



The Global Chalice

ICUU Newsletter

www.icuu.net

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ICUU Announces New Staff Appointments: Revs. Steve Dick, Jill McAllister to take office before Kolozsvár Council

Adopting a new staffing model designed to launch ICUU into its next stage of growth and development, the Executive Committee has hired the Rev. Steve Dick as Executive Secretary and created a Program Co-Ordinator position to be filled by the Rev. Jill McAllister. Both appointments take effect August 1, 2009.

"Thanks to the Internet, the ICUU, Unitarianism and Unitarian Universalism have become accessible to interested people in many more countries where we have had no presence," said President Brian Kiely. "Requests for service and support are increasing weekly. This shared leadership model sets us on a direction of growth and expansion and prepares us to meet growing needs. Let me assure member groups that we are working within our budget constraints, but that developing new sources of revenue and funding is quickly becoming a top priority."

The Rev. **Steve Dick** will succeed ICUU's current Executive Secretary, the Rev. John Clifford, who is retiring after four years of service. Dick will assist Clifford at the Council meeting this September in Kolozsvár, headquarters city of Unitarians in Transylvania.

Until recently serving as Chief Executive of the British General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, the Rev. Dick is American by birth and a British Unitarian minister by training. Most of his life has been lived in Europe married to Jenneke (a Dutch woman whose grandfather was a liberal religious minister). In addition to serving as a congregational minister and District Executive in England, he helped to found the European Unitarian Universalists and was employed part-time by the International Association for Religious Freedom. His broad perspective and spirituality benefits from this cross-cultural experience.

The Rev. Dick noted this is a challenging time, saying "ICUU is at a crossroads and I hope to help it develop through adolescence to adult vitality. Some amazing things have been achieved so far and future possibilities are exciting."

The Rev. **Jill McAllister** of the United States is a founder and past President of the ICUU. She is also a former member of the UUA Board of Trustees. For the past 15 years she has been active in developing and delivering ICUU programs. Stepping into the Program Co-Ordinator role is something of a natural progression for her.

Since 1998, the Rev. McAllister has served as Minister to the congregation of People's Church in Kalamazoo, MI. She has been active in the UU Ministers Association Heartland Chapter as President and Program Chair, and has been a speaker and consultant for many congregations in her district and around the USA. She is a vice-president of ISAAC, an inter-faith community organization which focuses on grass-roots organizing around social justice issues. She has led ICUU task forces, leadership conferences, youth conferences and symposia around the world, and has spear-headed ICUU publications. She says: "My dedication to this organization is part of a much larger devotion to the ideals of religious community. I am always thinking strategically for the ICUU, because it is so important to me that it live up to its potential to be a model of right relations, mutual aid and support, so that the liberal religious movement will only grow stronger, and offer more of its gifts to a world in need. I'm excited about the potential of our new staff arrangement for the development of the ICUU."

The Mission of the ICUU is

- To build relationships through communication and collaboration;
- To develop spiritual community among member groups and their leaders;
- To identify and nurture prospective and emerging groups;
- To foster our U*U faith for mutual inspiration, development, and growth.

British Unitarians' Annual Meeting

-Rev. John Clifford

About 300 British Unitarians, joined by guests from the Unitarian Union of North East India the Unitarian Universalist Association, met for three days on the campus of the University of Chester from 15 to 18 April.

In addition to five business sessions dealing with reports, questions, and motions, there were many worship events, some lectures, and several special interest gatherings, at times up to four things going on at the same time. Ministers and ministerial students gathered for a day preceding the Annual Meeting.

Formal Opening Celebrations included the usual parade of church, district, and organisational banners, a feature borrowed from the UUA many years ago.

The general theme this year was "Growth" and how to nurture it – although one speaker, Jane Dwinell of the UUA, reminded everyone that growth can occur in quality as well as quantity and that being small was, *in itself*, not something to be ashamed of.

A new hymnal, many years in the making, *Sing Your Faith*, was presented with purple covers to distinguish it from the green, red, black (Welsh), grey (UUA), and blue (previous generation) hymnals currently in widespread use in British congregations.

Business before the assembly ranged widely.

New elected Executive members were installed; a new Treasurer was elected; a new President (Rev Bob Wightman) was elected and installed. Motions included (1) urging the Executive to hire staff in the areas of Social Justice and Information; (2) welcoming the Heads of Agreement between British Unitarians and the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland; (3) the Executive is to consider alternative (shorter, dynamic) names to replace the current "General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches" and report back next year. Two long-serving ministers (Revs Jim McClelland and Eric Jones) were made life members of the Assembly; and one motion that failed (asking for the actual votes cast in Executive elections to be made public) may well be back next year because the number of abstentions was much greater than the gap between Yeas and Nays. Looking outwards, motions were passed urging greater openness in the admission policy of state-supported faith schools and greater acceptance of diversity in matters of ultimate belief by the Scout Association for its Leaders.

There were many opportunities to socialise: over meals, at the bar, in the display room, at coffee/tea breaks, at receptions, and at the off-campus social evening. There was also a Quiet Room where folk could retire for contemplation.

The Anniversary Service, conducted by the Youth Officer, Rev John Harley, with the sermon by the just-retired minister of York, Rev Margaret Kirk, included remembrance and celebration of ministerial service and recognition of those starting their ministry to our congregations. In spite of being held in the main auditorium, a collective devotional atmosphere was created by the leaders and participants.

This brief report cannot refer to all the many fine events crammed into 3 busy days but I close by noting the good grace exhibited by the outgoing President, Joyce Ashworth, as she gave her closing observations on the past year.

Canadian Unitarian Council Annual Conference and Meeting

-Rev. Brian Kiely

This mid-May weekend drew some 250 people from all over Canada to the campus of Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario, for worship, fellowship, learning and business.

It was the first ACM for Executive Director Jennifer Dickson. She comes to the CUC after five years at Pauktuutit, Canada's National Inuit women's organization. Dickson treated this meeting as a chance to learn more about the CUC and Unitarians in Canada. Active in an Ottawa church, she is fairly new to Unitarianism but the CUC Board has confidence in her abilities.

At the Knight Award banquet, Art Brewer of Toronto was inducted into the lifetime achievement 'order' named for Nancy and Victor Knight. Brewer is a longtime Unitarian with a passion for Gay rights. Under his diplomatic and optimistic leadership nearly every congregation in the country has achieved Welcoming Congregation accreditation. This program calls us to confront our biases and prejudices that can keep us from becoming the welcoming communities we truly wish to be. Brewer was also a key player in congregational growth initiatives and helped author the plan for an autonomous CUC.

In business sessions, delegates called upon all Canada's federal political parties to support and endorse the passage of Bill C-311, to ensure Canada assumes its responsibilities in preventing dangerous climate change. Calvin Drake, President of the CUC, pointed to the urgency of this legislation, explaining that "the overwhelming scientific evidence points to certain global disaster should immediate action not be taken. By passing Bill C-311, the Canadian Government can demonstrate global leadership on this important issue."

Like many national organizations, the CUC is also faced with the effects of the global financial crisis. While investments were hurt, expenses were down significantly in the last year due to staff transitions and temporary vacancies. Although the financial picture looks manageable for the time being, the Executive Director and Board will have to reconsider staffing and service delivery in the coming year.

Business sessions are necessary and important, but the Conference also came alive in multi-generational worship, social opportunities, several justice-oriented sessions, and workshops on everything from the international UU movement, to Canadian Unitarian history, to meditation practices, to finding and keeping a minister. Highlights of the weekend also included a powerful ministerial lecture on spirituality and a great youth conference.

International Threads at UUA General Assembly

-Rev. Eric Cherry



Rev. Eric Cherry (at podium) presents international guests in Salt Lake City.

From left, flanking Cherry: Mr. Olafemi Matimoju, Rev. Petr Samojsky, Rev. Helpme Mohrmen, Rev. Abhi Janamanci, Rev. Fulgence Ndagijimana, Rev. Yasutaka Watanabe, Mr. Yasutomo Sawahata, Rev. Koichi Barrish, Rev. John Gibbons, Bishop Ferenc Balint, Rev. Mark Kiyimba, Ms. Tina Huessing, Ms. Jian Li.

It was an honor to welcome many guests from around the world to the UUA's General Assembly in Salt Lake City, USA (June 24-28, 2009). Though some guests attended Ministry Days prior to General Assembly, the first opportunity for us all to gather together was during the International Guests Dinner on Wednesday evening. Breaking bread with guests from eleven countries, and getting to know each other while sharing this meal, was a very appropriate way to set the stage for all that was to come.

Nearly 4,000 GA attendees started to feel the presence of our honored guests during the Opening Worship Service on Wednesday, which began with an introduction of Rev. Mark Kiyimba (UUA of Uganda) followed by a presentation of photos from outgoing UUA President William Sinkford's pilgrimage to six African countries last November. As the slide-show commenced, Dr. Ysaye Barnwell was joined by three drummers in providing an incredible musical accompaniment. Following the last slide, one of the drummers came to the podium and was introduced as Mr. Olufemi Matimoju, General Secretary of the First Unitarian Church of Nigeria. Thunderous applause echoed through the assembly hall as GA attendees welcomed these esteemed international guests.

Later in the opening worship service Rev. Endre Nagy and Rev. Helpme Mohrmen, guests from Transylvania and North East India, participated in a beautiful arrangement of the hymn "Spirit of Life" sung in Spanish, Hungarian, and Khasi as well as English. Throughout the service, experiences and lessons learned through international engagement added a rich texture to worship. It felt good to have our deeply valued international relationships highlighted during opening worship at GA.)

The following morning, the UUA's International Resources Office (UUA-IRO) offered a workshop introducing its general activities and various materials for congregations that are involved in international ministry, including the "Faith Without Borders" program, the "International Engagement" workshop, the "Sharing Global Faith" e-devotional, and many others. Further information about the UUA-IRO and its work can be found at www.uua.org/international

On Saturday, the UUA-IRO held two additional workshops. The first was a fascinating theological dialogue about international engagement which included reflections by Bishop Balint and Revs. Mohrmen and Watanabe. Each speaker shared unique perspectives and wisdom, concluding the workshop with a lively question and answer session.

The second workshop was a more detailed overview of Rev. Sinkford's pilgrimage to Africa, which included presentations by Rev. Kiyimba, Rev. Ndagijimana and Mr. Matimoju.

It would be impossible to describe all of the events at GA that gathered International Threads. Meals and receptions held by the UU United Nations Office, Project Harvest Hope, the UU Partner Church Council, and IARF-USA all had excellent programs and strong attendance. Workshops offered by the UUPCC, the UU United Nations Office, and the International Convocation of U/U Women were also informative and inspiring.

Finally, our guests were invited to join together for a Sunday breakfast with Rev. Peter Morales. Thus the newly elected UUA President was able to begin his term in personal greetings and discussion with international colleagues.

Other "International Threads" during GA wound around the "International Booth" in the exhibit hall. For the first time at this GA, seven organizations involved in U/U international engagement shared a large exhibit space in order to provide "one-stop shopping" for attendees interested in international matters. The seven organizations were: ICUU, Project Harvest Hope, UU Partner Church Council, IARF-USA, UU Global AIDS Coalition, and the UU United Nations Office as well as the UUA's International Resources Office. This shared space also served as a location for special events, including video presentations by various organizations, a musical presentation arranged by Project Harvest Hope, and public introductions of guests.

Registration Still Open for 2009 Council

Coming September 1-5 to the historic birthplace of Unitarianism—Kolozsvar, Transylvania—the **ICUU's 8th biennial Council meeting** will feature a full program of worship, business meetings, workshops, and social activities.

The Council is open to both delegates and observers. Individuals may register for the Council, and the preceding pilgrimage to Deva (site of Francis David's martyrdom), at www.icuu.net

ICUU Member Groups

Australian and New Zealand Unitarian Universalist Assn.
Canadian Unitarian Council
Religious Society of Czech Unitarians
Danish Unitarian Church
European Unitarian Universalists
Unitarian Universalist Society of Finland
Deutsche Unitarier Religionsgemeinschaft (Germany)
General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches (Great Britain)
Unitarian Church in Hungary
Indian Council of Unitarian Churches
Jemaat Allah Global Indonesia
Unitarian Brotherhood Church and First Unitarian Church of Nigeria
Unitarian Universalist Christians of Pakistan
Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines, Inc.
Unitarian Church in Poland
Transylvanian Unitarian Church (Romania)
South African National Association of Unitarians
Unitarian Universalist Society of Spain
Unitarian Universalist Assn. of Sri Lanka
Unitarian Universalist Assn. of Congregations (USA)

Executive Committee, 2007-09

President: **Rev. Brian Kiely**, Canada
Vice President: **Rev. Gordon Oliver**, South Africa
Secretary: **Jaume de Marcos**, Spain
Treasurer: **Rev. David Shaw**, UK
At Large: **Rev. Pearl Greene Marbaniang**, India
Rev. Jill McAllister, USA
Pauline Rooney, Australia

Executive Secretary: **Rev. John Clifford**, UK

ICUU Office Address

International Council of Unitarians and Universalists
10 Langdale, East Kilbride G74 4RP, Scotland, UK
email: clifford@universalist.ednet.co.uk

Archivist/Historian

Rev. Polly Guild
4 Kendall Common, Weston, MA 02493 USA
email: polly@pollyguild.com

Member Groups' Websites

The first eight sites are in English, afterwards in other languages with English options as noted.

www.uua.org Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (USA)

www.unitarian.org.uk General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches (Great Britain)

www.cuc.ca Canadian Unitarian Council

www.anzua.org/anzua_alt Australian and New Zealand Unitarian Universalist Association

www.euu.uua.org European Unitarian Universalists

www.unitarian.co.za South African National Association of Unitarians

www.uuphilippines.org Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines

www.uu-uno.org Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office

www.uuen.org Unitarian Universalist Esperanto Network—ICUU's newest associate member!

www.unitarius.hu Unitarian Church in Hungary—enter in Hungarian or English

www.unitaria.cz Religious Society of Czech Unitarians—click on USA/UK flags at top right for English content

www.unitarerne.dk Danish Unitarian Church—click on "info in English," left column.

www.unitarius.ro Transylvanian Unitarian Church—click on "belepes" to enter site, then USA flag for English (not working at press time)

<http://www.uuespana.googlepages.com> Unitarian Universalist Society of Spain—readers of Spanish will also want to visit www.uuhispano.net

www.unitarier.de Deutsche Unitarier Religionsgemeinschaft (Germany)

www.netlife.fi/users/antti.pelkola/uu Unitarian Universalist Society of Finland

The Global Chalice is a publication of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists, an association of Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist organizations and congregations in more than 20 countries. Learn more about the ICUU on our website, www.icuu.net

Officers and staff of the ICUU and its member groups may submit material for this newsletter by contacting the editor, Lorella Thomas Hess, newsletter@icuu.net