



MID-COLUMBIA UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

GORGE UU NEWS - 2010

From the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association:

General Assembly is held each year as the business meeting of delegates of the congregations that constitute the Unitarian Universalist Association. This year's GA was held last week in Minneapolis, Minnesota. What follows are two excerpts from coverage of General Assembly on www.uua.org. To learn more, check out the full coverage there or talk to this year's delegate from MCUUF, Leanne Hogie. – ed

The UUA is at a critical juncture, “a time filled with both potential and threats,” UUA President Peter Morales told the General Assembly Saturday afternoon. Morales, elected a year ago, gave his first President’s Report, an annual event at GA.

He noted that, after years of very slight growth, the UUA membership was now shrinking slightly and that the Association is also having to cope with declining revenues because of the national economy. The UUA budget shrank by about \$4 million this past year resulting in staff layoffs and program reductions.

He said the challenges in the past year for UUA staff have been “enormous,” including adjusting to a new administration and adjusting to budget cuts which have resulted in cuts to both programming and staffing levels. He noted the UUA’s Washington office has been reduced in size, although not eliminated.

He said that increasingly, the UUA’s social justice work, including the Standing on the Side of Love campaign, will be centered in the congregations and less will be done from the Washington office. He said the administration is working very hard “to build a culture of collaboration with and among our congregations. We see again and again that when congregations work together in clusters and other groups they unleash amazing energy.”

He added, “Part of our effort with Standing on the Side of Love is to equip our congregations to be effective where they are. We’re putting more effort into working with you and your congregations all across the country.

He noted that the Association’s diversity of ministry initiative settled three ministers of color in the past year, the Revs. Alma Crawford, John Crestwell, and Lila Cuervo.

He called the UUA’s credentialing process for prospective ministers “cumbersome and expensive” and said he hopes to move more resources into mentoring and educational programs for these people rather than “setting barriers” for them at the other end if they don’t measure up.

He ticked off new resources created in the past year: a new Spanish-language hymnal, a meditation manual for the military, several new curricula including Building the World We Dream About, and a manual on accessibility. He noted that Beacon Press is now the publisher for the writings of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Morales received enthusiastic applause when he shared that the UUA had shifted its retirement funds from Fidelity to TIAA-CREF because the former firm refused to refrain from investing in funds that contribute to genocide in Africa. “We’re walking our talk by supporting an investment company that is responsible.”

He said the UUA is working on a closer relationship with the UU Service Committee and anticipates that this may provide more service opportunities especially for young people.

He closed on an optimistic—and emotional—note. “Our challenges as a movement are great. And the opportunities for us are fabulous. When we do Unitarian Universalism well people flock to us. It feeds something fundamental in the human spirit. We can do this. We can transform this faith. I am excited about the things we are going to do together.”

He choked up as he expressed a “word of gratitude” to the assemblage, for allowing him to serve as president. “Few people get the opportunity I have to serve the movement in this way. Thank you for letting me be your president.”

“The people to whom we must minister in the 21st century are the most disconnected people who have ever lived. What supreme irony. We who have smart phones, we who have instant messaging, tweets, email, voicemail, and zillions of ‘friends’ on Facebook are, by objective measure, the most emotionally isolated human beings who have ever lived on earth.”

He urged congregational leaders to be open to these visitors. “That means making room for people who are not just like us. We have much work to do to welcome people who are racially, culturally, economically different.”

When he noted that membership numbers are slightly declining for UU congregations and then said, “It breaks my heart because it is like watching hundreds of thousands of people slowly starve to death while our storehouses are full” those in attendance agreed with him with a hearty round of applause.

It does not have to be this way, he said. “We know how to create thriving, healthy, engaging, growing congregations. I have seen dozens with my own eyes. They fill me with hope for our future.”

By Christopher L. Walton

June 26, 2010 at 6:23 pm

The 2010 General Assembly has just approved the substitute business resolution that calls for a “Justice General Assembly” in Phoenix, Ariz., in 2012 “for the purposes of witnessing on immigration, racial and economic justice . . . in which business is limited to the minimum required by our bylaws.” The vote was overwhelmingly in favor of the resolution:

Whereas the state of Arizona has recently enacted a law—SB 1070—that runs counter to our First Principle, affirming the worth and dignity of every person; and

Whereas we have been invited to enter into an historic partnership with Puente and National Day Laborers Organizing Network (NDLON) to work for human rights and against racial profiling; and

Whereas the UUA Bylaws specify that the power to call and locate a General Assembly belongs solely to the UUA Board of Trustees;

Be it resolved, the Assembly hereby:

1. Calls on the UUA Board to gather Unitarian Universalists for the purposes of witnessing on immigration, racial and economic justice—a “Justice” General Assembly in which business is limited to the minimum required by our bylaws—in June 2012, to be held in Phoenix, AZ.
2. Calls on the UUA Administration to work with leaders in Arizona UU congregations to establish an Arizona immigration ministry to partner with other groups in Arizona working for immigration reform to strengthen those partnerships in preparation for our arrival in 2012.
3. Recognizing people with historically marginalized identities will be exposed to increased risk and inaccessibility, instructs the UUA Board to work in accountable relationship with Diverse Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM), Latina/o Unitarian Universalist Networking Association (LUUNA), EQUUAL ACCESS, Transgender Religious Professional Unitarian Universalists Together (TRUUST) and other stakeholders to identify measures that can be taken to increase safety and accessibility at the 2012 “Justice” GA.
4. Calls on the UUA Board to direct the economic impact of our presence in Phoenix toward our partners and allies as much as is feasible.
5. Calls on the UUA Board to provide the resources needed to build the capacity of Unitarian Universalists to stand in opposition to systemic racism in our congregations, local communities, and in our own lives.

WRITTEN OFFERINGS from Rev. Craig Moro
will return, along with Rev. Moro, in September

LEADERSHIP LETTER

Hello, MCUUF friends,

Summer is finally upon us and I am sure that most of you, like me, are busy, busy, busy....gardening, traveling, camping, horse-riding, wind-surfing, kiting, hiking, biking...and the list goes on and on. I hope we still find a bit of time for reflection and coming to church and spending time with our friends. As part of that reflection, I am enclosing a third of our proposed Bylaw change that we will address later this fall for your perusal in the meantime. Enjoy, and see you soon. – Cindy Horton, MCUUF President

Proposed Bylaws - Mid-Columbia Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Article I - Organization

- Section 1 The name of the organization shall be the Mid Columbia Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, hereafter referred to as MCUUF.
- Session 2 MCUUF is a non-profit religious corporation, organized and existing under the laws of the State of Oregon.
- Section 3 The fiscal year of MCUUF shall begin July 1st.
- Section 4 MCUUF is a Welcoming Congregation. As such the Congregation affirms and promotes the full participation of all persons in all our activities and endeavors including membership, programming, hiring practices, and the call of religious professionals without regard to color, gender, affectional or sexual orientation, class or national origin.

Article II - Purpose

- Section 1 The purpose of this fellowship is to unite free thinking people in the spirit of respect for human dignity, individuality, and the constant search for truth(s).(1)

Article III - Membership

- Section 1 Eligibility. Any person may become a member of this fellowship who is in harmony with its purposes and program, has signed its membership book, and annually supports the fellowship with a financial and volunteer commitment as they are able. Any person may become a voting member of MCUUF, who is in sympathy with its purpose (Article II), has signed the membership book, makes an annual contribution of services and funds as they are able, and is at least 18 years of age. People under the age of 18 who have completed a formal coming of age program within this Congregation may also become non-voting members by signing the membership book.
- Section 2 Privileges. Persons who have been members at least 30 days may vote in congregational or committee meetings, serve on the Board of Trustees (hereinafter called the Board), Nominating Committee, search committee, or chair a committee.
- Section 3 Membership retention. Membership is retained except in case of:
- a. death of the member
 - b. written request by the member to the Board secretary
 - c. failure to respond to a written inquiry from the Board sent to the most recent known address regarding the member's intentions as to continued membership.
 - d. removal by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board for actions that threaten the well-being of the Congregation. (The president may take temporary action in an emergency pending confirmation by the full Board.) The Board may reinstate a member who was previously removed from membership by Board vote.
- Section 4 Friends. Friends are those, who for at least a month or more, regularly participate in MCUUF activities, but have not chosen to complete the membership process. Friends:
- a. may attend congregational meetings and participate in discussion of issues. They may not vote.
 - b. may serve on any of the committees or other task groups except the Board, Nominating Committee, or a ministerial search committee.
 - c. may participate fully in worship, social action, religious education, small groups, and recreational/social events of MCUUF.
 - d. are eligible to apply for available scholarship assistance to Unitarian Universalist meetings, workshops, and conferences.
 - e. may participate fully in all other activities and events which are not specifically limited to MCUUF members.
 - f. may at their request may be included in the MCUUF directory.

- g. are not included in the count of members in recertification to the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Article IV - Denominational Affiliation

Section 1 MCUUF shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association, hereafter referred to as UUA, and the Pacific Northwest District of Unitarian Universalists, hereafter referred to as PNWD. It is the intention of MCUUF to make annual financial contributions equal to its full fair share as determined by the UUA and PNWD.

Article V- Meetings

Section 1 An annual meeting of the Congregation shall be held in April or May as designated by the Board. The business to be transacted at this meeting shall include election of trustees, officers, and members of the Nominating Committee; adoption of a budget for the ensuing fiscal year; and such other business as may be needed.

Section 2 Other Congregational meetings needed to conduct the business of the Congregation may be called by the Board or by a written petition of ten percent of the members.

Section 3 The business transacted at any Congregational meeting shall be limited to the purposes stated in the Notice of Meeting published at least 14 days prior to the meeting.

Section 4 Except as specified elsewhere in these Bylaws, thirty percent (30%) of the eligible voting membership shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5 Except as specified elsewhere in these Bylaws, an affirmative vote of a simple majority of those members present shall be required to pass a motion.

Section 6 The ultimate authority of the church is vested in the Congregation as expressed in annual and special meetings. The following powers may not be delegated, but may only be exercised by the Congregation.

- a. amending these Bylaws
- b. major changes to the adopted budget that are over ten percent (10%) of the total annual budget.
- c. major changes to the long range plan
- d. electing a search committee
- e. buying, selling, leasing for more than one year, encumbering, or otherwise disposing of real property
- f. calling a minister

For items *a*, *e* and *f* of this article the quorum shall consist of forty percent (40%) of the eligible voting membership instead of the usual thirty percent (30%).

Section 7 Public statements in the name of the MCUUF on social or other public issues will be made only after a vote of the Congregation. This does not limit the right of individuals or groups within MCUUF to make statements in their own name.

SUNDAY MORNINGS

July 4 – God Bless America, Bonnie New. From bumper stickers to intercessory prayer to patriotic songs.

July 11 – Grappling with the Book of Revelation During "End of the World Hysteria," Rev. Emily A. Champagne. Emily will discuss just what this book of the Bible says and then the way Revelation is (mis)interpreted to frighten people. She will address ways we Unitarian Universalists can be clear about the book's weaknesses (violent and misogynist imagery) while appreciating its magnificent strengths (as an amazing literary masterpiece and a document of hope for oppressed peoples). The sermon will include both African American and European/American perspectives.

July 18 – Wisdom of the Ancients, Tode Oshin. Tode is a member of Wy'East UU Congregation and joins us a part of our ongoing exchange with this sister congregation.

July 25 – Amazing Grace, Elaine Castles. We UU's tend to shy away from most theological terms. But, in the words of one UU thinker, for some reason the word grace "still has some of the bloom left." Let us explore together why the rather amorphous concept of grace seems to appeal so strongly to many of us.

CALENDAR

Newsletter Deadline for August edition – Wednesday, July 28, 2010

SPOTS STILL AVAILABLE! Peace Village summer day camp, August 9-13 at Mosier Community School. Camp runs Monday to Friday from 9am to 3:30pm for ages 6-13. Teens and adults are welcome to join in the fun as volunteers; we have jobs of all sizes and levels of expertise! This camp is sponsored by MCUUF along with other area congregations and organizations. For more information contact Laurie VanCott

SOFTball time!! This church league, with about 7 teams this year, starts with our first game June 8 and runs thru July. Games are at Westside school, 6:30pm: about once a week, lowkey, adult, no strikeouts, only 1 homerun/person/game. Give your COMPETITIVE streak a place to streak (or not) in true UU form. Email Tom H. to be put on email list for softball.

Circle Suppers, July 31!

Mark your calendars now for the next round of Circle Suppers. This time you will have your choice of two different types of suppers. Tamara and Steven Ball have graciously offered to host a family-friendly pool party/cook out at their home in Parkdale in the afternoon. They can accommodate all who would like to come. Smaller, adult-oriented suppers will also be available for those who prefer that option. Please respond to Elaine Castles to let her know which type of party you prefer. Elaine will also have signup sheets at church on Sunday mornings during July.

Water Communion Reminder

Please consider collecting a bit of special water on your travels or at a special place for you this summer, so that you can share it with all of us at our Water Communion ceremony again in the fall. Thanks, Cindy

NEWS

WyEast Food Co-op. Good source of organic, some local, healthy food, cheaper than you can find at the supermarket. Deliveries every two weeks. Pick up at the Grange on UU Sundays (9:30-12:30). For information please email Linda Short. Catalogs available downstairs on the coat rack next to the WyEast Food room.

CURIOUS ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHEN, AND WHERE? Go to www.mcuuf.org

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