

Congregational Services
Report to UUA Board of Trustees
September 2008

Congregational Stewardship Services (Wayne Clark, Robin Nelson, Jesse Holm)

Green Sanctuary

At General Assembly 2008 in Fort Lauderdale, Rev. Katherine Jesch, Director of Environmental Ministry for the UU Ministry for Earth (UUMFE), and Barbara Ford, Chair of the UUMFE, ceremoniously handed the Green Sanctuary banner to Rev. Bill Sinkford, Wayne Clark, and Robin Nelson.

On July 1, 2008, the UUA Office of Congregational Stewardship Services (CSS) began managing the Green Sanctuary program. Robin Nelson, newly appointed Program Manager for CSS, is responsible for day to day management of the program. Katherine Jesch will continue working with the program for a few months to ensure a smooth transition.

New Web pages (www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/greensanctuary/index.shtml) have been launched that provide information about the program, including the process for becoming a Green Sanctuary congregation. The Green Sanctuary manual is currently available for purchase at www.uuministryforearth.org but in early 2009, the manual will be revised and provided on our Web site at no charge.

The Green Sanctuary program is becoming more formal and structured to better manage the rapidly growing requests for accreditation. In the coming months, all current Green Sanctuary congregations will be contacted. Feedback will be gathered to better facilitate communication with them. A formal process of accreditation renewal will be created within the next year.

Small Project Loan Pilot Program

The Congregational Properties and Loan Commission (CPLC) is announcing the launch of a three-year Small Project Loan Pilot Program. The CPLC was established in 1996 to promote and facilitate the growth of Unitarian Universalist congregations. Over the years the CPLC has developed financial assistance programs to help congregations purchase land, construct new buildings, acquire existing buildings, undertake major building renovations, and complete green construction projects.

Currently the CPLC is managing 56 building loans with a principal balance of over \$7.1 million outstanding and unused loan capacity of over \$5 million. There are 12 congregations that have UUA loan guarantees. During fiscal 2008, four congregations received First Home Grants and one congregation received a Green Construction Award.

These existing financial assistance programs function well for the given purpose. However, UU congregations have asked for an additional financial assistance program; a loan program to help pay for relatively small congregational projects.

The purpose of the three-year pilot program is to promote congregational growth by financing relatively inexpensive projects that may seem beyond their current financial means. The program focuses on three broad categories of projects: mission-oriented, environmentally friendly, and critical/emergency in nature.

Marketing Outreach (Valerie Holton Susanna Whitman, Molly Housh)

National Campaign

TIME Magazine: In Spring 2008 the UUA continued its national ad campaign in TIME Magazine with two full page ads.

Month	Cover Date	In Homes & Newsstands
April	4/14/08	4/4/08
May	5/12/08*	5/2/08

*TIME 100 Edition

Measuring Results: The UUA created a "Marketing Dashboard" to measure several key indicators of the campaign. The following are some highlights:

1. UUA.org/Welcome Page - This URL was printed on all ads
TOTAL - 17,985 page views October 1 - May 21. By ad:

Cover Date & Ad Description	Newsstand/Delivery Date	# of visits over 28 day period*
October 15 - Full page	October 5	2,062
November 5 - Advertorial	October 26	2,004
December 3 - Full page	November 23	1,826
December 31 - Advertorial TIME "Person of the Year" Issue	December 21	1,594
April 14 - Full page ad with DVD offer	April 4	4,003
May 12 - Full page ad with DVD offer TIME "100" Issue	May 2	4,458

October 15 ad tracked for only 21 days

The two spring ads, with the DVD offer, had the largest number of page visits. The UUA had 1,832 visits to the DVD request page from those two ads; 682 or 37% requested a DVD.

2. **e- Starch Report** - TIME magazine conducted a Readership Survey for the December 31st and May 12th issues. The following are results from the May 12th issue:

- **41% remember seeing our ad** (35% December)
Of those, 14% talked to someone about the ad after having read it. This "talking about" score was the third highest score out of 53 measured brands.
- 25% read enough of the ad to clearly remember the advertiser (22% in December)
- 28% read some of the ad - versus 24% in December
- **13% read most of the ad** (8% December) - **these represent the most interested respondents.**
Of those readers, 40% talked to someone about the ad. Again, this was the third highest score.
- **75% of TIME readers had a low brand familiarity with Unitarian Universalism** (supporting the need for brand awareness advertising)

3. **TIME Opinion Leader Advertising Study** - TIME conducted an on-line panel survey measuring advertising messaging in June 2008

- 25% had some familiarity with Unitarian Universalism (pre-ad recall)
- 10% could recall seeing advertising for Unitarian Universalism
- Ad Recall by Ad: Between 9% (for Advertorials) to a high of 14% for "My God is Better than Your God"
- Brand Attributes: Respondents stated Unitarian Universalism was....
 - 82% Open-Minded
 - 80% Liberal Progressive
 - 77% Supportive of Religious Pluralism
 - 71% Supportive of Rights of Gays and Lesbians
- Readers would take the following action:
 - ~25% said they would visit UUA.org/wanted to learn more
 - 20% would discuss the ad with others
 - 8% would consider visiting a congregation
- Among respondents who were "seekers" - 71% said "ad reflected a religion they would be interested in" (59% of total respondents answered that way)

Google Adwords Campaign

The UUA supported the spring TIME buy with a Google adwords campaign. The campaign utilized previously defined audiences and keywords, and also included ads targeting current political events such as Senator Obama's speech on race and religion.

TIME PERIOD	TOTAL # OF IMPRESSIONS	TOTAL # CLICK-THROUGHS	CLICK-THROUGH RATE	COST PER CLICK
10 week Apr 9 - June 30, 2008	43,960,308	41,687	.09%	\$0.62

Marketing Materials available to Congregations

The DVD "Voices of a Liberal Faith" was released in Fall 2007. The following is a summary of its distribution as of September 22, 2008:

Free distribution to congregations	10,000
Sold to congregations and districts	15,460
Free DVD offer TIME ad	<u>1,311</u>
Total	26,771

"Nurture Your Spirit" Marketing Materials:

Outdoor Banners	105
Bumper Stickers	2,001
Postcards	2,300

A brochure highlighting the 2007-08 national and regional advertising campaigns was printed and distributed to key donors. Copies are available on the uua website or by contacting Congregational Services.

Regional Marketing Campaigns

February- April 2008 eight congregations in the Tampa Bay area participated in a \$236,000 advertising campaign. The campaign had the following goals:

1. Generate brand awareness of Unitarian Universalism
2. Increase visitor attendance at local congregations
3. Increase membership
4. Create excitement and pride among Unitarian Universalists in the area

The campaign had a rich media mix including TV, radio, direct mail, outdoor, print, newspaper inserts and the internet. A congregational preparedness workshop and multicultural training were both components of the campaign.

The following are some key results and observations through April 2008:

- 5,500+ visits to uutba.org website
- 563+ first time guests over 11 weeks period
- Direct Mail was an effective media
- Strong "returning visitor" statistics should translate into membership growth
- The congregations made many improvements in preparation for guests

- Integrated PR and marketing efforts resulted in increased visitors

Following the Knoxville Tragedy

The UUA ran a full page ad in the New York Times on Sunday August 10th (circulation 1.5 million) in response to the tragedy at the Tennessee Valley UU Church. The ad was a letter from Bill Sinkford acknowledging the heroic spirit of the congregation, thanking the community for its compassion and reiterating the importance of our religious values. Our "Voices of A Liberal Faith" DVD was viewed ~ 20,000+ on YouTube. In addition, the UUA conducted a Google AdWords campaign to educate the public about Unitarian Universalism.

TIME PERIOD	TOTAL # OF IMPRESSIONS	TOTAL # CLICK-THROUGHS	CLICK-THROUGH RATE	COST PER CLICK
July 30 - August 17, 200	609,123	5,983	.98%	\$0.31

Planning for Growth and Vitality District Pilot (Susanna Whitman, Growth Services Program Manager)

The purpose of the PFG pilot is to move us beyond a weekend training model in this program and explore the impact of sustained support for congregations committed to growing our faith. The expanded program is piloting support to congregations, in district groupings, toward greater health and growth by offering (1) careful selection of participants, (2) early support prior to the educational component, (3) a workshop component with some tailoring and flexibility possible, and (4) extensive follow-up support including the support of a specialized consultant, district support, and mutual support and learning through the cluster of piloting congregations.

This congregational growth pilot was begun in fall of 2007 in two districts, Central Midwest District (with 5 congregations) and Clara Barton District (with 4 congregations). In the spring of 2008 Northern New England District joined the group of piloting districts (with 6 congregations). In fall of 2009, Ohio Meadville District and St. Lawrence District will join the group, making five (5) districts piloting, to date. All of the districts are piloting with teams from small congregations (fewer than 151 members) except for Central Midwest, which is piloting with teams from smaller mid-size congregations (151 - 350 members). Most of these congregations, though not all, are both pro-growth and are facing resistance to growth within the congregation. The teams are learning how to manage this disharmony to enable growth, in addition to learning much about themselves and about how their own congregation can grow. The teams have much excitement about undertaking growth-related work and are choosing phased, key, relevant, attainable goals

and forming plans to get there. At our December PFG retreat we will be doing updates and assessment of the pilot thus far.

Young Adult Ministries (Nancy DiGiovanni, Erik Kesting, Hallie Andrew)

Grounded in a commitment to create anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and multicultural institutions, communities, and ministries, the Office of Young Adult Ministries advocates, educates, trains, and develops resources for young adults and those engaged in young adult ministry. This year we are focused on:

- 1) Fostering effective intergenerational ministry to and with our bridgers that results in congregational membership and lifelong relationship with Unitarian Universalism for our young adults.
- 2) The strengthening of current campus ministry programs and leaders as well as the nurturing of new campus ministries denomination-wide.
- 3) The sharing of practical ideas and best practices for programming and ministry to and with older young adults in congregations.

Of note thus far this year:

- a networking and training event for ministers, DREs, campus ministry coordinators, district staff, and seminarians October 9-12 in Titusville, NJ;
- coordination with district staff to provide regional young adult ministry trainings;
- monthly meetings with the Office of Youth Ministry - a welcome practice in which staff discuss and collaborate on joint projects;
- new full color campus ministry banners are available for purchase;
- a monthly e-newsletter in new and improved format that has been well received;
- honoring three new Anchor Congregations at General Assembly 08 - the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock, Second Unitarian Chicago, and First Unitarian San Diego;
- a significant revision of Bridger resources

C*UUYAN Update:

Prior to General Assembly in Fort Lauderdale, approximately 30 -35 young adults gathered to explore state of young adult ministry and the future of the Continental UU Young Adult Network. As a result of the work done at this meeting three actions were taken:

- A new C*UUYAN Steering Committee was elected with Liz Weber serving as Facilitator
- A task force looking at relationships and structures was gathered
- A Conference Task Force was gathered

National Conferences (Diane Martin, Congregational Services Program Manager)

Congregational Services is preparing for "**Envisioning Inclusive Excellence in Midsize Congregations**" a national conference for professional and lay leaders of midsize congregations to be held in Houston, TX from February 6-8, 2009. For this 7th midsize congregations conference, we welcome Dr. L. Lee Knefelkamp as keynote speaker to address issues of moral and ethical development, intercultural and diversity issues and inclusive excellence. Additionally the conference offers a prime opportunity for networking, skills-building, and team learning specific to the midsize church environment.

Additionally, Congregational Services is presenting the third annual multiracial, multicultural conference "**Leading Congregations into a Multiracial, Multicultural Future - now is the time!**" People from throughout the United States will meet in Tulsa, OK April 3-5, 2009 to learn and explore the challenges of creating and sustaining congregations that are truly welcoming and inclusive. Tulsa offers conference attendees the opportunity of a wide range of intellectual and spiritual experiences as we partner with Tulsa's richly diverse UU congregations that include cultures of native peoples and dynamic urban clusters. Our congregation in Tahlequah, OK is partnering with us in support of this conference, and we will worship with them on Sunday April 5.

Truth, Repair and Reconciliation - responsive resolution from GA 07 (Diane Martin, Tracey Robinson-Harris)

You are urged to visit the Truth, Repair and Reconciliation website at <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/araomc/104381.shtml>. There you'll find numerous resources for study and reflection on a variety of related topics including resources for descendants confronting a family history involving enslavement of Africans, an article researching the UUA record (by the Rev. Gordon Gibson), guidance/resources for congregations who want to explore the history of their home town - is your town a Sundown Town? what is the Native American history of your home town? (by Professor Jim Loewen), and other resources to assist individuals and congregations in exploring their own histories. A UUA staff-sponsored General Assembly 2008 Workshop was presented by Rev. David Pettee, Ministerial Credentialing Director; Rev. Dr. Tracey Robinson-Harris, Director for Congregational Services; Rev. Wendy von Zirpolo, President of UU Allies for Racial Equity; and Tom DeWolf, author of *Inheriting the Trade - A Northern Family Confronts Its Legacy as the Largest Slave-Trading Dynasty in U.S. History*. This workshop offered information on the UUA's efforts to explore the past in regard to slavery and the slave trade and other forms of oppression and to hear from congregations about their efforts.

JUUST Change - support for anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multicultural transformation (Paula Cole Jones, Tracey Robinson-Harris, Diane Martin)

Committed to the organizing principles of meeting congregations/leaders where they are and honoring the many paths we take on this shared journey, JUUST Change is focused on:

- gearing up to implement and support a Regional Strategy - with the possibility for partnerships with more than half of our districts for congregational transformation in ARAOMC. We are working with the four districts comprising NRG (MNYD, JPD, OMD, StLD), Clara Barton, Pacific Central District; with JPD being the testing ground for development of the strategic framework.
- developing our tools and skills for assessing readiness for change and tracking movement on the path of change
- assisting UUA Staff in building Multicultural Competencies including Stewardship & Development, Leadership Council, Ministry & Professional Leadership.
- supporting elected and appointed leaders in ARAOMC work including the Health Plan Trustees, 5th Principle Task Force; Board of Review.
- planning for the 2009 post GA opportunity for elected and appointed leaders to gather to deepen their ARAOMC skills as they apply to their roles and responsibilities
- supporting the congregations in the Diversity of Ministry Initiative under the guidance of Sofia Betancourt and Alicia Forde
- providing leadership for Start Ups for newly settled ministers of color
- continuing to provide consultation to congregations who apply independently for JUUST Change

Congregational Justice Making (Diane Martin, Tracey Robinson-Harris)

With one Jubilee One and five Jubilee Two workshops planned from August-December of 2008, the Jubilee anti-racism workshops continue to be an integral part of the Antiracism, Anti-oppression resources offered to districts and congregations by Congregational Services. In addition, congregations turn to CS for support of their Journey Toward Wholeness path and consultation for developing Transformation Teams. Our resource library is well used with videos, DVDs and books available for loan; many with study materials. Resources include *Traces of the Trade*, *Mirrors of Privilege*, and *Race the Power of An Illusion*. During this fiscal year, we are piloting a curriculum on white racial identity/white privilege developed by Bill Gardiner and Melissa Carville-Zeimer (in partnership with UU Allies for Racial Equity.).

Office for Large Congregations (Stefan Jonasson, Susanna Whitman)

This office serves the developmental needs of UUA's large and larger midsize congregations through consultations by email, telephone, web conferencing and on-site visits. The office will provide programmatic support during the current fiscal year to two district-level conferences, the UUA's triennial Midsize Church Conference, and the first-ever regional large church conference to be hosted by NRG four-district partnership. Special attention will be given to monitoring the financial health of larger congregations this year in order to discern trends as early as possible and identify ways in which the

association might be helpful in maximizing financial capacity in those congregations. The Director for Large Congregations will be on sabbatical from mid-March to mid-June and a plan is in place to ensure continuity of service during his absence.

Congregational Services Travel/Meeting Schedules as of September 20, 2008

Nancy DiGiovanni

Oct 3-5	Boston, MA	Youth Ministry Working Group
Oct 9-12	Titusville, NJ	UU YACM Professionals Event
Oct 24-27	Albuquerque, NM	LREDA Fall Conference
Nov 1-2	Boston, MA	Groundwork Roundtable
Nov 7-9	Crawford Notch, NH	NNED Leadership Development Series
Dec 12-14	Livermore, CA	PCD Young Adult Ministries Workshop

Erik Kesting

Oct 9-12	Titusville, NJ	UU YACM Professionals Event
Oct. 25-26	Philadelphia, PA	JPD Racial Justice Conference/ JTW Team
Nov 1-2	Boston, MA	Groundwork Roundtable
Dec 10-12	Seattle, WA	Excellence in Ministry Summit

Valerie Holton

Sept.26-29	Baltimore/Washington DC area discuss 2009 marketing campaign	
Sept. 30	Strategic Marketing group Meeting, Boston	
Oct. 24-26:	President's Council, Minneapolis	
Nov. 12:	Regional Marketing Meeting with Albany NY area ministers	

Wayne Clark

Sept. 20, 2008	Joseph Priestley District	Wilmington,DE
Oct. 11, 2008	Metro New York District	Poughkeepsie,NY
Nov. 1, 2008	Mass Bay District	TBD
Jan. 24, 2009	Pacific Central District	TBD
Feb. 5-7, 2009	Midsized Conference	Houston,TX
March 7, 2009	Florida District	Fort Meyers, FL

Stefan Jonasson

Sept. 25-28	Durham, NC	Eno River UU Fellowship
Oct. 17-19	Chapel Hill	Thomas Jefferson District Fall Conference
Oct. 20	Boston	Large Congregations Team Meeting
Oct. 23-24	Boston	Church of the Larger Fellowship Board
Oct. 25-26	Columbus	First UU Church
Nov. 2-3	Concord, MA	SMOLUUC/MPL "Dreaming Big" Training
Nov. 7-9	Albuquerque	First Unitarian Church
Nov. 14-16	Evanston, IL	Unitarian Church
Nov. 19	Rockford, IL	Central Midwest District - Large Church
Jan. 9-11	Mahtomedi, MN	White Bear UU Church

Tracey Robinson-Harris

Sept. 26- 27	Lanoka Harbor, NJ	Murray Grove Homecoming - keynote
Sept. 30	Boston, MA	Strategic marketing group
Oct. 3-4	Philadelphia, PA	Service of Repentance - Episcopal Church
Oct. 25	Boston, MA	Board of Review (ARAOMC conversation)
Nov. 1-2	Boston, MA	GroundWorkRoundtable
Nov. 10-11	Boston, MA	GrowthTeam
Dec 1-2	Scottsdale, AZ	NRG Gathering (MNYD, JPD, OMD, StLD) pre-BCM (other visits TBD)
Dec.5-7	Boston, MA	Planning for Growth Consultants

Note: All Congregational Services staff participate in a monthly staff meeting.