

The Religious Leader

Office of the Director

Beth Miller, bmiller@uua.org and Julie Shaw, jshaw@uua.org

From the Director

As you peruse this pre-GA edition of the Religious Leader, our last in this form, you will read about the many changes in the works. I know you will welcome Sarah Lammert when she arrives in August and offer her your support as the merger of the Ministry and Professional Leadership (MPL) and Lifespan Faith Development (LFD) staff groups into the new Ministries and Faith Development (MFD) staff group evolves. Sarah comes with solid experience in ministry and as a leader in the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA), excellent leadership skills, creativity, and a deep love for our faith. And Sarah is both smart and wise. I know she will be a tremendous asset to the UUA and to your work in our congregations and the larger communities you serve.

For me, of course, the most significant change is my own departure which makes this a hard column to write. I've loved my work and will miss all of you. I've been so grateful to you and quite proud of the many collaborations and partnerships MPL has engaged in with your professional organizations and credentialing committees in the four years I've been at the UUA. My work with many of you as individuals has also been especially meaningful, even when it has been hard for both of us. It has been clear to me that MPL's mission is to serve Unitarian Universalism by supporting and strengthening the religious professionals who serve our congregations and larger communities. The work of religious professionals is to imbue all of their work with the intention of manifesting our religious values in the world, striving to make it more loving and more just. Unitarian Universalism has a powerful saving message, one that sometimes feels difficult to lift up amid the cacophony of fear, isolation, materialism, polarization, racism, and general despondency that often seems epidemic in our world. But when we hold this higher purpose in our hearts and minds, stand together in whatever configurations we find ourselves at any given moment, and move in the same direction as partners, we're a strong and significant force for good. It's been my daily goal to help us do that from my perch at the UUA. More than a professional goal, that's always been my calling and it will continue to be wherever ministry takes me next. I'm still your colleague and I know our paths will continue to cross. I look forward to holding hands with you as we move along.

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We know that changes must be marked. MPL wanted to celebrate John Weston's amazing contributions upon his retirement and to welcome Keith Kron as the new Transitions Director. It was Keith's first day on the job. Kim Wilson came up from Connecticut to let us thank her and say goodbye as we marked the elimination of her position as Internship Clearinghouse Coordinator as part of the cost cutting measures we had undertaken earlier in the year. We also acknowledged the loss of our Administrators for the Regional Subcommittees on Candidacy, although they were not with us. And there was my departure as Director of MPL. What could we do to acknowledge all of these changes and celebrate happy endings, sad endings, and bright new beginnings, all at the same time? I assigned the task to Julie Shaw and Jory Agate and what did they come up with, creative geniuses that they are? A Duck Tour through Boston and into the Charles River. If you have no idea what that is, check it out at <http://www.bostonducktours.com/>. Of course we had yummy desserts and said nice things to each other, too. But our particular constellation of changes seemed so bizarre that quaking our way through Boston just seemed right. It rained, but that didn't stop us. The violent thunderstorm that sprung up while we were eating dessert and saying nice things had passed and by Duck time it was only a gentle drizzle. Our Duck Boat driver and tour guide was dressed as a superhero, complete with tights, cape, and funny glasses. How that fits with Duck Tours is beyond me, but it somehow fit the day. Our celebration was weirdly wonderful and just right. We say that agility is a desirable quality in religious professionals. I think part of agility is the ability to find humor in any situation. MPL is an agile bunch!

I know that many of you wonder what I will be doing when my job here ends after GA. I don't know yet. I have decided that I won't do an interim ministry next year, although that possibility is an attractive one to consider in the future. I'm seriously considering a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Residency. I've enjoyed the chaplaincy work I've done in the past and feel I would be good as a CPE supervisor. A year long Residency would both equip me for staff chaplaincy positions and allow me to explore the idea of continuing into supervision training. I am also considering other nonprofit leadership for organizations with missions compatible with my calling. Nonprofit work would allow me to continue to grow in the managerial skills I've developed at the UUA. I am not tied to the Boston area which expands my options as well. And I might just do none of that for awhile. I am grateful to the UUA for a severance package that allows me the flexibility to take some time off. I am so aware that I am privileged to have both time and possibilities. So many people who lose their jobs in today's economic climate have neither and are financially and personally devastated.

I know that many of you are going through changes, too. This is the season for departures, some planned and happy and others fraught with pain and regret. My own experience has been that there are always gifts to be found in even very difficult changes, if I am open to them. This has given me great faith in grace. That doesn't mean that I deny my own sorrow, pain and anger or avoid the 'what ifs' and 'should haves' that are part of dealing with and healing from hard transitions. One must allow oneself to grieve the missed opportunities and lost relationships. But grace still happens. It's like the sun breaking through the clouds after, and often even during, a storm. It happens whether we look up and see it or are too focused with our concerns down below to notice. I'll tell you what I keep telling myself: Look up!

May you find grace and many blessings. I love you.

Beth

*Ministerial Credentialing / Internship Clearinghouse*David Pettee, dpettee@uua.org - Christine May, cmay@uua.org - Marion Bell, mbell@uua.org**Ministerial Credentialing Report**

I returned from my three month sabbatical in mid-March feeling very refreshed and very appreciative of the opportunity to work on a book identifying modern day family patterns and dynamics of descendants of those who were enslavers or were engaged in the slave trade. It's been a powerful research project that has taken me to ten states. By the end of June, when we will be finishing the active part of our research, my co-author and I will have listened to the stories of more than 100 people with this heritage.

During my sabbatical, Chris May, MCO Administrator, and Jory Agate, Ministerial Development Director, picked up the parts of my work that could not wait. I remain very thankful and in their debt. When I began my sabbatical, I imagined that the work of the Ministerial Credentialing Office (MCO) could be significantly different upon my return, aware that the realities of a difficult budget cycle weren't going to go away. Nonetheless, I was saddened to learn that budget cuts necessitated a reduction in UUA staff, five who were accountable to me: Kim Wilson, Internship Clearinghouse Coordinator, and the four Regional Sub-Committee on Candidacy (RSCC) Administrators; Maureen Tobin with the New England RSCC; Connie Moore with the South East RSCC, Velna Kolodziej with the MidWest RSCC and Stephanie Barnhizer with the West RSCC. I am very grateful that all four RSCC Administrators will continue to serve through June 30, 2010, the end of the 2010 fiscal year.

I will miss all five of these good people, who brought commitment, professionalism, and good humor to the important collective work that we do. In addition, along with others here in Ministry and Professional Leadership, I will be saying goodbye to Beth Miller, who will be leaving us at the end of June.

The responsibilities of the Internship Clearinghouse have already begun to migrate back to the UUA and into the portfolios of several Ministry and Professional Leadership staff. I will be the lead contact person and will refer emails and phone calls accordingly. One important change, as a consequence of Kim's departure, is the expectation from the Ministerial Fellowship Committee that interns accept full responsibility to meet and fulfill the expectations of the areas of academic, UU, and professional competence that are outlined in the UUA Internship Manual. When the MFC upgraded their expectations around internships several years ago, the Committee asked Kim to 'approve' the Learning and Service Agreements, to make sure that all new interns understood these new expectations. By and large, internship sites have made the necessary adjustments.

If you are concerned about any aspect of your internship, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions. Already, I am receiving lots of emails and phone calls. I'm happy to consult with you to avoid complications with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee down the road.

In a manner similar to the responsibilities of the Internship Clearinghouse, the work of the four Regional Sub-Committees on Candidacy is also coming back to the Ministerial Credentialing Office. We expect that all the paperwork that has been accumulated by the four RSCC Administrators for all applicants, aspirants, and candidates will be sent to the Ministerial Credentialing Office during the first week of July. Chris May will become the primary point person for questions related to becoming an aspirant, scheduling RSCC interviews and handling all paperwork. Either Chris May or myself will be in attendance at all RSCC meetings held each year to ensure that the work of the committees continues without interruption.

We are working with the IT folks at the UUA to make as much of the required paperwork accessible online, to cut down on paper use. In addition, we are thinking about creating a weekly conference call, where anyone can call in to speak with Chris May or me about the credentialing process. While we are expecting that there are important benefits related to centralizing some of the RSCC administrative work, particularly during the first few months, we are asking for your patience if the response time is a little slower than you might prefer. We will be working to integrate 48 more hours per week of work into the portfolios of Ministry and Professional Leadership staff.

Finally, as many of us make plans to attend General Assembly in Minneapolis, if you would like to arrange an individual half-hour appointment with me on Friday morning, June 25th or Saturday morning, June 26th, please send an email directly to Chris May cmay@uua.org. My schedule is usually full by the time General Assembly begins, so please make an appointment in advance. If either of those two blocks of time is not good, please let me know, and we'll try to find some other time to meet.

In the faith - David Pettee, Ministerial Credentialing Director

Religious Education, Music Leader Credentialing & Renaissance Programs

Beth Williams, bethwilliams@uua.org - Paula Welling, pwelling@uua.org

RE & ML Credentialing Director on sabbatical:

I (Beth Williams) will be on sabbatical from July 1 to October 4, 2010. A major focus of this time will be a six-week trip to Latin America. In August, I will be in Guatemala for two weeks, visiting my tutor and continuing my Spanish studies. From Guatemala, I go back to El Salvador for a month. In Santa Ana, El Salvador I will be working again with ASAPROSAR (Salvadoran Association for Rural Health, www.asoprosar.net), an NGO dedicated to working with the rural poor in the western half of that country in health education and community empowerment. Among other things, I hope to explore with them the possible role of spiritual support in their holistic approach to health care. During my sabbatical, please contact my assistant, Paula Welling (pwelling@uua.org, 617-948-6418) for all questions about Religious Education and Music Leadership Credentialing. If Paula cannot answer your question, she will know who can, and will be assisted by Jan Devor, RECC chair, Jory Agate, MRE (and UUA Ministerial Development Director), Ken Herman, MLCC chair, and Erik Wikstrom, UUA Liaison to UUMN.

The Religious Education Credentialing Program

Many congratulations to the following religious educators who were awarded credentials by the RECC this spring: Sparrow Alden - Credentialed Religious Educator Level; Brenda Berry - Credentialed Religious Educator, Associate Level; De Anna Hoyle - Credentialed Religious Educator, Associate Level; Bobbie Poole - Credentialed Religious Educator, Master Level; Irene Praeger - Credentialed Religious Educator Level; Jeanette Ruyle - Credentialed Religious Educator Level; Tandi Rogers - Credentialed Religious Educator, Master 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 is recognized through these efforts:

- Katy Carpman, TX
- Liz Grimes, NC
- Melissa Magdaleno, TX
- Michelle Richards, IN
- Laura Ross, MI
- Debra Zagaeski, MA

RE Credentialing at General Assembly: Come to LREDA Professional Day on June 23, 2010 at the Downtown Hilton Minneapolis for a morning question and answer session on the UUA's flexible and creative RE Credentialing program with Jan Devor and Beth Williams. No question is too great or small! On June 24, stop by our informal RE Credentialing gathering from 2:30 - 4 pm, also at the Downtown Hilton Minneapolis. Visit the LREDA and Ministry and Professional Leadership booths for additional information. We are pleased to announce that religious educators that were awarded Credentialed Religious Educator status beginning this year will be participating in the Service of the Living Tradition.

For more information about the RE Credentialing Program, please see our [website](#). Questions may be addressed to Paula Welling, RE & Music Leader Credentialing Assistant, at pwelling@uua.org

Renaissance Program News

Beginning July 1, 2010 the Renaissance Program will have a new home within the UUA. It will be moving to the curriculum development office of the new Ministries and Faith Development staff group. Aisha Hauser (ahauser@uua.org) will be the contact. Up until July 1, please continue to contact Paula Welling (pwelling@uua.org) for all your Renaissance program needs.

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

- June 3-6, 2010, Curriculum, Tulsa, OK, Jennifer Nichols, jnichols@uua.org
- July 4-9, 2010, Multicultural, The Mountain, Highlands, NC, Tandy Scheffler, ordrets@bellsouth.net
- August 19-21, 2010, UU Identity, Manchester, NH, Joy Blanchette, uua-me.nh.vt@comcast.net

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

- Rick Carkin, NNE
- Linda Cobb, MS
- Sarah Liebermann, MB
- Courtney McKenny, MS
- Brenda Stetson, OM
- Linda Weaver, JP

Music Leadership Credentialing

We congratulate the following music directors who were awarded Credentialed Music Leader status by the Music Leadership Credentialing Committee this spring: Sharon Douglas, AZ; Mary Ann East, VA.

We welcome the following music leaders who were accepted into the Music Leadership Credentialing program as the class of 2010: Cindy Harmon-Jones, TX; Art Kuller, CA; Dara Schumaier, DE. Shawn McCann, MA is also joining the class of 2010.

Music Leadership Credentialing at General Assembly: If you are interested in learning more about the Music Leadership Credentialing Program, please drop by our informal music credentialing gathering during General Assembly. It will be held on Friday June 25 from 11 am to 12 pm at the Hilton Minneapolis in the Director's Row 2 room (third floor). This will be an opportunity to chat, get information, share experiences and celebrate this year's credentialed music leaders, Sharon Douglas and Mary Ann East. Visit the UUMN and Ministry and Professional Leadership booths for additional information.

If you think that becoming a candidate for the Music Leadership Credentialing program might be right for you and your congregation, please visit our [website](#) for program details or visit the Music Leadership Credentialing Committee's Fan page on [Facebook](#). Questions may be addressed to Paula Welling, RE & Music Leader Credentialing Assistant, at pwelling@uua.org

Rev. Beth Williams, Religious Education & Music Leader Credentialing Director,
and Renaissance Program Co-Director

Transitions

John Weston, jweston@uua.org – Keith Kron, kkron@uua.org – Emily Schwab, eschwab@uua.org

Reflections on His Departure – John Weston

I announced my retirement (effective after this year's GA) a couple of years in advance. I said then that "I wanted to explore for myself what it means to be in transition, and report to colleagues on what I find. It seemed like a good Last Thing for a Transitions Director to do." And until yesterday (May 20) I thought I had experienced and (reported on) the full gamut of professional and personal concerns that would come up. But yesterday came this message from a dear colleague: "I suspect that our paths will not likely cross in the future so wanted to wish you absolutely all the best wherever and whatever you and Susan end up being about." On my 40-minute walk to Ruggles Street Station shortly after receiving that note, the first eight lines of Shakespeare's sonnet 29 repeated themselves over and over in my mind:

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf Heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featur'd like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least . . .

“Why the long face?” I asked myself, and the answer came.

My departure, which I had heretofore looked on as a situational change, is an existential change. It is a kind of dying, and has death’s finality. The time for second chances – for doing something better the next time that I did not do so well the first, for connecting with someone with whom earlier interactions had not panned out, for (let’s face it) generally being better thought of – that time has come and gone. The time for hopefulness – the future-directed perkiness that has sustained me in thinking well of my intentions even as others don’t think so much of some of my actions – has run out. I cannot hope for (let’s face the whole thing) more recognition than the miserable crusts that have already been thrown my way. The hungry self must . . . go hungry.

All these things being true, I wouldn’t have served a year less nor would I serve a year more. I am grateful to the UUA and to so many colleagues who have trusted me with this sensitive ministry. To my fellow directors in MPL past and present – Diane Miller, David Hubner, and Beth Miller; Ralph Mero and Richard Nugent; Michelle Bentley and Jory Agate; Ellen Brandenburg and David Pettee; Erik Wikstrom; and Beth Williams – many thanks for your fellowship. What good teams we have been! To Emily Schwab, what a pleasure it has been to work with you! And to Keith Kron and Sarah Lammert, best wishes for good new ideas. It’s not as if anyone has this stuff figured out!

Sightings – John Weston

For the decade 2000-2009 an average of 57 ministers were called annually. The count for 2010-11 is 50 (assuming that the few remaining candidating week votes all result in calls). That’s ten more calls than last year, in line with slowly increasing employment figures nationally.

Nevertheless, there is a lot of pain in our congregations and our ministry. While 48 ministers have been contracted to serve in transitional ministries in the coming year, and an additional 29 are serving a repeat year in the congregation they served the year before, yet another 48 (repeat: 48) colleagues have submitted applications to serve the 27 congregational positions as yet unfilled, of which only 14 are full-time. Last year amid similar misery I identified two takeaways, which I repeat here:

Takeaway #1: it gives me no pleasure to say that ministers in search of opportunities to serve should develop a Plan B to last for the duration of the recession and, employment being a lagging indicator, likely a year beyond that.

Takeaway #2: ministers feeling themselves to be in the late stages of their career would do their colleagues as well as their congregations a very real service by refusing to be coaxed into longer than optimal service by their own understandable anxiety about finances. The old saw still holds true: We get to leave either too early or too late. Too early is better.

--John

Upon Arrival - Keith Kron

A couple of months ago, one of my former 4th grade students found me on Facebook. I discovered he's now 26 and a pilot for United Express Airlines as well as just becoming a professional triathlete. Looking at his website, I could easily see the face of the 4th grade student I remembered so clearly.

In our exchanges, he told me he had really looked up to me and then emulated me as role model. I reminded him he used to call me "Mr. K.K." which fortunately I'd taken as a sign of affection, though it had annoyed me at the time.

He also said it was so nice to have had a teacher who had been so good at teaching math and science and how much that had helped him. That intrigued me since I would have sworn the best subjects I taught were geography and literature. When I reminded him of all the maps in the room and the geography quizzes, he told me, "So that's where I got it from."

He also told me what a great athlete and kickball player I was. I reminded him that I was, at the time, the only person on the playground over 5 feet tall and that now all he had to be was 5'8" to look down on me.

I taught Jared in my last year of teaching elementary school. I suppose it's human and quite rewarding to want to find out that you made a difference—even if it may not have been the difference you thought.

I was very aware of my last year and trying to leave my school, my students, and my fellow teaching colleagues in a way that I would look back on later and feel good about how I had left.

I write this knowing that the publication date will come and I will have started as the new Transitions Director and my time as Director of OBGLTC will be completed. I hope this transition will be a kind and graceful as John Weston's move toward retirement and leaving work he has done so admirably well for 13 years. I do know he has touched lives in ways he too probably does not know. I am very grateful Emily Schwab will still be around to tell me how things have been done.

I applied for this position at the suggestion of a friend who thought I'd be good at doing it, since I've been in so many of congregations and know so many of our colleagues. I also know it is an awesome responsibility, but the responsibility of serving both colleagues and congregations is perhaps my greatest love in ministry.

I have any number of hopes for the work—learning as much as I can in the first year is top amongst them. Incorporating Beyond Categorical Thinking into the work of the Transitions Office is another. And I would like to see a similar program for colleagues, knowing that a good match for a congregation may be in a place where they never would have dreamed of going (as well as that congregation on the ocean they've dreamed of serving might need different skills than the strengths of the minister wanting to serve them.)

I was also struck by a statement in the Settlement Handbook sent to reassure congregations that the Transitions Office works diligently to make sure a congregation is getting a minister it thinks its getting. I totally agree. And I hope in the name of fairness to figure out ways to reciprocate—and help ministers be sure that they are getting the congregation they think they are getting.

I will be counting on colleagues and congregations to be co-conspirators in these hopes. I do not know everything, nor will I ever. Just know the Office is here to help you on your journey as a ministerial triathlete.

Many thanks for all you do for Unitarian Universalism. In faith, Keith

Ministerial Development

Jory Agate, jagate@uua.org - Margaret Montore, mmontore@uua.org

Challenges, Questions, Pitfalls, and Joys: The Reality of Serving a Church - Sunday, August 29 to Friday, September 3, Star Island, NH - This conference will focus on clergy serving in their first 1-10 years of ministry. It is jointly sponsored by the UUA and UCC and welcomes colleagues to come for 6 days of programming, collegiality, and time for rest and renewal as you gear up for the new church program year. Morning Theme talk will be led by Rev. Dr. Larry Peers: "*Expeditions Into What's Possible: Re-Viewing, Revising, Recomposing Our Ministries*". For more information and to register, check out the website at <http://starisland.org/conferences/2010-listings/clergy/>

CENTER Institute - February 7-11, 2011, Asilomar Conference Center. Join UUMA members to engage in an intense time of study and learning at this beautiful historic facility on the beach in Monterey, CA. The week will consist of in-depth workshops, dynamic worship, collegial connections and spiritual renewal. For more information about workshop and worship leaders and scholarship and registration information, check out the website at <https://uuma.site-ym.com/event/institute>.

Continuing Education Grants - Funds have been exhausted for this fiscal year but you may now apply for grants for next fiscal year. Your application can cover CE events taking place any time between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011. While priority is given to certain applications, applying early definitely increases your chances of receiving a grant. If you are interested in getting a grant for the CENTER Institute in February, it is best to apply now. Awards will be made by mid-July. Please see our website for the latest guidelines and an application form.

<http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/ministerialdevelopment/continuingeducation/23119.shtml>

Natalie Gulbrandsen Scholarship Fund for International Studies - Congratulations to Rev. Carol Ann Cole who received the Gulbrandsen Scholarship this year for \$2313 in order to study social justice issues and how they are being addressed in northeast India. This scholarship is awarded to ministers and candidates who are interested in broadening their liberal religious knowledge and understanding, and in strengthening their international sympathies by immersing themselves in or studying in a developing country. If you are interested in apply for next year's scholarship, check out our website at <http://www.uua.org/giving/awardsscholarships/89676.shtml>.

Residential Master Classes in Spiritual Leadership with Thomas Moore and Wayne Walder. A study Group, of 2 residential days, 2 months of home study, and 2 residential days to end. Beginning Oct 4-6, 2010 through Dec 6-8, 2010 <http://www.soul-spirit-dialogues.ca>

Ministers in Preliminary Fellowship— The next deadline for applications for renewal of fellowship is July 15, 2010. The deadline will be strictly adhered to and any applications with missing documents will be postponed until the December 2010 MFC meeting. To insure your application is complete, it is recommended you submit it by July 1 so that our staff may review it and inform you of any missing items before the deadline.

Webinars – Our office has begun offering monthly webinars on the MFC requirements for preliminary fellowship. If you are interested in participating in a webinar, please be in touch with Marion Bell, at mbell@uua.org to be informed of the next available webinar time.

First Year Ministers – If you received Preliminary Fellowship this church year, 2009–2010, please keep an eye out this summer for a “Welcome to Ministry” packet from our office. You will also be invited to a special reception at GA, an online webinar describing the process for moving through Preliminary Fellowship, and the First Year Minister’s Seminar in Boston next Feb. 28 – Mar. 2, 2011.

Attention All Ministers – Please be sure to update the UUA when your contact information changes, especially your email address. As part of our fiscal management, UUA is using less snail mail and more email for communication. If we have outdated information, you will miss out on important information.

Regarding Deceased Ministers – Please notify our office immediately when you learn about the death of one of our colleagues.

In faith,

Jory Agate, jagate@uua.org

Margaret Montore, mmontore@uua.org

Office of Church Staff Finance/UUA Health Plan Office

Richard Nugent, rnugent@uua.org - Joyce Stewart, jstewart@uua.org - Jim Sargent, jsargent@uua.org
Liz Oliver, loliver@uua.org - Linda Rose, lrose@uua.org

MOVING TO ANOTHER CONGREGATION THIS SUMMER?

Ministers who are transitioning from one congregation to another this summer should have received an informational email explaining how to ensure seamless continuation of health, dental, life, and long term disability insurance as well as retirement plan contributions. If you have not received this information, please contact Liz Oliver in the Office of Church Staff Finances. Liz can be reached at loliver@uua.org or (617) 948-6401.

UU ORGANIZATIONS RETIREMENT PLAN MOVING...

On May 20, the UUA Board of Trustees voted unanimously to shift from Fidelity to TIAA-CREF as recordkeeper of the UU Organizations Retirement Plan. The recommendation to move to TIAA-CREF came after two years of exhaustive study by the UUA Compensation, Benefits, and Pension Committee. The Board, Committee, and staff of the Office of Church Staff Finances believe that in terms of recordkeeping and administrative capacity, investment performance and fees, customer service, and compatibility with the mission of the UUA, TIAA-CREF will serve the retirement needs of our religious professionals and other staff best.

Recordkeeping and Administrative Capacity - The CBPC retained Angell Pension Group to evaluate the administrative and participant service capabilities of Fidelity Investments and TIAA-CREF, including their capacity in the areas of customer service, communications, education, and recordkeeping. Angell Pension Group reported: "The proposed recordkeeping and administrative services for Fidelity and TIAA-CREF have more similarities than differences. No single issue eliminates either from consideration." In addition to the evaluation performed by Angell, UUA staff members carefully examined the capabilities of both companies. Their work included site visits to both vendors' operations centers. Their conclusion was that TIAA-CREF has the capabilities necessary to serve the UUA and the plan participants in a manner substantially comparable to Fidelity Investments.

Investment Performance and Fees - The CBPC retained Fiduciary Investment Advisors ("FIA") to negotiate with each firm a recommended menu of investment choices. FIA concluded that significant changes in the fund menu would be warranted even if the UUA retained Fidelity as recordkeeper. After extensive negotiations with each firm, FIA recommended a menu of choices for each firm that would, when compared to the current fund menu, provide higher return, broader opportunities for diversification, and lower fees. FIA concluded that the selection of either firm would be prudent.

Customer Service - The CBPC paid particular attention to the quality of customer service that individual plan participants, congregations, and the UUA staff could expect to receive in their dealings with the recordkeeper. Relating to participants, this included statements, telephone contacts, on-line access to accounts and information, and in-person access (e.g., at offices of the recordkeeper or workshops conducted by recordkeeper for plan participants). For congregations and the UUA, this included dealing with administrative issues, contributions and any problems that might arise. The Committee and the UUA staff have concluded that TIAA-CREF offers a high level of customer service and responsiveness to queries and issues.

Ease of Transition - Because FIA recommended that the preponderance of the money in participants' accounts should be moved to different mutual funds even if Fidelity was retained, there would be some transition issues regardless of which firm was selected. Both Angell and FIA concluded that the transition will not be difficult for participants, because all existing investments will be "mapped," or automatically transferred, to a new fund that is similar in investment characteristics.

Mission Compatibility - The change in companies was spurred by a growing commitment by the UUA to genocide-free investing coupled with its disappointment in Fidelity's persistent refusal to consider human rights in their investment choices. After reviewing the records of the two firms, the UUA Committee on Socially Responsible Investing strongly recommended choosing TIAA-CREF as the retirement plan record-keeper. Angell Pension Group reported its conclusion as follows: "All things being considered as outlined above and after factoring all fiduciary considerations to make an informed and prudent decision on behalf of the participants, if mission compatibility is an institutionally important decision making factor to UUA, then TIAA-CREF may be the more appropriate choice."

UUA President Rev. Peter Morales said, "We are morally bound to consider the impact of our financial decisions. We could not continue to watch passively as money we earned through religious service was directed to companies profiting from a genocidal regime. As clients of Fidelity, we tried to create change from within, but after four years, it became clear that Fidelity's position on investing in the Sudan hadn't changed one iota." Tim Brennan, the UUA's Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer, explained that he

would not have supported the switch unless the due diligence process demonstrated that TIAA-CREF could deliver outstanding performance, value, and customer service.

TIAA-CREF will be at GA – they will have a booth and offer several workshops introducing TIAA-CREF and explaining the transition process to plan participants, other church staff, treasurers, and other congregational leaders. We expect the transition to be relatively seamless. Plan participants will not have to do anything. Neither will plan participants nor the UUA Plan, itself, be charged anything for this conversion. Our investments will not lose value. In the coming month, the Office of Church Staff Finances will send an initial information packet to all 2,800 plan participants. Until the conversion is complete, which we expect around November 1, plan participants will continue to manage their retirement funds with Fidelity Investments. More information can be found at www.uua.org/retirement.

Office of Worship and Music Resources

Erik Wikstrom, ewikstrom@uua.org

The WorshipWeb continues to evolve and grow! First, a reminder that the vast majority of these resources come from the fertile creativity of the clergy, professional musicians, professional religious educators, and lay worship leaders who are willing to share the fruits of their labor with the rest of our movement. The WAMR Office is eager to hear from you if you've created something that you think could be of help to others – and if it's been of help to you there's probably another congregation out there who could benefit from it as well!

Recent changes or additions to the WorshipWeb include:

- ↪ A reformatting of the Music Module to make the content on its home page easier to find.
- ↪ A new section in the Music Module – “Insights & Instructions” – which includes essays and articles that range from “how to” to more thought provoking. (Including tips to help musicians who might be wrestling with the jazz and folk rhythms in *Singing the Journey!*)
- ↪ The WorshipWeb is also now home to materials related to the topic of Contemporary Worship that used to be found elsewhere on uua.org.

WorshipWeb has been a component of the Spiritual Life section of the UUA's website, and this section has undergone something of a face lift also. Here you will now find links to meditations, sermons (video and podcasts), information about spirituality, curricula, the Unitarian Universalist Spiritual Directors network, and the many communities that help to nurture specific spiritual identities within our Association.

As always, the WorshipWeb depends on you. If there's something you have that we need, please send it along. If there's something you need that we don't have, please tell us. Together we can do so much more than any of us on our own.

Erik Walker Wikstrom, Worship and Music Resources

News, Resources and Possibilities

- **AUUA Professional Days in Minneapolis!**

We are very excited about this year's AUUA Professional Days preceding General Assembly in Minneapolis this year!

We will be meeting at the Crowne Plaza North*Star Downtown Hotel, about a 6 block walk from the Minneapolis Convention Center. We are very happy to be meeting at the Crowne Plaza Hotel; they have great facilities, and are friendly and welcoming! (<http://www.cpmnneapolis.com/>)

There's still time to register for this inspiring and educational event at: <http://www.auua.org>.

I am especially looking forward to hearing the Rev. Victoria Safford speak at our annual Banquet - she is a powerful and poetic speaker, and it will be a real treat to have her with us!

I am no less eager to witness Rev. Robert Latham's Wednesday morning workshop, "The Congregational Administrator," and to listen to our "Best Practices Panel," with Barbara Hubbard (Unity Unitarian, St. Paul), Debbie Bieber (Meadville Lombard), and Julie Slayton Frank (South Church, Portsmouth, NH), answer questions posed by our participants!

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions you might have about sending your congregation's administrator to the AUUA Professional Days events at this year's General Assembly!

Onward and Upward,

Chuck Rosene
AUUA President
crosene@uua.org

Come visit us at the AUUA exhibit booth at General Assembly

- **From the Chair of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee**

The members of the MFC join with me in wishing the Rev. Beth Miller well as she leaves her role at the UUA, which has included serving with us as the MFC executive Secretary. Beth has been diligent and sensitive in playing this role, and we will all miss working with her. We welcome our new colleague Rev. Sara Lammert and look forward to working with her.

Members of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee will join me at General Assembly for our usual and annual "Meet the MFC" Workshop. It will be held **in Room M100F at the Minneapolis Convention center from 10:45 AM to 12 Noon on Thursday, June 24**. This is usually an event that had a minimal presentation and lots of opportunities for questions. People who attend this workshop include aspirants, candidates, ministers, internship committee leaders, lay leaders interested in credentialing, spouses of all of the above, and people who might enjoy serving on the MFC some day!

Our three scheduled meetings are generally in late September, early December and late March, so there is but one meeting to report on since this publication was last posted.

We interviewed nineteen candidates and the range of decisions included fifteen I's, No II's, three III's, No IV's and one V.

We were pleased to be able to welcome UUA Vice President Harlan Limpert to observe sections of the March meeting. We continue to be responsive to questions and conversation from the various staff and Board appointees involved in reviewing credentialing.

Our public business agenda at the recent meeting included discussion on what constitutes a ministry that qualifies for consideration for preliminary fellowship review. As community ministries have expanded in scope, we are reviewing the definitions in place and asking ourselves who (beyond the minister personally) needs to affirm that a person is indeed engaged in a ministry. We also considered establishing a time frame within which a person who has been denied candidate status by a Regional Subcommittee on Candidacy, and discouraged from pursuing ministry, might be able to ask the MFC Executive Committee for permission to re-interview with an RSCC. That conversation continues.

The MFC next meets September 22 – 26, 2010 in Boston. We will be working on our business agenda in mid-August and I welcome your questions or suggestions.

--Rev. Wayne Arnason

• The Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF)

The Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF) at www.clfuu.org, is best known for connecting far-flung religious liberals; but we're a lot more than that. Have you wondered *what's in it for you*, a religious professional?

The CLF provides you with:

- Our monthly publication, *Quest*—plenty of sermon ideas, an RE page and food for your soul
- Podcasts
- A UU Loan library
- Online courses, communities, and covenant groups—outside of your congregation
- Pastoral care 800 line
- Prison Ministry's Letter Writing program—practice what you preach by engaging personally in more social justice work
- Military Ministry—talk with CLF staff and UU military chaplains about ways to invite military families into your congregation
- Worship resources—including more than 200 full worship services
- RE resources—including resource data bases, activities, RE columns, and weekly religious education curricula, sent via monthly emails
- Church of the *Younger* Fellowship—online ministry by and for Young Adults
- A gift shop, with classic UU chalice jewelry, order of service covers, and note cards

We hope you will join the CLF if you haven't already. Contact us at: www.clfuu.org/join, or (617) 948-6150.

Looking for Sunday morning worship resources? The Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF) can help lay leaders, committee members, and staff with a new resource titled,

Make Your Own Sundays!

Subscribers of this wonderful resource will be able to

- ☺ Choose a topic
- ☺ Choose whether they want opening words, chalice lighting words, meditations, children's stories, readings, sermons, or closing words
- ☺ Choose a format, choose a season, choose a holiday
- ☺ And add a cherry!

Put it all together, and you have all the components of Sunday morning worship.

A one-year subscription to the **Make Your Own Sundays** resource costs \$129.

Contact the CLF via email or phone, and we'll get you signed up: bmurray@clfu.org 617-948-6150

- **From Lifespan Faith Development**

Adult RE: Network and Share Resources at GA

The Lifespan Faith Development staff group will sponsor a gathering at GA for religious professionals and lay leaders who organize or coordinate adult religious education programming.

On Saturday, June 26, 2-3:30 p.m., Gail Forsyth-Vail, Adult Programs Director, will host the networking event at the Hilton Minneapolis and provide information about Tapestry of Faith programs for adults. Forsyth-Vail, who formerly served North Parish of North Andover (Mass.) Unitarian Universalist as director of religious education, is the author of *Stories in Faith: Exploring Our UU Principles and Sources Through Wisdom Tales* (2007) and co-author with Matt and Gail Tittle of *Harvest the Power: Developing Lay Leadership*, a Tapestry of Faith adult curriculum.

View Tapestry of Faith programs and resources for lifespan faith development, online: www.uua.org/tapestryoffaith.

Tapestry of Faith:

September Field Test Congregations Needed for New Children's and Youth Programs

Lifespan Faith Development seeks congregations diverse in location, size, and culture to field test four new Tapestry of Faith programs between September, 2010 and January, 2011. Three children's programs each offer 16 sessions and a program for youth of high school age, Place of Wholeness, offers 12.

Love Surrounds Us (Grades K-1; by the Rev. Lynn Kerr and Christy Olson) explores all the Principles in the context of Beloved Community. The program focuses on communities kindergarteners and first graders know – their family/home, school, and neighborhood – engaging children in activities that emphasize the love they feel in community. Children experience and live out UU values in community. Children come in knowing they are Unitarian Universalists, and leave knowing why.

Love Will Guide Us (Grades 2-3; by the Rev. Alice Anacheke-Naseman and Cathy Cartwright) emphasizes love as a constant guide as children approach life's questions and choices through the lens of our Unitarian Universalist Sources. Wisdom from our Sources helps participants answer questions such as "Where did we come from?" "What is our relationship to the Earth and other creatures?" and "How can we respond with love, even in bad situations?" Children learn that Unitarian Universalism values asking questions, even as they shape their own answers.

Love Connects Us (Grades 4-5; by Michelle Richards and Rev. Lynn Ungar) celebrates important ways Unitarian Universalists live our faith in covenanted community, using stories of faithful action motivated by love. Moved by love and gathered in spirit, we embrace our responsibility toward one another and the world at large. We encourage one another's search for truth and meaning. We strive to be active in peace-making and other efforts to improve our world.

Place of Wholeness (High School age youth; by Beth Dana and Jesse Jaeger) helps youth develop a holistic understanding of their Unitarian Universalist faith and build confidence in living their faith with integrity. The program nurtures Unitarian Universalist youth as inheritors of a strong faith tradition and co-creators of the faith the next generation will inherit. The curriculum emphasizes a sense of interdependence: The Opening reading states, "We are part of this living tradition. Through it we become whole, and through us it becomes whole." Participants engage with James Luther Adams' *Five Smooth Stones of Religious Liberalism*, deepening their understanding of our faith and how to claim it as their own.

To learn about field testing new Tapestry of Faith programs, contact fieldtest@uua.org or Alicia LeBlanc at 617-948-4371. Explore the expanding collection of Tapestry of Faith programs and resources for lifespan faith development, online: www.uua.org/tapestryoffaith.

- **New from Skinner House Books**

Serving with Grace: Lay Leadership as a Spiritual Practice, by Erik Walker Wikstrom

Discover how to experience congregational work as an integrated element in a fully rounded spiritual life. <http://www.uuabookstore.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=1212>

Story, Song and Spirit: Fun and Creative Worship Services for All Ages, by Erika Hewitt

These multigenerational worship services offer new ways to celebrate the beginning of the church year, Christmas, coming of age and Earth Day, as well as services for any time, to engage children through elders. <http://www.uuabookstore.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=1213>

The Spirit Leads: Margaret Fuller in Her Own Words, edited by Barry Andrews

Commemorates the bicentennial of Margaret Fuller's birth with a dynamic collection of excerpts from her writings. <http://www.uuabookstore.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=1210>

- **The Ferry Beach Group**

Ministers Are Invited to Join The Ferry Beach Group: A Ministerial Study Group

In the midst of the day to day demands of ministry, scholarship can become a luxury. Established ministerial study groups (the Greenfield, Prairie and Cedar Hill Groups) have long provided a place for ministers to remember the joy of study and the rewards of dialoguing with colleagues over the course of several days. In the spirit of the study group tradition, Ferry Beach will host The Ferry Beach Group: A Ministerial Study Group, July 24 - July 31.

This six day conference, coordinated by Rev. Katie Lawson and Rev. Telos Whitfield, offers ministers the opportunity to sink deeply into one topic through reading, discussion, and writing. This year participants will focus on truth. How do we arrive at the truth in a way that acknowledges subjective experience? What does the free and responsible search for truth look like? How do we know when we've found it? How much of the truth do you need to understand in order to feel that you can speak truth to power?

For the Ferry Beach Group's inaugural year, if you bring a ministerial colleague to the conference, both you and your colleague will come for half price. Additional financial assistance can also be requested through the Ministerial Development Office. For more information about Ferry Beach and The Ferry Beach Group, see the Ferry Beach website at www.ferrybeach.org.

- **From UUA Stewardship and Development**

Association Sunday 2010: Celebrating 50 Years and the Future of Our Faith!

Association Sunday is a wonderful occasion to come together to affirm the connections between us. This year we have even more reason to celebrate as we near our 50th anniversary as an Association and community of congregations – and in honor of this occasion, we'll be holding a special raffle.

If you haven't already, [sign up for Association Sunday](#) today to be entered in a raffle to win an Association Sunday service with UUA President Peter Morales! ! What better way to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our Association of Congregations than with the president himself? He will personally visit the winning congregation, preach at the service, and kick off the semicentennial celebrations.

This significant year in Unitarian Universalist history is such a wonderful opportunity to connect with the Association and with other congregations. We hope you join the celebration!

For more information visit www.uua.org/associationsunday or email Katrina Bergmann at associationsunday@uua.org.

- **From the Office of Data Services**

Congregations Can Edit Minister Contact Information Online Using My.UUA.org

In 2009, UUA Data Services unveiled my.UUA.org, an online system for congregations to update contact information about their members and leaders. The new system makes it faster and more reliable to report this information so the congregation's members can receive the quarterly UU World magazine. More than half of our member congregations are registered to use my.UUA.org, and the system now includes the ability to edit contact information about a congregation's ministers.

Each congregation can authorize a staff member, minister, or volunteer to be the chosen "Data Services Updater" who will register for a my.UUA.org account and submit these updates. Congregations can use this system to edit their minister's preferred mailing address, e-mail, and phone information. If your congregation has not yet registered with my.UUA.org, please take a look at the Account Registration web page, which includes a link to our Frequently Asked Questions.

Account Registration: my.uua.org/accounts

For more information, contact: data_services@uua.org

- **The Last Word**

Announcing *The Religious Leaders' Forum*

This will be the last time the Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group sends out an issue of *The Religious Leader*. In part this is because, as you have no doubt already heard, MPL is merging with Lifespan Faith Development to create the new Ministries and Faith Development Staff Group. Yet this is not just about institutional shuffling. As other UUA staff groups have shifted to more dynamic technologies it is time we move forward and join them.

Beginning **September 14, 2010** we will be publishing a blog, titled *The Religious Leaders' Forum*. (<http://religiousleader.blogs.uua.org/>) It will be a combination of inspiration and information that we hope will come to be a welcome and perhaps even a pleasurable part of your week.

In addition to the important news that you're used to getting in *The Religious Leader*, the new format will allow us to include relevant book reviews, information about upcoming workshops, and other content that never fit into our previous publication. We will also be soliciting authors from each of the professional groups - clergy, musicians, religious educators, and administrators - to offer weekly reflections for three month "terms," in the style of the *First Days Record*.

We will see you in September.

The Religious Leader

MPL Staff Group Contact Information may be found at

<http://www.uua.org/aboutus/professionalstaff/ministryprofessional/index.php>

Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group

25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108

Fax: (617) 742-2875

Professional Contact Directory

AUUA - Association of UU Administrators:

Chuck Rosene, President

crosene@uua.org

Gail Donkin, Administrator

admin@auua.org

LREDA - Liberal Religious Educators Association:

Anne Bancroft, President

abbancroft@gmail.com

Cindy Leitner, Administrator

admin@LREDA.org

SCM - Society for Community Ministries:

Deborah Holder, President

deborahholder@mindspring.com

UUMA - UU Ministers Association:

Robert Eller-Isaacs, President

president@uuma.org

Janette M. Lallier, Administrator

administrator@uuma.org

UUMN - UU Musicians Network:

Keith Arnold, President

keitharnold@jeffersonunitarian.org

Donna Fisher, Administrator

uumn@uumn.org

UURMAPA - UU Retired Ministers & Partners

Association: Makanah Morriss, President

revs2uu@aol.com