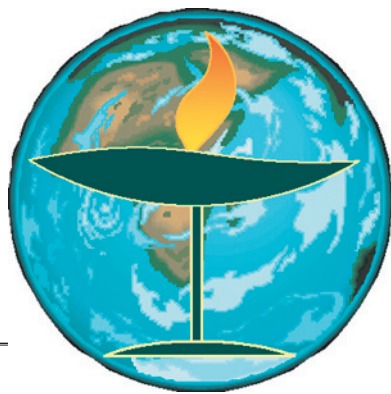


The Seventh Principle Project



Volume 3
Issue 1
Spring 2004

Sponsors of the
Green Sanctuary
Program

Newsletter

Seventh Principle Launches Two Projects To Develop Earth-Centered Resources for UU Congregations

Have you ever wished there was a resource brimming with ideas and sources that you could turn to when developing an earth-centered service, an adult RE class or a children's environmental RE activity? Or perhaps you've already developed one of these and would love to share it with others and spread the word!

Well, here's your chance. Lend a hand! As part of its mission to develop and disseminate materials for study, religious education, and worship, the Seventh Principle Project announces two new initiatives to compile earth-centered worship and RE resource materials. The breadth and depth of these compendiums will grow out of the richness of materials that you, our members and friends, contribute. Therefore, we invite each of you to search your archives, sort through all those pieces of paper tucked in drawers, dust off those books crammed with dozens of little slips marking pages, and polish up that inspiring sermon you gave on environmental justice two years ago and send them in!

By sharing the collective bounty of all the materials that inspire our spiritual connections to the interdependent web, we will create together two resources that will allow Earth-honoring worship and education to infuse Unitarian Universalist congregations everywhere.

The two initiatives are described in more detail on page 2. As you will read, there are many ways in which you can contribute to these two resources. In addition to contributing materials, we are also need volunteers to assist with illustration, layout design, and translation of the print version into a searchable, web-based version. To contribute materials or volunteer to help with the production, please e-mail Claudia Kern, claudia.kern@valley.net or write to PO Box 143, Lyme, NH 03768.

SPP Board News

SPP Initiates the Seventh Principle Fund

by Steve Maier, 7PP President and Board Member

The SPP Board recently announced the establishment of the Seventh Principle Fund. The Fund will be an important part of the Board's efforts to raise the funds necessary to address the growing needs of the Seventh Principle Project.

The Board believes the organization is at a crossroads—too successful to be effectively maintained with current staff and funding, but too under-funded for expansion. In looking to the future, (Continued on page 4).

GATHERING THE BOUNTY

Building a Compendium of Worship Resources

Imagine that you have been asked to provide a reading for a service that reflects upon our seventh principle. Perhaps you are a part of a lay-led fellowship searching for an Earth Day sermon? Maybe your Green Sanctuary group has been asked to do one chalice-lighting a month. Where will you find the perfect music for the dedication of your new community garden?

The Seventh Principle Project is pleased to announce that the work of building a resource to answer just such questions has begun. We invite your contributions of your favorite materials for any of the following:

- complete worship services with readings, sermon, music, openings and closings
- sermons which you give permission to reprint and make available electronically
- homilies
- word for chalice lightings, calls to worship
- invocations
- meditations and prayers
- unison affirmations, blessings, responsive readings
- readings
- benedictions and closing words
- music
- sample intergenerational service(s)
- share an earth-honoring intergenerational service from your congregation
- descriptions/directions for alternative worship elements, i.e dance, drumming, plantings, skits, etc.
- other materials that would enhance Earth-honoring worship

Ultimately, the resulting compendium of resources will be published in print and on the Seventh Principle website; therefore it is important

NURTURING EARTH CONNECTIONS FOR OUR CHILDREN

A new project to build a Religious Education Resource

What do Unitarian Universalists want to teach our children about their relationship to the natural world? What unique UU perspectives can we bring to the environmental education of our children? How can we empower and assist religious educators to make the seventh principle a vibrant, ubiquitous presence in all the lessons we teach our children? A bold new SPP project seeks to address these questions.

Spearheaded by Sparrow Alden, DRE of the UU Congregation of the Upper Valley, along with the staff of the Ferry Beach Camp and Conference Center and Ferry Beach Ecology School and SPP Board Members, this resource development project aims to compile easy, accessible materials to promote earth-honoring religious education for children.

When completed, the project will feature five components:

- “curriculum maps” which will cross-index all of the existing UU Earth-based curricula, other frequently used RE materials related to the seventh principle, and materials recommended to us by religious educators
- a comprehensive annotated bibliography of the resources
- UU teachers guides for ten engaging, creative and useful books related to environmental education for children
- a mini-sampler of three weekly lessons for nursery, primary, elementary, and jr. high levels with specific lessons for each level that include instructions for all of the elements a volunteer teacher might need, i.e. printed story, clear directions for activities, list of supplies.
- sample intergenerational service(s)

WE NEED YOU TO MAKE THIS A REALITY:
Here ‘s how you can help:

- recommend books, music, plays and

Worship Resources (continued from page 3)

that you grant permission for your original work to be reprinted and posted on-line. In addition complete source information should be given for other materials submitted.

An initial resource will be completed for a GA program in June; so any submissions before April 15 will be appreciated. However, we will continue to accept materials for the next year. Your willingness to share what most deeply inspires and reflects your own eco-spirituality will create new possibilities and answer a deep need.

RE Resource (continued from page 3)

skits, etc. (Please provide title, author, publisher, and brief annotation for bibliography)

- learn curriculum mapping, and map one or more books - Sparrow promises it is easy and teachable by email!
- coordinate solicitations of complimentary working/display copies of materials from publishers
- write a UU-oriented teacher's guide for one book yourself or with others in your congregation
- share an earth-honoring intergenerational service from your congregation

PLEASE CONTRIBUTE TO THESE TWO RESOURCES TODAY!!!

To submit materials or to volunteer to help with either resource project, please contact:

Claudia Kern

claudia.kern@valley.net

PO Box 143, Lyme, NH 03768

Green Sanctuary News

by Katherin Jesch, Director of Environmental Ministry

We are very excited to watch the progress of our Green Sanctuary candidates. I regularly speak with members about their questions on specific steps of the process, or challenges in keeping their momentum going. Sometimes just a little brainstorming can help get the creative juices flowing again. I also really enjoy hearing from you about your experiences and activities, especially your social justice projects. If you'd like to chat about how your program is coming along, I hope you'll feel free to call.

The program continues to grow as we add new congregations to the list of candidates. As of this date, 32 congregations are officially enrolled, four of them since the first of the year. We're proud also, to report that the Unitarian Church of Montpelier, VT, completed the program last fall and has now been accredited. Congratulations, Montpelier and David Grundy, Green Sanctuary Chairperson.

Presentations and workshops were held at several churches this winter. I visited First Unitarian

Church in Brooklyn and the Community Church of New York, as well as Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church in Alexandria, VA. Several additional presentations are in the planning stages for this spring.

A large gathering of Washington DC area congregations at River Road Unitarian Church in Bethesda, MD, brought together over 60 participants from 16 churches. After a morning workshop on the Green Sanctuary Program and a delightful pot luck lunch (environmentally appropriate, of course), we were treated to a slide show and commentary about Native American sacred lands across the continent. Our guest speaker, Native American activist, Suzan Shown Harjo, stimulated a great conversation on the challenges of protecting sites on public lands. Thanks to the Green Sanctuary folks at River Road, including co-leaders Suzanne Clarke and Jim Fremont.

Congratulations to Jim and Fritzi Scott!

Former board member, Jim Scott, and his wife, Fritzi welcomed their new daughter, Louisa Grace Scott into the world on Jan 26th. All are doing well, despite a lack of sleep!

SPP Fund (continued from front page)

the Board has adopted an ambitious plan to provide services to UUs across the U.S. and Canada. We are seeking donors to support and encourage SPP at this especially critical time, as continued and expanded services are dependent upon successful fundraising. We propose to:

- Continue and expand the Green Sanctuary (GS) Program and its focus on UU congregations.
- Create a UU religious education “green” resource guide that includes cross-indexing environmental curricular materials and lists of resources from GS congregations and UU camps and conference centers.
- Continue and expand work with the Districts to provide GS workshops at District conferences, and with other UUA affiliate organizations, especially UU camps and conferences.
- Expand our newsletter to include updates to the GS manual and a column to showcase one or more member congregations.
- Continue and expand work with the UUA, especially with the General Assembly (GA) Planning Committee on “greening” GA.
- Implement an annual sermon competition to increase awareness of the SPP mission among UU ministers, with SPP members voting for the winning sermon and the sermon creator featured at GA.
- Expand staff to include a half-time Director of Environmental Ministry to provide more programmatic and ministerial services to congregations and individuals and a new half-time Executive Director to provide leadership and expertise in member services, communications, financial management, and fundraising.

If you would like to make a contribution to help grow the Seventh Principle Project, please contact Steve Maier (smaier@adelphia.net), Katherine Jesch (kathjesch@earthlink.net), or call SPP at 703-920-3615.



A Reading/Writing Mediation for Earth Day

by Rev. Gail Collins-Randive

Embracing the Transcendentalist spiritual discipline technique of reading for insight and inspiration, read through the following material for any ‘little lustres’(Emerson’s words).

Our seasonal instincts are spiritual impulses that are interpreted through the lenses of differing human cultures and translated into the liturgies of organized religions. But nature is the basic script, the scripture “open to all perceptive souls,” as our Rational Spiritual forebears in the Radical Reformation believed.

This insight has come down to us through the Unitarian Transcendentalists and is why Emerson could claim:

“If you agree I may yet be wrong, but if the elm tree says the same thing, I know I am right.”

In honor of Earth Day,

Come out into the Garden ‘fit for the Gods’ at the foot of Pike’s Peak rising into the Colorado blue sky. Almost as ancient as its outcropping of red rocks are the one-seed junipers that thrive where it is hard to imagine any tree surviving. Sit beside a twisted trunk of petrified poetry and listen. If you have found a spot out of earshot of the humming highway and droning planes, the silence will hold the tree’s wisdom until it speaks to your spirit. In its own good time (moments, hours, days, even years), the tree may move from an image to a symbol and then to a metaphor that can frame and contain your spiritual journey. If you are truly blessed, you may experience a profound aha!, a peak experience.

Next, try the spiritual discipline technique of writing on the following topic:

Only by having such a first hand experience of the natural world will we truly appreciate it, and then begin to conserve, preserve, and restore it (David Brower’s 3 Rs.)

(write for eight to ten minutes, don’t censor or judge, don’t say no to what wants to come out)

This is, after all, the spiritual and moral imperative of OUR day.

May Earth Day's seasonal return invite you into a ritual affirmation of your relationship with the environment, so that you will have the inner stamina needed for the overwhelming work that needs doing.

Blessings, Rev. Gail Collins-Ranadive

Rev. Collins Ranadive is the Interim Minister at the UU Fellowship of Flagstaff, AZ and the author of "Finding the Voice Inside: writing as a spiritual quest



Two Earth-Related Study/Action Issues Proposed this Year

Two of the four Study/Action Issues (SAI) submitted to the Commission on Social Witness (CSW) this year focus on major environmental crises. S3 "Stopping Mass Extinction" looks at the looming threat of mass extinction and the loss of biodiversity, while S4 "Threat of Global Warming" focuses on climate. These SAIs call upon UUs to be mindful of our responsibility to future generations, our commitment to the "interdependent web of life" and to take individual and collective action to stop or slow these devastating environmental changes. Study questions and suggestions for actions that we can take as individuals as well as members of our congregations are included with each SAI.

SAIs are submitted to the CSW each year and those selected by the Commission are available for consideration by congregations in the spring. Congregations are then invited to vote in the Congregational Directives for General Assembly Action poll. This year, the poll closes on April 15th. Please encourage your congregation to review these SAIs and vote in the poll. Those SAIs receiving favorable votes will then be presented to delegates attending GA in June. One SAI will be selected by the delegates for a two year period of further study and final adoption as a Unitarian Universalism Statement of Conscience. As members/supporters of the SPP this is our chance to bring these critical issues to the attention of UUs everywhere and raise awareness and more importantly, action to reduce

the risks that both of these issues pose to the future of life on earth. For more information on the work of the CSW and this year's SAIs, go to their website <http://www.uua.org/csw/psaiforta04.htm>.

SPP Membership Update

A number of you responded generously to our reminder last fall that membership dues are an important part of the financial health of the Seventh Principle Project. Without your membership, we cannot exist. Not only does it help us pay the bills, but having a substantial membership list helps us to demonstrate support for our programs when we apply for grants. In fact, with the support of contributions above the basic individual and household dues, we were able to raise the funds necessary to match a \$5,000.00 challenge grant from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism. So, thank you to all of you who have made generous donations and help us spread the word and increase our membership rolls!

As of March 1, 2004, we can report 108 new and renewed members. Of nearly 200,000 Unitarian Universalists, that's an embarrassingly small number, but we are quite sure it doesn't reflect the true interest or need for our programs and resources. There are more than twice that number subscribed to our Green Sanctuary email list, and hundreds more have requested and obtained the Green Sanctuary Manual for use in their congregations.

We are very pleased that 40 congregations have joined or renewed their SPP membership in 2003 and 2004! Seven of these members are accredited Green Sanctuaries, and 24 are GS candidates..

It's not too early to renew! All renewals received after April 1 will be credited for 2004-2005. Use the easy membership form on the back page of the newsletter.

Membership Categories:

Planting the Seed	\$ 25/year
Kindling the Flame	50
Stepping in the Stream	100
Putting Down Roots	250
Soaring Like an Eagle	500
Thinking Like a Mountain	1000
Congregational	100

The Seventh Principle Project Needs You!

Help our organization grow by joining us today! We are a volunteer organization dedicated to affirming and promoting the Seventh Principle: "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.". Please join or renew today by completing the membership form below and sending it along with your check to :

Seventh Principle Project
c/o Katherine Jesch
PO Box 1523
Arlington, VA 22210

Name: _____

Street or PO Box: _____

City: _____

State or Province: _____

Zip or Postal Code: _____

email address: _____

If you have questions regarding the Seventh Principle Project, the Green Sanctuary Program or membership, please contact us at membership@uasp.org or contact the office at (703)-920-3615.

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For further information, visit our website
www.uasp.org
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