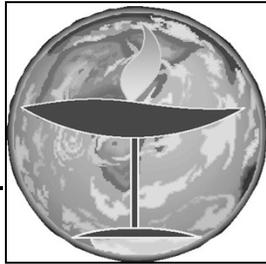


The Seventh Principle Project

Volume 4
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Sponsors of the
Green Sanctuary
Program



Newsletter

Emerson UU Church, Truly a Green Sanctuary

By Robert Hill, District Exec (Southwest District)

Only one church in the United States has a building that meets the rigorous "green" standards of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system and it belongs to the Emerson Unitarian Church of Houston.

Delaney Hall, dedicated earlier this year, is the second structure in Houston (the sixth in Texas) to receive LEEDS certification. In December, member Ann May announced, "We are now officially the first church in the country to have built a LEED certified building."

LEED certification was established by a building industry group, the U.S. Green Building Council. (See their website at www.gbc.org.) Certification provides a national standard for high-performance, environmentally sustainable buildings.

Named for a major donor who is a member of the church, Delaney Hall was dedicated and put into use earlier this year. Co-ministers Mark and Becky Edmiston-Lange led a parade after Sunday services May 2 from the church's sanctuary at 1900 Bering Drive into the new space.

The two-story building has 22,500 square feet on two floors dedicated mostly to religious education uses. It has a "Clara Barton Gathering Place" for allowing people to mingle with each other before and after services. There are also new offices for staff and volunteers. An elevator furthers the building's accessibility.

Built at a cost of \$3.75 million, Delaney Hall's plans included improvements to landscaping for the entire church property in keeping with the congregation's desire for significant green space in their high-density, mostly residential neighborhood a few blocks west of the Galleria shopping center.

The building won rave reviews in November from theme speaker John Buehrens and those attending the Southwest Unitarian Universalist Conference's fall meeting which Emerson Church hosted.

From Where I Sit!

Notes from the Chair of the SPP Board

by Claudia Kern

Since the November election much has been written about moral values, presenting UUs with a compelling opportunity articulate what we value and use to guide our lives. Last spring, having received several invitations to speak on behalf of the Seventh Principle Project, I decided as a matter of personal integrity that I had better think seriously about why I do this work – to try to put into words what might be called a personal ethos.

Now, in winter, it seems to me there is a new imperative for UUs to give words to the personal beliefs and values that ground each of us. Let us articulate for ourselves the "inner" spiritual connections with Earth/Nature that provide our religious grounding and then discern what holistic commitments these values require of us if we are to live in ways that honor these bonds to the Earth. I believe Earth requires nothing less of us than that we take a conversation about our "moral values" out into the world.

In a spirit of invitation, I share my own work-in-progress as a way of beginning this dialogue with you:

- I believe in Re-ligio – in reconnecting the ligaments, re-attaching myself to the whole. It is not too late to, as Robinson Jeffers puts it, "fall in love outwards" with Earth.
- I believe that science is religion's helpmate, rubbing my face in wondrous facts that I cannot ignore -- that we are all Stardust, resurrected atoms, our reptilian ancestors made conscious. This is miracle, transubstantiation, god enough for me.
- I believe that Earth is a living system that inherently heals and balances itself and is sustainable only when all living beings honor that system.
- I believe humans have the capacity to evolve an ecological consciousness and responsibility to do so.
- I believe that when I know the plants and animals, trace the source of my water, and am intimate with the lay of the land, my spirit is whole and at "home."

GLOBAL WARMING: New Resources and Actions

As you know, delegates to GA 2004 voted on “The Threat of Global Warming” as the study/action issue (SAI) for the next two years. Because there are no UUA institutional resources available to assist congregations in participating in this SAI, the Seventh Principle Project is striving mightily to fill the gap.

Now available:

- The Study/Action Resource Guide drafted by SPP is now available for downloading at www.uua.org/uuawo. The same resources are available on our website www.uuaspp.org in an alternative format, along with links to other organizations doing work on this critical issue.
- The Yes! Magazine discussion groups are proving very successful. One congregation of 120 reports that they distributed nearly 50 copies of the magazine and had 27 turn out for a one-night forum some of whom will continue to meet. You can receive a free copy of this issue with your SPP renewal or new membership at the \$50 level. You can also receive a discount on multiple copies by calling Yes! at 206-842-5009 and telling them that you want the UU group discount rate. The articles and discussion guide are also available to download for free at www.yesmagazine.org.
- Discussion guide for *Red Sky at Morning* by Gus Speth: <http://yalepress.yale.edu/yupbooks/redskyquestions.html>

Coming soon:

- In January we will debut an email discussion list specific to the topic of global warming. This will be a great venue for getting updates on advocacy, sharing ideas and projects from your congregation, and asking questions. Watch for details on how to sign-up on our website and in your email.
- Updates and action links on the Global Warming page of our website

How you can help:

Many congregations are seeking an accurate overview on the issue; therefore we are attempting to create a resource list of speakers, district by district, to post on our website. Do you know of someone in your region that you could recommend as a speaker on the topic of global warming and /or the moral imperative to address this issue? If so, please send SPP complete contact information for the suggested speaker along with why you believe this person would be suitable for UU audiences. We will contact them regarding being listed.

Please share with us how your congregation is to learning about global warming or taking action and send us a brief summary for our March newsletter.

NAME CHANGE UPDATE

By now you have heard that the Seventh Principle Project is contemplating a name change. If you are a member or on our email communication lists, you have been invited to submit your suggestions. Twenty-seven of you have responded, and we're glad to get your ideas. The Board will consider all candidate names at their January Board Meeting in Washington, DC, and then all members will be given an opportunity to approve the name selected by the Board by mail-in ballot or at our annual meeting at GA in June.



Earth Ethos (continued from page 1)

- I believe that any action taken on behalf of Earth is an expression of spiritual gratitude.

Will you join me in this spiritual exploration? I am finding the journey filled with insights and new questions, and I hope you will share your own discoveries with me and other UUs. Let's explore together how we might create an ongoing conversation about our “moral values” in upcoming issues of this newsletter, and beyond that, with our friends, in our congregations, and with all our neighbors. Surely, in this way we can begin to find new common ground for sustaining the Earth.

WE WELCOME YOUR LETTERS AND COMMENTS

To share their personal credos and other perspectives in upcoming issues of the newsletter, we invite readers to submit brief essays, electronically transferable art, poetry, opinions, SPP “elevator speeches,” questions for the Board, ideas from your congregation, and anything else for consideration. Simply email your contributions to Katherine.Jesch@uuaspp.org and put “attention editor” in the subject line.

ADDING TO THE BOUNTY: An Ecology-Centered Resource for Adult Religious Education

We invite your contributions to the development of a resource guide for ecology-centered adult religious education. Has your congregation's Green Sanctuary group held classes on making your church more eco-friendly? Have members gathered to study ecological issues such as the Study Action Issue on global warming, the ethics of producing and consuming the food we eat, preservation or restoration of local wildlife habitat, your local government's land development policies, and so on? Have you used videos or curricula on environmental subjects that you found to be useful (or not useful for that matter)?

Please share your comments, suggestions, materials, and experiences on creating and delivering effective adult RE programs. Specifically, we invite you to contribute the following types of materials:

- Recommended books, music, videos, education curricula, and any other materials that you have found to be useful. (Please include title, author, publisher, where to find the material, and a brief annotation for the bibliography).
- Curricula and study materials you have developed for use within your congregation or district that you are willing to share with the larger UU movement. (Such as openings, chalice lightings, music, materials that you used, study questions, etc.)
- Ideas about what works and what doesn't work for adult RE on ecology and spirituality. In particular, what materials, strategies, etc., have you found to be most likely to engage the attention of adult audiences? Have you successfully used alternative elements such as drumming, chanting, dancing, artwork, etc.?

- Your experiences in taking study into the field in the form of environmental action: stream/beach cleanups, demonstrations and other direct political actions, letter-writing campaigns, etc. How have you linked such field actions with study and reflection?

The resulting adult RE resource guide will be introduced at the 2005 General Assembly, and, eventually, posted on our website. Building on highly successful 2004 offerings for *Nurturing the Spirit-Nature Connection in Children's RE* and *Earth-Honoring Worship*, we will again sponsor a workshop to explore adult RE materials and offer the new resource guide for sale.

Your willingness to share what most deeply inspires and reflects your own eco-spirituality will create new possibilities for all UUs and answer a deeply-felt need. **Submissions for this first edition of the Adult RE Guide must be submitted by April 30, 2005**, and must include permission for us to use your original work, or complete source information for other materials submitted or recommended. Contributions received after April 30 will be saved for future editions.

To submit materials

or to volunteer to help complete this project, please contact:

Rev. Craig Scott

Craig.Scott@uuaspp.org

1027 Cragmont Ave., Berkeley, CA 94708

Please be sure to include your contact information when submitting materials.

Membership Update

The UUA tells us there are 158,000 Unitarian Universalists on the membership rolls. The SPP is the only official voice for the environment within the UUA, but the UUA does not provide financial support for independent affiliate organizations, so **we must depend on your membership to be effective.**

If even half a percent of UUs were members of the Seventh Principle Project, we would have nearly 800 members! For several years now, we have been holding steady at around 120 to 140 members. Last year we counted 129 members, and so far this year, more than half of you have renewed, and another 65 new members have joined. We're also grateful to have the support of 40 congregational members, many of whom are Green Sanctuary candidates or accredited congregations. A

strong membership base makes us a better candidate for grants, while allowing us to keep up with program needs while we search for additional funding.

Last year, a survey of *UUWorld* readers showed that 48% contributed to environmental funds in the previous year, and 30% were involved in environmental activities in their community. We believe UUs are strongly committed to honoring Earth and building sustainable communities, and we're working hard to support your efforts in your congregations with information, networks, program ideas, and resources. The need for our services seems to increase each year, and especially now with the Study/Action Issue on global warming.

If you haven't already joined or renewed, please take a minute right now to send in your membership using the form on the back of this newsletter.

YOUR WORDS ARE WELCOMED

Add to the Seventh Principle Resources

By Karen Urbano

Words. What words can you use? What words will you share? For a worship service, to open a meeting, to give thanks for a perfect day? Or to teach a child?

At General Assembly in Long Beach, The Seventh Principle Project unveiled two new resources at overflow workshops and sold out the fifty copies we brought with us of *Honoring Earth: A SPP Worship Resource* and *Nurturing the Spirit-Nature Connection: a SPP Religious Education Resource*. Orders are still coming in.

But both are still works in progress with your help. We anticipate a second edition of both volumes with your contributions of readings, prayers, sermons, and sample worship services for *Honoring Earth*, but more important we seek more materials for *Nurturing the Spirit-Nature Connection*.

The latter debuted with a mini version of 80 pages, highlighted by a curriculum map created by DRE Sparrow Alden of most of the Earth-oriented religious education curricula used by UU educators. A second great feature is an annotated bibliography of material found to be effective with children. Our high priority is to expand this RE resource with your contributions of lessons, intergenerational services, and annotated additions to the bibliography of books, music, plays and skits suitable for children's RE.

To quote DRE Sparrow, "Imagine that you and your committee want to offer a unit on Trees in your children's Ministry. Imagine reaching for your copy of *Nurturing the Spirit-Nature Connection* and opening to the section on Trees. There they are: the titles of complete curricula, individual lessons, teacher resources, stories and songs you need, with notes on their use and information on how to obtain them. These resources have been vetted and recommended by other UU religious educators, so you know they are fun and valuable."

What have you used that lit a spark in your RE programs? In your adult worship? Please share your successes so we can add to our resources and make them available to UUs across the country. Send your words to Karen.Urbano@sppuua.org.

Seeking Volunteer Regional Coordinators

The SPP Board envisions that within the next two years we will have trained regional representatives in each district. These volunteers will be available to speak in congregations and at District gatherings about the mission and work of SPP, including the Green Sanctuary Program. If you would like to take a small, but active part in our organization please contact the Seventh Principle by phone or email to learn more about this important opportunity to serve.

Green Sanctuary Update

It's been a busy fall for Green Sanctuary candidates and other green UUs. We currently have 38 congregations actively pursuing GS status. Several are nearing completion and two are planning celebrations in their congregations this winter to receive their certificates. These congregations will join the twenty already accredited as Green Sanctuaries.

A number of congregations are finding the GS program to be a helpful way to organize their work on the Study/Action Issue on the threat of global warming. Whether or not you're formally enrolled in the GS program, we encourage you to use all of our resources, especially the GS Manual, to help you respond to the SAI.

Wishing you many Earth Blessings
and a Greener New Year!

Rev. Katherine Jesch,
Director of Environmental Ministry

SPP ON THE ROAD, IN THE PRESS, ON THE WEB

A Seventh Principle Project goal this year is to increase our visibility to attract greater participation in our work. So far, we are making progress in achieving that goal. In October our Director of Environmental Ministry spent much of a week with the leadership of UU Camps and Conference Centers exploring how to blend more Earth awareness and good environmental practice into the operations and programs of camps and conference centers across the continent.

In addition, Rev. Jesch and six members of the board have traveled widely to conduct 11 worship services, workshops or programs on SPP, Green Sanctuary, and Global Warming." In recent weeks, we've visited UUs in NH, VT, ME, MA, GA, AL, FL, CT, and TX. We were also at the Massachusetts Climate Action Network Conference in Boston, MA.

The spring calendar is rapidly filling, with additional events in the planning stages for Washington DC, Prescott AZ, Tallahassee FL, Belfast ME, and Portland OR. If you would like to invite a SPP representative to your event, please contact Rev. Jesch.

Our website has been updated and now includes a new page with informative and inspirational twice-monthly articles, and there is a new resource page on Global Warming. Check www.uuaspp.org often to see what is new!

And, finally, watch for the Jan/Feb issue of *UUWorld Magazine* featuring an ad on page 48 for the Seventh Principle Project. We're inviting readers to participate in an online survey which asks, "Is Global Warming a Religious Issue?" Be sure to log on and take the survey!

Does Your Congregation Have a Sustainable Practices Policy ?

The UU Congregation of the Upper Valley, Norwich, VT, a Green Sanctuary congregation, has adopted a policy that commits it to choosing and supporting the most environmentally sound and sustainable practices in all congregational operations. UUCUV has volunteered to share their policy as a starting point for other congregations considering establishing their own policies.

Copies of the complete policy can be obtained from the UUCUV Environmental Sustainability Committee by sending an email request to: uucuv@valley.net . The following practices are included in the policy:

- Purchase products made of and prepared with renewable, non-toxic, non-polluting materials from socially responsible business sources;
- Use reusable or recycled materials whenever possible, including 100% tree-free and/or 100% recycled and chlorine-free papers; glass, china, cutlery instead of throwaway paper and plastic, unless size or location of event precludes this;

Guest Column

WHAT WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Tina Clarke, Clean Water Action

The results of the November 2nd election have caused many of us to wonder whether our actions really do make a difference. The answer is “yes”, but our action must be strategic. We must work together to focus collective power where it can have the greatest impact in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We will win the most progress when we participate in coordinated citizen action a few minutes each month.

Consider this: if California had not passed a law requiring low-emission vehicles, we would not have hybrid vehicles today. In the 1990s, Congress required appliance manufacturers to make more energy efficient products. Today everyone who buys a new refrigerator automatically is using less electricity – whether they know about global warming or not!

To reduce global warming we need to make government act. We citizens have learned to gripe about government. But corporations know that the laws, regulations, taxes, and programs of government have enormous impact, and so they devote vast resources to influencing government decisions. Federal, state and local government set the rules and standards of conduct, provide funds, and create incentives or disincentives for businesses, organizations and citizens to act. New technologies usually emerge because of government investment.

Citizens must advocate for the public good or private interests will dominate. Today fossil fuel and nuclear

- Recycle paper, aluminum, glass, copier and printer cartridges, computers and computer equipment, & all other electronic devices;
- Conserve energy by using heating only as necessary, installing compact fluorescent bulbs and Energy Star appliances, turning off lights, carpooling, walking, or cycling to services and meetings, and consolidating other errands into trips to services and meetings;
- Choose plant-centered menus for community events, using sustainably grown, local and/or organic foods when possible, avoiding processed and over-packaged foods, and handling left-over food responsibly;
- Conserve water and compost organic wastes from the lawn, garden, and kitchen;
- Plant native vegetation and remove invasive alien plants from the grounds
- Include environmental and socially responsible considerations in any construction or property management decisions;
- Invest only in environmentally and socially responsible funds.

power corporations have won massive tax breaks, tax subsidies and favorable federal government policies. ***To protect our health and environment, and protect the earth's climate, we must demand that government regulations and our tax dollars be redirected to support the common good, not corporate interests.***

State-based Strategy

Currently a very effective strategy is to pass laws at the state level. State laws force industry to change, and that can have a ripple affect nationwide. To pass state legislation, we may need only 25-100 citizens in approximately 70% of the legislative districts. In many states, 10-15 letter-writing citizens per district can win progress.

Join An Action Alert Network

When you join a free climate “action alert network”, **you will be notified of key moments to call or write to your elected officials.** Personal action, a few times per year, joins with dozens, hundreds and thousands of communications from citizens, creating a groundswell of support and pressure for elected officials to take action.

Clean Water Action has won many victories by building coalitions of medical professionals, workers, parents, local citizen groups, environmental justice advocates, and many others to work for health, safe jobs and businesses, strong communities, and a clean envi-

(continued on page 6)

Make a Difference (continued from page 5)

ronment. For more information, go to: www.cleanwateraction.org. Check the site to see if CWA has a climate campaign in your state. If not, join another climate Action Alert Network, such as Greenpeace www.greenpeaceusa.org, the Union of Concerned Scientists www.ucsaction.org, or one listed in your UUA Study/Action Resource Guide on "Threat of Global Warming."

Like doing the laundry, citizenship is the practice of keeping things clean. Otherwise, corporate power will run a-muck. I hope you will join me in taking action!

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

Membership Categories:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planting the Seed (\$25)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Putting Down Roots (\$250)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kindling the Flame (\$50)**	<input type="checkbox"/>	Soaring Like an Eagle (\$500)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stepping in the Stream (\$100)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thinking Like a Mountain (\$1,000)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Congregational membership (\$100/year minimum)		

Please make your check payable to:
UU Seventh Principle Project
PO Box 1523, Arlington, VA 22210

**** Renewals** for \$50.00 or higher may receive a *free* copy of the Fall 2004 Issue of *Yes! Magazine*, while supplies last, courtesy of Positive Futures Network. [Check here to receive this premium gift!](#)

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Name	Phone
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City, State, Zip	Congregation
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The Seventh Principle Project

Rev. Katherine Jesch
Director of Environmental Ministry
P.O. Box 1523
Arlington, VA 22210

For further information,
visit our website at www.uuaspp.org
or call us at (703)-920-3615

Jugglers Wanted!

Here at SPP, we juggle a lot of balls – some large, some small. Its mostly fun and the crowd loves us, but we could use a few more hands. Recently, a new member, Jan Brotman, volunteered to juggle a large ball, spearheading creation of a new database system to be up and running in January. She'll also assume some membership administration tasks. **Thank you, Jan!**

More balls continue to appear at a prodigious rate in the form of contained, one- time projects. If you'd like to join the act, please call or email the office with your phone number. The ringmaster will call you soon!