Universalist faith.

Rev. Jesch joined the board of the then-named Seventh Principle Project in 1999, when she was in seminary at the Starr King School of the Ministry. In 2001, she graduated, resigned from the board, and became the office manager and program manager for the newly created Green Sanctuary Program. As Director of Environmental Ministry, she created the vastly expanded third and fourth editions of the Green Sanctuary Manual, and provided guidance, consultation, workshops, sermons, and theological leadership to a growing number of congregations across the country. The Green Sanctuary Manual, in particular, has been cited in interfaith circles as the model of a faith-based congregational resource for congregational response to Earth concerns.

Reflecting on her work with UU Ministry for Earth, Rev. Jesch states, “The Green Sanctuary Program grew from the dream of a few in 2001 into a really rich understanding of how transformation happens in a congregation. Our choices in programming, consultation, congregational support, and brainstorming have facilitated spiritual transformation in some congregations and paradigm shifts in how others

approach the work of Earth justice. I’m proud of how we responded to our members’ needs and supported their work.”

Rev. Jesch also notes UU Ministry for Earth’s strength in its ability to work creatively and collaboratively with the UUA, stating “our care, patience, and clarity of purpose, along with insight into the process of institutional change, allowed us to form strong alliances with leadership in the UUA. I am proud of how thoughtfully and quickly we were able to form these alliances. One result of this work is the transfer of the Green Sanctuary Program to the care of the UUA, and an ongoing partnership between them and UU Ministry for Earth to serve our faith.”

She is not sure where her ministry will take her next. “One lesson I learned, the hard way, is that when you approach this work without “boots in the dirt”, or direct engagement with nature, there is a tendency for burnout. I plan to spend the next few months on a sabbatical, resting, gardening, spending time in nature, and considering how to live out my vision of engaged activism as a minister.”

The board of UU Ministry for Earth is grateful for the wisdom, energy, theological grounding, and institutional knowledge brought by Rev. Jesch to the work of UU Ministry for Earth and the Seventh Principle. We wish her the best on her journey as a minister, and offer our love and support to her as she heads for new horizons. ♦

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## Environmental Justice Passport—*continued from Page 1*

Congregation is a Green Sanctuary Candidate – CS booth

Congregation is a Green Sanctuary (accredited) – CS booth

Pledge to participate with UUMFE in the *International Day of Climate Action*, October 24, sponsored by 350.org

Pledge to support the Southern Alternative Agricultural Coop with a domestic pecan promotion activity this fall and get a how-to kit from Equal Exchange

Hang up towel to reuse at hotel

Refuse the daily paper at your hotel room doorstep

Turn out the lights and tv when you left your hotel room

Visit UU Service Committee booth

Visit UU Ministry for Earth booth

Visit Congregational Services/Green Sanctuary booth. ♦

Recycle something at the Convention Center

Carpool to Salt Lake city

Show refillable/reuseable water bottle – UUSC booth

Sign-up for EJ newsletter – at any booth

Visit Advocacy and Witness/IdBM booth



## Annual Meeting at New Venue

Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth will convene the Annual Meeting at a new venue in Salt Lake City.

**Saturday, 6/27/2009  
10:00:00 AM - 11:00:00 AM  
Marriott -- Grand Ballroom E.**

The 2009 Guardian of the Future Award recipient will be announced and honored, an election will be held for the Board of Directors for 2009-2010, and the business of our organization will be conducted. ♦

### *Salt Lake City and Beyond . . .*

## UUs Pioneer Leading Green Meeting Practices

*by Shawna McKinley, Project Manager, MeetGreen, Sustainability Consultant for General Assembly*

Since 2005, the Unitarian Universalist Association has advocated for greener meetings. This is an important way to demonstrate commitment to the Seventh Principle: respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. In 2008, UUA was presented with the highest accolades for green meetings globally: The IMEX Green Meetings Award, recognizing efforts to green the Portland General Assembly 2007.

Often times, success of the UUA efforts is dependent on what destinations can offer, although the conference team advocates for improved practice in each city visited. For example, the General Assembly in Fort Lauderdale last year resulted in a permanent expanded recycling program at the convention center and improved adoption of linen reuse and recycling at local hotels, 3 of which became certified under the Florida Green Lodging Program as a result of the event.

UUA continues to work with suppliers in Salt Lake City to provide green practices in preparation for the 2009 General Assembly. In the months leading up to the event all hotels have implemented or expanded recycling programs – four of them starting these for the first time as a result of UUA requests! UUA has also been working with the City of Salt Lake to advocate for

improved commercial composting in the city, an option that will not be available in time for the 2009 General Assembly, but one from which all citizens will be able to benefit from in the future.

In addition to advocating for change UUA promotes sustainability through very practical and simple efforts that are improved upon year after year, including:

- Verifying hotels follow practices that support recycling, linen re-use and energy efficiency.
- Reducing paper use by 35,000 sheets per year by curbing mailings and providing registration and communications online.
- Providing food made with organic and local ingredients, including enhanced vegetarian and vegan options.
- Donating left-over food to local charities. 1,080 pounds of food were donated from the GA in Fort Lauderdale.
- Re-using signage. Some of the signs at General Assembly are in their fifth year of use!
- Printing on post-consumer recycled content paper using vegetable-based inks.
- Powering the event using 9% renewable energy resources.
- Prohibiting the use of polystyrene disposables.

The pioneering work being done by the UUA is being recognized not only with awards, but through participation of the UUA in the development of sustainability standards for the meeting and event industry broadly. **Janiece Sneegas**, Director of General Assembly and Conference Services with the UUA, sits as member of the Convention Industry Council's Green Meeting and Event Practices Panel. The process of setting specifications for what defines a 'green event' internationally is one more way the UUA is advocating for positive and sustainable change! ♦

### Featured Speaker: Mark Winne

Mark Winne is the author of *Closing the Food Gap: Resetting the Table in the Land of Plenty* (Beacon Press, 2008). Winne will be the UUMFE keynote speaker at

**Closing America's Food Gap: Sustainable Food for All,**  
Workshop 5020, Sunday 11 am–12:15 pm,  
Salt Palace 255B.

When ordering online from [www.beacon.org](http://www.beacon.org), please enter the code **UUMFE** and your purchase will help support the work of UU Ministry for Earth. ♦





## A Response by Rev. Laurel Hallman

*In our Fall 2008 Newsletter, we posed questions to UUA Presidential Candidates **Rev. Peter Morales** and **Rev. Dr. Laurel Hallman** to better understand their ideas about theology, environment, and the role of the UUA and its President. In our winter issue we presented the response from **Rev. Morales**. Below is a portion of the response from **Rev. Dr. Laurel Hallman**. The full text of both responses to our questions may be read online at: [www.uuministryforearth.org](http://www.uuministryforearth.org)*

*What do you see as the role of UUA President in faith-based advocacy and witness for social and environmental justice?"*

As a faith-based community, we have an obligation to act, not only to address the degradation of the environment, but to address the impact of environmental deterioration on the most vulnerable, least powerful communities who are always its first victims. In addressing the interconnected issues of environmental and social justice, the president of the UUA can have a powerful impact as collaborator-in-chief. Our witness as Unitarian Universalists is strengthened when we create partnerships and alliances with others to do the work of justice. The next UUA president should take advantage of the higher priority that the Obama administration is giving environmental justice, and expand our association's capacity effectively to respond to injustice in partnership with communities of faith and action.

*What do you see as the specific ministry needs for people struggling with despair and confusion related to environmental crisis?*

Despair comes from feeling cut off from all possibility: from any sense that success is possible, and from any sense that anyone else is experiencing despair as we are. The antidote is hope: not the same thing as expectation of success, which is probably not something we can achieve in our own lifetime. Ministry in an age of global environmental crisis means helping people find genuine connection with others. We can learn from environmental pioneers who have gone before us, from whose lives we can draw inspiration, knowledge and empowerment. And we can connect with those on the journey now, working for environmental justice with us today. Ministry at the edge of an ecological precipice means helping create opportunities for every individual to find tangible ways to be at least a part of the solution, and to come to understand that there is meaning and joy to be found on the path—even without a guarantee of reaching the goal. These have always been the tasks of ministry: helping our people and our congregations see that no one faces overwhelming burdens alone, that no one person is singled out for suffering, that we are all in this together, and that religious community can hold us up when our strength fails. I have long been committed to engaged spirituality because it is a source of both hope and action.

*What is your understanding of/connection to eco-theology?*

I believe it is valuable for Unitarian Universalists to re-engage with our seventh principle in a thoughtful way, one that recognizes how radically it would require Western theology to be transformed if taken seriously. The degree to which our lives are interwoven with the rest of creation cannot be overstated, as the climate crisis and continuing scientific discoveries are making increasingly clear. A new eco-theology will require us to be more intentional and articulate about taking care of one another and the planet, calling us to align our actions with our beliefs. It will require that we forgive one another and ourselves as we inevitably fall short of our aspirations, and need to renew our hope going forward. I am confident that our evolving eco-theology will deepen in ways that invite more and more people into our congregations and into this work, not out of fear, but out of a hopeful sense of sacred possibility.

*What kind of institutionalized support, if any, should the UUA give to congregations in the honoring of the Seventh Principle?*

Given the success of The Green Sanctuary Program in helping congregations and their members to move toward greater environmental awareness, sensitivity and recognition of what can be done locally to protect the environment, the UUA should be looking for practical ways to expand upon Green Sanctuary goals. Can we implement programs that recognize congregations who implement lifespan environmental justice education programs? Can we make it an Association priority to help congregations achieve LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification? LEED certification is expensive, but the UUA could commit to helping congregations find the funding necessary to make their buildings more environmentally sustainable. Can we take the lead in providing information and incentives to encourage congregations to investigate Energy Performance Contracts? EPC contracts fund renovations that pay for themselves through energy savings over time. Leadership and commitment of Association attention and resources, and a willingness to collaborate creatively with our congregations is a powerful recipe for change. ♦

# environmental justice

## You Can Help Write Environmental Justice Guide

*What is . . .*

### Environmental Justice?

**Environmental Justice** is the human affirmation of our place within the interdependent web of all existence. Environmental justice pursues simultaneously the protection of natural systems and the ecological health of human communities, specifically disadvantaged, oppressed, and indigenous communities; and

- Guarantees basic human rights for all Earth's people,
- Distributes the benefits of Earth's resources fairly and sustainably,
- Avoids inequity in bearing the burdens of humanity's impact on the Earth,
- Recognizes that people have common but differentiated responsibilities according to abilities and resources available to them,
- Ensures the moral and political rights of all to participate in decisions affecting their environment and wellbeing,
- Provides equal participation in decision-making process regardless of race, class, gender, age, language, education, or economic barriers;
- Applies and enforces environmental rules, regulations, and laws equitably and impartially,
- Recognizes the inherent value of all species,
- And acknowledges our human responsibility to seek a sustainable balance between the rights of nature and human rights.
- All while building relationships to create a larger impact. ♦

UU Ministry for Earth is seeking thoughtful input from UUs for our Environmental Justice Guide. To accommodate the growing awareness of environmental justice within our denomination, we are committed to producing the most provocative and thoughtful resource on environmental justice possible, one that will invite the transformation of UU thinking on issues of both environment and justice.

We believe that this goal will best be achieved, in keeping with our new vision of working collaboratively, by consulting the wisdom and experience of others who have passion and knowledge to share. Our departing Director of Environmental Ministry, Rev. Katherine Jesch, has produced a well-researched starting document. Now, we would like to share that document with interested laity, leadership, and clergy for review and comment. Our hope is that by reaching out in this way for comments and additional reflection, the final result will be a rich and comprehensive exploration of environmental justice.

We are committed to producing the most provocative and thoughtful resource on environmental justice possible.

The decision to postpone publication until Fall of 2009 was made for a variety of reasons. Foremost was a growing realization that no individual or small group can hold all the key wisdom and knowledge necessary to address this confluence of related issues - environment, human rights, economic issues, species protection, climate, and multiple other concerns. In addition, we recognize that the theology of environmental justice is at a young stage. We hope, by reaching out, to encourage new and seasoned UU theologians and others to reflect and contribute to the emerging body of thought in this new dimension of UU spirituality.

UU Ministry for Earth aims to help organize and connect the collective wisdom and experience of UUs, both lay and professional, as they work in their communities on important EJ-related issues. We are finding, more and more, that people are the experts in their own communities, and if given the tools and encouragement, have more to share with the larger UU community than we can teach them. We believe that sharing among and between congregations and communities is a ministry as well - a ministry that empowers all members in the exchange. UUMFE's goal is to facilitate and take such exchanges to next level.

If you are passionate about environment and justice (or know someone who is), please let us know if you would be interested and available to participate in reviewing and adding to this important UU resource over the next several months. You may phone or email us at: 503-595-9392, [office@uuministryforearth.org](mailto:office@uuministryforearth.org) ♦

# FOOD JUSTICE: THE TIME HAS COME

An Excerpt from *Closing the Food Gap: Resetting the Table in the Land of Plenty*

As a class, the poor and near-poor have been well represented in some of the best-covered food stories of our day, especially hunger and obesity. But at about the same time that obesity was fast approaching tobacco as the nation's number one public health problem, another food trend was rapidly ascending – namely, the national craze for local and organic.

Many events fueled the interest in food that was produced without the aid of chemicals – the Alar story on *60 Minutes* in 1989 being perhaps the most public. But ultimately it was a generation of baby-boomers who were now raising children of their own that soon made organic food the fastest growing segment of the retail food industry. Due in part to more expensive production methods as well as rising demand, the price of that food, however, soon put it beyond the reach of lower income Americans.

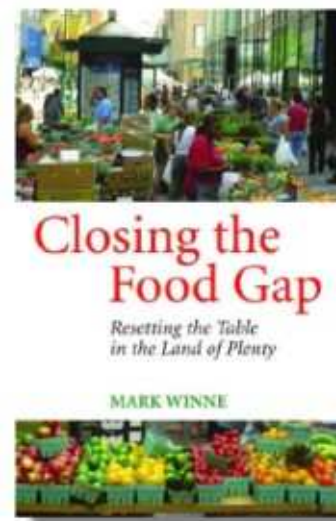
A few non-profit food and justice organizations such as the one I ran in Connecticut, the Hartford Food System, sensed that the food gap that already divided Americans by class, race, and geography, was now opening up another front; this one offering chemical-free and fresh local food to the affluent, and chemically laden, processed, and long distance food to the poor. We set out to learn more.

One afternoon, we asked eight residents of the city's poorest neighborhood to share their thoughts about local and organic food. Four members of the group were Hispanic and four were African-American. They quickly reached a consensus that fresh, inexpensive food – the food they generally preferred – was unavailable in their neighborhood. When asked what the word *organic* meant to them, they answered “real food,” “natural,” and “healthy”. But they immediately added that organic food wasn't even an option because it wasn't affordable to them. One young woman made a point of saying that she didn't trust the environment where she lived or the food she ingested, noting that the regional landfill was virtually in her backyard, and in her opinion, polluted her air and water. Conversely, she and the other group members made it clear that they trusted the safety and healthfulness of food they could identify as local and organic.

What became very obvious, especially from the parents in the group, is the desire for what is best for your children stitches together the fears, hopes, and dreams of everybody with children. But the opportunity to realize those dreams is weighted heavily in favor of the affluent.

In response to these concerns, the Hartford Food System set upon the task of creating community supported agriculture, urban gardens, and farmers' markets to serve the area's poor. And it also advocated for public policies that would increase the access of lower income households to food that was nutritious, sustainable, local, and affordable.

NOTE: All of these responses can serve as great models for UUs concerned with building environmental justice into our food system. See Page 4 for information about Mark Winne at the UUA General Assembly in Salt Lake City. ♦



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## Green and Accessible

by Dr. Deborah Greenstein, Program Coordinator, UUA Office of Accessibility Concerns

As a UUA staff person who works to make our facilities accessible to people with disabilities, and as a UU who tries to live “green,” I see strong relationships between our UU efforts to make our congregations greener and to make them more accessible.

**Audits**– we plan our work by doing audits of our buildings and grounds to learn what we are doing right and what we could be doing better. The UUA has excellent audits for both “Green” and “Accessible.”

**Children** – sometimes our children lead the way in helping us do what's right. Children who learn new attitudes in RE take information home and teach their parents. It's been shown in both Green and Accessible issues.

**Ongoing awareness** – it's not enough to buy a more efficient furnace and then move on to another social justice issue – it's not enough to put in a ramp and check accessibility off our “to-do list.” We need to establish new Green and Accessible ways of thinking.

**Planning** – an example: does your congregation plan activities/meeting times so that people can use energy-saving (and accessible) public transportation? Does your congregation have a carpooling program? Some people with disabilities don't drive – isn't transportation both a Green and Accessible issue?

**Making complex choices** – sometimes Green and Accessible needs are different. A simple example: compact fluorescent light bulbs save energy, but some CFL bulbs also produce a high frequency electric field that can be harmful to people with chemical and electrical sensitivities.

It makes sense to combine Green and Accessible efforts! Architects say: “Universal design and green design are comfortably two sides of the same coin... Green design focuses on environmental sustainability, universal design on social sustainability.”

Please e-mail me if you think it's a good idea to work on “Green and Accessible” together. [dgreenstein@uua.org](mailto:dgreenstein@uua.org) ♦



from our members

# Earth, Our Deep-Home-Place

by Judy Moores, UU Church of Davis, California



**W**e live in perilous times. The news from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change becomes increasingly dire with every scientific report that it issues.<sup>1</sup> Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is already over 385 ppm and rising about 2 ppm per year. In June of 2008, Dr. James Hansen, Director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies predicted that unless global emissions are reduced to 350ppm soon that we can expect a sea level rise of at least two meters within a century. Millions around the world will be displaced and increasing numbers of animal and plant species will go extinct.<sup>2</sup>

As **Claudia Kern**, of the UU Ministry for Earth, writes, “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.”<sup>3</sup> Such a leap requires that we rethink our relationship to Earth. We need to develop a sense of gratitude so deep that we are willing to consider our every action – large or small – every day – and make critical positive decisions for the health of our planet. We need to understand our direct dependence on Earth. If we continue on our current path, Descartes’ words, “The unexamined life is not worth living,” take on profound implications for our continued presence as a species on earth.

Van Jones suggests in his article, “In Need of a Good Word” in *Orion Magazine* (Jan.-Feb, 2008) the words *environment, ecology, sustainability, conservation and green*, neither help us understand that our grandchildren are more important than the bottom line and our personal comfort nor include people of all political persuasions, ethnicities, and nationalities. He says we need a terminology that invites everyone into the effort to transform the way we live on the planet.”

To address these concerns, I would like to suggest that we begin to refer to our planet as “Earth, Our Deep-Home-Place” to mean the unique location in the Universe that is our ancestral home, our current home, and the only home that we will ever have – a place deserving of reverence, gratitude, wonder, love and care. Deep – home – place – all simple words that we have used for centuries and perhaps, millennia.

According to Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, “home” is a place of residence; a social unit formed by



a family living together, a congenial environment, a place of origin. For most of us home is the place where we live, where we find sustenance and love. Home is where we belong. Since Magellan's ships circled the globe to the Apollo 8 pictures of Earth from space to the advent of the internet to the reports on climate change, we have come to understand that our home is not a street address or a geo-bio-region. Our true home is a planet we call Earth. All humanity is connected in a great interdependent web of existence that links us to all other living and non-living parts of our planet.

Current cosmological research indicates that we, as part of the Earth, are made of the stuff of stars. Every atom of our body was formed as part of the Big Bang or during the evolution of super nova. Each of our individual bodies is in constant interchange with the inorganic parts of our environment. In order to live, we breathe Earth's air, drink her water, and eat the products of her soils and seas. Every living thing does a version of this dance with Earth for we are all of Earth – not apart from or superior to creation. It is with good reason that many think of our planet as “mother”.

Darryl Babe Wilson<sup>4</sup>, of the Pit River Nation from north-most California says that all of us are born with a love-song for Mother Earth that can be lost if not nurtured when we are children. He suggests that we make sure that our youngest children have the opportunity to greet the morning sun each day and sing their own songs of gratitude to earth. Lastly, Earth makes no judgments relative to who we are: our race, ethnicity, nationality, poverty or wealth, politics or other qualities that we as humans use to divide us from each other. Whomever we are, Earth feeds our bodies, our minds and our spirits.

While the word “deep” implies direction, as in “far down a well,” it also is used to mean profound and mysterious. Used in the context of deep-home-place, deep takes the concept of home to a higher level of meaning, one that invites contemplation of the long history of the earth (deep time), and our history as a species on it. We can weigh human history from the recesses of time to well into the future of our planet, including our own children and grandchildren. Deep invites us to contemplate our many understandings of God and our relationship to eternity. For many of us deep brings us to a sense of gratitude and reverence for the opportunity to live our few decade- long life-span. Deep-home-place asks us to look beyond that which divides us and shows us what connects us. Like it or not, *we have only one planet* on which to live in the hugeness of the Universe, and that planet is Earth.

Our deep-home-place is both a physical location and a place of the heart; it grounds us literally and figuratively; and obligates us recognize to that we are all in this together. What we do to nature, what we do

to the land, the water and air, we do to ourselves. Our deep-home-place calls to look back and reflect on how we have treated each other and the web of all existence of which we are a part. It requires us to take responsibility for the morass we are in. It challenges us to work together to do the right thing by all people, by all nature, by our local geo-bioregions and ultimately by our planet as a whole.

*We need to develop a sense of gratitude  
so deep that we are willing to consider  
our every action . . .*

Our deep-home-place place calls us to love our planet and strive to live in peace with ourselves, our neighbors, nature, and Earth herself. For if we are to address global warming, pollution, species extinction, poverty, hunger, health issues and a host of other challenges, we need to recognize our connections to each other and to our deep-home-place.

The Lake Miwok people of California once lived (and a few still do) west of the southern Sacramento Valley. The Miwok people called their ancestral lands by names that implied meanings beyond location. One Miwok name, in particular caught the imagination of Robert Thayer when he researched the lands of the creeks in the Putah-Cache Creek geo-bioregion: *Tuleyome*. He writes, “This name referred in the Miwok tongue not only to an ancient village located along Copsy Creek, a small tributary of Cache Creek in the Excelsior Valley, but to the contemporary residents, the ancient ancestors, and the entire surrounding territory inhabited by the Lake Miwok people. Literally, *Tuleyome* means “deep-home-place.” In the modern world of the twenty-first century, our *Tuleyome*, our deep-home-place is not a geo-bio-region, it is Earth herself. Let us add “Earth, our deep-home-place” to our terminology and begin immediately the work that needs to be done. Our planet, our mother needs us – now!

1 See the Speech by the current chair of the IPCC at [www.ipcc.ch/graphics/speeches/rajendra-pachauri-poznan-01-december-08.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/graphics/speeches/rajendra-pachauri-poznan-01-december-08.pdf)

2 Hansen, James, “Twenty Years Later: Tipping Points Near on Global Warming,” Huffington Post, June 23, 2008

3 Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth Newsletter, Volume 7, Issue 3, Spring 2008, page 3.

4 Personal correspondence. ♦



## Transformation, Collective Wisdom and You

by Nancy King Smith, Member, UUMFE Board

The new UU Ministry for Earth is intending to be a connector supporting and inspiring individuals, congregations, ministers, UUA leadership and staff, and other UU organizations to lift up voices for Earth from within our denomination. From its beginnings in 1999 as the Seventh Principle Project, UUMFE has sought to both influence UU's at all levels to make the Seventh Principle (respect for the interdependent we of which we are all a part), more central to their lives and theology. A step in that direction was the gift of UUMFE's Green Sanctuary Program to the UUA, thus making Earth care more mainstream within the Association. We now feel called to continue serving as the leading edge of UU environmental theology, practice and justice by collecting the wisdom and experience of all sectors of Unitarian Universalism and making it available to individuals, congregations, Districts and the Association.

Districts and the Association.

In order to meet this new calling, we know we need to transform the way we operate to take advantage of current technology that allows for the sharing of information and its dissemination in new ways. Thus, we are re-vamping our website to be a place where resources can be shared and created for everyone's use. We will be changing our staffing model to give us the support that will be needed to implement this vision. We are asking you to help us by sharing your expertise and stories.

So, we invite you to collaborate on the new Environmental Justice Guide by responding to the request on Page 6 to help review and add to this publication. As we continue our transformation we will be inviting you to participate in more ways to build the wisdom and voice of earth care within the UUA and in the larger world. The complete statement of the new vision can be found at [www.uuministryforearth.org/mfe\\_overview.htm](http://www.uuministryforearth.org/mfe_overview.htm) ♦

## Earth Day Celebration 'Sent the message home.'

The creative Green Sanctuary Team at the **Minnesota Valley UU Fellowship** in Bloomington, Minnesota got the attention of the participants in the Earth Day Service and Celebration with a pyramid of 100 rolls of toilet paper. The pyramid was built to draw attention to the need to help protect the Boreal forests in Canada by selecting paper products with recycled paper content.

The team members enjoyed sharing laughs and educating the congregation with information provided by Natural Resources Defense Council about product selection.

MVUUF became an accredited Green Sanctuary congregation in 2008, and the Green team, led by Mary Ann Dean, continue to help the congregation become aware of how they can work towards a sustainable lifestyle for themselves and future generations. ♦



*Carolyn Halvorsen and Mary Ann Dean participate in the fun giveaway at Minnesota Valley UU Fellowship.*

new from UUMFE

## ***New RE Curriculum*** **Sounds of Nature**

**Make a spaghetti-box sitar! Listen to whales sing! Drink dandelion tea!**

Activities like these are guaranteed to bring new excitement to your RE program using **Sounds of Nature**, a new children's RE curriculum written by UUMFE Guardian of the Future 2008, Stefani Scott.

Music affects our emotions and allows our feeling to be expressed. It is as basic as walking or talking, and it develops a child's sense of patterning and memory skills. Music is an easy way for young people to connect with each other, and it is also a bridge for connecting with other generations, other cultures, and the myriad rhythms of Nature.

Each **Sounds of Nature** lessons tells a story and invites the children to make their own instruments from recycled materials. The lessons are designed to help children feel welcome and willing to come to RE knowing that they are about to have fun and learn something new. They help children recognize and share their creative gifts. Each lesson encourages children to practice the UUA Principles with emphasis on understanding that they can make a difference by respecting all life (the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle), and, in particular, shows them that they can make a difference by recycling and by encouraging others to do the same.

Each of the eight lessons provides:

- Background information for teachers,
- A comprehensive list of materials to collect
- Advance preparation tips,
- A step-by-step guide through the lesson which includes
  - "Opening the Circle",
  - "Lighting of the Chalice,
  - Adapted story or reference to easily obtainable stories
  - "Essential Questions" to ask,
  - "Closing the Circle and Extinguishing the Chalice",
  - Activity and/or instrument-making instructions with templates
- Creative snack suggestions



And amidst all the fun, there are good science lessons about plants and animals.

Listen to what a parent, Deborah Little, of the UU Fellowship at Stony Brook says about her daughter's experience with **Sounds of Nature**:

*"... when my daughter participated in the **Sounds of Nature Talking Drums with Anasazi** class, or **Bringing the Rain**. She came dancing out of her RE classroom, bubbling with excitement about the sounds and activities and lessons. I didn't have to ask anything! She just glowed with the joy of telling me about her experiences."*

If you want this kind of excitement for your RE program, this curriculum is a must! **Sounds of Nature** includes eight lessons with many wonderful ideas for expanding the lessons into two or more sessions, and the eighth lesson also contains a complete in Multigenerational service based on that lesson. It is available on CD (\$ 20) or in print (\$ 25) from UUMFE.

Order online or download an order form at [www.uuministryforearth.org](http://www.uuministryforearth.org) ♦

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### **UUMFE Membership Renewal Now on a Rolling Schedule**



With the installation of a new database system for UU Ministry for Earth last summer, membership renewal dates are now adjusted based on when your gift is received. For many of you, the current renewal date is approaching at the end of June, the former renewal date for all memberships. You are encouraged to consider renewing your membership as soon as possible so that the organization will not need to incur the expense of sending a reminder letter.

You may choose to renew online at [www.uuministryforearth.org](http://www.uuministryforearth.org) or through the mail by printing a membership form, also found on the website. Either way, please know that your gift is appreciated.

You are encouraged to stay connected to share your comments and ideas with other members. Look for the new website in the very near future. Also, UUMFE now has begun a Facebook group to provide a place for collaborative discussions. These are in addition to the Greensancturary and Globalwarming email groups administered by the UUA. Visit [www.lists.uua.org](http://www.lists.uua.org) to join these groups. ♦





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## ***New RE Curriculum in the We Are All Connected Series*** **Sounds of Nature**

“Music is one way for young people to connect with each other, but it is also a bridge for connecting with other generations. Through music, we can introduce children to the richness and diversity of the human family and to the myriad rhythms of Nature and to all the Good Earth’s life, great and small.”

This new curriculum being offered by UU Ministry for Earth includes eight RE lessons for children of all ages, with ideas to expand into two or more sessions. The eighth lesson also contains a complete Multi-generational service. The lessons use music to help us connect with each other, other cultures, and the myriad rhythms of Nature. Stories, crafts, music and other hands-on activities are included in the lessons.

*Sounds of Nature* and *Butterfly and Creepy Crawlies*, the first in the *We Are All Connected* series, are generous gifts of the author, Stefani Scott of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stony Brook. Stefani was the Guardian of the Future Award winner at the UUA General Assembly in 2008.

Order on the website: [www.uuministryforearth.org](http://www.uuministryforearth.org)