

From Perspiration to Inspiration: Spiritually Grounded Leadership for Large Congregations

The Seventh National Conference for Large Congregations
Unitarian Universalist Association

March 13-16, 2008
Marriott Hotel – Louisville, Kentucky

Session 1 – 9:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

1-A Creating Depth in Worship – Ralph Waldo Emerson famously challenged Harvard Divinity students to preach “life passed through the fire of thought,” saying that good preachers spoke in ways that connected deeply with the lives of their congregation. How do we create deep worship that also has energy and vitality? *Rev. Dr. Michael Tino, former Director of Young Adult and Campus Ministry, UUA and organizer of The UUA’s 2007 Contemporary Worship Conference.*

1-B The Potential of Unitarian Universalism – Are liberal churches growing? This is a much debated issue in our movement right now. While our growth numbers may not seem statistically significant, in fact Unitarian Universalism is the one liberal denomination which is still at least holding steady, and it is our large congregations which contribute the greatest growth to our denomination. Rev. Cooley will share her research and ideas about what makes vital and dynamic congregations that can help our movement grow both in numbers and in relevance to the broader culture. *Rev. Dr. Terasa Cooley, District Executive of Massachusetts Bay District, UUA.*

1-C Eight Spheres of Spiritual Growth – Spiritual growth involves more than just the head and the heart. In this workshop Rev. Erik Walker Wikstrom, author of “Spirit in Practice” (a new curriculum from the UUA’s Tapestry of Faith series), will present a holistic model exploring spiritual growth in terms of eight “spheres” of a person’s life. *Rev. Erik Wikstrom, Senior Minister, First Parish in Brewster, Massachusetts.*

1-D Healthy and Growing on the Other Side of Large – Growth and health literature to date still relies on the simple designation of ‘corporate’ or ‘large’ to define the congregation with average weekly attendance over 400. There are significant gaps in our understanding of what growth and health look like on the other side of that designation. In this workshop I’ll present a model that I’ve developed for purposes of my own consulting practice that outlines the healthy role of pastor, board and staff team in various large sized congregations. We’ll examine the common reasons why large congregation’s get stuck at various transition points as they grow into and beyond the corporate sized label. *Rev. Susan Beaumont, Senior Consultant, The Alban Institute.*

1-E The Multi-Site Option – We will explore the various ways congregations are using this new model to expand their options in worship, programming, and growth. The workshop will present an overview of the model and share some particulars of some congregations, including First UU Church of San Diego. *Rev. Ken Brown, District Executive of Pacific Southwest District; Dr. Angela Merkert, UU congregational consultant; and Rev. Dr. Arvid Straube, Senior Minister of the First UU Church of San Diego.*

1-F Money, Stewardship and Faith – Wayne will share a coming-of-age story designed to move congregations beyond the restrictive myth of scarcity that pervades so many of our Unitarian Universalist faith communities. Drawing upon his recently published book, *Beyond Fundraising: A Complete Guide to Congregational Stewardship*, Wayne will help participants focus on the reality of abundance. Hard-copies of the Powerpoint slides will be distributed. *Dr. Wayne Clark, UUA Director of Congregational Stewardship Services.*

1-G Governance à la Mode – Many UU congregations have sought to discover the perfect governance model in an effort to improve their organizational effectiveness. But our efforts to reduce micro-management have often been frustrated by a shift to micro-governance! It seems that *models* may be less important than understanding the essential *modes* of governance. *Rev. Stefan M. Jonasson, UUA Director for Large Congregations.*

1-H Large Church, Large Impact: Are You the Next Jericho Road Community? – The Jericho Road Project, founded by the First Parish of Concord, engages hundreds of congregant volunteers in social justice collaborations with neighboring community nonprofits in need. This movement builds the nonprofits' professional capacity and results in community-wide transformation in the congregation and surrounding towns. Could your congregation be next? *Dan Holin, Executive Director, Jericho Road Project, First Parish in Concord, Massachusetts.*

Session 2 – 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 a.m.

2-A Creativity in Worship – Creating contemporary worship means thinking creatively about worship in our congregations—how we plan it, what it looks and sounds like, and how we organize it. We will engage in some creative exercises to get us thinking about worship in new ways. *Rev. Dr. Michael Tino, former Director of Young Adult and Campus Ministry, UUA.*

2-B Fear and Loathing in the Large Church – Leaders in the large church need to deal effectively with anxiety caused by fear of change. Healthy strong leaders are critical to growth. How does the system help or hinder leadership? How do our fears keep us from being the leaders we could and should be? *Rev. Dr. Richard Speck, District Executive for Joseph Priestley District, and Connie Goodbread, Lifespan Program Consultant for Mid-South District.*

2-C From Initiation to Renovation – the Campus Ministry Spectrum - Are you looking to start a campus ministry or seeking practical tools to sustain and energize one in progress? Either way, this highly interactive and informative workshop with two seasoned young adult professionals will send you home hungry for more college-aged energy in your congregation! Bring questions and best practices to share and exchange. *Nancy DiGiovanni, UUA Director of*

Programs for the Office of Young Adult and Campus Ministry and Ellen Carvill-Ziemer, Ohio Meadville District Young Adult and Campus Ministry Consultant.

2-D Beyond the Glass Ceiling – While the Unitarian Universalist Association has about as many large congregations, proportionately speaking, as the average Protestant denomination in America, it has proportionately fewer *very large* congregations. Few of our congregations have managed to sustain themselves much above the 1,000-member mark and only a tiny handful have ever grown beyond 1,500 members—and none have remained that large for more than a generation. Is there a “glass ceiling” beyond which UU congregations cannot sustain themselves? What might it take to break through that glass ceiling? *Rev. Stefan M. Jonasson, UUA Director for Large Congregations.*

2-E Using Video to Expand Your Ministry – The First Unitarian Church of Albuquerque has been using video recordings of the sermon in many ways; from worship leader training to support of lay-lead churches to organizing video assisted worship for church members both on-site and in small towns (multi-venue worship). This workshop will feature an introduction to this exciting project and what its leaders have learned from it so far. *Rev. Christine Robinson, Senior Minister and Rev. Ron Hersom, Acting Assistant Minister, of the First Unitarian Church of Albuquerque.*

2-F How Much Can We Afford to Keep? – A new perspective is offered for congregations planning their next annual budget drive. Wayne explores the difference between fundraising and stewardship. He probes the concept of giving as an act of worship and his belief that receiving precedes giving. Implications for your next annual budget drive will be discussed. Hard-copies of the Powerpoint slides will be distributed. *Dr. Wayne Clark, UUA Director of Congregational Stewardship Services.*

2-G Policy Governance at Work – We will seek to understand and discuss participants’ experiences with moving to policy governance, while sharing the process First Parish in Concord has used to: (i) generate greater clarity on our strategic direction; (ii) better define roles of staff and lay leaders; and, (iii) help the focus of Board meetings be on and stay on long-term direction versus operational matters. *Don Leopold, Sherbrooke Consulting and vice-chair of First Parish Standing Committee; Rev. Gary Smith, Senior Minister; and Rev. Jenny Rankin, Minister—all from First Parish in Concord, Massachusetts.*

2-H STAND for Justice – This interactive workshop explores the possibility of shifting UU identity by casting an integrated view of social justice and racial justice. How are we relevant in the multicultural society? What results are produced when we practice right relations, reconciliation, and accountability across racial and class boundaries? Join in the discussion. *Dr. Paula Cole Jones, Lead Consultant, JUUST Change Program, UUA.*

Session 3 – 2:15 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

3-A Contemporary Worship for All Ages – While we might seek to make our worship more contemporary in order to appeal to specific groups of people, good worship invites all people in. We will explore four ways of looking at congregational diversity—age, ability, cultural background and multiple intelligences—to create diverse worship that appeals to many people. *Rev. Dr. Michael Tino, former Director of Young Adult and Campus Ministry, UUA.*

3-B Matching Spiritual Gifts to Leadership Needs – The Apostle Paul waxed eloquently about the varieties of spiritual gifts, while modern theories of personality type remind us about differing temperaments. There are more than enough different types of individuals to meet every conceivable need. So why is it that we so often find mismatches between leadership roles and the people who fill them? How can we better link people's natural gifts to their work for our congregations, so that congregations are well-served and volunteers are deeply satisfied? *Rev. Stefan M. Jonasson, UUA Director for Large Congregations.*

3-C The Role of the Second – Few positions are characterized by greater ambiguity—or offer more opportunities for creativity—than that of the "second" minister in larger congregations. What is the appropriate role for such ministers? How can the "second" be most effective in his or her ministry? A seasoned second minister will offer insights and observations. *Rev. Daniel Kanter, Associate Minister of the First Unitarian Church of Dallas.*

3-D Employment and Covenant: The Nature of Employment Relationships in Congregations – Participants will explore the fundamental nature of employment relationships within covenant community. We'll look at the inherent tensions between church membership and employment relationships and we'll look at the basic pieces of feedback and accountability required for good staff team performance management. *Rev. Susan Beaumont, Senior Consultant, The Alban Institute.*

3-E Marketing Strategies for Growth – Marketing is about attracting guests by providing programs and services that *they* want and need. In this session we'll discuss how to create a successful marketing plan for your congregation, and we'll share the many new resources that the UUA has available to help congregations be successful in their outreach efforts. *Valerie Holton, UUA Marketing Outreach Director.*

3-F Capital Campaigns: If You Build It, They Will Come ... – But will they stay? Sometimes, there is no direct connection between a capital campaign and congregational growth. Sometimes, congregations actually lose members. Wayne makes a case for a comprehensive approach to capital campaigns. He explains how to increase your chances for growth after the completion of a campaign. Hard-copies of the Powerpoint slides will be distributed. *Dr. Wayne Clark, UUA Director of Congregational Stewardship Services.*

3-G Transitions in Governance and Organization – As William Bridges suggests; change is with us all the time; it is the transition that often gives us problems. In creating governance and organizational models that fit larger congregations we deal with issues of power and authority;

mission and vision. This workshop will look at how to manage these transitions and create governance and organization that truly supports our vision and mission. *Rev. Ken Brown, District Executive of Pacific Southwest District, and Dr. Angela Merkert, UU congregational consultant.*

3-H Spiritually-Grounded Social Justice Programs – What gives our social justice work the strength and resilience we need in these troubled times? Only a deep spiritual grounding, say Kate Lore and Rev. Marilyn Sewell. Come hear about the power of what they call engaged spirituality. *Rev. Dr. Marilyn Sewell, Senior Minister and Rev. Kate Lore, Minister of Social Justice, First Unitarian Church of Portland, Oregon.*

Session 4 – 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

4-A Welcoming Worship – Worship is the public face of any congregation, and thus must welcome the newcomer. Powerful worship also includes ways in which people feel connected to one another. How do we balance intimacy and welcoming in our worship? How do we honor the different places that people come to us from? *Rev. Dr. Michael Tino, former Director of Young Adult and Campus Ministry, UUA.*

4-B Congregations Come First – If congregations really were to come first in the work of the Unitarian Universalist Association, then how would the needs of our larger congregations best be served? Join members of the UUA's Congregations Come First Team to learn about the team's initiatives and ideas, while offering your own. *Laurel Amabile, Director, Annual Program Fund, UUA.*

4-C Growing Edges in Religious Education – Both within Unitarian Universalism and other denominations, large congregations lead the way in creative and innovative religious education programming. What trends can be observed? What innovative approaches have been discovered—or re-discovered. What can we learn from mainline and even conservative denominations? And what are the staffing implications? *Rev. Stefan Jonasson, UUA Director for Large Congregations.*

4-D Extending Your Ministry with an Executive Director – Participants will learn how to use a non-clergy church executive to lead and support administrative, financial, human resources, facilities stewardship and board/staff relationships that complements and strengthens existing staff/volunteer structures. *Jill A. Warren, Executive Director, Birmingham Unitarian Church, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.*

4-E LifeNow! Radio – Taking to the Airwaves – Is there a place for Unitarian Universalism on the commercial airwaves, where we might communicate liberal religious values more widely? Can we develop compelling programming that the public will perceive as relevant to their lives? Can doing so help us to grow? Come learn about LifeNow! Radio, an exciting initiative in Rochester, New York. *Rev. Kaaren Anderson and Rev. Scott Tayler, Senior Co-Ministers, First Unitarian Church of Rochester, New York.*

4-F Creating a Planned Giving Program – Planned giving is an important element of a comprehensive financial management plan. A well-conceived planned giving program encourages congregants to give financial support for the long-term fiscal stability of a faith community. This workshop is designed for congregations that do not currently have an active planned giving program. Hard-copies of the Powerpoint slides will be distributed. *Dr. Wayne Clark, UUA Director of Congregational Stewardship Services.*

4-G Staffing Transitions and Challenges – As congregations grow there is an expectation of more options in programming and thus the need for more staff. Yet, many of UU congregations struggle with how additional staff fits with our shared ministry concept. We will deal with how to build a staff team that works with the ministry teams in a UU congregation. *Rev. Ken Brown, District Executive of Pacific Southwest District, and Dr. Angela Merkert, UU congregational consultant.*

4-H International UU Women – Creating a UU Global Village: Global Literacy, UU Women's Activism, and the Meaning of Convocation – Learn about the work UU women have done and are doing to improve women's lives worldwide. Find out about the exciting program in Houston in 2009 and how you can participate. Become more aware of your personal and congregational global connections. Learn how you can become a more competent and empowered citizen of our UU global village. *Laura Nagel, Administrator, International convocation of Unitarian Universalist Women.*