



The Religious Leader

NEWS FROM THE MINISTRY AND PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP STAFF GROUP • PRE-GA 2007

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From the Director

Anual meetings and programs of our professional groups and General Assembly are coming up in just a few weeks, marking the end of my first year as Director of MPL. It has been a year of learning and getting to know people, and yet there are still many people to meet and countless things to learn. Though I continue to resist casting a vision or setting a specific course for MPL, here are some new initiatives I'd like you to know about:

Professional Leadership Coordinating Council (PLCC)

Leaders from all the professional groups had a very productive meeting with some MPL staff on March 30, 2007. With a real sense of collegiality and a desire to be of use to one another, we decided that PLCC's mission is: "To promote healthy partnerships among UU professional organizations and encourage the development of strong UU professional leadership teams." We meet again during GA to continue refining a draft of goals. Tell your professional groups' leaders your ideas about how PLCC can address its mission.

Community Ministry Intern

Interacting with community ministers, I've learned that we fall far short in addressing their needs. We lack resources. Robin Tanner, a seminarian at Harvard Divinity School, will help me part time for the next two years to analyze the situation. Robin will contact community ministers, SCM and UUMA leadership, and other stakeholders to help us understand needs and how MPL can address

them so that I can seek the resources to move ahead. Please welcome Robin's inquiries if she seeks you out in her research.

UU Military Chaplains

Noticing a great need, Lisa Presley asked if she could help. She formed a committee and drafted a comprehensive protocol for how we will endorse and support military chaplains and those pursuing this career option. By GA we will have this information in a brochure available at the workshop, Military and UUism: Respecting Inherent Worth? (10:45 a.m. on Saturday), and at the MPL booth. Those serving our country need and deserve the benefit of UU chaplains and I am grateful to Lisa and the committee—Cynthia Kane, David Pyle, Rebekah Montgomery, Vernon Chandler, and Vince Patton—for helping us help those called to this ministry.

Service of the Living Tradition

To create a more worshipful service with less of a graduation ceremony tone, there are some changes to the format of the service. Most noticeably, no one will walk across the stage and receive certificates and handshakes. Instead, all will process in to *Rank by Rank* and be seated on the stage. Names will be called by group, as usual, and each individual will stand (if able) as the camera projects a close-up on the screens. When all in the group are standing, the congregation will join in a brief litany of blessing. The Singers of the Living Tradition choir will be seated at floor level. We hope each individual will feel no less honored, and that

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all present will feel they have participated in meaningful worship.

Ministerial Fellowship Rules and Policies

Under MFC Chair Jory Agate's terrific leadership, she, fellow MFC member Abby Tennis, David Pettee, and I have spent many hours this year in a huge effort to change how the MFC does some things and to

make all the rules and policies easier to understand. Latest results will be available for discussion at UUMA Days. Please give this some of your attention and offer feedback

It has been a very full year and I'm still glad I'm here. I look forward to seeing many of you in June. ●

—Beth Miller, Director of MPL

Ministerial Credentialing/Internship Clearinghouse— David Pettee, Christine May, Leslie Staples, Kim Wilson

Getting Cleared

Following the last few Ministerial Fellowship Committee meetings, I have noticed there seems often to be some confusion surrounding the circumstances of how a candidate who has had a good interview gets “cleared” to enter the settlement process. After every MFC meeting, first thing Monday morning, John Weston receives a call from a newly minted minister ready to go. Yet, until John has heard from my office, he sends this person straight to me because the Ministerial Fellowship Committee has empowered the Ministerial Credentialing Office to determine when a candidate can be “cleared” to enter search. For those seeking to be called to a congregation, this is often the real issue at hand. This unexpected hitch is often jarring.

It's certainly very encouraging news that most candidates have a successful interview with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. Most folks clearly remember the waiting that is required when the MFC has invited the candidate to leave the room so the Committee can complete their important deliberations. Then, it's me (or Michelle Bentley, the staff liaison with the other MFC Panel) who arrives to escort the candidate back into the room to hear the news. MFC members (particularly the ministers on the Committee) know that it is very difficult to remember all that is said when a person comes back in the room. Even when the news is good.

Such is the impact of crossing over a threshold.

Let's say a Category 1 is granted. There is excitement and relief all the way around. Most folks leave with a pretty clear belief that they can now move forward. But wait. Not so fast. Being granted a Category 1 may not mean that a candidate is cleared to enter the search process. Often, much of the time that the MFC has been taking in their deliberations is not about which category will be granted. The MFC works very carefully to take into consideration all the details of a candidate's circumstances at the time of the interview, including, but not limited to: When will they graduate? Have the mid-term final internship evaluations been received? Have the final CPE evaluations come in? What about the outstanding required reference from a religious educator? Is there a lingering question about the candidate's ministerial status from their prior faith tradition, if the candidate is transferring to the UUA from another faith?

The decision to “clear” someone to enter the search process is thus determined on a case-by-case basis. I try to facilitate this as best as I can with the knowledge of what the Ministerial Fellowship Committee desires.

When the MFC grants a Category 2, this means there is at least one contingency (if not more) that must be completed before preliminary fellowship is awarded. Once

again, the MFC has worked diligently to spell out and articulate what needs to be addressed and if there are any parameters that need to be followed. The specific language for the letter the candidate will receive after the interview is crafted during this deliberation period. In some circumstances, the Committee will want the candidate and my office to simply come up with a plan of how to meet the contingencies in order to get clearance for search. Other times, the contingency must be completed before clearance into the search process can occur. And, in a few situations, the Committee determines a very specific course of action with the belief that the additional time involved to complete the contingency is what will be needed to complete the ministerial preparation or formation process for a given candidate.

The possible options are quite varied. My counsel? At such point that you interview with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, and receive a Category 1 or 2, get in touch with me soon thereafter if you wish to know when you can be cleared to enter the search process. We'll work together to try to make this happen as soon as possible. In addition, a candidate is always welcome to work on their Ministerial Record. Please contact the Transitions Office to get a password to get you started!

Ministry Days and General Assembly will be soon upon us, and I hope to get a chance to meet new and current aspirants and candidates. If you have an interest in meeting with me privately, please contact Chris May, who can assist you with getting a half-hour slot arranged. As is my custom, these half-hour blocks are reserved for those who live outside the Boston area, because those nearby always have the opportunity to meet with me in my office.

See you in Portland! ●

In the faith,
—David Pettee, Ministerial
Credentialing Director

Internship Clearinghouse News

Over the past few years, the role and functions of the Internship Clearinghouse have gradually expanded beyond facilitating intern/internship match-ups and providing guidance primarily to interns. We are aware that the existence of congregationally based internships is dependent on the willingness of our colleagues to give their time and energy to serve as supervisors. They have done so without expectation of recognition or reward—although every supervisor deserves at the very least a spirited round of applause. (You may clap now!) Over the past six months, we've sought to discover what needs of supervisors the Clearinghouse might be able to meet.

Through an informal survey, supervisors expressed desire for three kinds of support:

- 1) to be able to communicate more easily with each other;
- 2) to have a supervisor-oriented program at CENTER Days; and
- 3) to be able to take part in a UUA-sponsored supervisory training.

The Clearinghouse has responded to these desires:

- Supervisors can now communicate with each other through the email list "Super-chat." If you're currently supervising or will be in the coming year, please feel free to sign up for this forum through the UUA's online email lists page.
- A CENTER program this year, Can I Be a Supervisor?, will include a panel of experienced supervisors to offer insights, opinions, and wisdom regarding internship supervision, as well as to answer your questions. Check the UUMA website for details.
- For the first time, the UUA will offer a free, one-day supervisory

training: a joint effort by the Ministerial Credentialing Office, the MFC, our two UU theological schools, and two supervisors. It will be held Monday, June 18, from 1:00–6:00 p.m. The program is open to any minister in final fellowship, whether currently supervising or planning to supervise a UUA internship or field education program. Please contact me for more information or to sign up.

We haven't forgotten the other crucial leg of the stool that makes up the internship: the intern committee. These lay leaders give generously of their time and work hard to do their job well. (Give them a round of applause, too!) Their multiple roles and responsibilities can be challenging and nuanced. Given that committee members' formal training generally consists of reading the

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Internship Manual, which can only provide basic guidance, the complexity of their work can become difficult and confusing. We're looking into creating a curriculum for intern committees, focusing on roles and expectations at greater depth and in much more detail than we have been able to offer before. The internship is a crucial step in ministerial formation, and by offering support to supervisors and committees as well as interns, we hope to raise the quality and value of the internship experience even higher than it typically has been.

All interns attending GA are invited to the IC's Intern Gathering, to be held from 4:30–5:45 p.m. on Saturday, June 23

in the Portland Room at the Doubletree Hotel. It's a time to meet other interns, share experiences, and socialize, as well as an opportunity to chat with David Pettee and me. Current interns, those who have just finished their internship, and those starting this fall are invited. Light refreshments will be served. We hope to see you there!

If you are serving a congregation or other potential teaching site, I encourage you and your lay leadership to attend the workshop *Becoming a Teaching Congregation* on Thursday morning. You can also look for me and the rest of the Ministerial Credentialing Office staff at Saturday afternoon's work-

shop, *Are You Considering Going into the Ministry?*

I will have half-hour appointment slots during GA for anyone who would like to meet with me one-on-one, whether prospective or current intern, supervisor, or intern committee member. You can arrange a meeting in advance via email or phone, or visit the MPL booth in the Exhibition Hall at GA to set one up. To those who won't be at GA this year, please feel free to call or email me with anything you'd like to discuss. For all who do plan to be at GA, I look forward to seeing you there! ●

Yours in faith,
—Kim Wilson, Internship
Clearinghouse Coordinator

Meadville Lombard Summer Intensives 2007

Advanced Preaching, July 9–13

The Large Church: Praxis, Problems, and Promise, July 9–13; Dallas, TX

Evangelizing Unitarian Universalism Across the Metropolis, July 16–20

Postcolonial Comparative Religious Ethics, July 23–27

We Would Be One, August 6–10; Ferry Beach, ME

Creating Quality Worship in Congregations, August 18, 19, 22, 25, 26; Paint Branch UU Church, Adelphi, MD

UU Hymnody, August 27–31; Ferry Beach, ME

For more information visit www.meadville.edu.

Starr King School for the Ministry Summer Courses 2007

The Growth of the Spirit in Unitarian Universalist History, June 4–9
Clinical Pastoral Education, TBA

For more information visit www.sksm.edu.

Religious Education Credentialing & Renaissance Programs—Beth Williams, Paula Welling

What's New in the Religious Education Credentialing Program

Many congratulations to the following religious educators who were awarded credentials by the RECC on March 13, 2007: Tryst Chagnon—Credentialed Religious Educator Level; Natalie Fenimore—Credentialed Religious Educator, Master's Level.

We welcome the following religious educators who have been accepted into the Religious Education Credentialing Program and are working toward various levels of achievement. Their commitment to excellence in religious education and professional development are recognized through these efforts:

Brenda Berry, JP
Carol Larson, NE
Jansen Wendell, JP

Jamie Gross, CMW
Greta Porter (Master's), OM

Paula Welling has joined the UUA staff as RE Credentialing and Renaissance Assistant. She has a background in publishing management, and is active in her Episcopal church. Paula can be reached at pwelling@uua.org or 617-948-6418. ●

Good News from the RE Credentialing Committee (RECC)

Credentialed religious educators and key leaders within their congregations/organizations were surveyed last year to quantify outcomes and assess the effectiveness of the credentialing program since it began reviewing applications in the fall of 2003. A sampling of the results:

Among credentialed religious educator respondents:

- 1) Ninety-six percent reported a reinforced or increased sense of professionalism through their completion of the credentialing process. (Feedback from candidates going through the program indicated that it is transforming their attitude about religious education, from that of a job to that of a career with the possibility of advancement.)
- 2) Sixty-one percent reported that the credentialing process had an impact on their involvement in continuing education.
- 3) Seventy-eight percent have developed new programs, resources, and curricula since becoming credentialed.
- 4) Fifty-seven percent reported a more positive relationship with their ministers and congregations since becoming credentialed.
- 5) One hundred percent have encouraged other colleagues to seek credentialing.

Among congregational/organizational respondents:

- 1) Seventy-seven percent indicated that their religious education programs have increased in quality, enrollment, or effective innovations since their religious educator was credentialed.
- 2) Seventy-six percent indicated that their credentialed religious educator either implemented a Safe Congregation program, strengthened policies or procedures in an existing program, or communicated the need for such a program.
- 3) Sixty-seven percent indicated that their credentialed religious educator provided leadership in anti-oppression/anti-racism efforts where previously there had not been extensive programming or communication efforts.
- 4) Eighty-three percent indicated an increase of salary or hours once their religious educator was

credentialed, or used UUA compensation guidelines in establishing their religious educator's salary.

These results suggest that there will be a tipping point within the UUA when the cumulative outcomes of the credentialing program begin to have an effect on the field of religious education. We believe an auspicious milestone will occur when the number of credentialed religious educators active in the field grows to 100 from the current 39.

Once again, the RECC would like to thank the Veatch Foundation for funding the RE Credentialing program.

For complete survey results, please visit the RECC page on the UUA website. ●

—Colleen McDonald, Member, RECC

New RE Credentialing Policy and Procedure Requirements from March RECC Meeting

As part of the Responsible Staffing initiative, new RE Credentialing program participants will be required to provide a background check and disclose incidents of legal violations, arrests, and convictions. The competency area of "Family Ministry" has been substituted for the Master's level competency area of "Pastoral Care." ●

Renaissance Program News

The following are Renaissance program modules scheduled for the coming year:

May 16–18, Multicultural RE, Surrey, BC, Sylvia Bass-West, sylvia@cuc.ca

Jun. 6–7, Multicultural RE, West Chester, PA, Rev. Carol Taylor, ctaylor@uua.org

Jul. 7–13, Curriculum, Ferry Beach, ME, Jennifer McAdoo, dre@uuyarmouth.org

Jul. 15–22, Teacher Development, Star Island, NH, Kathy Cronin, kathy.fpb@verizon.net

Oct. 26–28, Administration, Angelus Oaks, CA, Tera Little, teralittle@att.net

We are pleased to congratulate the following religious educators who recently received Renaissance Recognition:

Lisa Ashley, PNW

Brenda Berry, JP

—Beth Williams,
Religious Education Credentialing Director

An Invitation

If you'd like to meet with John Weston at General Assembly, whether to talk about search, or about your present situation, or about your career in general, please contact Emily Schwab to make an appointment. ●

Surprising Findings in Ministerial Longevity

Over the past fifteen years, the median duration of a settlement has increased from 6.8 to 7.4 years, while its average duration has decreased from 8.9 to 8.4 years. The greater excess of the average over the median in years past is presumably due to a few very long ministries, the frequency of which has been declining for some time. Ministries of median or greater length are presumably to be honored (although questions are increasingly being asked about very long ministries), while ministries concluding within five years—"early endings"—would seem to indicate, in many but surely not all cases, the existence of problems deserving of attention.

For a recent UUMA CENTER Committee-sponsored meeting the Transitions Office prepared the following study of early endings. The study indicates the following:

- the total number of annual early endings has increased by about 50 percent over the past fifteen years, from 14 to 21; and

- the number of early endings brought about by negotiated resignation (a.k.a. pressured termination) has remained constant (as have the number of negotiated resignations at any time in a ministry—the rate of the latter being about a dozen a year);
- thus, the *percentage* of early endings brought about by negotiated resignation has dropped by about one-third.

Among ministers in their first five years of fellowship, the number of early endings in the past four years is even with their number ten to fifteen years ago. (Between 1996 and 2002 their number spiked by more than 50 percent.) Of special note, the number of early endings among such ministers brought about by negotiated resignation has decreased by over 60 percent, to an average of only one per year.

Among ministers in their later years in fellowship, however:

- the number of early endings annually among more experienced ministers has increased by a third over fifteen years and
- the number of early endings brought about by negotiated resignation has increased by about 50 percent.

If there is a moral in these complexities, it is that experienced ministers who neglect their own continuing education and ongoing spiritual growth, do so at their peril. ●

—John Weston, Transitions Director

Professional Development (PD)

Hi Michelle, just wanted you to know that I have completed my D. Min. degree as of today. I am told I will graduate with honors—quite something for them to give me that given that Perkins is firmly a Methodist school. Graduation is in May. Thanks for the financial assistance through the years. It was worth it.

Thanks,
Daniel Kanter, Dallas, TX

Congratulations, Daniel, and to all of you who took advantage of and enjoyed your professional development opportunities this year. Remember there is 2006–2007 continuing education money still available through June

for your professional development. If you have not received a continuing education grant for this fiscal year and there is an event or opportunity in which you wish to engage for professional nourishment, please email me a note describing the event and how it impacts your ministry, total costs, and a mailing address. Daniel's note speaks volumes. ●

CENTER News—The Continuing Education Arm of Our Ministers' Association

On March 3–4, your UUMA CENTER Committee held a special Summit with Stakeholders involved in the

formation and training of ministerial students and the long-term development of ministers. Seminary presidents (Meadville Lombard, Starr King, Andover Newton, Dean of the Harvard Divinity School), chairs of the MFC and UUMA Exec, MPL Transitions Director, DRUUMM and District Executive Representatives, and CENTER members Roberta Finkelstein, Wayne Walder (co-chair), Roy Reynolds (co-chair), Carol Huston, Michelle Bentley, Ed Piper, Maddie Sifantus, Joan Van Becelaere (absent: Jan Johnson) all came to Chicago in March during a storm to discuss the important subject of ministerial formation. U.T. Saunders served as facilitator.

In review, committee members expressed their individual thoughts after experiencing the Summit. It was agreed that this was a “once in a blue moon event” and the hope would be that a taskforce would arise out of this meeting and that connections had been made between stakeholders that would take root and be ongoing. We agreed that the extent to which that happens would likely be up to us.

CENTER members then designed goals for the immediate, developmental, and long-term work. The following ideas took shape:

Immediate

- Publish the summit report
- Buddy up with our guest participants
- Write for grant money from UUMA
- Gather research/study group information

Developmental

- Mentor training (on-site program for CENTER 2008 and Chapter presenter on mentor the mentor)
- Research and design the Arc of Professional Development (on-site program for CENTER 2008, background research component curriculum and tool development)

Long-Term

- Create strategic plan for new CENTER
- “Bringing us home” (ritual) for Convo 2009 (ritual, healing, blessing, covenanting, an anti-racism/oppression event).
- We finalized plans for Ministry Days 2007 and continued work on 2008. Hope to see you in Portland at Ministry Days! ●

Finding Our Way Home

I also just returned from the Ministers and Seminarians of Color/Latino/a Finding Our Way Home gathering in Washington, D.C. April 12–15.

Thirty-eight ministers and ministerial students gathered in D.C. during cherry blossom season. We lit ancestral candles, and together set the altar with items we brought from home and from our cultures that grounded us in the practice and understanding of our ministry. President Bill Sinkford preached the Friday morning worship and told us about the Reverend Jeffrey Campbell, the first African American to attend St. Lawrence Divinity School, which was the first Universalist seminary in the United States. “As a black man in a white denomination, he presented problems to institutional leaders. He could not be recommended to any white congregation, they agreed, because no white congregation would ever call him to serve as minister. . . .” Bill later spoke to us about his plans for settlement of ministers of color.

Other conference highlights include a continuing education time on stress reduction, and the mind, body, spirit connection.

Sunday morning we worshipped with the Davies Memorial UU Church congregation and heard the good preaching of Rev. John Crestwell, Jr. ●

First Year Ministers’ Seminar

We are gearing up for the First Year Ministers’ Seminar that will take place online May 11–25 with Deans Rev. Michael Schuler, Rev. Mel Hoover, Dr. Angela Merkert, and me.

Please feel free to phone me anytime for career counseling or just to talk (773-643-6988). ●

Peace,
—Michelle Bentley,
Professional Development Director

CENTER Workshops

MPL staff will lead five CENTER workshops during UUMA Ministry Days, addressing financial planning, first year ministry, intern supervision, addictions ministry and ministerial search. Please see www.uuma.org/ministrydays/index.html for schedule and presenter information.

Message Regarding Fidelity and Darfur

This message is directed to persons in the UUA Retirement Plan who have money in the Fidelity Diversified International Fund. Even if you don't, the information is important.

The terrible tragedy in Darfur is wrenching the conscience of all good people. Darfur is that portion of western Sudan where military and paramilitary forces have driven perhaps one million African Muslims from their farms and villages and have killed over 400,000 civilians in blatant acts of genocide that have shocked the world.

The Fidelity Diversified International Fund is one of the mutual funds in the UUA retirement plan, and it is one of the Fidelity-owned funds with shares in a Chinese energy firm whose royalties to the Sudanese government may be contributing to the genocide in Darfur. We are encouraging participants in the UUA retirement plan to divest their money from the Fidelity Diversified International Fund into one of two alternatives:

- The Calvert International Equity Fund, owned by the Calvert mutual fund company and managed in a socially responsible manner, or
- The Fidelity Spartan International Index Fund, another Fidelity-owned fund but one that does not have holdings in Sudan.

Both the Calvert International Equity Fund and the Fidelity Spartan International Index Fund have recently performed as well or better than the Fidelity Diversified International Fund.

The Calvert Fund is more expensive to own, with a management fee of 1.75 percent per year of total assets in your account, as opposed to the 1.01 percent fee in the Fidelity Diversified International Fund. Because it is an "index fund," the management fee of the Spartan

International Index Fund is a very low 0.1 percent of assets in the account.

Changing assets from one mutual fund to another in the UUA retirement plan is easy. Call 800-343-0860, enter your social security number and the pound (#) sign, and touch zero to talk with a phone representative. Tell the phone representative what you think about Fidelity and Darfur and that you want to move money from the Fidelity Diversified International Fund to the Calvert International Equity Fund or to the Fidelity Spartan International Index Fund. You should also instruct them that no new contributions are to go into the Fidelity Diversified International Fund.

In order to discourage market timing, there is a one percent holdback on money withdrawn from the Diversified International Fund that has been on deposit for less than 30 days. Fidelity distributes this money among other shareholders.

Transfers can also be made through www.fidelity.com/atwork. Click on "Access My Account," and follow the instructions. If you transfer money from the Fidelity Diversified International Fund into either of the alternatives, please let us know at rmero@uua.org or jstewart@uua.org. Call 617-948-6421 with any questions or if you need help.

Further information about Darfur is available through:

UU Service Committee Drumbeat for Darfur,
www.uusc.org/drumbeatfordarfur

Sudan Divestment Taskforce, www.sudandivestment.org

Fidelity Out of Sudan, www.fidelityoutofsudan.com

Amnesty International,
www.amnestyusa.org/countries/sudan/index.doc

—Ralph Mero,
Church Staff Finances Director

Resources & Possibilities

MFC Meeting

The latest MFC meeting was March 21–25, 2007 in Chicago, IL.

The Committee is undertaking a major rewrite of our rules and policies. These will be presented to colleagues and congregations at General Assembly for comment and feed-

back, with a vote on actual changes next year.

The Committee has been contacting ministers in Preliminary Fellowship who have not been moving through the renewal process to inquire about their desire to remain in Full Fellowship. Ministers not actively serving, or whom we are unable to

contact, are being moved to Associate Fellowship status. According to our rules, ministers from whom we have had no contact and whom we have been unable to reach for two years will be removed from Fellowship.

The Committee has been working with the Religious Education Credentialing Committee to estab-

lish a process for requiring background checks for all RE and ministerial credentialing candidates. We expect to have a policy in place shortly.

We met with Beth Dana and Rev. Shana A. Lynngood to discuss the recent findings of the Consultation on Ministry to and with Youth. The Committee would like to see our ministers better prepared in the area of Ministry with Youth.

Rev. Michelle Bentley, Professional Development Director, gave a presentation on the Sankofa project.

The committee interviewed 22 candidates (seven men and fifteen women). Nineteen were encouraged to move forward toward preliminary fellowship, with varying contingencies. Two were encouraged to continue in preparation for ministry but to return for another interview. One was discouraged from proceeding in pursuit of a career in the ministry.

Along with MPL, the MFC will offer General Assembly workshops on ministerial credentialing, including Meet the MFC and Considering Ministry. We will hold our annual luncheon with members of the Regional Subcommittees on Credentialing, including a presentation on classism. In addition, the MFC has been invited to make a presentation and lead a collegial conversation regarding our rules rewrite at the business meeting of the UUMA. With staff from the Internship Clearinghouse, Starr King, and Meadville Lombard we will also offer a workshop for internship supervisors on Monday before Ministry Days.

The MFC next meets September 26–30, 2007. Direct enquiries and comments to mfc@uaa.org. ●

—Jory Agate, Chair,
Ministerial Fellowship Committee

Plan Ahead!

The success of the February 2007 national conference, Now Is the

Time—Leading Congregations into a Multiracial, Multicultural Future has reinforced how essential it is for UUs to continue this important work as we seek to build just and inclusive communities rooted in Unitarian Universalist identity, theology, and values. Consider how your congregation will select and financially support participation in the spring of 2008 or 2009 as we present future Now Is the Time conferences. Plan to join other congregational leaders from throughout the United States as we explore together what we can do to lead. ●

Adult Programs on UU Spirituality

The UUA is seeking congregations to lead spirituality workshops in the 2007–2008 church year. Two forthcoming programs, by Rev. Barbara Hamilton-Holway and Rev. Erik Walker Wikstrom, give congregations the material they need to run workshop series or one-time events on spiritual practices and spiritual life. Workshops will be in the beta test phase, so feedback from religious professionals and congregations will be useful in developing the final product. Contact Rev. Sarah Gibb Millspaugh, UUA Adult Programs Director, at smillspaugh@uaa.org or 949-916-5661 to learn more. ●

General Assembly Events Sponsored by Our Professional Organizations

Thursday

Church Office Basics, 10:45 a.m., Oregon Convention Center E146—AUUA: Donna Zimmerman, et al.

UUA Health Plan: A User's Meeting, 10:45 a.m., Oregon Convention Center, F151—

Council on Church Staff
Finances: Jim Sargent

Becoming a Teaching Congregation, 1:00 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, F152—Internship Clearinghouse: Rev. Kim Wilson, Rev. Nan Hobart, Patti Lawrence, Rev. David Pettee

Before Calling 25 When Conflict Arises, 1:00 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, Portland Ballroom 252—UUMA: Rev. Ken Sawyer, Rev. Susan Manker-Seale, Rev. Harlan Limpert

Staffing for Social Justice: A Shared Responsibility, 2:45 p.m., Portland Ballroom 252—PLCC: Rev. Deborah Holder, Rev. Nathan Woodliff-Stanley, Keith Arnold

Beyond UU 101: Lay Theological Education, 4:30 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, Portland Ballroom 255—Panel on Theological Education: Gini Courter, Denny Davidoff

Tending the Fire V, 4:30 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, F149—SCM: Rev. Kurt Kuhwald, Joseph Santos-Lyons, Rev. Dale Lantz, Rev. Susan Conrad, Rev. Kay Jorgensen

Service of the Living Tradition, Sermon: *Make Ready for the Coming Day*, 8:00 p.m., Oregon Convention Center Hall C—UUA: Revs. Barbara & Bill Hamilton-Holway

Friday

Creating a Covenant of Right Relations, 10:45 a.m., Oregon Convention Center, Portland Ballroom 252—PLCC: Rev. Cathleen Cox Burneo

The Lay Leader's Guide to RE Excellence, 1:00 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, F152—RECC: Liz Jones, Kathryn Warrior, Gail Forsyth-Vail, Rev. Kirk Loadman-Copeland

Attracting Quality Employees, 1:00 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, Portland Ballroom 254—AUUA: Wren Withers

Fahs Lecture: Home Grown Religion, 2:45 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, Oregon Ballroom 201—LREDA: Dr. William J. Doherty

Meet the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, 4:30 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, F151—MFC: Rev. Jory Agate, Dr. James Brown, Rev. Emily Gage, Rev. Dr. Carolyn Owen-Towle

Reception and Conversation for All UU Professionals, Faith Development in a Too Much of Everything World, 4:30 p.m., Doubletree Hotel, Oregon Room—LREDA: Dr. William J. Doherty

Saturday

Military and UUism: Respecting Inherent Worth?, 10:45 a.m., Oregon Convention Center, E146—UUA: Rev. Beth Miller, Rev. Cynthia Kane, Rev. Lisa Presley, Dr. Vince Patton

The U.S. Health Insurance Crisis: A UU perspective, 10:45 a.m., Oregon Convention Center, F149—Compensation, Benefits, and Pension Committee: Jim Sargent

Are You Considering Going into the Ministry?, 2:45 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, F152—MPL: Rev. David Pettee, Christine May, Rev. Kim Wilson

Sunday

Interim Ministry—Making the Most of It, 11:30 a.m., Oregon Convention Center, B116—MPL: Rev. John Weston ●

UU Funding Program

The UU Funding Program makes grants of \$1,000–\$20,000 to projects

undertaken by UU congregations, committees, districts, and affiliates from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism, the Fund for International Unitarian Universalism, and the Fund for UU Social Responsibility. Each Fund has a distinct mission and guidelines.

Application deadlines are March 15 and September 15 each year. Panel members are appointed by the UUA Board; funding comes from the UU Veatch Program at Shelter Rock. Visit www.uua.org/uufp or call 617-971-9600 for guidelines, annual reports, and more information. ●

Society for Community Ministries, Inc. at GA

CENTER Days Workshop

Justice and Healing Ministries: Theology and Praxis—two sessions focus on the services of community ministers as highly trained religious professionals, bringing our congregations into the community and community into the congregation. The first session addresses large group engagement in the unique functions of the congregation, followed by collegial discussion on ways current economic, social, and political changes negatively impact the lives of those we serve. A second session engages participants and a panel of practitioners in reflection on the theology of community ministry, expanding traditional notions of UU polity, and pastoral care of religious activists.

Presenters are Rev. Patty Franz, Rev. Deborah Holder, Darrick Jackson, Rev. Dr. Kay Jorgensen, and Rev. John Hickey, on Tuesday, June 19, 1:30–4:15 p.m.

Annual Meeting and Breakfast

Come see fellow members and friends, hear the latest news and the Board's plans for 2007–2008, and give the SCM board your input and news of your ministry. Rev. Jeanne Lloyd will present her final report as President and introduce SCM's new

President, Rev. Deborah Holder. Saturday, 7:30–9:30 a.m., Courtyard Marriott, 435 NE Wasco St., Portland, OR. RSVP to kvsb2602@earthlink.net to reserve breakfast (\$9.95 per person). Send checks payable to SCM to P.O. Box 262, Wayland, MA 01778, with "Annual Breakfast" in memo line. Deadline is June 15, 2007.

Learn More about Community Ministry

Visit the SCM booth in the Exhibit Hall for information about this exciting work and a list of community ministry activities at GA, and to meet ordained community ministers and laity who seek to live their lives as a ministry in the larger world. Become a member and/or buy our new SCM lapel pin or SCM Proclamation. ●

Stewardship Sermon Award

Rev. Lynn Acquafondata, minister of the UU Church of the South Hills "Sunnyhill" in Pittsburgh, PA, received the 2007 Stewardship Sermon Award for Speaking with Your Money. This \$1,000 award is co-sponsored annually by the UU Ministers Association, Liberal Religious Educators Association, and Annual Program Fund. The winning sermon, chosen by a committee representing each of the sponsoring groups, is the one deemed most effective in exploring and affirming the financial support of our Unitarian Universalist faith. The award and a certificate of recognition will be presented at GA. ●

Youth Ministry Discussion Guide for Religious Professionals

The following is a resource for dialoguing with colleagues about ministry with youth in our congregations.

Opening

Open with a chalice lighting and reading or song. Provide an opportunity for reflection with a silent meditation. What was it like to be a youth? What place did you or could you have had in a spiritual community?

Discussion

Reflect on and discuss the following questions: Why do we do youth ministry? What is the theological grounding for our youth ministry (historical and current)? How does your congregation do ministry with youth? What would a vibrant, nurturing ministry with *all* of our youth look like? How would your congregation look different if it had a stronger ministry with youth (i.e., What would Sunday morning be like? How would worship services be different? What would faith development and religious education be like? What would be the connection to the community around you?)? How can we engage younger youth so that they remain UUs as older youth? How can we engage youth so that they remain UUs as adults?

Closing

Thank your colleagues for the discussion. Go around and ask each person to share one thing they will do differently in their congregation as a result of this conversation.

For information and resources about the Consultation on Ministry to and with Youth, visit uua.org/trus/youth. To share reflections or notes from your conversation with the UUA Task Force on Youth Ministry, contact Beth Dana at bdana@uua.org. ●

Liberal Religious Educators Association: Better Together!

We can make things happen when we join our varied expertise! This year at GA, LREDA provides a venue to gather religious professional staff teams around this issue: How do we as congregations use our insti-

tutions to provide avenues of sanity in an over-busy culture?

LREDA cordially invites all UU religious professionals to join together for refreshments and conversation at a special GA event. Unitarian Universalist Dr. William Doherty, professor at the University of Minnesota, family therapist, author, and one of the initiators of the Take Back Your Time movement, will help us process how our congregations can deal with this issue.

Faith Development in a Too Much of Everything World

Our faith development efforts for children risk being swamped by the me-first, frantic, turbo-charged consumer culture. It doesn't help that we operate on a provider-consumer model of program delivery with fragmented riches of children, youth, and adult ministries. It's time for a new conversation about community based, countercultural faith development.

This will be held on Friday, June 22, 4:30-5:45 p.m., in the Oregon Room, Doubletree Hotel.

Bring the professionals you work with to develop a team approach to providing support! All PLCC groups are invited: ministers, religious educators, musicians, administrators, and community ministers. This issue is one of many that can be best approached by unified work in both programmatic and administrative efforts. Hope to see you there for good food and good conversation! ●

Annual Program Fund Ribbons at General Assembly

APF ribbons are provided to those representing Fair Share Honor Congregations, Merit Congregations, and Leadership Congregations, with special buttons for 10+ year Honor Congregations. Ministers can receive theirs during Ministry Days at the APF display table. During GA, ribbons and buttons will be available at the Stewardship and Development

booth. To ensure representatives and delegates receive their ribbons, please remind your office staff or treasurer to get APF contributions in the mail by June 1 and paid in full before GA. It takes time for checks to move through the postal service and bank processing system to be credited to your congregation. Refer to your year-end statement for amount and mailing address. Contact the APF Office with questions at apf@uua.org or 617-948-6512. ●

Association Sundays

What happens on Association Sunday?

On October 14, 2007, participating ministers and lay leaders across the country are invited to speak to their congregations about the Unitarian Universalist Association and the campaign to grow our faith. We ask that you take a special collection that day to support the UUA's growth and outreach projects, and that you help us inspire your congregation to generously support our campaign.

Why Grow? Why Now? Simply put, more UUs are needed to help heal the wounded world. People are seeking a faith community that stands up for peace and justice—and they need to know how to find us.

Now is the time to bring our message of peace, justice, and religious inclusiveness to the world. With your participation, we can make our voices heard. Help us grow Unitarian Universalism in spirit, influence, and numbers.

Association Sunday: Save the Date! There is strength in numbers. That's why we hope you will participate in Association Sunday on October 14. Together we can build the momentum we need to grow our faith.

For more information contact Cherrise Haakonsen, Congregational Giving Assistant, at 617-948-6544 or associationsunday@uua.org. The website is uua.org/giving/association_sunday. ●

UU University

Last year a new program was unveiled before GA: UU University. Its purpose is to provide intensive leadership training experience for lay leaders in our congregations. Initially conceived as a biennial event, we now plan to offer it annually due to popular demand. This year's keynote speaker is Gil Rendle, who will speak on leading change in congregations. Workshops will be in three tracks:

- (1) Sharing Our Leadership, with a presentation, Finding Balance in Leadership, by David Rynick, and a workshop on leadership development models led by Rev. Tom Schade and others;

- (2) Fostering Our Generosity, featuring two workshops by Rev. Laurel Hallman; and
- (3) Growing Our Faith, featuring David Rynick, on the spirituality of welcoming the stranger and a panel discussion on how we can successfully "market" our faith.

We realize that these presentations conflict with CENTER Day and UUMA events, and while we welcome the participation of ministers, we know you have other priorities as well. We hope you'll encourage your lay leaders to attend, and will engage in a full discussion with them about what they learned and how they can best share their learnings when you return to your congregations. We have begun a conversation with CENTER about

how we might, in the future, integrate UU University and Ministry Days, and Rev. Ed Piper from CENTER has volunteered to work with us to explore this possibility for 2008.

An edited version of UUU 2006, featuring Peter Steinke, will be available for sale at GA or through your District Office. We hope this program will support your congregation's ministry by helping to educate those who share this work with you.

The UUU Planning Team is Gini Courter, Rev. Harlan Limpert, Rev. Scott Prinster, Rev. Nancy Bowen, Karen Araujo, Rev. Brian Eslinger, Janine Larson, Elyse Reznick, and Rev. Terasa Cooley. Contact uuuniversity@uua.org for information or to share ideas and feedback. ●



The Religious Leader

NEWS FROM THE UUA MINISTRY & PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP STAFF GROUP

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