



For the Fortieth Anniversary of Earth Day, UUMFE Invites Congregations Take a Bite Out of Food Injustice

by Ellen McClaran, UUMFE Board Member

During the forty years since the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970, we have experienced environmental success stories and colossal failures, technological miracles and missed opportunities, Mother Nature in her magnificent glory and, all too often these days, her fury. In this age of climate disruption and peak oil, can we find meaningful ways to celebrate Earth Day 2010? Of course! We are UUs – always ready to joyfully lift up and act on injustice wherever we find it. This year, the UUMFE Earth Day team is focusing attention on the justice issues associated with a basic human need (and right) – food.

Inspired by the current Congregational Study Action Issue (CSAI), *Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice*, our 2010 Earth Day resource packet will help congregations explore the issues on many levels and ways. As stated in the Guide, *Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice* is personal in nature – involving our free choices of what we put in our own bodies – and global in reach – with implications for ecosystems, human hunger, social inequity, animal welfare, and climate change.”



Photos, flickr/Creative Commons: (l) Jess J, Italian Market; (c) ClioYou, Mexican Market; (r) World Bank Photo Collection, Algerian Market

The Earth Day packet is entirely web-based this year. Go to www.uumistryforearth.org, click on “Take Action” then “Earth Day 2010” to get started. Be sure to register your activities and send photos and stories to office@uumistryforearth.org.

Rowan Van Ness, UUMFE’s Program Associate for Environmental Justice in the Washington Advocacy Office, has put together an excellent “Call To Action For Ethical Eating,” including:

- Links to the Ethical Eating CSAI materials
 - Ethical Eating Resource Guide
 - Ethical Eating Worship Supplement
- Consumer Choices
 - Fair Trade and Global Concerns
 - Local Considerations
 - Labor
 - Organics
 - Slow Food
 - Still Hungry for More Information?



You can also read about what other congregations are doing and learn to engage your community through press and publicity for your Earth Day event. These resources are intended to supplement the extensive materials found in the Ethical Eating Resource Guide and Worship Supplement.

You will find other practical items to download and print for use in your Earth Day activities including:

- Order of Service cover in two sizes
- Order of Service insert with UUMFE and membership information; may also be used as a handout at your program table
- Certificate to Honor your Congregational Eco-Hero, with a choice of four beautiful background photos
- Form to nominate your congregational Eco-Hero for the 2010 UUMFE Guardian of the Future Award to be presented at the UUA General Assembly

Have a productive and fruitful 2010 Earth Day! ♦

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Unitarian Universalist
Ministry for Earth

Unitarian Universalist
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NEWSLETTER

is published three times
per year by
UU Ministry for Earth
1034 SW 13th Ave.
Portland, OR 97205

The points of view
expressed by contributors
are their own and not neces-
sarily those of UU Ministry
for Earth. Subscriptions are
available through member-
ship in the organization. The
printed version of this
newsletter uses 100 percent
postconsumer content
recycled paper.

ABOUT UUMFE

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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.

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From the Board

We Value Our Relationships

April 22, 2010, will be the 40th anniversary of Earth Day! Where were you during past Earth Day events? What was your favorite? What do you plan to do this year to commemorate the anniversary? We have been reflecting on the significance of Earth Day since we began planning for the new Earth Day packet months ago. We have concluded that one of the more amazing results of the events of the past is that we have become more connected to other interest groups with similar care and concern for Earth that we at UU Ministry for Earth have come to embrace.

As Rowan Van Ness, our Program Associate in Washington, writes in her article about coalitions, we find insight, richer solutions, and stronger advocacy when we work together with others interested in the same issues. Many of our UU congregations put this principle into action last fall as we came together with others in answering the call of 350.org to participate in the International Day of Climate Action in October and other events leading up to the UN Climate Change Summit in December. Now many of those same community groups are working on 'after Copenhagen' projects.

UUMFE will begin publishing the Environment and Justice Green Papers this month on our website. The first papers will summarize the growth of environmental and justice work in the United States and describe how the seemingly disparate interests are finding common ground. The UU Funding Panel has awarded UUMFE a grant to publish these papers that are themselves a result of input from many UUs. We also have been uplifted by the variety of members and friends who have stepped forward to help UUMFE begin to pay for our portion of the budget for this project. So it has been in the twenty-plus years UUs have invested time and treasure in the work of UU Ministry for Earth.

Forty years ago, we hoped that we would not be in such a crucial moment as we find ourselves facing today, working towards sustainable living in the face of global climate change. But, here we are. The role of our congregations is vital to helping us sustain hope and energy, even joy, as we move through our growth in understanding of our interconnected lives. We look forward to continuing to lift up the stories of your inspiration and progress.

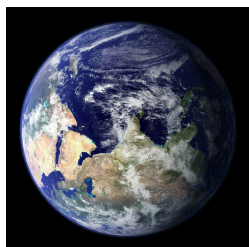
The events and relationships above are not an end all and be all, but the building blocks of ever more effective actions. Each new relationship can lead to another and another in what is sometimes a serpentine path. Each newfound friend with newly discovered shared interests helps us sustain personal strength and resolve in the face of our growth in global awareness. We become more able to juxtapose the one with the many. Staying open to and looking for the possibilities has given great rewards.

We continue to be inspired by these words from the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Ware Lecture to the UUA General Assembly in 1966 that are included in the retrospective in the first Green Paper that we will publish:

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UUMFE Launches Environment and Justice 'Green Papers'

by Irene Keim, UUMFE Board Co-chair



In the coming months, UU Ministry for Earth will be posting 'green papers' on our website on the broad topic of Environment and Justice and specific focus areas such as Food. The papers are a result of a collaborative review and edit process with over thirty ministers, lay UUs, and UUA staff. The postings are labeled 'green papers' because they are meant to stimulate thoughtful comment, interaction, and action by UUs who are involved in and concerned about the history, connections, and future of environment and justice work.

The papers are a result of a UU Funding Panel grant awarded to UU Ministry for Earth last December to help UUs connect their commitments to economic justice, diversity/anti-racism and anti-oppression work in general, and to Earth. The goal is to deliver environmental justice resources that help bring the work alive in our congregations.

The first two 'green papers' will include an introduction to this new feature of the website and will provide a historical context for the topical papers to follow. You are encouraged to reflect and comment on these papers.

UUMFE has also contracted with Dr. Mark Hicks, Professor of Religious Education at Meadville Lombard Theological School, and with Pamela Sparr, member of All Souls Church Unitarian, Washington, D.C., to develop additional strategies for delivering materials to a variety of audiences. UUMFE intends to deepen the work by providing tools and support for congregations to understand the connections between their commitments to justice and their work for the environment. The essence of Dr. Hicks' work and expertise is to create supportive learning environments where people can address issues in ways that are accessible to them. He stresses the need to both challenge people with new learning, and also to support them along the way. This enables cycles of continued learning that open

increased levels of complexity and, ultimately, the changing of hearts and minds.

In addition to the papers and the work on new resources, the new UUMFE facebook postings are presenting opportunities for UUs to engage in specific issues, campaigns, and advocacy work. Visit the new UUMFE website to become a facebook fan. (www.uuministryforearth.org)

The initial administration of this grant was provided by Steve Maier as UUMFE Interim Executive Director. Steve, a former member of the UUMFE Board, continues to collaborate in this project. Claudia Kern, past president of the UUMFE Board, is engaged in rewriting and editing the Green Papers. Claudia and Steve also coordinated the contributions of UUMFE and its members on the 2006 UUA Statement of Conscience on the Threat of Global Warming/ Climate Change.

The Funding Panel grant provides \$9,650 towards the program budget for these activities. UU Ministry for Earth has asked our members and friends to contribute to our part of the budget through memberships and directed donations. To date, over \$2,000 has been donated towards the \$7,000 that UUMFE has committed to this project. Please consider adding your 'vote' for these innovative projects. Visit www.uuministryforearth.org and select the Join & Order tab to donate. If you donate online, enter an "E & J Grant" notation in the Comment line of the checkout form or, if you mail your donation, please include mention of the grant. ♦

The Importance of Working Together

by Rowan Van Ness, UUMFE Program Associate for Environmental Justice, Washington Office of Advocacy

Since the time we were little, we have been told to work together. The part that isn't always clear is with whom should we work? When working towards environmental justice, I would argue that we are accountable to the disadvantaged communities and should work both with them and in coalition with other communities of faith, social justice groups, environmental justice, and environmental groups. What we can accomplish *continued on page 4*

Environment & Justice News

Working Together . . . *continued from page 3*

together is much greater than what we can accomplish alone.

As defined by Eileen McGurty of John Hopkins University on page 9 of the *Green Sanctuary Manual* (5th Edition), "Despite the diversity of backgrounds



Environmental justice image from National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, www.niehs.nih.gov

and approaches, the environmental justice movement united around three ideas: environmental problems are intimately entwined with social problems; the current environmental framework exacerbates both environmental problems and social problems;

and the environmental establishment has neglected these relationships, in part, because of their elitism and exclusive practices." Environmental impacts fall most strongly on those most disadvantaged and oppressed.

To move beyond charity and truly seek justice, we need to listen to the voices that are often not heard and work to avoid imposing our own vision on the community of what we think they should want. Working with existing organizations that represent communities of color and people of lower incomes can be a good way to work on already identified needs in your/surrounding communities, whether it is on weatherization or food justice. Conversations with the community through neighborhood association meetings, through community safety meetings, through the places people in your community gather, can all be other ways to find out what environmental justice issues are salient in your community, and these conversations may lead to future partnerships. These partnerships can help keep us accountable to the sufferers of environmental injustices.

Similarly, when other groups are working on the same issues as we are, we can add strength to the

movement through working together and joining forces. Here in D.C., I am part of a working group of the Washington Interreligious Staff Community, focused on energy and eco-justice. It's made up of a number of people working in advocacy offices of a number of different religions, brought together by a common focus of working on environmental justice issues from a faith perspective. We come together in coalition to meet and discuss what's happening in Congress (or Copenhagen, at that time) and to hear what the different religions are doing and how we can get involved. We frequently put together sign-on letters to jointly speak our truth to power. The more we work together, the stronger our voices are. Coalitions aren't only at the national level—explore what already exists in your community and work together to build partnerships to further our work for everyone. ♦

We're All Ears! Our Fifth Principle In Action With Ethical Eating

by Vicky Talbert, UUMFE representative to the Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice Core Team



In November 2010, the Commission on Social Witness will post on-line a draft of the Statement of Conscience (SOC) for our 2008-2112

Congregational Study Action Issue (CSAI), "Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice." The statement will be based, in part, on recommendations submitted by the Ethical Eating Core Team. The Core Team seeks input from you – and all Unitarian Universalists – to help us craft this call to action. Comments can be made through the Data Services Login for Congregations. Contact your minister or congregational administrator for login credentials. To view the comment form, please see <http://www.uua.org/socialjustice/issuesprocess/index.shtml>. The deadline for comments offered in this manner is March 1, 2010.

Another great opportunity to present your thoughts about the CSAI and the SOC is at the planned General Assembly Workshop, "Ethical Eating: Moving Toward A Statement of Conscience," where individuals and congregations are encouraged to tell the Core Team what they would like included. *continued on page 5*

Environment & Justice News

We're All Ears! . . . *continued from page 4*

We are eager to hear what you think.

The Ethical Eating Core Team is also in the process of revising the "Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice Resource Guide" to reflect the input of those who have used it. The revised edition will include additional resources, an updated Worship Supplement, and more space allotted to congregational activities.

We appreciate hearing from congregations and individuals who are engaged in the CSAI. Many of us who have explored the issue of food and faith have taken action to bring our food choices into alignment with our Unitarian Universalist Principles. We invite you to share resources, worship, actions, and activities that have worked well in your congregation or group by including them in the revised Resource Guide. Please send them to vctalbert@sbcglobal.net by March 1, 2010. ♦

Emily Kao Joins Advocacy Team

by Rowan Van Ness, UUMFE Program Associate for Environmental Justice, Washington Office of Advocacy

For a few months this winter, there's a new environmental justice intern at the Washington Office of Advocacy. Emily Kao comes to the UUA by way of Carleton College in Northfield, MN, where she is a junior Environmental Studies major. Originally from Hood River, OR, Emily is a nature enthusiast and spends her free time hiking, rock climbing, skiing, or windsurfing. These passions inevitably led her to study the conservation and protection of our natural resources.

During her internship, Emily is working to lift up congregational stories of environmental justice work around the country. She feels her experience thus far has been eye opening and is constantly impressed with the Unitarian Universalist faith community's commitment to the environment. She feels privileged to be able to be a part of their work towards environmental justice. ♦



Fifth Annual End Mountaintop Removal Week In Washington

by Ellen McClaran, UUMFE Board Member

This annual week of advocacy in Washington, D.C., is organized by the Alliance for Appalachia. It brings together over one hundred citizen activists, from the coal fields of Appalachia and across the nation, who care deeply and passionately about mountains, clean water, and social justice. This year's event will take place on



March 6 through 10 in Washington, D.C. The Alliance for Appalachia is a regional alliance. Its goals are ending the devastating form of coal mining called mountaintop removal coal mining, putting a halt to destructive coal technologies, and supporting a sustainable, just economy in Appalachia.

Last year's efforts were extremely successful – more than 150 people from over twenty states came to Washington and held 150+ meetings with Congressional offices. As a result, there are now 160 co-sponsors in the House and ten in the Senate for the Clean Water Protection Act (H.R. 1310) and the Appalachia Restoration Act (S. 696). In 2010, there is a real opportunity to pass both of these bills, which would significantly advance the goal of ending the practice of mountaintop removal.

If you can come to Washington, you will have the opportunity to meet with members of Congress and their staff about ending mountaintop removal, and make many new friendships with other activists from around the country. Even if you can't come to Washington, you can still make a difference by making a donation at the website below and participating in the March 17th national call-in day to House Representatives in support of the Clean Water Protection Act.

For complete information on the event and the issues, the event schedule, and to register, go to the End Mountaintop Removal Action and Resource Center at www.ilovemountains.org/wiw. ♦

More News From UU Ministry For Earth

Online Connections to UUMFE Community are Growing

by Irene Keim, UUMFE Board Co-chair

The avenues for connection to your UUMFE neighbors online are getting more varied and flexible. Recognizing that each of us has preferred styles of sharing, researching and questioning, UUMFE has expanded its use of online media to include our new website, facebook, and two electronic newsletters.

The UU Ministry for Earth [facebook page](#) has inspirational readings, announcements of new resources available for you (i.e., the new Earth Day Packet), and event announcements, particularly those that are related to environmental justice issues. Many of the postings are by Rowan Van Ness, the UUMFE Program Associate for Environmental Justice. For those of you who will be in the Lexington, Kentucky area in March, you may want to check out a recent entry with the details of the Bluegrass Food Security Summit, Food & Faith Community Track on Friday, March 19. Go to the UUMFE website home page (www.uuministryforearth.org) and click on the facebook button to become a fan today.



The new [Environmental Justice News](#) e-newsletter is a collaboration of UU Ministry for Earth, UU Service Committee, the UUA Green Sanctuary program, and the UUA Washington Office of Advocacy. The monthly e-newsletter includes news, resources, and action suggestions. Each of the organizations contributes to this mailing and provides links to more extensive information. Go to the Social Justice home page on the UUA website (www.uua.org/socialjustice) to sign up for the mailing, under "More Ways to Connect." For additional action items, check out the Social Justice Action Center on the same page.

The volunteers of UUMFE produce the [UUMFE eNEWS](#) for events and resources of special interest to UUMFE members and friends. For example, a regular feature item is LINKS WE LOVE – links to tips, tools, and organizations related to our 'care for

Earth.' Sign up for the eNEWS on the UUMFE website (www.uuministryforearth.org) and the eNEWS will be delivered right to your e-mail box.

The [new UUMFE website](#) has been redesigned to accommodate expanded offerings and links for exploration and exchange of materials to support your work on Earth issues. Currently, the website has the new 2010 Earth Day suggestions, with links to the CSAI materials on Ethical Eating. Very soon, you will be invited to read *and* comment on the newest feature: Environmental Justice Green papers (see separate article on page 4). Samples of each of the publications that UUMFE offers in our 'store' are also in the works.

Reminder: If your church website has a link to the UUMFE website, please ask your Webmaster to update the link to www.uuministryforearth.org. ♦

UUMFE Offers Partner Grants for Districts

by Irene Keim, UUMFE Board Co-chair

Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth has received a \$6,000 challenge grant from the UU Funding Program to provide support for UUA Districts to further the work of building a just and sustainable future for life on our planet. The grant provides for direct work with four Districts and will provide a template for other Districts or regions to use in strengthening their Earth ministry. It also gives UUMFE the opportunity to build organizational capacity by identifying potential new members and donors.

Survey tool available to all Districts: The first component of this work is available to all Districts and offers a survey tool that was developed to provide Districts with information about the level of interest in the intersection of justice and environmental work, sustainability, and Earth care. It is also designed to identify the kinds of activities taking place within congregations. This tool can help Districts to identify some of the existing needs and to create a base for a directory of congregants willing to offer information and support to others. The survey was developed and piloted in collaboration with Rev. Karen Brammer, a staff member of the Northern New England District (NNED), and *continued on page 7*

More News From UU Ministry For Earth

Partner Grants . . . *continued from page 6*

coordinator of its Sustainability Task Force.

UUMFE is willing to work with Districts to administer the survey and cooperatively analyze the results regardless of whether Districts intend to create follow-up programming with UUMFE in response to the survey findings. This collaboration will provide Districts with guidance for administering and analyzing the survey and will assist UUMFE in with outreach within the District.

Four Districts to be selected for program grant:

In January, UUMFE sent an invitation to all UUA Districts to apply for a program grant. Four UUA Districts will be selected by UUMFE to receive \$1000 – \$500 of which will be raised within the District. This money will enable the District and UUMFE to co-create programs or tools in response to the survey findings.

The proposed programming centerpiece is a gathering within the participating District of those who have worked or hope to work in some way on environmental ministry or activism.

The gatherings have four focus areas:

- Share Stories of success and challenge.
- Provide spiritual grounding, transitioning despair to encourage productive action.
- Build a lay and ministerial network within the District and support congregations needing assistance.
- Identify activists and ministers to connect them with UUMFE and other UU resources.

The challenge part of the grant requires that UUMFE raise \$500 within a District ; then the District will be eligible to apply for a matching \$500 from the UU Funding Panel to provide the full \$1,000 to the District for this additional programming. UUMFE will work with District representatives to plan all activities.

Applications to participate as one of the four selected Districts, due on February 20, will be evaluated by March 15, according to UUMFE's assessment of the application and UUMFE's ability to supply a person to work with the District. UUMFE will work with any interested District, even if not selected, in administering and analyzing the survey data (no deadline for applying). ♦

News From Congregations

Congregational Stories: Ethical Energy

by Emily Kao, UUA Environmental Justice Intern

As Unitarian Universalists, we affirm the seventh principle, "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part," and understand the detrimental effects of our fossil fuel consumption and the resulting emissions, pollutants, and waste. Around the country UU congregations are taking steps to reduce their own CO₂ footprints, use renewable resources, and change their consumption methods. These congregations, in partnership with the Green Sanctuary program, recognize the effect their energy consumption has on the environment and strive to lower their demand on Earth.

In 2007, the UU Society of the Daytona Beach Area pledged to reduce their use of non-renewable energy

and thus their carbon footprint. Since then, the congregation has worked hard fulfilling that pledge. The church installed what was the *continued on page 8*



The UU Society of the Daytona Beach Area's photovoltaic panels. This system produces 10kw of energy for the church's use.



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We Value Our Relationships . . . continued from page 2

...through our scientific genius we have made of this world a neighborhood, and now through our moral and ethical commitment we must make it a brotherhood. We must live together as brothers or we will all perish together as fools. This is a fact of life. No individual can live alone, no nation can live alone...

...For some strange reason I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be."

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

Ethical Energy . . . continued from page 7

largest and most complete solar energy system in Volusia County, consisting of a solar hot water system, two solar fans, and photo-voltaic solar panels that produce 10kw of energy. With these and other electricity saving equipment and practices, such as turning off equipment and lights and reducing the use of air conditioning, the congregation has reduced its use of electricity by over fifty percent

and increased members' awareness of their energy consumption at the church and in their homes.

When the Unitarian Church in Westport, Connecticut audited its environmental and environmental justice footprint, it found that many crucial opportunities to save energy had been missed. In the face of these findings, the congregation launched a campaign to change its usage and emphasize conservation. Under its Clean Energy Initiative, the church switched to purchasing all of its electricity from clean sources. Through the church's example and education efforts, 105 families also demanded clean energy from their energy providers. ♦

Your Support Is Needed and Appreciated

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