



## Environmental Justice at "Justice" General Assembly

Ellen McClaran, UU Ministry for Earth Board Member

This year's special "Justice" General Assembly (GA) offers attendees a unique in-depth opportunity to learn about and experience justice work. From the UUA website: "General Assembly 2012 will be a gathering with multiple ways of engaging in justice work for people of all ages. Joining with the people of Arizona, we will worship, witness, learn, and work together. We will leave GA grounded in our faith, energized for justice, and with resources to bring this work home to our congregations." See the program and learn all about GA beginning on the main UUA webpage: <http://www.uua.org/ga/2012/>.

There are numerous workshops and events related to environment and justice that may be of interest to UUMFE members and supporters. Check your program for the location of the offerings described below. Hope to see you at GA – come by our booth in the exhibit hall for a visit!

On Thursday, June 21, at 10:30 a.m., Dr. Susan Goekler and Caitlin DuBois of the Commission on Social Witness will host a forum for advocates of the **Proposed Congregational Study/Action Issues for 2012-2016**, to present their issues and respond to questions. Two proposals address environmental issues – *Climate Action and Adaptation Plans: Why Greenhouse Gases and Their Effects Matter to Us and Families, Population, and the Environment*. At Friday

morning's plenary, delegates will determine which of the proposed CSAIs is selected for four year of congregational focus and potential adoption as a UUA Statement of Conscience. Sunday morning at 11:40 a.m., will be a **Hearing on the Newly Selected Congregational Study/Action Issue** with facilitators Kat Liu, Dr. Susan Goekler, and Dr. David May, who will give a brief overview of the CSAI process and

some general tips on how to engage effectively. Participants will be invited to share their recommendations, including examples of best practices. This hearing will help the UUA staff create a CSAI resource guide.

Members of the President's Advisory Committee on Ethical Eating – Rev. John Millspaugh, Rev. Dr. LoraKim Joyner, Rev. Nate Walker, and Nancy King Smith, UUMFE Board Co-Chair – will present **Weaving a Tapestry of Justice** on Thursday at 11:45 a.m. This inspiring worship service will explore how immigration, economic justice, environmental justice, and ethical eat-

ing are woven together. Participants will take home inspiration for weaving their strands of justice-making into a tapestry of wholeness.

In **New Curriculum Showcase: Our Place in the Web of Life**, Pam Sparr, one of the designers of UUMFE's new EJ Curriculum, will acquaint participants with its unique features and the opportunities it offers to strengthen cont'd on page 3



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Unitarian Universalist  
Ministry for Earth

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Ministry for Earth is a non-  
profit organization whose  
supporters envision a world  
in which reverence, grati-  
tude, and care for the living  
Earth is central to the lives  
of all people. As a 501(c)3  
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## From the Board

**F**or UU Ministry for Earth, Earth Day and General Assembly serve as the two major touch-points of our year. We make sure that we have a complete packet of Earth Day materials ready for use in plenty of time before the April celebration, and also to plan events at General Assembly that will enrich the experience of our constituents.

Knowing that this June will be a Justice GA focused on immigration, we recognized the opportunity to show the connections between immigration and environmental justice, indeed to pay attention to the interlocking oppressions that blend social and environmental justice in so many ways.

We hope that even if you didn't use the materials for Earth Day you will take a look at the immigration resources on our website in preparation for General Assembly, whether you are attending or not, as a different lens on the issues that will be in front of us. The more we can see the connections between climate change and the lives of people on both sides of the border, the better equipped we will be to help our denomination and our communities respond appropriately.

To that end, we will be convening a National UU Strategy and Networking session on Sunday, June 24, 11:00 am- 12:30 pm. We intend to share environmental activism successes and strategies and explore how as a movement we can be more effective moral and ethical leaders in tackling the big issues challenging our communities and Earth. We are particularly concerned that the pace of climate change is accelerating, creating untold human and animal suffering that will only be exacerbated and magnified by the coming changes.

The environmental damage will accelerate human migration and conflict and will hit the most vulnerable communities and populations earliest and hardest. This is the greatest moral and spiritual crisis of our lifetimes, and we fear as UUs and as an association we are not providing the leadership demanded by our faith. How can we raise the consciousness of UUs and our association to the criticality of educating themselves, building alliances, and taking action?

Equally important is finding the wellspring of hope to sustain us. These words from James Howard Kunstler in "The Long Emergency" give us guidance:

*Here's the plain truth, folks: Hope is not a consumer product. You have to generate your own hope. You do that by demonstrating to yourself that you are brave enough to face reality and competent enough to deal with the circumstances that it presents. How we will manage to uphold a decent society in the face of extraordinary change will depend on our creativity, our generosity, and our kindness, and I am confident that we can find these resources within our own hearts, and collectively in our communities.*

Please come, or ask that your congregation's delegates join us for this important General Assembly Strategy discussion. Or add your voice to the discussion by submitting comments on the Forum section of our new website at <http://uuministryforearth.org/forums/uu-earth-forums>.

– Nancy King Smith, Co-Chair, UU Ministry for Earth Board ♦

## News From UU Ministry For Earth

### Environmental Justice at “Justice” GA, *cont’d*

a congregation’s environmental, racial, and economic justice ministries. Congregations using this program will share their experiences. The workshop is not listed in the GA program – it will take place at the Hyatt, Remington ABC, on Thursday, from 1:30-3:00 p.m.

On Thursday at 4:30 p.m., Dan Millis and Sergio Avila of Sierra Club Borderlands will present **Wild Versus Wall: Borders, Justice and the Environment**. They will discuss how much of the American public is unaware of the devastation being caused by harmful U.S. trade and border policies and how the most symbolic and destructive infrastructure resulting from these bad policies is the newly-constructed U.S.- Mexico border wall. This program shows the ecological effects of enforcement and infrastructure in the four states that share boundaries with Mexico.



*UUMFE’s booth at the 2010 GA in Minneapolis  
(photo from UUA website, photographer unknown)*

The UUSC will sponsor **Values into Action: Organizing Workers, Field to Fork** on Thursday at 4:30 p.m. Panelists Ana Aguayo, Lupita Aguila, Ariel Jacobson, and José Oliva will address the conflict of how we are deeply interconnected with all the people who plant, process, and serve our food, yet these workers face systematic violations of their labor rights. Participate in a discussion of UUSC partnerships with successful models for organizing workers across the food chain – and how UUs can get involved.

On Thursday at 5 p.m., the Commission on Social Witness will sponsor **Implementation Year for Ethical Eating SOC**. Presenters Rev. John Gibb Millsbaugh and Caitlin DuBois will lead a discussion of what our congregations have done this past

focused year of implementation after the SOC was adopted and what we can do in the future. “Ethical Eating – Food & Environmental Justice” is too important a subject to let fade away in our congregations.

UUMFE’s own workshop, **Immigration & Environmental Justice**, will begin at 9 a.m. on Friday, June 22. The panelists – Rev. Earl W. Koteen, Amy Petré Hill, Lara Helfer, and Linda Herrera – will discuss how environmental degradation (polluted air, land, and water; ocean acidification; severe storms and droughts; mass extinctions; melting glaciers) disproportionately impacts disadvantaged communities and contributes to migration and injustice. Find out how your congregation and state advocacy network may work with environmental justice organizations and coalitions addressing these issues.

As a follow-up to Thursday’s workshop on UUMFE’s new EJ Curriculum, Pam Sparr will lead a **Strategy and Skill-building** session. Learn by doing! We’ll use a fun and powerful participatory analysis-mapping tool (from the new curriculum) to build strategies for UU congregations to have greater impact with their environmental, racial, or economic justice work. The workshop is not listed in the GA program – it will take place at the Hyatt, Remington ABC, on Friday, from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

On Friday at 4:30 p.m., UUSC will present **Water Justice and the Blue Revolution**. The panelists – Rev. Dr. Bill Schulz, Lindi Ramsden, Cynthia Barnett, and Tom Hallock – work in California and Alabama where regressive immigration and water policies exclude communities from access to safe drinking water. They will share how congregations can act to create water justice and the human right to water. “Blue Revolution” author Cynthia Barnett calls for citizen’s action to change our water ethic.

Our final UUMFE gathering for this GA will be **National UU Strategy and Networking** on Sunday, June 24, from 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., at the Hyatt, Remington ABC (again, not listed in the program). Pam Sparr will lead us in sharing environmental activism successes and strategies so we can be more effective as a movement in tackling the big issues challenging our communities and Earth. It includes a very short UUMFE business meeting and light refreshments. ♦

# News From UU Ministry For Earth

## New Northwest Earth Institute Curriculum Focuses On Energy

Ellen McClaran, UUMFE Board Member

Just before Earth Day, the Northwest Earth Institute (NWEI) introduced a new mini-discussion course, *Powering a Bright Future*, available as a PDF download for \$10. This two-session course explores issues related to current energy use and what we can



do to take action as individuals and communities interested in promoting energy sustainability.

*Powering a Bright Future* contains solution-based curriculum providing discourse on energy use and extraction, peak oil, fossil fuel subsidies, energy efficiency,

equity, energy policy, and even low carbon food tips. Authors include Lester Brown, Richard Heinberg, Sandra Steingraber, Amory Lovins, and others. Go to <http://www.nwei.org/> to order and/or find out more about this and the many other courses NWEI offers.

If you select UUMFE/Green Sanctuary as your “connection” when you order this or other discussion guides, NWEI will share some of the profit with UUMFE. Thanks for your support! ♦

## Earth Day Excitement

Cindy Davidson, UUMFE Board Member



For 2012, UUMFE once again developed a comprehensive set of resources for UUs to use for their Earth Day activities. In support of this year’s CSAI on Immigration as a Moral Issue and the upcoming “Justice GA” in Phoenix, we encouraged congregations to connect the dots between immigration and environmental justice, as we did with food and water in previous years. The President’s Council on Ethical Eating created a new website and continued the 40/40 challenge from previous years with a Food-Immigration-Environmental Justice theme.

Check out the list of registered activities (you might find inspiration for an environmental justice project) and the 2012 congregational Eco-Heros on the website: <http://uuministryforearth.org/2012-ED-CongregationalStories>. We will be adding Earth Day stories to this page soon, like the ones you will read in this newsletter. Please send us your post-Earth Day stories and photos to [office@uuministryforearth.org](mailto:office@uuministryforearth.org) – we would love to include them. Send us your ideas for next year’s

## Interfaith Moral Action On Climate (IMAC) In Washington, D.C.

Pam Sparr, UUMFE member/consultant

As the sun dawned over the MLK Jr. memorial and the Tidal Basin in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday, April 24th, UUMFE was one of 40 national organizations participating in a day designed to inspire faith leaders and activists and put pressure on Congress to pass comprehensive climate change legislation.

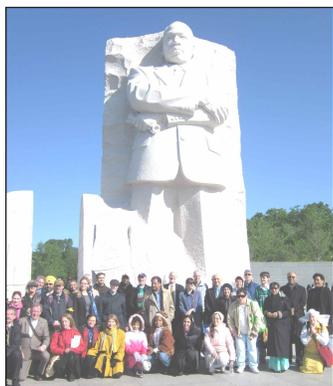
The gathered crowd was a remarkable expression of both the diversity of the faith community in the United States as well as its unanimity on this issue. Looking across the group at the memorial, one saw beaded hairpieces and long braids, brown Franciscan robes, kippahs, liturgical collars and stoles, turbans, skullcaps, saris, and the dress of people who are not ordained but minister to the world through their presence and activism. One of the politically significant aspects of this day was the presence of Evangelical Christian leaders who had brought college students from around the country to meet with the White House in a related event. Some sported t-shirts bearing the logo of the Evangelical youth’s new “Green The Golden Rule” campaign.

After the early morning vigil, IMAC sponsored a formal interfaith worship service at the Presbyterian Church where President Abraham Lincoln attended, further underscoring the justice dimensions of climate change. From there, the crowd processed down Pennsylvania Avenue past the White House to Upper Senate Park for a press conference and lobby visits.

The day was filled with many powerful oratorical and visual statements – from noted author and United Methodist Bill McKibben standing shoulder to shoulder

## News From UU Ministry For Earth

with a Muslim leader talking about MLK's legacy, to an evangelical minister from West Virginia at the



*IMAC participants gather at the base of Dr. King's statue. More photos on page 8.*

altar holding high a lump of coal and grieving the destruction caused by mountain top removal, to a Mohawk clan mother walking from pew to pew, blessing worshippers with water and her feathered fan.

At the Capitol Hill press conference, IMAC planners (which included UU Minister Rev. Terrence Ellen),

unveiled Congress' failing climate ethics report card, and the specific grade results for individual Senators and Members of the House. Teams then fanned out

to meet with Congressional staff, urging even those who have been the most stalwartly opposed to addressing climate change to open a new national dialogue on climate, one grounded in our common humanity and destiny, one grounded in the profound ethical imperative we all face. UUMFE's representative met with staff from Senator Jeff Sessions' office (R-AL) and House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH).

- Read UUMFE's press statement at <http://uuministryforearth.org/Letters>
- To learn more about IMAC, and learn about your elected officials' legislative grades, go to <http://www.interfaithactiononclimatechange.org/endorsers.html>.
- IMAC's "Call to Action" is based on the National Climate Ethics Campaign, which is launching community-based conversations across the country. To learn more about how you can contribute to shifting the political climate where you live, go to: <http://climateethicscampaign.org/>. ♦

## News From Members and Congregations

### Municipal Sustainability Plans

*Pam Sparr, All Souls Church, Unitarian in Washington, DC, and UUMFE member/consultant*

A great way for your congregation to take its environmental justice ministry to another level is getting involved in your local government's planning around sustainability. There are a variety of initiatives under way – some are independent and some fall under national frameworks such as the STAR Community Index. This could be an excellent project for Green Sanctuary candidates or for accredited Green Sanctuary congregations. From my experience working with the STAR Community Index, local governments really need the faith community to promote the justice dimensions like providing green job training for unemployed and chronically underemployed residents and doing renewable energy and conservation retrofitting of affordable housing, etc.

We're doing this in a variety of ways at All Souls Church, Unitarian in Washington, D.C. Several of our "Green Souls" volunteered to participate in working

groups formed to contribute ideas and review draft goals for the DC plan. We are trying to align our church's justice goals in our new strategic plan with the employment and affordable housing goals in the City's 20-year sustainability plan.

We also want to



see how our upcoming church renovation can contribute to and take advantage of any incentives coming from the green vision the District of Columbia is now laying out for 2032. And finally, we are talking with City staff about how we can help pull together the interfaith community in the District to collaborate on bringing the plan alive by holding City officials and ourselves accountable on the affordability, equity, accessibility and inclusion dimensions.

To read about DC's new plan "A Vision for A Sustainable DC" go to: <http://sustainable.dc.gov>. To learn about the STAR Community Index and the 11 communities that are helping to test that comprehensive sustainability road map, go to: <http://www.icleiusa.org/sustainability/star-community-index>. ♦

## News From Members and Congregations

### Revolution, Realignment, Reframing

*Rev. Earl W. Koteen, Consulting Minister for Climate Justice, UU Legislative Ministry California, and UUMFE Board Member*

When I first began to understand the magnitude of the risks – the sixth great extinction, collapse of sea life, disease, famine, and war – we are facing and the legacy that we are leaving for our children and generations yet unborn, I could not fathom why we were not taking drastic and immediate steps to address the main driver of global warming – the levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Instead, we have



been taking baby steps while the greenhouse gas levels continue to rise.

But the tide is beginning to turn. Whether it is fires in Texas, tornadoes in the Midwest, famine in the Horn of Africa, or flooding in Bangladesh and Vermont, there is a growing awareness that Nature will not sit idly by as we continue to pollute air, land, and water.

There is also a growing awareness of the interlocking nature of environmental injustice and other oppressions. For example, communities of color are leading the environmental justice charge here in California.

We have reached or are about to reach a tipping point. No informed person continues to question the reality of climate change. The questions on people's lips now are: "How soon?" – "How severe?" – "How can I help?"

To answer these questions, we must first acknowledge that we are no longer living on the planet that we have had the privilege of occupying for the last 10,000 years. We must reframe how we look at the world around us and what are our expectations of the future. We must realign UUism to help ourselves, our loved ones, and our allies repair the interconnected web of life which we have been unraveling.

This does not mean that we have to give up any of our passions for justice. It does mean that we need to act out these passions while attending to how the changing planet will affect our efforts.

Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman, a mentor of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., used to say that the two most

important questions in life are: "Where are we going?" and "Who is going with us?" He also said that most of us ask these questions in the wrong order.

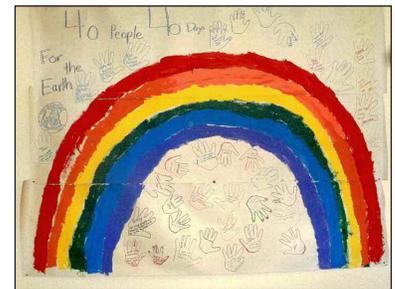
The joy of the work that we have today and the work that lies before us is that we have the opportunity to ask Dr. Thurman's questions in the right order and find that we are blessed in the allies who will do the work with us. Once we find the courage to face the truth and grieve our lost expectations, we find the chance for joyful revolution in beloved community. ♦

### UUs Around the Country (and the World!) Celebrate Earth Day

*Cindy Davidson and Ellen McClaran, UUMFE Board Members/Earth Day Committee*

Many thanks to all of you who registered your Earth Day events and sent us your stories and photos. It's not too late! We will be posting them soon on the Congregational Stories page on the UUMFE website, so send your stories and photos to [office@uuministryforearth.org](mailto:office@uuministryforearth.org). Here is a sampling of Earth Day activities from coast to coast and across the Pacific.

Kathy Neff, Religious Education Chair at **Glacier UU Fellowship in Kalispell, MT**, reported that her small congregation of about sixty members was encouraged by the 4th to 6th grade class to participate in the 40/40/42 challenge. The class is currently using the "In our Hands" curriculum and is learning about Environmental Justice this month. They created a large rainbow mural and asked forty congregants of all ages to trace their handprint and write their name and one thing they would do for Earth for 40 days. Glacier UU is also doubling the size of its Community Garden and worked on that during the Earth Day service.



*Glacier UU wall mural with handprints and Earth pledges.*

Marc Wathen wrote: "**Unitarian Universalists Hong Kong** celebrated on April 22, 2012, by hiking on beautiful Lamma Island. Lamma Island is a green

## News From Members and Congregations

oasis in hectic Hong Kong. There are no automobiles on Lamma Island. Bicycling and walking are the preferred modes of transportation. Lamma Island also has Hong Kong's only wind power station – Lamma Wind. We made a special point of visiting there on Earth Day.



*Hong Kong UUs spent Earth Day on Lamma Island.*

"In keeping with this year's UU theme, we discussed "Immigration and Social Justice" in the context of Hong Kong. We had a vegetarian meal at the Green Cottage, which is most appropriate on Earth Day."

Tuli Patel is the Director of Religious Education at **Unitarian Church in Summit, NJ**. She wrote to let us know that they led a very successful Children's Worship Service for Earth Day and had more than forty kids and adults commit to the 40-day challenge. Kids committed to picking up litter, not littering, making sure the fridge door was closed, and eating more fruits and vegetables. Adults committed to compost more regularly, to line dry clothes, and to eat lower on the food chain.

She also requested some sort of recognition for the children – so, congratulations, kids! We admire your commitments to taking Earth-friendly actions.

Melinda Perrin and Nancy Peterson of **First Unitarian Society of Schenectady, NY**, sent us all the materials from their unique and creative "B'Earthday Service." We will post them on the website soon.



*B'Earthday Service participants Melinda Perrin, Sarah Bilofsky, Juliana Post-Good, and Gary Feinland.*

**UU Church of Spartanburg, SC**, had a great Earth Day. Not only did they win the UUMFE raffle for a \$50 gift certificate from the UUA Bookstore, they also had a magical celebration. Melissa Fritsche, Search Team Chair, described their plans on the registration form: "Earth Day at the UU Church of Spartanburg (SC) will be a celebration for all ages! This intergenerational service will include a conversation with a magic frog, lots of singing, and a river rock communion. And we will honor our very own Eco-Hero! We will reflect on finding our place in the family of things and discovering how to live in loving relationship with the Earth and all her various and complicated life-forms."

Terry Wiggins, Chair, Environmental Justice Ministry at **First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee, WI** (and former UUMFE board member) reported a very successful Earth Day action. "Our event started with an article in our April church newsletter, which featured what several members of the congregation and our associate minister do to protect our Earth home. On Earth Day, the minister called for members to see the board in the Coffee Room and state their new commitments for helping to heal the Earth. We had copies of three different lists to give everyone ideas. Quite a few people put their names on the clouds, so we will have the opportunity to follow up and see how they're doing with their commitments."



*Rev. Dr. Drew Kennedy, Senior Minister, with congregational Earth Justice commitments.*

UUMFE was pleased to see that two registered congregations used this year's suggested Earth Day theme. **Oberlin Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, OH**, presented a worship service, "Earth Day Interconnections: Immigration and Environmental Justice," which included a video about the damage the wall is causing at the borderlands. **First Universalist Church of Minneapolis, MN**, explored farmworker rights and ethical eating during it's service, "Harvesting Justice: Farmworkers, Food, and You." On Earth Wednesday, they showed the documentary film *The Harvest*, which focused on child labor. ♦



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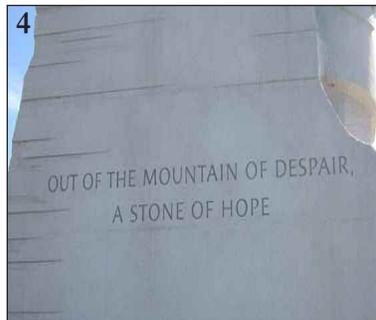
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## April 24th Interfaith Moral Action On Climate (IMAC) In DC

Focus on the justice dimensions of climate change – see complete story on pages 4 & 5

1. Fr. Jacek and Sarah James at IMAC press conference.
2. Dr. Carroll A. Baltimore Sr., 19th President of the Progressive National Baptist Convention, at IMAC press conference.
3. UUs for Social Justice Exec. Director Terry Ellen, one of the planners for the day's events, helps participants navigate.
4. Quote on MLK memorial that ties into theme of the day!
5. Marching to the press conference via the White House.



all photos: Pamela Sparr

### Your Support Is Needed and Appreciated – Please Consider a Donation

This issue of the UUMFE newsletter highlights exciting projects that depend on you. Your donations make possible the work towards Earth ministry as an integral part of our UU experience. Go to [www.uuministryforearth.org](http://www.uuministryforearth.org) for donation options, as well as many UUMFE resources. Thank you for your