



## UUMFE Calls All Congregations to Participate in the 350 International Day of Climate Action on October 24, 2009

by Vince Pawlowski, UUMFE Board Member

Social justice, creation-care, stewardship, Earth community, beloved community – there are many ways we can name and express our moral and spiritual perspectives on climate change. UU Ministry for Earth invites Unitarian Universalists to join with us in prayer, meditation, action, and celebration on United Nations Day, October 24, 2009, in our collaboration with 350.org in a day of action for climate justice. In addition to being the founding date of the UN, this date is an important milestone in the path to an effective international treaty on climate change to be negotiated by the UN in December in Copenhagen, Denmark.



At General Assembly last June, UUMFE began inviting people to sign a pledge to participate in the 350.org Day for Climate Action. We are providing a registry for congregations to communicate and share ideas with one another about this Day of Action (see web address below). The UUA Green Sanctuary Program, UUA Washington Office for Advocacy, UU State Advocacy Network, UU-UNO (United Nations Office), and others are collaborating on building participation in the 350 event.

350 represents a scientific benchmark for a safe climate – yet there are also deeply moral and spiritual reasons for getting the world back below 350 ppm

of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere. 350.org is an international grassroots network mobilizing a global climate movement united by our common call to action. It is an independent, not-for-profit project spreading an understanding of the science and a shared vision for a fair policy that will create bold and equitable solutions to the climate crisis.

For more information about the International Day of Climate Action, visit the UUMFE website at <http://www.uuministryforearth.org/350.htm>. We have included ideas for events your congregation can organize, links to our partner organizations, and a registry for our collaboration with 350.org.

Also, please register at [www.350.org](http://www.350.org) and sign the "Interfaith Call for 350," which states in part: "...We come together as people of faith to call on the world's leaders to commit to decreasing carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) levels in Earth's atmosphere to below 350 parts per million, the stable and safe upper limit for the world's people, creatures, and future generations..."

To help spread the message of 350, Unitarian Universalist minister Fred Small has written "Three Five O," a thrilling anthem for climate justice. We hope to circulate a video of "Three Five O" for online posting and viral networking. Production of the video is already underway, but more funds are needed to complete it. Make your tax-deductible donation at [www.uuministryforearth.org/orderform.html](http://www.uuministryforearth.org/orderform.html). ♦

October 24  
**350 DAY OF CLIMATE ACTION**  
✓ Pledge your participation  
✓ Get more information & ideas



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**ABOUT UUMFE**

Unitarian Universalist  
Ministry for Earth is a non-  
profit 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  
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## From the Board

### A New Year – Change Is In The Air

We feel privileged to be taking the helm of UU Ministry for Earth. You'll see in this newsletter that a lot of exciting things are happening: a new Environmental Justice intern has been hired, the 350 International Day of Climate Change registry is on our website, long-time Board member and past chair, Steve Maier, is serving as consultant as we start the process of hiring an executive director.

We are grateful for the wonderful service that three outgoing Board members and past Board chairs have given to UUMFE and are pleased that they will all stay involved in some way. Steve Maier stepped off of the Board to become consultant for UUMFE until he returns to the Vermont legislature in January. He will continue to work on the Environmental Justice Resource, will guide the hiring process for a new executive, and will help deepen the theological conversation around earth ministry and justice.

Barbara Ford is immediate past chair of UUMFE and guided the organization through the decision around gifting the Green Sanctuary program to the UUA. She also helped build collaborative relationships with the UUA, UUSC, the Office of Advocacy, Northwest Earth Institute, among others. Barbara will continue to be a presence in our Portland office and will be available for workshops based on Joanna Macy's work.

Claudia Kern has been the heart and soul of UUMFE work. She has been the primary contributor and editor for the UUMFE eNews and regular newsletters as well as for many UUMFE resources. She led the organization through the strengthening of the Study Action Issue on climate change at the 2006 General Assembly and in the establishment of the Regional Coordinator program serving districts. She will continue to work with Steve Maier on the EJ resource.

UUMFE is a small organization in the overall scope of things, but Steve, Claudia, and Barbara and others before them provided good leadership that built the foundation for more direct EJ work and contribution within the UUA. Our small Board will continue those efforts, and we need your help in strengthening our collective Earth ministry voice:

- We hope that you and your congregation will help us register at least 350 UU congregations for the 350 Day of Climate Change;
- If you or someone you know has interest in helping with our EJ Resource, there's still the opportunity for that; and
- If you have interest in engaging other congregations in your District or in helping monitor the website, we could also use that assistance.

Doing this work needs the support of our members, not only through contributions of time, as described above, but also contributions of money. We invite you to renew your membership when it is up for renewal, to give a special gift or become a Parent for the Planet, or to ask your congregation for a shared plate offering. Thank you for being a part of UUMFE.

Irene Keim and Nancy King Smith  
UU Ministry for Earth Board Co-Chairs ♦

## Environmental Justice

### Rowan Van Ness Tapped for Environmental Justice Position

by Ellen McClaran, UUMFE Board Member

Earlier this year, the UU Ministry for Earth (UUMFE) and the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA) partnered to create a staff position dedicated to promoting effective environmental justice work among Unitarian Universalists. We are delighted to welcome Rowan Van Ness as the first Legislative Assistant for Environmental Justice, beginning Sept. 8. She is based in the UUA's Washington Office of Advocacy where she also participates in the UUA Social Justice Internship Program. The goal of this program is to combine effective work for justice with faith development in order to produce energetic young adults with professional skills and strength of character to be lifelong leaders in Unitarian Universalism and social justice.

Rowan's responsibilities include: (1) identifying, analyzing, and promoting existing environmental justice work through sharing stories, best practices, and common challenges; and (2) promoting education, organizing, advocacy, and public witness on UUMFE/UUA-identified priority issues, e.g., the current Study Action Issue, Ethical Eating: Food and



Environmental Justice, and the upcoming 350 International Day of Climate Action on October 24 (read more about both elsewhere in this newsletter). She will also produce Environmental Justice News, a collaborative effort between UUMFE, UU Service Committee, UUA's Green Sanctuary program, and the Washington Advocacy Office. Sign up for this and other social justice advocacy e-news at [www.uua.org/socialjustice/](http://www.uua.org/socialjustice/).

Rowan is well qualified for this position, with a strong background in current environmental issues. She graduated from Smith College in 2008 with a degree in economics and a minor in environmental science and policy. After graduation, she spent a year with Healthy Communities AmeriCorps\*VISTA at Groundwork Lawrence, MA, where she worked with members of the low-income, immigrant community to improve their quality of life through community food programs, environmental and open space improvements, youth initiatives, and community programs and events – find out more at [www.groundworklawrence.org](http://www.groundworklawrence.org).

We are looking forward to a fruitful year of environmental justice advocacy under Rowan's capable management. As she stated in her application, "My knowledge of environmental issues and advocacy work in a diverse community combined with my commitment to putting my UU faith into action have prepared me to promote effective environmental justice work among Unitarian Universalists." Contact Rowan at [environment@uua.org](mailto:environment@uua.org). ♦

## News From General Assembly

### Colin High Named 2009 UUMFE Guardian of the Future

by Claudia Kern, former UUMFE Board Member

UUMFE is pleased to announce that Colin High of the UU Congregation of the Upper Valley in Norwich, Vermont, is the 2009 recipient of the annual UUMFE Guardian of the Future Award. The award was presented at the UUMFE Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, UT, at General Assembly in June.

Colin High is an environmental consultant special-

izing in renewable energy, climate protection, and sustainability. He has taught environmental science at Dartmouth College and Columbia University and developed foreign study programs in Environmental Studies in Kenya and in Russia. He is a Lead Verifier for the National Carbon Registry, and his company was one of the first to become a Carbon Reporter in the new program designed to report and verify greenhouse gas emissions in the Cap and Trade system.

Colin helped lead his congregation to certification as the very first Green Sanctuary. He is a keen participant and leader in

*continued on page 4*

# News From General Assembly

**Guardian of the Future** . . . *continued from page 3*  
congregational discussion courses, conducts church and individual member energy audits, and was a major force in creating an outdoor Spirit in Nature Path on the church property. Colin has also been an active participant in denominational green faith activities at district and national levels. Without his input, UU General Assembly would not have become an award-winning green event. His help was invaluable in crafting the amendments for the powerful UUA Statement of Conscience on Climate Change adopted in 2006.

He is a founding board member of Vermont Interfaith Power and Light, and, just this summer, his efforts launched a new New Hampshire Interfaith Power and Light.

In his community, Colin is a member of the Enfield Shaker Museum's preservation committee, where he is developing innovative ways to weatherize the historic Shaker Great Stone Dwelling, making it more sustainable and better able to welcome overnight visitors year round. Colin and his wife, Mardy, live in a green, nearly zero carbon home that they designed and built.

Often working late into the night at his computer to finish a grant application, a piece of work, or even a sermon, this year's Guardian is a model of dedication. Colin is ever eager to engage in conversations about "turning the ship" to avert catastrophic climate change, generously giving his time and energy to people and organizations that need help of the green kind. His hope and passion for leaving a viable planet to the next generation are an inspiration to all of us.



Colin High truly exemplifies the qualities of a Unitarian Universalist Guardian of the Future. ♦

*This year's selection committee for the Guardian of the Future Award included Rev. Mary Lara Hoke, former UUMFE Board Member, Lea Hall, former UUMFE Regional Coordinator, and Stefani Scott, the 2008 Guardian of the Future.*

## Focus on Food and Faith

by Vicky Talbert, UUMFE  
Liaison to the UUA Ethical  
Eating Core Team

ENTHUSIASM ran high at the 2009 General Assembly as Unitarian Universalists shared the myriad of ways our congregations are exploring the 2008-2012 Study Action Issue, Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice.

WE ARE . . .

Giving homilies, offering sermons, witnessing, and lighting social justice candles that focus on why our food choices matter . . .

Attending panels and participating in the "Menu for the Future" discussion course from the Northwest Earth Institute . . .

Watching "King Corn," "Is Fair Trade Free Trade?" and "The Emotional World of Farm Animals" . . .

Attending congregational potlucks and "100-mile Meals" serving compassionate and sustainable food and using Compassionate Communication when talking about the issues . . .

Visiting local farms to understand the challenges of sustainable food production and studying the paradox of hunger in a bountiful world . . .

Teaching our children how food gets to our table and educating our youth about food and justice . . .

Joining the Ethical Eating Discussion List to tap the wisdom and knowledge of our Unitarian Universalist Community at <http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/ethical-eating-network> . . .

And . . . Responding to the call to bring our food choices into alignment with our Unitarian Universalist principles.





# News From General Assembly

## 20th Anniversary Celebration

by Claudia Kern, former UUMFE Board Member

The 2009 UUMFE Annual Meeting celebrated twenty years of Earth ministry in our denomination. Founding members, past and current leaders, and friends met to celebrate and commemorate how the organization began and grew and contributed to Earth ministry for Unitarian Universalists.

The first ten years were characterized by an awakening to environment as a religious and justice issue. A cadre of visionaries saw that a congregationally-based program could blend religious celebrations, RE, church administration, and community action into one environmental and faith centered program. Those visionaries included: Rev. Bob Murphy, Rachael Stark, Brian and Roxanne Reddington-Wilde, Leslie Pohl-Kosbau, Jim Tucker, Rev. Jim Eller, Rev. Fred Small, and Rev. Katherine Jesch.

The second decade of our history was dedicated to engaging congregations in the work of Earth ministry, developing the organizational capacity to grow the Green Sanctuary Program, and, as of July 2008, to institutionalize it within the UUA. In the last ten years, we have grown from a small, but persistent voice for faithful UU environmentalism to a respected partner and collaborator with our denomination.

This growth and visibility would not have been possible without the intense, dedicated labor and profound commitment of many people. First and foremost is Rev. Katherine Jesch. Without her dedication to Green Sanctuary and Earth ministry, we would not exist. For the past ten years, she has provided ministry, leadership, and consultation to the organization. We are grateful for the wisdom, energy, theological grounding, and institutional knowledge Rev. Jesch brought to the work of UU Ministry for Earth and the Seventh Principle Project.

Jim Scott is best known as our UU troubador for Earth, but as part of our celebration Jim was recognized for his unsung leadership as President of the Board in the formative years of this second decade. He was the glue that held us together as we struggled to become a viable organization, tending to the nuts and bolts work that built our foundation.

Finally, members of the Seventh Principle Project and UU Ministry for Earth boards for the past ten

years were recognized. These individuals have worked as visionaries and bookkeepers, lay theologians and secretaries, button-makers and editors, negotiators and resource writers. Again and again, these deeply committed UUs said "yes":

### Board of Directors 1999-2009

Cecile Andrews • Gisela Bahr  
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Rev. Craig Scott • Jim Scott • Nancy King Smith  
Carlos Taylor • Karen Urbano • Terry Wiggins  
Rev. Jackie Ziegler ♦

## Earth Song

Opening for UUMFE 2009 Annual Meeting

by Claudia Kern, former UUMFE Board Member

Earth Song, enter now this place and set our hearts and minds to singing. We are here to affirm the goodness of all your diverse and wondrous melodies. We are here to celebrate our reawakening to the symphony of life.

Earth Song, let our voices be fulsome with gratitude for the dedicated Seventh Principle Project and UU Ministry for Earth leaders of the last twenty years. Their sustained vision, commitment, and plain hard work give us reasons aplenty to sing.

Call forth in us a recommitment to live in harmony with the interdependent web of existence. Remind us that it is with our voices that all life cries out for justice. Remind us that wherever there is injustice, there is a tear in the web of life.

May we open ourselves to hearing song of the Earth that it might inspire, nourish, and sustain us as we enlarge our ministry for Earth, our deep home place.

# News From General Assembly

## Action of Immediate Witness – In Support of America's Red Rock Wilderness Act

by Joan M. Gregory, Coordinator, Environmental Ministry, First Unitarian Church of Salt Lake City, UT

On June 28, the 2009 General Assembly (GA) of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) passed an Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) calling for the protection of America's Red Rock Wilderness in



*Gooseneck proposed wilderness*

Utah. Passage of this AIW urges Unitarian Universalist congregations and their members and friends to: call for passage of America's Red Rock Wilderness

Act (S 799/HR 1925); urge the BLM to establish administrative protections for Utah's wild lands from off-road vehicle abuse, road development, oil, gas, oil shale, and tar sands development by participating in the BLM public comment process; and use the resources of the Utah Wilderness Coalition, including the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA), to educate themselves and others about the environmental and spiritual importance of protecting Utah's wild lands.

**The Process.** Beginning early in 2009, members and friends of First Unitarian Church and other Salt Lake City faith communities participated in a series of *Faith and the Land Dialogues* with the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. Dialogue attendees met to think and talk about two questions: How are Utah's wild places important to you spiritually? How does your faith tradition call on you to care take the natural world, including wild lands?

The interfaith statement that resulted from the dialogues calls on Utah's elected leaders to recognize that Utah's wild lands are places of profound spiritual inspiration, renewal, connection, and nourishment to people of many different faith traditions and to act now to ensure their protection. It also invites all faith communities to join the call for protective stewardship of Utah's wild places.

Those in attendance at the *Faith and the Land Dialogue* at First Unitarian were not content with dialogue alone, but suggested that we take action to share our experience with other Unitarian congregations and to propose a resolution in support of Utah's wild lands at the 2009 UUA GA to be held in Salt Lake City. First Unitarian's Environmental Ministry took up the challenge, investigated how to submit a UUA GA resolution, learned about the AIW process, and prepared an AIW Resolution – In Support of America's Red Rock Wilderness Act – with research support from the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance.

In June, Environmental Ministry shared the proposed AIW with other congregations, especially Utah and Mountain Desert District congregations and those on the UUA Green Sanctuary mailing list. A Google Group was formed to facilitate planning, idea generation, feedback, volunteering for signature gathering, and post-GA advocacy. Ten volunteers were recruited from five different congregations, representing three different districts.

At GA, advice was obtained regarding the AIW process and criteria, resulting in changes to the AIW. The AIW was posted and the signature gathering began. This process gave us the opportunity to approach many, many delegates to advocate, educate, and discuss the environmental and spiritual significance of America's Red Rock Wilderness and our role in supporting the passage of this legislation. It was quite an empowering experience. For visibility, we wore and gave out bright yellow stickers proclaiming: Protect Wild Utah! We shared pictures and stories of our individual and collec-



*Labyrinth*

tive experiences in these unique landscapes and spoke about how Utah's Red Rock wild lands are seriously threatened by rampant off-road vehicle damage, climate change, energy and mineral development, and other human-initiated activities. We estimate that we gathered close to 312 signatures from congregations in over forty cities representing all nineteen UUA districts. *continued on page 7*

## News From General Assembly

### Red Rock Wilderness . . . continued from page 6

Having met the signature requirements, the Commission on Social Witness (CSW) reviewed and approved our AIW. Then the GA delegates voted to admit the proposed AIW to the Final Agenda. At the mini-assembly which followed, submitted amendments improved our AIW by substituting inclusive language for exclusive language, by removing reference to a practice that could harm wildlife, and by including in the process the creation and maintenance of right relationships with indigenous peoples as well as listening and actively responding to indigenous guidance concerning these lands. The 2009 UUA GA adopted the AIW with all amendments incorporated.

**Take Action in Support of America's Red Rock Wilderness Act.** The AIW in Support of America's Red Rock Wilderness Act passed by the 2009 General Assembly creates an amazing opportunity to influence the future of America's precious wild

lands in Utah. Actions individuals or congregations can take to help implement this AIW are highlighted at: <http://www.suwa.org/site/PageServer?page-name=UUCongregationalResources>.

We urge you to get involved and make a difference for the protection of the interdependent web of all existence of which we are just a part – a part that depends on nature's services as provided by wilderness and the wildlife



wilderness supports in Utah's wild lands, America's wild lands. They are YOUR wild lands. ♦

*Note: all photographs are by Ray Bloxham, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance; see more at [www.suwa.org](http://www.suwa.org).*

## The Green Sanctuary Program

Congregations and congregants working together to restore Earth and renew Spirit.

### Green Sanctuary Program Update

*by Robin Nelson, Program Manager, UUA  
Congregational Stewardship Services*

**A**t General Assembly 2009 in Salt Lake City, UT, the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA) Office of Congregational Stewardship Services (CSS) celebrated the accreditation of twenty-five congregations. At that time there were 98 accredited Green Sanctuaries with 116 congregations in candidacy. That's a total of 214 or 20 percent of all UU congregations. To view the entire list of accredited Green Sanctuaries go to: <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/green-sanctuary/index.shtml> and click on "Green Sanctuaries" in the left-hand purple bar.

Over the summer, the Green Sanctuary Program has continued to thrive. We have received so many applications in the last few months that we are adding a third Green Sanctuary review team that will begin reviewing applications in October. Applications for both candidacy and accreditation

are accepted and reviewed year-round on a rolling basis. Please send your application electronically to [greensanctuary@uua.org](mailto:greensanctuary@uua.org) when you feel that it is ready for review.

The UUA Office of CSS is committed to continuing to grow the Green Sanctuary Program and will be providing more resources for congregations. A newly updated Green Sanctuary Manual will be released in September. In addition, a comprehensive review of environmentally themed books, films, and websites is being regularly updated on the Green Sanctuary web pages: [www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/greensanctuary/index.shtml](http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/greensanctuary/index.shtml) and click on "Resources for Green Sanctuaries" in the left-hand purple bar.

In the fall, congregations should check their mailboxes for a copy of the interfaith film *Renewal* and "Renewal: A Guide for Screening and Using the Documentary" which are being provided to all UUA congregations. If you have not received your copy by the end of October please contact [greensanctuary@uua.org](mailto:greensanctuary@uua.org). ♦



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### Join the Team Developing the Environmental Justice Guide

*by Claudia Kern, former UUMFE Board Member*



UUMFE is engaged in a unique collaborative process to review and revise a draft Environmental Justice guide. Over thirty ministers, lay UUs, and UUA staff have already volunteered to review and comment on the draft sixty-page-plus document.

The draft resource asks UUs to consider thoughtfully how our faith might build a bridge between the environmental work of the last fifty years and the historical work on racism/classism

and social justice. Your participation is encouraged and welcomed. We are particularly seeking UUs with a historical perspective on environmental justice and commitment to anti-racism and anti-oppression work, ministers able to help us give broad theological grounding to the work, and UUs with specific knowledge about the environmental justice dimensions of the following: economics, climate disruption, energy, toxics and health, species extinction and biodiversity, and animal rights.

If you would like more information or wish to volunteer, please contact [office@uuministry-forearth.org](mailto:office@uuministry-forearth.org) as soon as possible and use "EJ Resource" in the subject line. ♦

## Support the EJ Guide Project and More!

This issue of the UUMFE newsletter highlights exciting projects that depend on you. Your donations and your new or renewed membership makes possible the work towards Earth ministry as an integral part of our UU experience. Go to <http://uuministryforearth.org/orderform.html> for donation and membership options, as well as the many UUMFE resources available. Thank you for your support.