



Advocacy & Witness News

Congregational Advocacy and Witness
Washington Office for Advocacy

(617) 948-4607
(202) 296-4672

AUGUST 2007

REPORT FROM GENERAL ASSEMBLY

It is always a special treat for the Advocacy and Witness staff to connect with you at General Assembly. This year we planned/presented six workshops and had sponsored an action center in the exhibit hall where 365 people sent messages to their representatives! For those of you who attended our workshops or booth we thank you and we look forward to working with you throughout the year. Also, we would like to extend a very special AMEN to the Right Relationship Team. General Assembly 2007 marked the debut of this hardworking volunteer committee, which helped address instances of discrimination, misunderstanding, or hurt between and among attendees, and which reported on its work to the entire plenary hall. They truly exemplified what it means to practice right relationship. To learn more about GA and to view many of the workshops online, visit:

<http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/2007/index.shtml>

2007 Actions of Immediate Witness

One of the most important things that happens at GA is the debate and adoption of Statements of Conscience and Actions of Immediate Witness. These statements on moral and public policy issues inform and guide the Advocacy and Witness work of the UUA. In contrast to the Statements of Conscience, which arise from a lengthy period of congregational study and action, Actions of Immediate Witness are adopted address pressing policy concerns in a timely manner. To learn more about Actions of Immediate Witness, visit www.uua.org/csw.

- **Social Support for the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**
- **Support Immigrant Families—Stop the ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) Raids**
- **Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education Legislation**
- **Stop US Sponsored Torture—A Religious Call to Action**
- **Repeal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"**
- **Pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act with Transgender Inclusion and Protection**

Watch Presentations Online

- **Welcoming the Stranger: A Just Immigration Policy (Friday 6/22)**
This presentation on immigration featured Interfaith Worker Justice Director Kim Bobo and discussion of congregational organizing and solidarity actions, including the new sanctuary movement.
<http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/2007/presentations/31350.shtml>
- **Theology of Peacemaking: (Saturday 6/23)**
Rev. William Schulz and Professor Sharon Welch discussed the theology of peacemaking in this popular presentation.
<http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/2007/presentations/31313.shtml>
- **The Pentagon Papers: Then and Now (Saturday 6/23)**
Rev. Robert West, Daniel Ellsberg and presidential candidate Mike Gravel recounted their roles in events that led to the UUA's Beacon Press' publication of the Pentagon Papers in 1971-72. Moderated by Amy Goodman.
<http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/2007/presentations/30971.shtml>
- **Ware Lecture: Dr. Rashid Khalidi (Saturday 6/23)**
Historian Rashid Khalidi delivered a stinging denunciation of the Bush administration and its Middle Eastern policies in Saturday's Ware Lecture.
<http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/2007/presentations/31309.shtml>



*“If war is the violent resolution of conflict,
Then peace is not the absence of conflict,
But rather,
The ability to resolve conflict without violence.”*
--C.T. Lawrence Butler

Calendar

August 6-31	District Work Period for Members of Congress: attend town halls and schedule lobby visits in local offices
August 24	UU/Islam Interfaith Dialog Insights due
September 11	UU/Islam Interfaith Dialog Resource Launch Date
October 8	Interfaith Fast Day for Peace
October 11	National Coming Out Day
November 11	Armistice Day/Veteran's Day: Lobby your congress people and candidates to bring our soldiers home



We Need Your Help!

Is your congregation in community with an Islamic Mosque or Center?
We need your best practices!



The Washington Office for Advocacy is looking for stories or insights from UU congregations who have worked closely with Mosques.

- What has worked?
- What has not?
- What else would you like to know?

Information received will be compiled into a resource guide for congregations who want to work with Mosques and Islamic Community Centers

Please Send Your Information To The Washington Office for Advocacy C/O:

Alex Winnett: awinnett@uua.org

By Friday, August 24, 2007

SUPPORT THE EMPLOYMENT NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT

It is currently legal in 33 states (under state law) to fire an employee based on sexual orientation; it is legal in 42 states to fire an employee based on gender identity. **The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2007 (ENDA)** would extend fair employment practices under federal law to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community by prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in most workplaces. It does not apply to small businesses, most religious organizations, or the military.

Take Action:

Call your Representative and Senators: ask them to support the Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2007 (H.R. 2015).

Capitol Switchboard: (202) 225-3121

For more information, advocacy resources, or to tell us about your awesome work on this issue, please contact Elizabeth Bukey in the UUA Washington Office, LA_BGLT@uua.org, (202) 296 4672 x22

STANDING ON THE SIDE OF LOVE T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE ONLINE

With the warm weather comes outdoor activities and t-shirts! We know that you UUs will be out there for demonstrations, prayer vigils, and just for fun. Why not be more visible as Unitarian Universalists while you do it? The next time your congregation goes to a public event, make sure that everyone will easily be able to find each other. Our 100% cotton t-shirts come in an attractive and easy-to-spot royal blue. Stand out in a crowd. Stand up for justice. Stand on the side of love.

For more information, pictures, and/or to place an order, please go to www.uua.org/uuawo and click on "ONLINE STORE" on the left side of the page)

There is a \$3/shirt discount for bulk orders, so order as a congregation! If you'd rather place an order by phone, please call Kat Liu at (202) 296-4672 x12

Why Bother Contacting My Representative?

Because your voice counts (literally)!

To learn more, go to: www.uua.org/uuawo

Interfaith Fast Day for Peace Monday October 8, 2007



Please join thousands of UU's and millions of other faithful people in this day-long vigil for peace and justice.

Created by the Shalom Center and co-sponsored by dozens of religious leaders and organizations, this event will bring together millions of people to share in thoughtful reflection on peace and justice.

For more information on how to prepare for your day of fast, please visit our blog:

Inspired Faith, Effective Action at <http://uuawo.blogspot.com/>

Or, our homepage: <http://uua.org/uuawo>



Co-sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee