



Unitarian Universalist Association Staff Report: FY2013

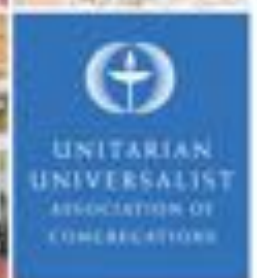


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Executive Summary

Unitarian Universalism is a liberal religious movement that welcomes all people. The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) unites Unitarian Universalist congregations, communities, and individuals and supports them in their quest for compassion, tolerance, and justice. Together, we can build a better world.

The UUA strives to grow our movement by nurturing the spirits of individuals, strengthening our communities and congregations, and changing the world by advocating for UU principles nationally and internationally. Using these three categories as an outline, this report will detail the outcomes of our campaigns during the past year.

Highlights of FY13 include:

- Creating a new program to recognize youth leaders;
- Our most highly acclaimed General Assembly ever;
- The creation, with the UU Service Committee, of the UU College of Social Justice;
- The second annual Thirty Days of Love celebration in January-February 2013;
- A successful matching gift fundraising challenge.

In the coming year, the UUA will continue its work to nurture our spirits, grow our communities, and change the world. We want Unitarian Universalism to be a larger force for good in the world. Some of our most exciting goals for FY14 include:

- A redesigned *UU World* magazine;
- Targeted scholarships for promising and diverse ministerial candidates;
- Innovation in campus ministry and young adult support;
- More service learning opportunities nationally and internationally.

Thanks to the continued support of congregations, individuals, and foundations, the UUA has been able to do more than ever to support Unitarian Universalism in the world. This report is an opportunity to review the past year, lifting up our accomplishments and setting goals for our future.



Fiscal Year 2013 Report

Brief Organizational Background

History

The UUA is a religious organization that combines two traditions: the Universalists, who organized in 1793, and the Unitarians, who organized in 1825. They consolidated into the UUA in 1961. Each of over 1,000 congregations in the United States, Canada, and overseas are democratic in polity and operation; they govern themselves. We unite in the Association to provide services that individual congregations cannot provide for themselves and to share the life-saving message of Unitarian Universalism with the world.

Structure

We are committed to the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large. In accordance with this commitment, our congregations elect the Board of Trustees that governs the Association. We hold an annual business meeting called General Assembly, where delegates vote on trustees as well as Association issues. Other elected leaders include the moderator, who presides at the General Assembly and at meetings of the Board of Trustees and represents the Association on special occasions; a financial advisor who sits on the Board; and an elected president. The president, an appointed executive vice president, a treasurer, and ten others form the leadership council and manage the day-to-day business of the Association.

Purpose

According to the UUA Bylaws Section C-2.2, "Purposes,"

The Unitarian Universalist Association shall devote its resources to and exercise its corporate powers for religious, educational and humanitarian purposes. The primary purpose of the Association is to serve the needs of its member congregations, organize new congregations, extend and strengthen Unitarian Universalist institutions and implement its principles.

The Association and its member congregations covenant together to affirm and promote seven principles:



The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
 Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
 Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
 A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
 The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
 The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all;
 Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The UUA fulfills these principles and purposes by creating programs and initiatives to support our congregations and share our life-affirming message with the world.

The UUA nurtures our souls:

- We recruit and support ministers, religious educators, and scholars throughout their call to ministry;
- We publish picture books, novels, and non-fiction to help individuals conduct their own free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- We support youth and young adults in their quest for spiritual nurturing and leadership.

The UUA strengthens our communities:

- We assist congregations as they live and voice their values in their local communities;
- We create connections between congregations and help them grow;
- We use technology to connect our Association and UU communities across the country;
- We come together at General Assembly for connection, worship, and business.

The UUA changes the world:

- We speak and act for social justice, multiculturalism, and anti-oppression;
- We connect with UUs around the world and with international partner organizations;
- We strengthen our voice in coalition with other organizations, reaching across denominational and cultural divides to find places where our values intersect;
- We create service learning opportunities for Unitarian Universalists;
- We ensure that Association funds are invested in a socially responsible manner and assist congregations and individuals in finding ways to invest their funds in accordance with their principles;
- We keep the national media informed of our activities and speak out on current issues.



Membership and Demographics

The UUA recognizes 1,047 congregations in the United States, Canada, and overseas as member congregations. Our current adult membership is 161,502 individuals as of February 2012. Over the last year, membership in UUA congregations dipped slightly. Over the course of the last decade, however, membership has risen 3.1% in total.

The UUA Director of Growth Strategies identified several trends within our congregations:

- The average size of a UU congregation's adult membership is presently 148.
- 28.2% of our congregations reported annual increases of adult membership exceeding 3% in 2012, but they were more than offset by 32.9% of our congregations reporting declines in excess of 3%.
- Declines exceeding 3% were significantly more common among fellowships (1-60 adult members) and midsize churches (161-300) than other size categories, with more than 37% of congregations in each category reporting declines of this magnitude.
- Growth exceeding 3% was most common among large program churches (401-600), with 37.5% of congregations reporting growth of that magnitude, followed by midsize churches (161-300), with 29.6% achieving that level of growth.

We are dedicated to racial and economic diversity on our board and staff. The UUA has 214 employees. Our staff is 64% women and 36% men. Ethnically, our staff is approximately 2% Asian, 7% African American, 2% Hispanic or Latino, 1% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, 85% white, and 3% identify with two or more races.



Objectives, Outcomes, and Results

Nurture Our Spirits

We are called to work together to deepen our spirituality, however we define it, within ourselves, our congregations, and our denomination as a whole. The UUA encourages individuals to discover their own spirituality, empowers leaders, and develops resources.

Ministries and Faith Development

The work of Ministries and Faith Development (MFD) goes to the core of the UUA's work as we provide more resources, inspiration, and oversight than individual congregations can do alone. We create a pipeline of excellent, credentialed UU religious professionals to serve congregations and beyond and support youth and young adults in their quest for spirituality and leadership.

Resource Development Office

The Resource Development Office (RDO) fosters multicultural, multigenerational congregations and nurtures spiritual, ethical, and faith development in UUs of all ages. We broaden and deepen access to and engagement with UUA faith development programs and resources through the creative use of technology and effectively reach Unitarian Universalists and seekers beyond congregational settings.

During the last year, the RDO created several [Tapestry of Faith](#) lifespan curricula and resources online and in print. New programs for children include "World of Wonder" (K/1), "Signs of Our Faith" (2/3), and "Sing to the Power" (4/5). New programs for youth and young adults include "Building the World We Dream About;" *Bridging: A Handbook for Congregations* by Gail Forsyth-Vail and Jessica York, which offers guidance to help congregations implement a program that serves youth approaching majority and their parents; and "Building Beloved Community," a five-session high school antiracism curriculum co-developed with the Youth and Young Adult Office.

Adult and multigenerational curricula developed over the past year include a revision of "What Moves Us," by Thandeka; "What We Choose," an ethics program for adults by Rev. Amber



Beland and Rev. Manish Mishra-Marzetti; Beacon Press's *Study Guide to Soul Repair: Recovering from Moral Injury after War*; and the multigenerational "Circle of Trees"

The RDO is in the process of revising and updating the [Our Whole Lives](#) (OWL) sexuality education program for Grades 7-9. It was field tested during the 2012-2013 church year. New topics include social media, bullying, consent education, and material on teaching OWL to youth with special needs. In May 2013, the RDO will run a training for approximately 30 new OWL trainers. The second edition will be published in May 2014.

Online, the RDO is adding new material, removing outdated material, and re-visioning the scope and potential for the UUA [WorshipWeb](#), an important resource and outreach tool. We are also creating a faith development blog called "Reflecting Pool," to launch in spring 2013.

The RDO has collaborated with *UU World* to create family pages in the magazine. The "Weave a Tapestry of Faith" section is published 4 times year, in each issue of *UU World*. FY13 themes included "All God's Critters... Even the Bat," "Courage! Look in Your Heart," and "Sacred Rest: The Beauty and Purpose of the Dark."

Another important aspect of the RDO is the creation of identity-based faith development resources, including ministry to youth and young adults of color and LGBTQ youth. Some initiatives from FY13 were the Multicultural Leadership School; training workshop for UU youth and young adults of Color, held in Boston, July 27-31, 2012; webinars on ministry with transracially adopted youth and their families; and the creation of a series of video-based, one-hour [workshops for youth](#). The creator of these online workshops, Rev. Monica Cummings, also leads online worship for youth of Color. Jessica York, another RDO staff member, led several conversations on the theological and spiritual needs of UUs of Color.

The RDO also creates many resources to support UUA initiatives. This year we wrote a discussion guide and program promotion for the [Third Annual Common Read](#). This year's book selection is *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander. The RDO's "[Cooking Together](#)" blog site was critical in supporting UUA immigration justice efforts during the lead-up to Justice General Assembly 2012. At this General Assembly delegates voted to repudiate the [Doctrine of](#)



[Discovery](#); the RDO and Multicultural Growth and Witness created online resources and discussion guides to support this resolution.

We have begun to focus on our role as curators as well as generators of faith development resources. We now intentionally use multiple, and sometimes new, modalities—e.g., blogging, e-lists, webinars, the Family pages in *UU World*—to increase our output of annotated resource lists and links. Also, we are striving to make our work more accessible to seekers of faith development resources who are not active in a congregation. Some examples of this new focus are:

- We supported the Standing on the Side of Love “30 Days” campaign with relevant activities and stories in the online Tapestry of Faith programs, which SSL incorporated into the campaign.
- After the Sandy Hook, Connecticut, school shooting, we responded by quickly posting on the UUA website a page of resources to support religious educators, families, and congregational communities.
- We will launch a blog site in spring 2013 to serve as a platform for constant resource curation, based on seasons, holidays, current events, and other themes.
- We have begun producing “How-to” videos for our website, to help religious educators understand and explain the benefits of the Tapestry of Faith curricula and get the most out of these resources.

Tapestry of Faith curricula and many other RDO resources are delivered 100% online. These metrics indicate the reach of our curricula and resources. Of the 3.3 million “hits” on the entire UUA website between July 1, 2012 and January 15, 2013, 22% (722,000 hits) of them went to the Religious Education page, more than double the amount of the next most visited page on UUA.org. 18% (601,000 total) went to the Tapestry of Faith index page. The Worship Web index page in the same period accounted for 12% of the entire website traffic (395,000 hits). The RDO accounts for 34% of all UUA.org traffic.

We know from our contact with field staff and religious professionals, as well as from individuals’ feedback, how enthusiastic our users are about the materials we have published. Corrine Ho, pictured here, is a Religious Educator from Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church in Canoga Park, CA. She uses



In this [video testimonial](#), Corrine Ho talks about how teaching Tapestry of Faith children’s religious education as a new Unitarian Universalist has enhanced her own faith development as well as her family’s religious life at home.

Tapestry because “it is so versatile. It includes the acceptance and learning of all the other religions and it invites children to really explore what faith is and what their faith is.” We regularly hear from our constituents about different ways they are using Tapestry of Faith resources in Religious Education programs and other faith development contexts (from home schooling to lay leadership development). In FY13, we have maintained communication with a wide range of constituents via email lists maintained by the UUA, blog sites of other UUA and UU groups, and Facebook pages for Congregations and Beyond, the UUA Common Read, and other topic areas. When the RDO blog site launches in spring 2013, we expect it to generate more dialogue about the resources we provide and how they are being used.

The Youth and Young Adult Ministries Office

The Youth and Young Adult Ministries Office (YaYA) connects and develops leaders, offers resources for ministry and advocates for the interest and voices youth and young adults, and those who work with them, in our faith communities. The YaYA Office’s FY13 strategic plan focuses on four approaches to achieve these goals: building networks, sharing and communication, making key investments and advocating with collaborative partners.

Some of our highlighted initiatives for FY13 include:

- Establishing joint youth and young adult projects and initiatives with each district or region of the UUA.
- Securing participation in the newly created [Luminary Leaders](#) youth recognition program.
- Publishing a pocket-sized spiritual reflection guide for UU young adults, already in process with the UUA Publications Department.
- Helping to create campus ministry clusters in the New York City and Los Angeles areas.

In FY12, the YaYA office exceeded its overall implementation target for initiatives across the categories of youth, young adult, and campus ministry. Additionally, we succeeded in the goal of promoting attendance of younger UUs to General Assembly—we doubled Youth Caucus registration to 307, in



Youth Caucus at General Assembly can be a transformative experience, as described in this [welcoming video for 2013!](#)

comparison to the prior year. Young adult registration at GA also saw a dramatic increase, estimated at 50%.

The YaYA Office published a new version of the primary resource for adults working with youth, called "[Youth Ministry Advising: A Complete Guide](#)," in September 2012. The YaYA Office also initiated development of an introductory level youth curricular program in multiculturalism and anti-racism that will be completed in FY13.

The YaYA office underwent several changes based on feedback from their constituencies. Recognizing the lack of infrastructure for supporting, connecting, and engaging young adults, the YaYA Office brought on a part-time young adult ministry associate, who is building relationships with young adult leaders and groups across the Association. Additionally, we have revised the type of posts offered on our blog [Blue Boat](#), and have seen regular monthly traffic increase 70% from last year. This year will also see a re-launch of Blue Boat, following feedback from user testing, in order to make the site more engaging, relevant, and interactive.

Credentialing and Professional Development Office

Credentialing and Professional Development provides a continuum of support from the first blush of a "call" to ministry through the formation and credentialing process, and on throughout a career. The team also includes the Professional Associate for Religious Education and Music Leadership, who provides support for certification programs and advanced learning for UU religious educators and musicians.

The Credentialing and Professional Development Office supported 63 candidates who came before the Ministerial Fellowship Committee in the past year, as well as streamlined the structure of the Regional Subcommittee of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. The Director visited with seminarians at Union, Starr King, Meadville-Lombard, Union, Earlham and Iliff to guide them in the process of seeking fellowship. Approximately 525 people are at some stage of preparation for UU ministry. During FY13, 39 fulltime ministers will be settled in congregations; 9 developmental ministers and 41 interim ministers will also be settled.



One of the candidates before the Ministerial Fellowship Committee was Margaret Weis.

Margaret approached the Credentialing and Professional Development Office in October 2011 and received financial support to travel to Ghana, where she stayed in a small village and experienced local culture through the lens of religion, attempting to understand how faith sustains a small rural African village community. She spoke of a conversation about racial identity with local youth who had never seen a white person before; during this conversation, Margaret recognized that she was the minority for the first time in her life. This experience sharpened her understanding of privilege and she preached about this learning at a UUA Chapel and referenced it in her materials submitted to the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.



Support from the UUA allowed Margaret Weis to travel to Ghana, an invaluable formative experience for her ministerial career.

Specific goals for the Credentialing and Professional Development Office for the remainder of FY13 include:

- Completing the transformation of the scholarship distribution process as outlined in the Strategic Plan for Professional Ministries;
- Continuing to support recruitment efforts with the two UU identity schools by collaborating with seminary representatives at an upcoming General Assembly workshop;
- Supporting efforts to create best practices and learning communities for seminarians; and
- Supporting efforts to strengthen the mentoring program for ministers in preliminary fellowship.

The Credentialing and Professional Development Office hosted several trainings since September, including one on Supervision, one on Adaptive Leadership, and the largest First Year Minister seminar to date. We also worked with the UU Ministers Association on the Institute for Excellence in Ministry in January 2013, which was a great success.

Military Chaplaincy

The first ever Military Chaplain Professional Development Conference was held in Florida in February 2012. We currently have 11 chaplains and one chaplain candidate serving our ministry. Three chaplains deployed to Afghanistan during FY13. Several others have expressed



interest in this path or have applied for reserve chaplaincy. A strategizing meeting was also held in advance of the retreat with Fred Garcia, representatives of the Church of the Larger Fellowship, Ministries and Faith Development staff, and Chaplains to look at how we can expand our welcome for military members and their families, as well as veterans. A reception was held at General Assembly for UU military members, their family, and supporters. The second annual Military Chaplain Professional Development Conference will be held in February 2013.



Pictured here is the “UU Congregation of Kandahar,” a growing group of military members in Afghanistan led by military chaplain Chris Antal (center). Every person in this photo has committed to becoming a member of the [Church of the Larger Fellowship](#). We welcome them to our UU community!

Over the last year, the UUA Leadership Council created care packages for each military chaplain deployed this year and we continued to have heavy demand for the “Bless All Who Serve” meditation manual. Our UUA Endorser is the Rev. Sarah Lammert, UUA Director for Ministries and Faith Development, who endorses UU military chaplain candidates. We are excited to announce that she recently became the first UU to be elected to the Executive Committee of the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces. Through this work, more and more congregations are becoming aware and equipped to respond to the needs of military families and veterans.

Office of Church Staff Finances

The Office of Church Staff Finance (OCSF) supports our UU congregations and religious professionals and other staff with insurance products, a retirement fund, the UUA Fair Compensation Program, and a variety of financial tools and advice. In addition the OCSF manages and disburses sustentation and the service gratuity funds.

Each year, the OCSF assists approximately 8 individuals (ministers, religious educators, musicians, and administrative staff) navigate the long-term disability process. The causes of disability claims are varied including cancer, heart disease,

Recently, the Office of Church Staff Finances learned of a newly-hired music director who had relocated from Texas to Massachusetts. Within two months of his employment, he was diagnosed as terminally ill from cancer. In reviewing his insurance coverage, OCSF realized he had not signed-up for our life insurance benefit. Fortunately, this decision was discovered within the enrollment window, but only by one day. OCSF worked with the congregational minister to ensure eligibility for the full-array of benefits and provided \$5,000 to the congregation to help subsidize his out-of-pocket medical and related expenses including a visit by his two adult children prior to his death.

stroke, depression, physical injury, among other disabling conditions. The long-term disability application process can be daunting to individuals particularly when they are grappling with serious health challenges. UUA staff walk the employee and their congregational leaders through this process, ensuring they have the resources and support they need.

Transitions Office

The Transitions Office supports congregations through ministry transitions as well as advising ministers in this process. The Transitions Office also provides ongoing trainings for interim ministers and administers the Beyond Categorical Thinking program. During FY13, the Transitions Office will be creating a new training for the Developmental Ministry Program and launching the twice-a-year settlement system with interim ministers.

During FY13, the Transitions Office began to investigate a new settlement system that will be easily manageable by constituents and staff and adaptable enough to adjust to changing needs. They are exploring these possibilities in collaboration with Information Technology Services staff, Ministries and Faith Development staff, Congregational Life staff, and district/regional staff. It is possible that all UU employment opportunities might be housed at the UUA at some point in the future.

We have also been pleasantly surprised by the increased interest in developmental ministry. Developmental ministry is a hybrid of interim and consulting ministry, in which a congregation agrees to focus longer term on specific goals with the assistance of a new minister, recommended specifically to help them work on their goals for three to five years. At the end of that time, the congregation and minister will evaluate the work they've done on these goals and then will decide on next steps. Options include going into interim work, going into another developmental ministry, going into search to settle a minister. Two congregations kicked off the program in 2010, nine congregations entered the program in 2011, and potentially



The UU Society in Stamford, CT has benefitted from its developmental ministry and minister, Rev. Frances Sink. The congregation has had a series of unhappy endings with ministers and has a gorgeous but expensive building that they are unsure whether to keep or move. Unspoken but clear in the application and application process, the congregation also needed a minister who would show caring for them and provide a place they could call a spiritual home. The match between the two was ideal

even more will embark on this option in the 2012-2013 church year. Continuing education for these ministers and appropriate training will become a need and a priority.

We have also identified some other opportunities in the settlement system. With the advent of the web, every minister and every congregation has an electronic version of their packet of information. This has sped up the process of how congregations select pre-candidates. Most initial interviews take place over Skype. Most congregations now do their congregational informational gathering survey on line. All of this may lead to a shorter cycle of time for the search process.

In addition to the new settlement system, short informational videos are being planned for each segment of the settlement cycle for congregations and ministers to see. The settlement handbook is being redesigned and the website is being updated

Strategic Review of Professional Ministries

The Strategic Review of Professional Ministries was accomplished in 2010 to carefully review our ministry and to explore the way the UUA can best direct our resources to further excellent ministry in the future. The follow up report, [Strategic Plan for Professional Ministries](#), presented eight recommendations, and the office of Ministries and Faith Development has had considerable achievements in each of the eight areas.

During FY13, we strove to:

- **Aggressively Recruit Leaders** through [recruitment videos](#), redirecting scholarship money for seminarians of color to be available earlier in the process, and creating a think-tank of UU ministers with a passion for recruiting excellent parish ministers.
- **Support Multicultural Immersion Learning** through the “Mosaic Makers” workshop held at All Souls in Washington DC, developing a Skinner House book based on that workshop, and assisting in the launch of the UU College of Social Justice.
- **Re-Imagine and Evaluate our Credentialing Efforts** by rolling out an assessment framework for excellence in ministry and strengthening the mentoring program for ministers in preliminary status as well as seminarians in candidate status using a grant from the Liberal Religious Charitable Trust.



A screenshot of Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray from one recruiting video: [“Do You Feel Called to the Ministry?”](#)



- **Expand Transitions Systems** as mentioned above, by launching a twice a year process, adding a new category of “developmental ministry,” and upgrading the ministerial settlement system using a grant from the ITS department.
- **Support Advanced Learning for all Religious Professionals** by creating a two year advanced training program for ministers in final fellowship, training ministers on effective ministry teams, and participating in a Summit on Excellence in Community Ministry with the UUMA and UU Society for Community Ministry.
- **Be More Strategic in the Use of Scholarships and Grants** through strategically bundling and targeting UUA Scholarships to promising and diverse candidates for our ministry.
- **Measure What is Truly Important** by working to develop a dashboard for Ministries and Congregational Support.

UUA Communications

The Communications staff group serves the Association by publishing and distributing books and periodicals that inform, inspire, and educate their readers; by developing and maintaining a UUA presence in cyberspace via the World Wide Web, email, and social networking; by raising the visibility of Unitarian Universalism in the public arena; and by counseling and supporting our congregations in their various communications efforts. These goals allow individuals and congregations to participate in a free and responsible search for truth and meaning and to deepen their spirituality.

Last year, a task force appointed by UUA President the Rev. Peter Morales reviewed the communications strategies employed by the UUA internally among our staff and externally with our constituents. The task force identified goals of improved engagement with and among our audiences, coordinated communications, better branding and outreach, and enhanced internal systems and technologies. We have begun implementing some strategies this year including: developing the technological infrastructure necessary for a unified database management system to allow for more targeted communications; launching a social intranet for improved staff collaboration; and a series of deep discussions related to mission, vision, and branding with a marketing consultant. We realize that in order to have a leading progressive religious voice in the United States, we need to present a new image, one that reaches those outside our current membership. Soon we will contract with a branding company and begin this important work.



This year, the Office of Information and Public Witness (IPW) had 53 scheduled Coming of Age and adult groups visit 25 Beacon to tour the UUA headquarters, as well as dozens of unscheduled walk-in visitors, a slight increase over FY12. IPW maintains the UUA's presence on social media sites. The number of "Likes" on the UUA Facebook page continued to rise steadily from 31,482 in July 2012 to 33,743 in January 2013. In addition, we have 5,920 followers on Twitter and this grows daily. The UUA Twitter feed offers six different lists, including lists of UU ministers, congregations, and religious educators that are growing in popularity. We have had particular success in the past year using Twitter to connect with Unitarian Universalists internationally and to direct individuals to congregations.

Skinner House and the UUA Bookstore

Skinner House Books is an imprint of UUA. By the end of the year, we are scheduled to have published 12 Skinner House books (in print format, eBook format, or both), two books developed by the staff of Ministries and Faith Development, and one pamphlet. We hope to publish two more Skinner House books and one or two more pamphlets before the year is out, as well as creating some non-book products to be sold at General Assembly 2013.

Highlights from the past year include:

- [*Mira and the Big Story*](#) by Laura Alary, illustrated by Susan Todd—a story for readers 8 and older about a young girl trying to make sense of the creation stories of two rival villages.
- [*War Zone Faith: An Army Chaplain's Reflections from Afghanistan*](#) by George Tyger—meditations about the spiritual quest for meaning in the context of active duty in a combat zone.
- [*While Still There Is Light: Poetry and Writings from a Minister Facing Death*](#) by Nancy Shaffer, edited by Mary Ganz—a collection of reflections written by a UU Minister in the last year of her life, after diagnosis of a brain tumor.
- [*In the Interim: Strategies for Interim Ministers and Congregations*](#), edited by Keith Kron & Barbara Child—essays from interim ministers and other congregational leaders about how congregations can navigate ministerial transition and take advantage of opportunities offered by the interim period.
- *Buddhist Voices in Unitarian Universalism*, edited by Wayne Arnason and Sam Trumbore—essays about the intersection of Buddhism and Unitarian Universalism:



Mira and the Big Story is a delightful picture book that shows us how we can be inclusive and at the same time respectful of our ancient stories.



how it developed, what it means to individual practitioners, and what it could mean in the future for both traditions.

The UUA bookstore has made further developments with their church booktable program. Many congregations have books for sale before and after Sunday services. The church booktable (often called a bookstore or bookstall) is a popular way to raise money for congregations and keep congregants aware of new reading resources. Church booktables receive a discount on quantity orders of Beacon Press and Skinner House books.

The UU World Magazine

The UUA publishes the quarterly *UU World* magazine on behalf of its member congregations. The magazine descends from a long line of Unitarian and Universalist publications going back almost two centuries: *Universalist Magazine* was founded in 1819 and the Unitarian *Christian Register* in 1821.

UU World's mission is to help its readers build their faith and act on it more effectively in their personal lives, their congregations, their communities, and the world. To this end, it strives to be not only informative but also useful, provocative, and even prophetic.

UU World's average circulation in 2012 was 127,195, up from 126,878 in 2011. The good news in FY2013 is that advertising is trending up for the first time since the start of the recession, with increased demand for ads in print and online for the past six months. We hope this trend continues.

In the past year, *UU World* launched a new series of congregational profiles in partnership with the UUA Growth Team's "Breakthrough Congregations" program, commissioning in-depth articles about vital and growing congregations (including [First Parish in Bedford, MA](#) and [All Souls New London, CT](#)). The magazine also published extensive coverage of the UUA's immigrant rights advocacy, with a special issue in advance of the 2012 Justice General Assembly and extended print and [online coverage](#) of GA itself. The online magazine's General Assembly coverage featured video and many more photographs than in past years.



Strengthen Our Communities

As we live and grow with one another, we strengthen our congregations and our communities. The UUA has worked to develop connections between individuals and congregations through a variety of programs and resources.

Congregational Life

The Congregational Life staff group (including district and regional field staff, Congregational Stewardship, and the Growth Strategies Office) serves our Association and the cause of Unitarian Universalism through helping to build covenanted religious communities that inspire people to lead lives of humility and purpose, connection and service, thereby transforming themselves and the world.

We strive to fulfill this purpose through consultations, programming and the development of learning communities between and among religious professionals and active lay leaders of congregations and emerging communities.

Regionalization

One of our goals from last year's proposal was to move toward regionalization. The purpose of the regionalization of staff is to build a structure that is responsive to congregational changes, economic realities, and technological advances that will connect us to one another.

While there are still district specific staff, and direct relationships between staff and district structures, the UUA field staff now work in significant collaboration with one another within our newly specified regional designations: Southern, New England, MidAmerica, Central East (CERG) and Pacific Western. These structures allow not only for collaboration among UUA staff, they also create structures in which other district and regional employees may work together to avoid duplication of effort and create economies of scale.



The CERG Sandy Relief Fund has raised over \$300,000 to aid and support Unitarian Universalists as they recover from devastation. This is a picture of a Thank You note from an affected congregation, pictured in [this video](#), which highlights the contributions of UUUs.

Within these regional structures, we have built in ample flexibility for each region to structure itself in accordance with the specific governance structures and cultural needs of its geographic surroundings. We are also developing new methods for sustainable support of districts and regions.

Regional structures allow us to utilize new technologies for learning. A vast number of teaching materials are now available on demand or through scheduled webinars. In cases of local disasters, regional structures allow us to more adeptly and specifically develop support structures.

Congregational Stewardship

The Office of Congregational Stewardship continues its consultations with congregations and has developed significant new programs based on developing priorities named above. In fiscal year 2012, 135 congregational leaders participated in three stewardship workshops while 89 leaders participated in two free webinars, all offered by Wayne Clark. A total of 45 congregations received stewardship guidance from one of the nine consultants.

FORTH is a social networking program to help congregations grow a year round culture of spiritual generosity. The program encourages communities of congregational leaders to create and share a diverse library of free web-based materials. More than 600 congregational leaders are participating in the program and there are more than 70 Partner Congregations.

UUA staff are also developing a congregational stewardship network. The network will include ten stewardship consultants and ten stewardship conveners, two consultants and two conveners for each region. The goal is to instill a culture of spiritual generosity among many small communities of learning. This will be in partnership with regional field staff, district governance structure, and other volunteers who are committed to healthy stewardship.

Growth Strategies and Large Congregation Development

The Office of Growth Strategies and Large Congregation Development was established in 2011, expanding upon the work of the earlier Large Congregations Program. Its primary mission is to mobilize strategically a variety of resources, a sense of purpose, and a network of partnerships



to grow current and future Unitarian Universalist congregations, in addition to continuing to identify and provide resources that serve the unique developmental needs of larger congregations.

The [Growing Unitarian Universalism blog](#) is a forum for sharing ideas and strategies for growing our faith in breadth, depth and numbers. Once or twice most weeks, the blog features commentary from UUA Growth Strategies staff or guest bloggers, stories from the field, resource reviews, and questions to encourage interactive exploration. The blog receives between 1,600 and 1,800 visits each month. The *Growing Unitarian Universalism* blog is linked to the [Growing Unitarian Universalism Facebook page](#), which had 1,028 subscribers by the end of 2012. In addition to directing followers to the blog, this page is utilized to post growth-oriented and inspiring news and links about Unitarian Universalism, as well as links to non-UU growth resources. According to Facebook's analytics, this page reaches nearly 7,000 people each week and between 250 and 400 readers are engaged in talking about its contents in a typical week. A task force of more than twenty volunteer leaders in the field is working with the Growth Strategies staff to review growth materials on the UUA website and redevelop the website with resources aimed at developing leaders' capacity for adaptive thinking, illustrations of peer learning among congregations, measurement and evaluation tools, and more technically-oriented tools.

Growth Strategies staff work with regional staff to monitor and support approximately 40 emerging congregations as well as several identified "meeting groups." The office is also working closely with the Church of the Larger Fellowship, which is formalizing resources for "meeting groups."

Three Innovative Learning Circles were launched in the fall of 2012. The aim of this experiment is to gather our movement's best, innovative leaders together to spark, inspire, and cross-pollinate each other. The Innovative Learning Circles presently underway bring together religious leaders engaged in work beyond congregations, pioneer planters who are forming alternative religious communities, and credentialed religious educators exploring Unitarian



Universalist faith formation. Each learning circle studies common resources and meets by web conference for ninety minutes each month.

Last year, the Breakthrough Congregations Initiative was retooled and relaunched as a feature series in *UU World*, with a streamlined selection process and in-depth reporting on what makes the congregations selected special. As each congregation is featured in the *World*, a study guide is published at the *Growing Unitarian Universalism* blog in order to help shape conversations about what each Breakthrough Congregation offers.

In addition to growth-related resources for all congregations, the Office provides size-specific support to larger congregations. During the past year, the Director provided on-site consultation to eleven congregations, while consulting extensively with fourteen congregations through electronic means. There has been a marked upturn in requests from congregations for help around ministerial transitions, staffing questions, and congregational finances, which points to the increased awareness and usefulness of these consultations.

Congregational Mentoring

Leap of Faith is a methodology that invites congregations into learning communities with larger congregations based on a consultation with large and growing congregations. The first year we worked with twelve aspiring and mentoring congregations in five learning communities. Each aspiring congregation made a weekend learning journey to their mentoring congregation in addition to regular phone and web contact throughout the year.

This is the second and final year of the pilot project before the methodology will be implemented at the regional level. The [Northern New England](#) and Pacific Western Regions are preparing to launch regional expressions of Leap of Faith in 2013. Congregations will be invited to invest more fully into this new iteration of the program.

A professional outside evaluation team reports that Leap of Faith consistently:

- Enlivened and motivated lay leaders;
- Increased leadership awareness of the difference between technical fixes and adaptive challenges;
- Deepened lateral relationships between congregations;



- Improved congregational capacity;
- Opened taboo and difficult topics to creative conversation;
- Increased and intentioned use of Unitarian Universalist language and values;
- Increased understanding of significance of congregational mission;
- Developed heightened risk profiles—trying new things, risking experiments;
- Increased expectations of membership is met with approval;
- Led to a new understanding of the balance of professional leadership and lay leadership.

During the last couple of years, one congregation committed to a new building after decades of struggle with an historic building. Another learned how to maximize their sanctuary through appropriate use of technology and are now filling it twice each Sunday. Yet, another Leap team led the congregation out into the community where they are now actively and regularly engaged in sharing UU values.

Information Technology Services

The UUA's Information Technology Services (ITS) are stewards of digital resources and the computing infrastructure in which they live. We foster online communication to spark and sustain connections among stakeholders and seekers. We strive to amplify the productive capacity of the UUA staff and volunteers. We mentor and provide strategic leadership in technology to further the goals of the Association.

Our work allows the Association and our congregations to work more effectively and create a sense of community by taking advantage of new technologies.

During the past year, we re-learned the value of engaging across staff groups to imagine ways the UUA can be more effective through innovative technology, to experiment with the best of those ideas, and to produce sustainable changes that move us inexorably toward our goals. Members of the Web Team are organizing a learning community to help others and themselves become more effective at using online presence.



"Although I don't go to UUA.org regularly, when I go there, it's for specific information. I cannot express how deeply I appreciate the wealth of resources you provide for leaders. The UUA website is fabulous and makes every cent my congregation pays in dues worth it. The UUA provides helpful information for all types of volunteers and in many formats (email lists, GA, website, workshops), and it seems like everything is posted on the website. Thank you for making so much knowledge available." – a recent note from a member of the Edmonds (WA) UU Church

The lay leaders of many UU congregations get direct and immediate help via our discussion lists, especially the lists for lay leaders Religious Education staff and volunteers). For example, a congregation whose minister is leaving got advice about how the interim process works and why the UUA recommends a two-year process. Religious educators around the country shared stories they were planning to use for MLK Sunday. We regularly provide feedback and practical assistance for congregations building websites or experiencing technical difficulties.

General Assembly

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of Unitarian Universalists and our UUA. Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. General Assembly and Conference Services staff coordinate logistics such as site selection, contract negotiation for the convention center, registration, accessibility services, the exhibit hall, services to our attendees prior to General Assembly, and the GA Program Book. We strive to make General Assembly as inclusive and sustainable as possible. GA is a chance for us to come together to strengthen our UU communities and our Association.

In 2012, the UUA held a “Justice General Assembly,” which received an overwhelmingly positive response. Attendees appreciated a single theme (especially one that focused on justice with multiple opportunities for service and witness), and partnerships with local community activists. The Tent City Vigil was the high point for many. There were 3,600 attendees at GA 2012; approximately 2,500 of whom attended the Tent City Vigil.

Justice General Assembly, which has been described as a transformative experience by Unitarian Universalists, is providing lessons and inspiration for how to engage Unitarian Universalists in social change work that takes them beyond the walls of their congregations. Justice General Assembly provided meaningful engagement with immigrant and migrant justice that was supported by religious education resources, spiritual reflection, interfaith and community-based partnerships, and supporting on-the-ground leadership.

After Justice GA 2012, Skinner House Books launched the *Assembled* series. The plan is to publish the major sermons and speeches of each General Assembly in eBook format as soon as possible after the conclusion of GA. *Assembled* is part of a larger effort to explore new, more



agile publishing options that allow us to respond quickly to particular needs and interests of our readership. For example, we published Annette Marquis's *Resistance: A Memoir of Civil Disobedience in Maricopa County* as an eBook only 3 months after General Assembly 2012, and we're planning a one-time printing especially for GA 2013, where Annette will be presenting a panel workshop on effective civil disobedience planning. We're now considering another title especially for GA 2013, as an eBook and possibly limited-run print book.

Building on the experience of Justice GA 2012, the General Assembly Planning Committee, the UUA Board of Trustees, and the administration seek to create a General Assembly in 2013 that moves our Association "From Promise to Commitment." Promises call us into relationship. We will gather in Louisville to examine and renew our covenant to our faith, one another, our congregations, and the larger world. In 2013, workshops will explore the kinds of promises our religious communities are called to make as we seek to live out our UU values; how we make them, with whom, and how we hold ourselves and each other accountable. The public witness event will be focused on environmental justice. There will be a lot of plenary time as the Board has a three year backlog of business.

Change Our World

As we nurture our spirits and strengthen our communities, we also change the world. This year, the UUA has focused on connecting with people and organizations all over the world to work for social justice and to promote our values and principles.

Multicultural Growth and Witness

The continuing mission of Multicultural Growth and Witness (MGW) is to support Unitarian Universalist congregations' and leaders' capacity to minister effectively in a multicultural world. The two wings of the staff group are Multicultural Ministries (formerly Multicultural Growth) and Witness Ministries. The goals of the staff group include connecting congregations and individuals with opportunities to build Beloved Community through advocacy, witness, and social action; and providing experiential learning, leadership development, and networking opportunities that strengthen the intercultural competencies of congregations and individuals



to build communities “where all people are welcomed as blessings and the human family lives whole and reconciled.”

Witness Ministries

MGW’s Witness Ministries achieves the above goals by engaging congregations and individuals in online and on the ground witness, advocacy, and social action in relationship with oppressed and marginalized communities that are most directly affected by injustice; participating in interfaith and social justice collaborations with organizations and communities that are working for social change and transformation in the state, local, national, and international spheres; and providing educational resources, consultation, social media platforms, and community/interfaith organizing tools that enable congregations to engage in interfaith and community-based partnerships to advance social justice.

During FY13, Witness Ministries has worked to change our world through social and spiritual justice action in a number of areas. One of our ministries is Standing on the Side of Love, which this report will address in more detail further on. We also work with more than 140 congregations that are active in Congregation Based Community Organizing (CBCO). A major initiative of this last year was to work for immigration justice. Our national campaign against the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agreements of Cooperation in Communities to Enhance Safety and Security (ICE ACCESS) has become the “[Restoring Trust](#)” campaign. We created this campaign in partnership with the Interfaith Immigration Coalition (IIC) in order to mitigate the worst effects of ICE ACCESS, as identified by IIC and other coalition partners like the National Day Laborer’s Organizing Network (NDLON). We created a toolkit and webinars for congregations involved in immigration justice. The current political environment offers us the opportunity to do more legislative work for compassionate or comprehensive immigration reform. Another interfaith campaign we are working on is “Breaking Bread and Building Bridges,” which encourages congregations to form and strengthen relationships between different faiths and local migrant rights organizations.

Witness Ministries has also been working to change immigration law, policy, and practices so that LGBTQ immigrant families have the same rights and privileges as other families. We are



working on the Faithful Budget campaign for economic justice and partnering with other faith communities in the Faiths United Against Gun Violence coalition. We are working for environmental justice by advocating against hydrofracking and climate change. We are also working with interfaith and advocacy groups to support reproductive justice through legislation reform, supporting the passage of an improved Violence Against Women Act and other bills. Direct advocacy and coalition work in DC will continue to be the foundation for legislative advocacy done across the country, with myriad ways for local UUs to support and engage these federal topics in support of communities most directly affected by these fiscal and legislative policies.

Multicultural Ministries

Multicultural Ministries collaborates with Witness Ministries, other UUA colleagues, UU congregations, and interfaith and community partners to support Unitarian Universalist congregations and community leaders ministering through social action and justice-making as well as worship, congregational welcome and inclusion, and multicultural religious leadership. Multicultural Ministries also supports congregations' capacity to do effective social justice and social change ministry by developing their intercultural competencies, multicultural ministries, and cross-cultural leadership.

Multicultural Ministries' primary focus is providing resources and opportunities for congregations and community leaders to grow their multicultural leadership competencies. We provide the educational resources (curriculum, webinars, training, social media) and experiential learning opportunities (consultations and conferences) that build congregations' ability to effectively cross borders of identity in diverse contexts. We facilitate collegial relationships that provide safe space for religious leaders engaged in intentional multicultural ministries to learn from each other and support each other's continuing leadership development. Multicultural Ministries also provides guidance in building intentionally multicultural community and ministries and educates congregations and leaders about how to fully welcome and include those who are considered the cultural "Other." We build collaborations that equip congregations and leaders to participate as culturally competent



partners in interfaith and cross-cultural community-based coalitions working for social change and transformation.

During FY13, Multicultural Ministries created a resource on welcoming for transgender people and how to create drop-in centers for LGBTQ youth. We also participated in Standing on the Side of Love webinars, supporting advocacy through blog posts and connecting with congregations working on UUA public witness initiatives.

This year saw the development of the Multicultural Leadership Institute, a collaborative learning initiative to support UU leaders in building a Beloved Community that is inclusive of multiple identities, multigenerational, and justice-centered. MGW launched the Multicultural Leadership Institute with Mosaic Makers, a conference for congregations committed to intentional multicultural ministries coordinated in partnership with All Souls Church, Unitarian in Washington, DC during February 2012. More than 100 UU professional and lay religious leaders representing 11 congregations came together for worship, keynotes from religious leaders with long-standing multicultural ministries, and shared learning geared toward developing core competencies in multicultural leadership, worship, community building, and community-based partnerships. Another goal of the conference was to foster partnerships between UU leaders and congregations committed to multicultural ministries.



“When I departed All Souls on Sunday afternoon, my heart was both swelling with pride and brimming with confidence of what we can achieve.”
Mark A. Hicks, Angus MacLean Professor of Religious Education, Meadville Lombard

Unintended outcomes of the Mosaic Makers conference were demand that exceeded expectations for attendance and participant “envy” among other UU congregations and leaders as word spread nationally about the quality of the conference content, presenters, and experience. As a result, a second Mosaic Makers conference will be held in fall 2013. Continuing the model of partnership/collaboration, shared learning, and direct experience of multicultural community, this Mosaic Makers will be a collaboration with All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa, OK.



Over the past years, Multicultural Ministries has been incredibly responsive to UU community needs, serving as a resource and partner working directly with UU colleagues, congregations, and committees and affinity.

Annette Marquis, LGBTQ and Multicultural Ministries Program Manager, participated in the Southeast District's anti-racism team's winter retreat to develop a vision for their work, which has the potential to impact all 63 congregations in that district. Alex Kapitan, LGBTQ and Multicultural Ministries Programs Administrator, supported a newly formed Welcoming Congregation cluster of six congregations in Mississippi to help them envision how to use their collective capacity to strengthen their welcome and inclusion of LGBTQ people in their communities. Multicultural Ministries was invited to work with the District to develop this cluster model.

MGW serves as a leadership education resource for the Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago, IL. This year, Janice Marie Johnson, Multicultural Ministries and Leadership Director, provided a multiculturalism consultation for Meadville Lombard. This consultation included training in anti-racism and multiculturalism for new staff, and a special session with 20 seminarians and faculty of color. She also created a presentation on the present and future of multiculturalism in Unitarian Universalism for the entire Theological School (seminarians, faculty, and staff) in January 2013.

Finding Our Way Home, the annual retreat for UU religious professionals of color sponsored by the Diversity of Ministry Team continues to grow in participation. Last year's retreat had 70 attendees; we anticipate even more in 2013. In 2012 a service component was incorporated into the retreat, and was enthusiastically welcomed by the participants and the local organizations in New Orleans. This will be a continuing feature of Finding Our Way Home.

Multicultural Ministries co-sponsors the Living Legacy Pilgrimage, an annual week-long journey to meet veterans of the Civil Rights Movement for more than 40 people. Plans for fall 2013 include working with the UU College of Social Justice to incorporate a "taking the experience home" component. Examples of this would include working on reducing voter suppression and increasing access to voting for vulnerable communities.



Over the last year, Multicultural Ministries has also

- Collaborated with the Pacific Western Region to present webinars on LGBTQ youth welcome and ministry, and transgender identity.
- Produced a webinar with Standing on the Side of Love for more than 200 participants that continues to be widely downloaded as an ongoing resource.
- Continued to deliver Jubilee Anti-Racism trainings to congregations and at district gatherings as a leadership development tool for increasing leaders' ability to understand, identify, and strategize how to dismantle institutional racism in congregations and the larger community.
- Worked to sponsor and/or collaborate on at least six General Assembly 2013 workshops related to welcome, inclusion, multicultural ministry, and multicultural justice-making.
- Revamped the online "racial justice and multicultural ministries" web presence on UUA.org.
- Collaborated on the curation of [Doctrine of Discovery](#) online resources in response to the Justice General Assembly resolution.
- Developed online resources for new Indigenous Peoples Day and National Coming Out Day.
- Launched the [Welcoming Congregation Bulletin](#) to keep leaders connected and engaged to the work of building intentionally diverse, welcoming, inclusive, justice-centered, multicultural and multigenerational congregations. 1,000 people have subscribed to the Welcoming Congregation Bulletin in its first five months.
- Initiated efforts to engage and reengage congregations in the Welcoming Congregation Program. This year marked two landmarks: a full two thirds (66%) of all UU congregations are now recognized Welcoming Congregations, and there is now a recognized Welcoming Congregation in every U.S. state. FY13 also marked a new concerted effort to offer UU congregations the opportunity to officially renew their Welcoming Congregation status.

Multicultural Growth and Witness works to bring our UU principles to the world through all of these incredible programs and initiatives. One step at a time, we are making the world a better place!

[Standing on the Side of Love](#)

[Standing on the Side of Love](#) (SSL) is the UUA's public advocacy campaign, which seeks to harness love's power to stop oppression.

Standing on the Side of Love boasts a highly engaged Facebook community of over 33,000 supporters. According to Facebook's metrics, our "weekly total reach" (the number of unique people who see our content during a given week) can be as high as 80,000 individuals during



high-engagement periods. SSL also interacts with supporters on other social media platforms, including a growing Twitter following (currently 3,330 followers) and an emerging presence on Pinterest (200+ followers). Email remains a primary engagement tool for the campaign—our email list currently reaches 25,100 active subscribers. Through only our newly-created advocacy actions in the last year, we generated nearly 7,000 messages to federal legislators and policymakers on issues ranging from immigrant justice to religious freedom.

Standing on the Side of Love has worked for social justice in a number of areas over the past year.

Last spring, SSL partnered with UUA Treasurer Tim Brennan to pair his office’s shareholder advocacy for American Legislative Exchange Council divestment with grassroots mobilization. Our petition calling for Amazon, FedEx, UPS, and Visa to stop funding the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) garnered over 2,600 signatures. Amazon did leave ALEC (along with many other corporations) and our efforts helped shed light on the organization’s shady and immoral practices.

For the Tent City vigil during Justice GA 2012, SSL and our partners employed a dual strategy of local witness and national action. The poignant nature of the SSL message helped garner press coverage in more than 200 media outlets, including *NPR*, the *USA Today*, and the *Washington Post*. Additionally, our online action page directed more than 3,800 messages to President Obama, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, and Attorney General Holder calling for an end to the suffering in Maricopa County.



[UU World estimates](#) that more than 2,500 people attended the Tent City Vigil.

In the wake of the shooting at the Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, SSL [collected more than 2,100 messages of love](#) and support which were then hand delivered to the temple by local UU clergy. This fall, SSL embarked on several endeavors to expand our supporters’ level of competency on transgender issues. More than 300 people signed up for our “Transgender



Identity & Inclusion” webinar, which received high praise from participants. We also partnered with the Church of the Larger Fellowship to host our second online Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil, which received over 300 RSVPs.

SSL supported the work of marriage equality initiatives in North Carolina, Washington State, Minnesota, Maine, and Maryland in a number of ways. Groups in all five states used our message to frame their local organizing. SSL also facilitated connections between organizers, shared best practices on our blog, provided strategy support, offered our supporters ways to plug into the campaigns, and in some cases provided support through grant funding. Four of the five campaigns led to favorable outcomes at the ballot box.



UUs at the New York City Pride Parade, proudly displaying their SSL shirts!

SSL also continued its ongoing support of [No More Deaths](#) and their humanitarian work along the U.S.-Mexico border. As in years past, SSL has acted as a national megaphone for No More Deaths’ local organizing. We promoted two petitions on their behalf, one to Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano about [giving human rights observers access to detention facilities](#) and another to the FBI and Justice Department [denouncing excessive use of force on the border](#), resulting in at least 2,500 messages to policymakers on these critical human rights issues.

In the wake of several national tragedies, SSL has often filled a unique role on social media by providing a prayerful response to the violence. Prayers that we posted in response to Trayvon Martin’s murder and the shootings in Oak Creek and Newtown received hundreds of likes and shares on Facebook.

We connect with communities of all sizes across the country and organize groups of many sizes. The Tent City vigil at Justice General Assembly was a great example of our capacity to mobilize people—[UU World estimates](#) that more than 2,500 people attended that event!



Thirty Days of Love

Our inaugural Thirty Days of Love campaign (January-February 2012) resulted in a flurry of activity across the country. Here is a sampling of statistics from the month:

- Nearly 1,000 people took part in our daily love actions.
- 75 people registered public witness events.
- 46 people submitted their own prayers, mantras, and meditations.
- 250 people attended the immigration webinar.
- 110 individuals took part in the collective visioning webinar.
- 77 congregations participated in Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day events (read congregational stories [here](#)).
- 7 congregations reported that they [honored community leaders with Courageous Love awards](#).
- Nearly 200 people registered social justice-themed worship services.

Besides the pure numbers, we received dozens of touching stories about how the Thirty Days of Love impacted the lives of both congregations and individuals, from a [gorgeous video](#) on a marriage equality-themed youth service project from First UU Brooklyn and a vigil at a detention center in Colorado to clergy preaching SSL-themed sermons in places as diverse as Solana Beach, California, Hartford, Connecticut, and Twin Falls, Idaho. A full round-up of the stories we received is available [here](#).

The second annual Thirty Days of Love took place between January 19 and February 17, 2013. Initial numbers indicate that our level of engagement will be even higher this year. According to the Congregational Social Justice Survey, conducted by UUA Witness Ministries staff in 2011, nearly 80% of congregations indicated that they were connected with SSL in some way. Our contact with individuals and congregations indicates that this level of participation has increased since 2011, both in terms of the number of engaged congregations and the level of engagement within already-involved congregations. This increase was likely driven in part by the visibility of the campaign in the lead up to and during Justice General Assembly.

Standing on the Side of Love is working every day to change the world and to demonstrate the importance of Unitarian Universalism and our life-affirming message of love and hope.



International Resources Office and Faith Without Borders

The International Resources Office provides tools and techniques for congregations involved in international engagement; maintains and develops the UUA's UU and interfaith relationships around the world; and leads collaborative work between independent UU organizations doing international work.

One method of pursuing this work is the [Faith Without Borders](#) blog. Faith Without Borders 2.0 will launch in February 2013 as a collaborative enterprise of the "Coalition of UU International Organizations." Faith Without Borders creates a way for all of our organizations to respond to the needs expressed by individuals and congregations in an organized and easily accessible way.

UU-United Nations Office

The UU-United Nations Office (UU-UNO) engages Unitarian Universalists and our faith's voice at the United Nations. Over the course of the past year, we completed the merger of the UU-UNO and the UUA. Integration within the UUA structures proceeds well on all fronts. Continuing work will take place in fundraising, electronic communication, and work for the UU College of Social Justice.

UU Holdeen India Program

The UU Holdeen India Program (UUHIP) advances empowerment and promotes equity in India by partnering with Human Rights and Social Change organizations. During the past year, the UUA has assisted our partners among the Adivasi people to develop collaborative structures.

The Director of UUHIP, Derek Mitchell, has been with the program for one year. During that time, he has worked closely with our partner organizations, building relationships and supporting our important work in India. We have received amazing feedback about Derek, including this letter from the Rev. James C. Leach,



Derek Mitchell with members of the Self-Employed Women's Association, one of our UU Holdeen India Program partners.

Senior Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte:

“What I can say without equivocation is that Unitarian Universalists have a superb representative in India. As I suspect you know already from your own travels with him in India, Derek Mitchell is a man of formidable intellect, immense compassion, keen cultural sensitivity, impressive linguistic acumen and obvious spiritual depth. He is a person who embodies his role as Director of our Holdeen India Program in an exemplary and strategic manner. We can be rightly proud that Derek represents us in this way in this important work.”

One of our UUHIP partners is the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA). SEWA’s primary work has been in helping the most impoverished women in India band together and fight for dignity and the basic rights of health care, supplementary food for their families, and an education for their children. UUHIP has partnered with SEWA since its founding in 1974, and we continue to work in solidarity with them as they have grown to 1.35 million members.

Other International Work

During FY13, we have worked to support our partner organizations across the world. We supported LGBTQ Human Rights partners in Uganda, especially Rev. Mark Kiyimba, through consultation, planning and solidarity. We are in the process of planning a Regional Theological and Reconciliation symposium in Kampala with Rev. Kiyimba.

We also continued our relief efforts for Japanese partners in response to the devastating 2011 earthquake and tsunami. UUA President the Rev. Peter Morales visited Japan in [March of 2012](#); our funding for this relief effort was nearly completed in FY12, and we look forward to continued collaboration with our partner organizations throughout this year and next.

UU College of Social Justice

One of the most exciting developments of FY13 was the launch of the [UU College of Social Justice](#) (UUCSJ), a joint program of the UUA and UU Service Committee (UUSC). The mission for the UU College of Social Justice is to build the capacity of Unitarian Universalists to catalyze justice in community, through experiential learning grounded in UU theology, history, and contemplative practices.



The International Office has supported the UUCSJ by helping to develop and lead a very positively evaluated service learning trip to Tanzania and Burundi another to India with UUHIP partners. The International Office is also developing seminarian and minister programs that the UUCSJ promotes.

During the course of the past year, the UUCSJ has developed and initiated a variety of experiential learning programs, including a [youth justice training](#) and youth civil rights journey, a program leaders' training to help us rapidly expand our capacity, and has successfully sent delegations of UUs to Haiti, India, Tanzania and Burundi, Mexico, New Orleans, and Guatemala.



The 2012 Youth Justice Training was an incredible success, and we are now accepting applications for the summer 2013 training!

In order to ensure the kind of depth learning that these experiences are designed to effect, we have enlisted the Fahs Collaborative at Meadville Lombard to help us create our core curriculum. The prototype of the curriculum will be ready for use by the end of May 2013 and will undergird all of our programs.

We have also begun a rapid expansion of our experiential learning offerings, including plans for youth justice trainings in two locations in summer 2013, with plans to hold such trainings in at least three of the five UUA regions by the summer of 2014. For Fiscal Year 2014 we will also add two domestic locations for experiential learning, to make them more accessible especially to youth groups.

The work in establishing the UUCSJ and now assisting it in its success points to the importance of collaboration between the UUA and UUSC. Each organization has priceless experience in unique areas that are mutually beneficial for individuals and congregations pursuing mature social justice. Our learning and consequent changes through the first six months of our formal existence have been the sort that can be anticipated in a start-up endeavor of this scope. In particular we've realized the need to plan and publicize our offerings far in advance, in order to allow for the long timeframe in congregational planning. We have recognized the need for more



of our experiential learning to be domestic in destination, to help reduce the cost and environmental impact of travel, include more youth, and debunk the myth that border-crossing happens only in leaving the country.

This is an incredibly exciting initiative, and we look forward to supporting and promoting it throughout next year and beyond.

Socially Responsible Investing and Shareholder Advocacy

Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) ensures that our investments are consistent with our values. The UUA has been strongly committed to SRI for over forty years. Our commitment springs from our faith, and from our deep conviction in the dignity of all human beings. The UUA is constantly engaged in SRI activity from shareholder resolutions, to community investing, to affordable housing and other justice initiatives.

We are also dedicated to community investment; \$1,357,879 of the UU Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF) assets are invested in community investments as of September 30, 2012. Over sixty congregations are participating in the UUA matching program whereby the UUA will match a congregation's community investment up to \$10,000. This year, the Lucy Stone Co-op received the UUCEF's first Targeted Impact Investment. This investment enabled them



Members of the Lucy Stone Co-op take part in a sing-along after dinner at the Lucy Stone Co-op.

to secure financing to set up their first co-op house based on a shared grounding of UUA values. Twelve adults live communally in this co-op-with-a-mission: to create an intentional community living the values and traditions of Unitarian Universalism and focused on sustainability, spiritual practice, and social change. The [Lucy Stone Co-op](#) is an exciting, innovative new initiative that we are excited to support!

We did have some unanticipated results this year. With the support of the UUA's investment committee, our investment consultants, New England Pension Consultants, brought in two new investment managers with a focus on "ESG" (environmental, social and governance) to interview. MFS Investment Management and Schroder's Investment Management both have a



strong track record with respect to ESG and will become managers of a portion of the UUCEF assets.

Shareholder Advocacy is focused on systemic change that flows through to individual lives. This year we have partnered with a coalition of investors seeking to reduce corporate support for the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). Most member companies are interested in supporting pro-business legislation at the state level, not the pro-gun, voter suppression laws pushed by many of the member legislators. By making the case to companies that their membership is a reputational risk, we have succeeded in convincing 48 corporations to drop financial support for ALEC, thus weakening their influence. Tim Brennan, UUA Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer, has also had the opportunity to work individually with many congregations in their efforts to bring UU values to bear on their investments. He has also spoken at many workshops addressing SRI.

The steady increase of shareholder support for resolutions we file and co-file is a major benchmark that indicates our progress. As the number of people affected by these resolutions is quite broad, the UUA likes to target companies that have a wide reach because the passing of new corporate policy touches that many more live as these policies and practices become more widely adopted in an industry. Over the last several years we have played a role in getting companies to change important policies, such as adding gender identity/expression to their non-discrimination policies and undertaking serious efforts to measure and disclose their environmental impact.

Unitarian Universalism in the Media

The UUA has received positive media coverage over the past fiscal year from a number of sources. In July, UUA President the Rev. Peter Morales published an article in [*The Guardian*](#) on his experience with Phoenix Sheriff Joe Arpaio. In August, the Rev. Morales was quoted in a [*National Catholic Reporter*](#) article on the importance of interfaith support and understanding in the wake of violence targeting the Sikh temple in Oak Creek, WI. In October, [*USA Today*](#) published an article on the growth of our faith nationwide.



In addition, in FY13, the Rev. Morales has been published several times in the Huffington Post. Those articles include:

- [5 Action Items for Obama](#) on January 16, 2013
- [Fear of the Fiscal Cliff](#) on December 4, 2012
- [Be Not Afraid](#) on November 8, 2012
- [The Real Values of Voter Summit](#) on September 24, 2012

In FY13, the Rev. Peter Morales issued the following statements:

- [Joint Statement with UUWF President Commemorating 40th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade Decision](#) on January 22, 2013
- [Statement on the Connecticut School Massacre](#) on December 14, 2012
- [A Holiday Message](#) on December 10, 2012
- [Applauds Marriage Popular Vote](#) on November 7, 2012
- [Responds to Shooting at Sikh Temple](#) on August 6, 2012

Standing on the Side of Love's distinctive golden shirts have also appeared in the press several times over the past year as SSL continues to provide congregations and individuals with a compelling, visible way to "show up" at local witness events. Some examples include a report on a recent [marriage equality rally](#) in Chestertown, MD, a [Rolling Stone article](#) on the "war against gay teens," and the coverage of UU participation in [Dallas Pride](#).

Sign-ons and Amicus Curiae Briefs

The UUA also participates in non-partisan civic engagement by supporting public statements and court cases that are in accordance with our principles. We do that in two ways.

"[Sign-ons](#)" are endorsements either from an organization such as the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) or from one of its representatives such as UUA President the Rev. Peter Morales. Sign-ons are usually in the form of a letter directed to someone in a position of power requesting that they take action on the issue in question.

The UUA determines which letters to sign on to by whether or not we have "grounding" within our past [social justice statements](#). This is to ensure that our sign-ons faithfully represent the position of Unitarian Universalists, as determined by our democratic social witness process. The UUA president has the prerogative to make personal endorsements provided they are in keeping with the values of Unitarian Universalism.



During the past year, notable sign-ons have included a letter to Valerie Jarrett regarding reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act; letters to Congress opposing cuts to sexuality education funding and supporting the “Water for the World Act of 2012;” and letters to President Obama regarding the end of nuclear weapons and asking him to hold a summit on religious tolerance, among others.

Another category of organizational endorsements is amicus curiae briefs, which are legal documents filed to state positions relevant to court cases. For amicus briefs, in addition to “grounding,” the statement is vetted by attorney. Over the last year, our two most notable amicus curiae briefs have been about marriage equality in California’s 9th Circuit. One is in opposition to the [Defense of Marriage Act](#); the other was regarding Proposition 8. Both of these cases are now before the Supreme Court.

Conclusion

Thanks to our amazing staff and the generous financial support from congregations and individuals, the UUA has been able to create programs that support our congregations and promote our liberal religious values to the world. Together we have the passion, the compassion, the spirit, and the determination to face the tests of our times. We can ensure that our religious movement continues to grow and thrive. Our shared values will help us create a better world.

