



UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
ASSOCIATION OF
CONGREGATIONS



Summit on Youth Ministry Report

July 16–20, 2007
Simmons College
Boston, Massachusetts

Greetings!

We are delighted to share with you a new imagination of Unitarian Universalist youth ministry and multigenerational faith community. This vision comes from a diverse group of youth and adult stakeholders who gathered at Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts, for the Summit on Youth Ministry. Our task was to imagine and shape a youth ministry that serves *all* Unitarian Universalist youth. Our work was grounded in the two-year Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth, a process that engaged more than five thousand Unitarian Universalists in conversations about the role and direction of youth ministry in our Association. Thousands of Unitarian Universalists have contributed to this new vision.

We envision a youth ministry that is central to the articulated mission of Unitarian Universalism, offers multiple pathways for involvement in our faith communities, and is

congregationally based;
multigenerational;
spirit-centered;
counter-oppressive, multicultural, and radically inclusive.

Numerous factors impact our ability to serve the members of our congregations. Our programming, worship, social justice work, and resources work for some, but do not effectively minister to and with all Unitarian Universalists. The issues facing youth ministry reflect the forces and trends affecting our movement as a whole. This report offers recommendations for strengthening and broadening our ministry throughout our faith communities.

The publication of this report does not mark the end of a process. It marks a beginning. Now is the time to create the ministry our youth deserve. Take this report home to your congregations and look for more updates and resources for sharing it at www.uua.org/aboutus/governance/boardtrustees/youthministry. Begin to implement its recommendations and create change within your own communities. Let's shape a youth ministry that serves all Unitarian Universalist youth.

With gratitude,



Megan Dowdell
Co-Conveners of the Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth



Rev. William Sinkford

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What Happened at the Summit on Youth Ministry

The Summit on Youth Ministry took place July 16–20, 2007 at Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts. For a list of the fifty-four participants, their roles/affiliations, and working groups, see Appendix A.

The theme for the gathering came from the song “Where Do We Come From, What Are We, Where Are We Going?” The week began with a collective remembering of where we come from, as participants created a narrative of the history of Unitarian Universalist youth ministry, the Unitarian Universalist movement, and the United States and Canada over the past fifty years.

Eugene Roehlkepartain from the Search Institute and the Center for Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence engaged participants in a presentation and discussion of his research on contemporary youth spiritual development across multiple denominations and cultures. His presentation on youth developmental assets and the role of religious communities in youth development informed subsequent discussions about youth development in Unitarian Universalist communities.

Participants then moved into an assessment of the current state of youth ministry in Unitarian Universalism, based on the data gathered by the Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth, which was conducted over the past two years. This data was drawn from the results of congregational discussions, district discussions, stakeholder discussions, a survey of youth, and a survey of adults who work with youth. Participants discussed the forces, factors, and trends that impact youth ministry, issues often reflected in the larger Unitarian Universalist community and society.

The focus then turned to the question, where are we going? Participants were organized into six working groups based on the themes that emerged from the consultation process. Groups were age diverse with representation from different stakeholders to ensure that the work had a range of experience as well as perspective. The process has striven to model from the start what it advocates in the end: a collaboration among youth, young adults, and adults. These groups wrestled with the issues raised by the consultation, articulated new visions, and identified specific objectives for Unitarian Universalist youth ministry.

Summit on Youth Ministry Recommendations

The Summit on Youth Ministry recommendations were developed by six working groups organized into six theme areas, each addressing a significant aspect of Unitarian Universalist youth ministry. The six areas are:

- Meeting the Spiritual Needs of Youth
- Welcoming All Youth in a Multicultural World
- Building a Multigenerational Faith
- Organizing Youth Ministry for Success
- Moving Beyond a One-Size-Fits-All Ministry
- Preparing and Supporting Adults for Youth Ministry

For more information about the issues these working groups focused on, see the Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth Summary Report.

The Summit recommendations in each theme area include:

Vision Statement: Each working group developed a vision statement for their area of focus. These statements cast a broad imagination of what Unitarian Universalist youth ministry could be.

Objectives: Under each vision is a list of three to six objectives. Objectives are goals that, if achieved, will bring us closer to realizing the vision of Unitarian Universalist youth ministry.

Activities: Most objectives are accompanied by supporting activities, which are concrete steps or projects that will help fulfill the objectives. These are not meant to be exhaustive lists of all possibilities, but rather the beginnings of a more comprehensive plan. Undoubtedly, many more activities will be developed over the next few years by those working on implementation.

The specifically articulated visions, objectives, and activities of all the working groups are included in this report despite their overlap, both to be faithful to the thinking and output of each group and to illustrate the depth of consensus in the overall vision for the religious life of the community.

See Appendix B for conceptual definitions that informed the development of the visions, objectives, and activities.

Meeting the Spiritual Needs of Youth

We envision a spirit-centered Unitarian Universalist culture at all levels of our faith, including youth ministry. Our youth ministry provides for the spiritual development of youth, advisors, and families through Unitarian Universalist identity formation, pastoral care, and spiritual practice, in order to manifest Unitarian Universalism in all arenas of life. Our youth ministry is viewed as an integral part of ministry for the entire Unitarian Universalist community and is varied to meet the diverse needs of youth.

Objective 1: Engage in a process of theological reflection on youth ministry toward the end of establishing a shared vision and practice.

Activity 1: Convene a symposium (e.g., *Essex Conversations*, *Soul Work*) on the theology of youth ministry and publish the proceedings in various media.

Activity 2: Create resources for people of all ages to engage in theological reflection as a Unitarian Universalist spiritual practice.

Activity 3: Ask the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and the Religious Education Credentialing Committee to add theological reflection on youth ministry for all professional credentialing, and ask Unitarian Universalist theological schools to provide education in the area of youth ministry.

Objective 2: Create spirit-centered youth communities.

Activity 1: Create a youth-specific resource book including readings, hymns, and activities for different settings, including Sunday worship, midnight worship, and committee meetings.

Activity 2: Create a “questioning” curriculum to spark conversations on theology, social justice issues, Unitarian Universalist history, and issues around anti-racism/anti-oppression/multicultural (AR/AO/MC) work. This curriculum should include intentional time for reflection.

Activity 3: Develop “sacred activist” training to emphasize the connection between social justice and spirituality.

Activity 4: Review trainings for youth chaplains and advisors for content on theology, spiritual grounding, and accessibility.

Objective 3: Develop a strong understanding and articulation of Unitarian Universalism within youth communities.

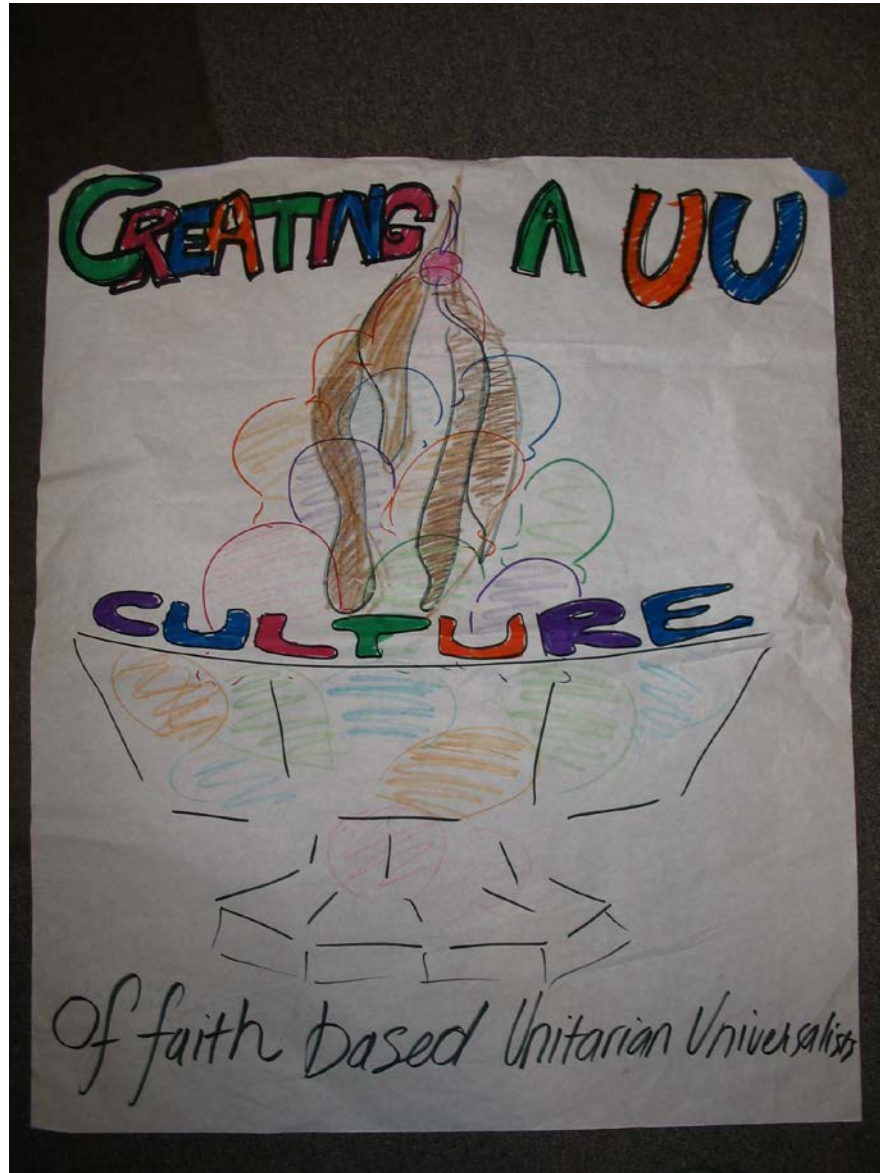
Activity 1: Develop a training or curriculum that will help youth talk about Unitarian Universalism with their friends.

Activity 2: Expand/explain the Youth Ministry Coordinator’s responsibilities to include ministry to youth not active in the youth group or congregation.

Activity 3: Equip youth with knowledge of Unitarian Universalist history and theology, including that of Unitarian Universalist People of Color.

Activity 4: Promote “UUvangelism”—the sharing and spreading of Unitarian Universalism.

Activity 5: Encourage youth to be active in community ministry with an AR/AO/MC lens.



Welcoming All Youth in a Multicultural World

Our vision for welcoming all youth in a multicultural world

Is a spiritual vision;

- It comes from our faith and it strengthens our faith.
- It comes from life and it intensifies life.
- It comes from the spirit and it raises the spirit.

Is a vision for our whole religious community;

- It is not just what our youth need but what everyone in our congregations need.
- It is a vision of what our congregations should be: places where all involved bring their whole selves—their cultures and identities—and learn together how to be a multicultural community that is just and life giving for everyone.

Is a vision that requires a critical mass of leaders;

- Youth can help lead our whole religious community to be a multicultural, counter-oppressive community, but youth can only succeed if there is a team of leaders to support and collaborate with them, leadership that includes, at a minimum, minister, religious educator, youth advisors, music director, and board leaders.

Is a vision of a community constantly learning and changing;

- The goal is not stasis, but increased dynamism and flow, creative interaction and interchange.
- It requires humility, not self-righteousness.
- The learning that happens in our multicultural congregations makes our congregations into schools for the transformation of society.

Is a both/and vision that

- *both* supports and nurtures diverse identities in their particularities;
- *And* supports, nurtures, and structures just interactions that transform historic legacies of injustice and oppression.

Is a vision grounded by worship, ritual, spiritual practice, and dedication;

- It is rooted in the diversity existing in the community.

Is a vision that is local, regional, and global in its completeness.

- It brings the whole world into a local religious community.
- It offers gifts from the local community out into the whole world.

Objective 1: Create and sustain Unitarian Universalist youth communities rooted in worship, spiritual practices, learning, and service that model what Unitarian Universalist communities can be: multigenerational, multicultural, religious, inclusive, just and counter-oppressive, and affirming all people in the fullness of their identities.

Activity 1: Review and adapt the UUA's youth leadership training program, Chrysalis, to ensure

cultural competency and counter-oppressive awareness.

Activity 2: Create and promote identity-based ministry resources for youth and young adults for use at the congregational level.

Objective 2: Multicultural youth communities will act as agents of change within Unitarian Universalist and non-Unitarian Universalist communities.

Activity 1: With Unitarian Universalist theological schools, create an annual leadership institute that partners ministers, religious educators, and youth leaders in building skills for advancing our congregations as just and sustainable counter-oppressive communities.

Activity 2: Offer a grassroots organizing skill-development program for youth and young adults at all levels of the Association.

Objective 3: Build on effective AR/AO/MC work already in place by consolidating and modifying existing resources in order to increase accessibility and implementation in multigenerational congregational settings.

Activity 1: Increase the number of trainers in each district and create regional teams for the UUA's youth and young adult anti-racism training program, Groundwork.

Activity 2: Promote the Training of Trainers and extend the application process for Groundwork.

Activity 3: Ensure that Canadians have opportunities to participate in Groundwork as participants and trainers.

Activity 4: Create a communication infrastructure for districts/regions to exchange ideas for dealing with AR/AO/MC issues in their areas.

Activity 5: Provide UUA subsidies for youth-led and youth-focused AR/AO/MC trainings to increase accessibility at the congregational level, specifically reaching out to smaller congregations.

Activity 6: Create and promote AR/AO/MC youth-focused curricula that can be implemented in congregations, led by congregants with training similar to that of the UUA's sexuality education program, *Our Whole Lives* (OWL).

Objective 4: Strengthen support for groups doing AR/AO/MC work, including People of Color, * Latino/Latina/Hispanic, and White people.

Activity 1: Develop a mentorship program within the Association staff to support youth and young adult staff of color and white allies.

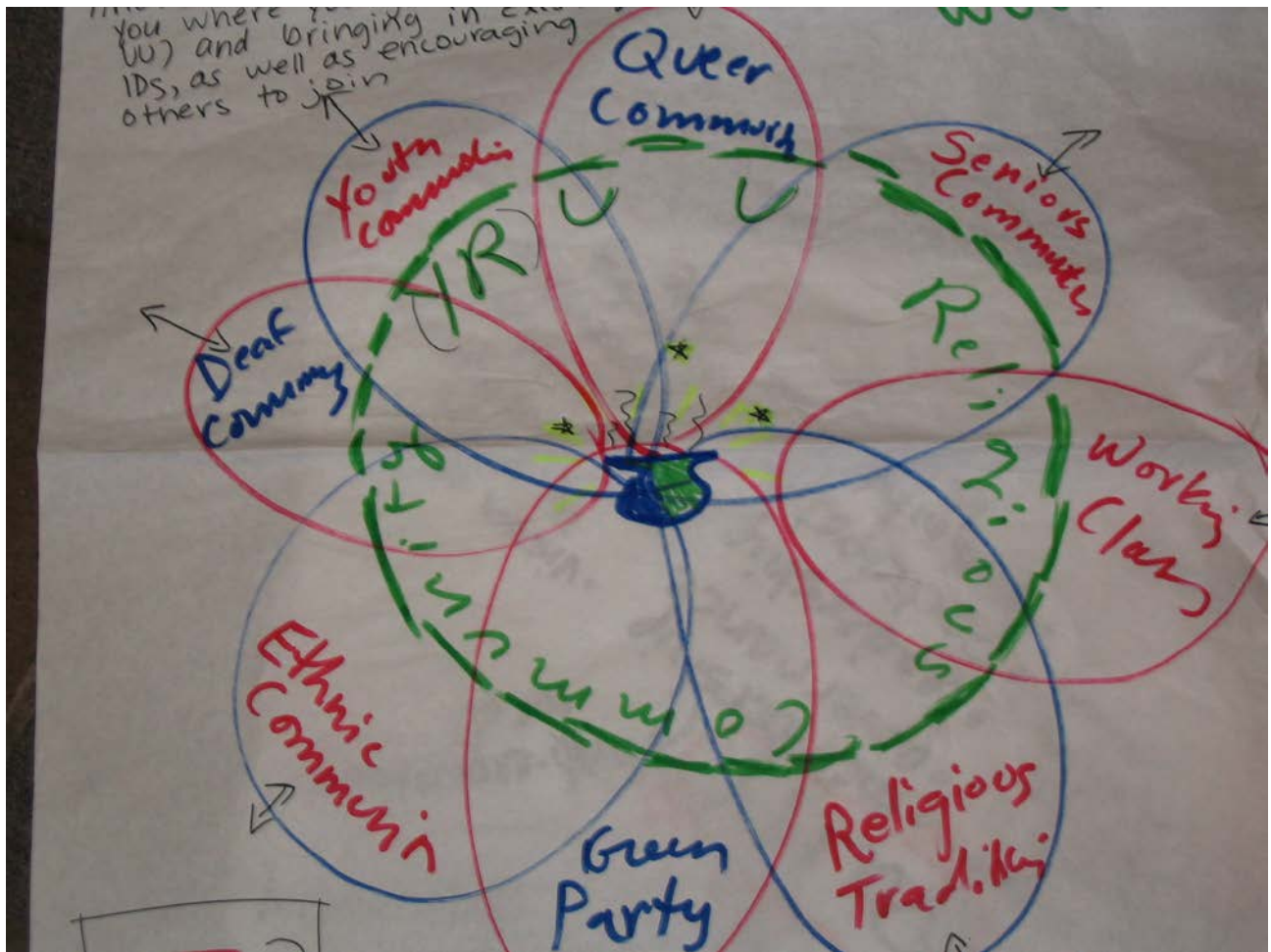
Activity 2: Conduct a needs assessment of transracially adopted youth and young adults, and develop or modify programs and other resources based on the assessment.

Activity 3: Conduct a needs assessment of transgender youth and young adults, and develop or

modify programs/resources based on the assessment.

Activity 4: Conduct a needs assessment of all People of Color/Latino/Latina/Hispanic descent youth and young adults, and develop or modify programs and other resources based on the assessment.

*The term *People of Color* is acceptable within many communities, though not all. Our community is wrestling with finding language that is inclusive and empowering and has chosen People of Color because of its common usage in the Unitarian Universalist Association.



Building a Multigenerational Faith

We envision a radical culture change for our faith movement in which generational differences are honored and celebrated and in which the norm for all programs, activities, and ministries includes all ages.

There are six thematic areas to this vision:

WORSHIP: Congregations engage people of all ages in the planning, implementing, and experiencing of worship.

RELATIONSHIP: Congregations support people of all ages in building trusting, respectful, and nurturing community.

THEOLOGY: Our common understanding of Unitarian Universalist theology explicitly includes youth empowerment, youth ministry, social justice, and the sacred value of multigenerational community.

LEARNING: Our congregations are learning communities in which people of all ages and learning styles are helped to learn and teach our faith and encourage one another to spiritual growth.

POLITY: People of all ages are members of the community with a voice in the congregation and a responsibility to the community's covenant.

RESOURCES: Our congregations distribute resources to create a robust multigenerational community.

Objective 1: Create and disseminate resources to equip congregations for building multigenerational communities in which all peoples' gifts and wisdom are honored.

Activity 1: Create a tool kit that will equip congregations for multigenerational ministry by consolidating and modifying existing resources currently available to youth, adults, and congregations and creating new resources as needed. These could include

- resources for multigenerational worship teams;
- resources and support for whole-family worship;
- a database of multigenerational worship resources;
- resources to develop multigenerational competencies among congregational leaders;
- resources on membership and governance;
- resources for multigenerational rites of passage;
- resources for anti-racist multicultural and anti-oppression analysis of multigenerational worship.

Activity 2: Identify eight (two of each of four congregational sizes, at least one in Canada) strategic congregations willing/able to serve as pilot congregations for building multigenerational competency and provide them with monetary and training incentives to do so.

Activity 3: Plan for a multigenerational General Assembly (GA) 2010 at which worship, workshops, and programs use a multigenerational model.

- Every worship service at GA 2010 in Minneapolis is a multigenerational service planned by a multigenerational team.
- Multigenerational models are coupled with workshops and congregational highlights (such as Breakthrough Congregations).
- GA is intentionally alcohol-free.
- Multigenerational activities for community building are offered.

Activity 4: Develop multigenerational elements/curricula as part of the Tapestry of Faith project, connected with the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) Lifespan Learning Community program.

Activity 5: Study how other faith groups have been successful in developing multigenerational community and share learnings with Unitarian Universalist congregations and community.

Objective 2: Engage in a process of theological reflection on youth ministry, youth empowerment, and multigenerational community.

Activity 1: Engage with the Commission on Appraisal process of reviewing and revising Article 2 to ensure that the multigenerational lens is used and the life cycle is honored.

Activity 2: Ask the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and the Religious Education Credentialing Committee to add theological reflection on multigenerational community for all professional credentialing. Ask Unitarian Universalist theological schools to provide education in the area of multigenerational community and the place of youth ministry in this model.

Activity 3: Incorporate a multigenerational lens and theology into all Unitarian Universalist social justice work. Hold up models where this is done well (for example, Gulf Coast teams, Industrial Areas Foundation, etc.).

Activity 4: Engage stakeholder organizations in a theological reflection process on the intersections of race, class, age, sexual identity, and gender/gender identity.

Objective 3: Establish youth ministry as an inherent and visible ministry of multigenerational congregational systems. Youth ministry will not be isolated, but will be part of all areas of congregational life.



Organizing Youth Ministry for Success

We envision a youth ministry structure that is grounded in congregational life with youth integrated into multigenerational community, which also provides a space for youth to connect outside of their congregation. This youth ministry structure includes spaces for youth who are currently not well served by congregations, for example, Youth of Color, Queer Youth, and youth who are geographically distant from a congregation. Anti-racism, anti-oppression, and identity development are central in all aspects of this youth ministry structure.

Objective 1: The UUA will give priority to services and resources supporting excellence in congregationally based youth ministry.

Activity 1: Reorganize UUA staff to more effectively support youth ministry in congregations and clusters of congregations.

Activity 2: Develop a training and consultancy program to serve congregations and clusters of congregations by region.

- The program will include, but not be limited to, communications, resource development, mentorship/recruitment/retention of leadership, AR/AO/MC, and conflict management.
- Trainings will support youth, lay adult leaders, religious educators, and ministers in their respective roles around youth ministry.
- This program will include a process for support and mentorship.

Activity 3: Provide programming and leadership development opportunities in regions and clusters of congregations in order to reach a broad, diverse community of youth, and provide services to congregations more equitably.

Activity 4: Evaluate and phase out and/or transition out of continental and district youth structures and programs.

Activity 5: Include local youth program information and data in the UUA Directory.

Objective 2: Every congregation or cluster of congregations will have a well-trained and supported youth ministry coordinator or director.

Activity 1: Develop a congregational grants program to help congregations add paid youth ministry staff.

Activity 2: Develop a training program specifically for professional youth ministry coordinators and directors.

Objective 3: There will be a central place that youth and adult leaders will be able to go for resources for excellence in youth ministry.

Activity 1: Develop a comprehensive and youth-friendly online resource center using the latest online community networking technology. This online resource center will include resources for new and lifelong Unitarian Universalist youth and professional and volunteer staff working with

youth. This online resource will also include networking for congregations and clusters around best practices, and models of youth ministry, discussion forums, training and event information, resources for bridging to young adulthood, regional support and information, and spiritual needs and pastoral support.

Objective 4: Create an identity-based ministry to and with Youth of Color that is located as close as possible to their home congregations, recognizing that, at least initially, “as close as possible” might be at the continental or regional level.

Activity 1: Through the UUA Identity-Based Ministry’s assessment of ministry needs for Youth and Young Adults of Color, consult with key stakeholders in Unitarian Universalist communities of color including (but not limited to) Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM) and Latino/a Unitarian Universalist Networking Association (LUUNA).

Activity 2: Encourage and support DRUUMM and others in their continuing ministry with Youth of Color.

Objective 5: Provide dedicated staff support for Youth of Color and those who minister to and with Youth of Color.

Objective 6: Create an identity-based ministry to and with Queer Youth that is located as close as possible to their home congregations, recognizing that, at least initially, “as close as possible” might be at the continental or regional level.

Activity 1: Encourage and support Interweave and others in their continuing ministry with Queer Youth.



Moving Beyond a One-Size-Fits-All Ministry

We envision a far-reaching youth ministry that

- is a multigenerational community that recognizes sages (wisdom) at every age;
- instinctively creates opportunities for youth presence in congregational and denominational life;
- offers a variety of diverse and robust pathways to a richness of experience;
- provides welcoming spaces that are radically inclusive;
- is an accompanied journey of spiritual growth;
- challenges everyone to be their best selves.

Objective 1: Offer many varied pathways and resources for “growing souls” in both youth-specific and multigenerational contexts.

Activities include (but are not limited to) learning/teaching, leadership, worship, social justice, membership, music/arts, community building/events, pastoral care, small group ministry, facilities, fellowship, spiritual practice, camps/conferences, denominational involvement, anti-racism and anti-oppression work.

Activity 1: Gather information about existing pathways for youth engagement in Unitarian Universalist communities, and share best practices.

Activity 2: Provide resources to youth, adults, and congregations on these pathways, and develop ways to encourage youth to seek out meaningful ways of being involved.

Activity 3: Conduct ongoing assessments of opportunities and pathways for youth.

Objective 2: Create a cultural shift in Unitarian Universalism such that ministry to and with youth is understood to be shared by all people in our Unitarian Universalist communities.

Activity 1: Provide education and training opportunities for professional staff and lay leaders through General Assembly Professional Days, UU University, Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association CENTER continuing education programs, district and continental conferences, etc.

Objective 3: Create a tool kit to equip congregations for multigenerational ministry by consolidating and modifying resources currently available to youth, adults, and congregations (e.g., Groundwork Collective, JUUST Change, and Jubilee World) and creating new resources as needed.

Activity 1: Convene staff and members of groups/resources such as JUUST Change, Jubilee World, and Groundwork to consolidate the best of their respective programs.

Activity 2: Evaluate, update, and consolidate curricula and resources for application to multiple constituents.

Activity 3: Identify resources and expertise outside the movement to supplement our know-how.

Preparing and Supporting Adults for Youth Ministry

We envision a youth ministry that is central to the articulated mission of Unitarian Universalism.

- Youth ministry is integral to congregational life and the responsibility of the whole faith community.
- There are more than enough qualified adults, including adults from historically marginalized communities, to work with youth.
- The vitality of its youth ministry is considered an indicator of a congregation's health and vitality.

Objective 1: Religious professionals and congregations will have the vision, skills, and resources for transformative youth ministry.

Activity 1: Audit training and credentialing processes (Ministerial Fellowship Committee, Religious Education Credentialing Committee, Renaissance Modules, UU University, Chrysalis, seminary curricula, Leadership Schools, etc.).

Activity 2: Convene a task force with representatives from seminaries, MFC, UUMA, and congregational youth to strengthen the preparation of ordained clergy for youth ministry.

Activity 3: Create an organization and process for recruiting, credentialing, and supporting competent youth workers.

Activity 4: Model and replicate congregationally based collaborative staff teams in youth ministry.

Objective 2: Prepare and support adults from historically marginalized and underrepresented communities to be involved in youth ministry so that there are more mentors for youth with historically marginalized or underrepresented identities.

Activity 1: Convene a task force dedicated to bringing in, supporting, and retaining more youth workers from historically marginalized/underrepresented communities. The task force should consider

- mentoring youth and young adults from marginalized/underrepresented communities toward becoming youth workers;
- encouraging seminarians of color and BGLTQ seminarians to engage in youth work;
- investigating what types of stigma these adults face and make recommendations on how to create institutional means to address this stigma;
- ways that adults from privileged communities can mentor and support youth with historically marginalized or underrepresented identities.

Objective 3: All adults working with youth will have AR/AO/MC competencies.

Activity 1: Make AR/AO/MC training and praxis integral to youth-worker credentialing.

Activity 2: Strongly encourage parents to engage in AR/AO/MC work.

Activity 3: Provide Beyond Categorical Thinking (United States) or Welcoming and Celebrating Congregational Diversity (Canada) to teams responsible for choosing youth workers in our congregations.



Underlying Structural Questions Regarding Unitarian Universalist Youth Ministry

The Organizing Youth Ministry for Success working group was charged with discussing broad structural issues related to the implementation of successful youth ministry. In the process, the working group confronted two crucial questions that have a bearing on all other structural matters. They named these “The YRUU Question” and “The Canadian Question.”

The working group concluded that it would be hard to move forward with new structures without addressing these questions. They also felt that answering these questions required the input of more than just the participants in the Summit. Therefore, the working group framed the two questions as described below and recommended a group be convened to wrestle with the issues involved. The outcomes of these conversations will determine decisions about how youth ministry is structured.

The YRUU Question

There is a question as to whether the current YRUU structure can support the Summit’s vision for youth ministry. YRUU has been allowed to function without a clear sense of mission or accountability. There are questions of whether YRUU as we know it can support visions of youth-adult partnership or youth empowerment. If YRUU continues to exist, it must have a clear, defined mission as a part, not the whole, of our youth ministry.

Therefore, we recommend that YRUU Youth Council discuss the possible future role of YRUU in a congregationally based model of youth ministry with diverse leadership structures and a variety of congregational and extracongregational ministries to and with youth. Youth Council’s conversation needs to feed into and inform the UUA Board’s decision-making process about Unitarian Universalist youth ministry’s mission and structure. This must include an evaluation of ending the current YRUU structure.

The Canadian Question

For many years there had been tension between Unitarian Universalists in the United States and Canada. As a result of this tension, the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Canadian Unitarian Council split in 2002. The UUA/CUC-negotiated agreement kept youth and young adult organizations (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists and Continental Unitarian Universalist Young Adult Network), the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, and ministerial fellowship and settlement “continental” or binational. However, there was no further definition of what this agreement means for youth and young adults. Therefore, there is confusion about the “continental” nature of YRUU and youth ministry.

To clarify this situation the following questions need to be addressed:

- In short: Is Canada “in” or “out,” eh?
- If “in,” what is the funding responsibility?
- If “in,” do Canadian congregations get the same youth ministry services as congregations in the United States?
- If “out,” how will Canadian youth ministry sustain, survive, and proceed? And how will Canadian young adult ministry be affected?

In order to address these questions, the Summit recommends convening a conversation with multiple stakeholders including:

- CUC/UUA Professional Staff (e.g., Jesse Jaeger and Sylvia Bass West)
- CUC/UUA Executive Staff (e.g., Mary Bennett and Kay Montgomery)
- CUC/UUA Board Representatives
- CUC/UUA Board Youth Observers, possibly the Youth Trustee or another UUA Board Rep
- Multiple representatives from national youth leadership (e.g., CAYAC and YRUU Steering Committee)

This meeting and its recommendations should be completed by June 2008, with the long-term goal of creating and maintaining healthy, happy, and functional youth (and young adult) ministry for all.



Implementation

Implementation of the Summit recommendations and the ideas generated by the Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth will take broad commitment throughout the Association.

Youth Ministry Working Group

One of the first steps in the implementation process will be the formation of a Youth Ministry Working Group in the fall of 2007 to meet in January or February 2008. This will be a small group that includes UUA staff with job responsibilities closely tied to significant implementation tasks, and youth and adults from stakeholder groups.

The Youth Ministry Working Group will

- prioritize the objectives and activities from the Summit;
- identify additional activities as appropriate;
- identify resources (including people) needed for successful implementation;
- create a five-year implementation timeline;
- partner with stakeholder groups to implement activities in their respective communities.
 - Example: Work with the YRUU Steering Committee to determine the role of YRUU in a new youth ministry structure.
 - Example: Work with the DRUUMM Youth and Young Adult Steering Committee and the Identity-Based Ministries Staff Group assessment of ministry with Youth and Young Adults of Color to ensure that these ministries are growing and sustainable.

UUA Staff Structure

Many of the large structural components of this new imagination of Unitarian Universalist youth ministry involve changes to the UUA staff. The working group and other key stakeholder groups will have a chance to comment on these changes, but they are ultimately the responsibility of the UUA administration. The UUA administration will analyze this report and figure out the best staffing solution given the available resources. It is likely that these staffing changes will take place over several years.

UUA Culture

The Summit visions and recommendations call for broad cultural change at all levels of our Association. This type of change takes time and requires the involvement of numerous stakeholders. For this new imagination of Unitarian Universalist youth ministry to become a reality, professional and lay leaders from across the Association will need to carefully review this report and the Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth Summary Report and act on the recommendations they have the most power to enact.

One of the most radical assertions of the Consultation process has been that youth ministry is the responsibility of all Unitarian Universalists. We can begin now by offering our time and talent to the creation of this new youth ministry.

Appendices

Summit Participants

Meeting the Spiritual Needs of Youth

George Brown (YRUU and DRUUMM)
 Melanie Friedrichs (Congregational Youth)
 Paul Gupta (YRUU)
 Eric Guyton (Congregational Youth)
 Denise Hall (DRUUMM Steering Committee)
 Alison Miller (Minister)
 Tom Rylett (Task Force on Youth Ministry)
 Hannah Stampe (Task Force on Youth Ministry)
 Jessica York (UUA Youth Programs Director)

Welcoming All Youth in a Multicultural World

Genna Ayres (Interweave/BGLTQ Youth)
 Darrick Jackson (UUA Assistant Youth Ministries Director)
 Alice Mandt (YRUU)
 Aymie Manning (Youth Observer, UUA Board of Trustees)
 India McKnight (UUA Youth Ministry Associate, 2007–2008)
 Chris Michell (YRUU Continental Social Action Coordinator)
 Rebecca Parker (President, Starr King School for the Ministry)
 Julian Sharp (Task Force on Youth Ministry, UUA Board Youth Trustee 2005–2007)
 Laura Spencer (UUA Program Associate for Racial and Ethnic Concerns)

Building a Multigenerational Faith

Sylvia Bass West (CUC Director of Lifespan Learning)
 Gini Courter (UUA Moderator)
 Megan Dowdell (Co-Convener, Task Force on Youth Ministry)
 Lizzie Lamb (District Youth, Pacific Northwest District)
 Emma Olson (YRUU and DRUUMM)
 Linda Olson Peebles (Minister of Religious Education)
 Michael Tino (UUA Director of Young Adult and Campus Ministry, through July 2007)
 Jova Vargas (Task Force on Youth Ministry)
 Aubrey Weaver (District Youth, Mid-South District)

Organizing Youth Ministry for Success a.k.a. “Structure”

Austin Bridges (Congregational Youth)
 Dori Davenport (UUA District Staff, Central Midwest District)
 Annelise Iversen (Canadian Advisory Youth Adult Committee)
 Jesse Jaeger (UUA Youth Ministries Director)
 Jonalu Johnstone (President, Interweave Continental)
 Joseph Santos-Lyons (UUA Campus Ministry and Field Organizing Director)
 Kat Manker-Seale (YRUU and Former UUA Staff)
 Bill Sinkford (Co-Convener, UUA President)
 Ellen Zemlin (District Youth, Heartland District)

Moving Beyond a One-Size-Fits-All Ministry

Brian Acevedo (YRUU)
Ellie Barkhouse-Geyer (Congregational Youth)
Lyn Conley (UUA Board of Trustees)
Nancy DiGiovanni (UUA Program Associate, Young Adult and Campus Ministry)
Caitlin DuBois (General Assembly Youth Caucus Staff)
Sara Eskrich (Task Force on Youth Ministry, UUA Youth Ministry Associate 2007–2008)
Mandy Keithan (Liberal Religious Educators Association)
Shana Lynngood (Task Force on Youth Ministry)
Jan Taddeo (Youth Coordinator-Local and District)

Preparing and Supporting Adults for Youth Ministry

Nick Allen (YRUU)
Lee Barker (President, Meadville Lombard Theological School)
Charlie Burke (UUA Board Youth Trustee)
Sean Capaloff-Jones (Task Force on Youth Ministry)
Rob Eller-Isaacs (President, Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association)
Judith A. Frediani (UUA Director of Lifespan Faith Development)
Chelsea Gibson (Canadian Advisory Youth Adult Committee)
Tera Little (Task Force on Youth Ministry)
Beth Miller (UUA Director of Ministry and Professional Leadership)

Facilitators, Observers, and Presenters

Facilitators: Beth Dana (UUA Youth Ministry Associate, 2005–2007)
U.T. Saunders (Consultant)

Recorder: Rek Kwawer (UUA Youth Office Assistant)

Observer: Katrina Bergmann (UUA Stewardship and Development)

Presenter: Eugene Roehlkepartain (Search Institute, Center for Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence, Minneapolis, Minnesota)

Conceptual Definitions

Youth Ministry and Youth Empowerment- Working Definitions

Over the past two years of the Consultation process, working definitions for youth ministry and youth empowerment, terms widely used without shared meaning in Unitarian Universalist communities, have been crafted and input solicited and incorporated. These definitions were shared and briefly touched on for feedback at the Summit and will continue to be built upon during implementation.

Youth Ministry

Unitarian Universalist youth ministry is a collaboration between youth, their families, and adults to create authentic, anti-racist, anti-oppressive*and multicultural communities that empower and support

- the spiritual, religious, and ethical development of youth grounded in Unitarian Universalist identity;
- mutual love, respect, and trust between and among youth and adults;
- relationship-based ministry and peer support;
- a youth-driven ministry of justice that calls all of us to live out our values in the world.

Like all ministry, ministry with youth is the responsibility of the whole congregation and the whole community.

“The great end in religious instruction ... is not to make them see with our eyes, but to look inquiringly and steadily with their own.” – William Ellery Channing

* Anti-racist and anti-oppressive communities are ones in which individuals actively work against individual and institutional racism and oppression while striving for safe, welcoming, and radically inclusive communities. The language of “anti-” is used to emphasize the prevalence of oppression in the world. It is our calling as people of faith to actively dismantle oppression in Unitarian Universalist communities and the world at large.

Youth Empowerment: Unitarian Universalist Guiding Principles

Youth empowerment is both a goal and a practice that has intrinsic merit for each of us in our ethical and spiritual lives. The practice of fostering youth empowerment varies by context. In congregations, youth empowerment practice depends on the geography, culture, history, and structure of the congregation. Youth empowerment and youth leadership development reinforce one another—calling for our personal and community commitment to right relationship between youth and adults. Across diverse contexts, the principles of youth empowerment remain the same, but the details of its practice must address the particular needs of each community.

The task of youth empowerment is not to make our congregations safe for youth or to determine authority within Unitarian Universalist institutions. These are the responsibility of our shared faith community. If covenant is the backbone of our faith, youth empowerment is one vertebra among

many. In order for individuals, groups, and communities to determine the structural barriers to youth empowerment and enact the practices in which youth empowerment might be fully realized, we must first define a philosophy of youth empowerment grounded in our Unitarian Universalist principles.

Youth empowerment is a covenantal practice in which youth are safe, recognized, and affirmed as full and vital participants in the life of our shared Unitarian Universalist faith community. This covenantal practice is based on the following set of guiding principles:

- Love and trust between youth and adults, between youth and youth, and between adults and adults
- Mentoring relationships among children, youth, and adults, which draw from direct experience and wisdom
- The development of youth confidence and self-identity through building community, learning to use one's voice effectively, and realizing a more robust expression of themselves
- Encouragement for all to grow together in accountability
- Youth defining their issues and participating in the decisions that impact youth communities and the larger multigenerational communities we share
- Youth and adults having access to information through direct and honest communication expressed with grace, humility, and respect
- Trust in the competence of youth and the authenticity of their insights
- Appreciation of the prophetic wisdom and energy of youth to be agents of social change, justice, and service
- The recognition that youth ministry is an integral Unitarian Universalist ministry and part of our collective past, present, and future

Spirit-Centered Youth Ministry

(as explained by members of the "Meeting the Spiritual Needs of Youth" working group)

Spirituality: Refers to a way of tending to and nourishing our inner being, innate, or divine nature; a vital force that characterizes a living being as being alive.

Faith: Refers to a personal belief that aligns with a set of values shared with a larger community; a system of religious belief, or the group of people who adhere to it.

Religion: Refers to a community of people bound together by a common doctrine or covenant; a particular institutionalized or personal system of beliefs and practices relating to the divine.

Covenant: Refers to a voluntary, binding agreement of how parties operate in the world and with each other.

Multiculturalism

Multi = many, several

Culture = social norms, patterns of behavior

Includes customs/traditions, religion, ways of meeting needs, ways of communicating, rituals/values/rites of passage, language, arts, food, music, learning/teaching/mentoring,

interacting, developing, sanctions/setting and breaking boundaries

Encompasses many groups and identities: for example, racial/ethnic groups (Native American/Aboriginal, Asian Pacific Islander, Latino/a, African descent, White, Middle Eastern descent, multiracial, transracial adoptees, etc.), nationalities, religions, ability, sexuality and gender orientation and expression, age, education and schooling, class/socioeconomic status

According to UNESCO, culture is “the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs.”

(www.unesco.org/education/imld_2002/universal_decla.shtml)

Multigenerational Community

by Rev. Linda Olson Peebles (member of the “Building a Multigenerational Faith” working group)

Communities which are made up of diverse identities (such as age, race, theology, abilities) can be organized in different ways. Three general modes are

1. segregation (separated and forming many whole social strata for groups of each identity);
2. integration (merged, fused everyone blended together in one social structure—a melting pot—in which differences are tolerated, minimized, or marginalized);
3. multi-gration (each identity maintains identity and autonomy AND is totally involved in the social organization “stew”).

A long view of human community throughout history reveals that separating the ages from one another is a relatively recent phenomenon. Before the modern Industrial Age, all ages lived, learned, played, and worked together. Children learned by being around adults, growing to apprentice with someone with more experience, and developing their skills by doing the work in the actual business of living. As centers of learning from books began to be developed, students still spent only a small percentage of their time segregated from the larger community (their families and the marketplace).

In nineteenth-century Western culture, however, in an effort to specialize learning, it became more the norm for children to leave their families to learn. And a sign of being in the privileged classes was the ability to send your children away from home—to day or even boarding schools—or to hire people to raise and tutor your children in the home. By the mid-twentieth-century, the educated middle/upper class in the United States (which included Unitarians) adopted the pattern of age-segregation as an ideal, a virtue to be sought after which marked them as above lower classes.

In pre-Industrial times, the journey to autonomy and self-discovery for the youth or young adult (such as a vision quest into the wilderness, or being sent away to apprentice in another family) was very different from the modern twentieth century idea that emerging from adolescence requires young people to be separated into an age-segregated community, which has in many cases cut them off from the nurturance of the larger community. We are now in a complex, multicultural post-modern era. What is the post-modern way to help youth find a vision of themselves and also to find value or worth within the larger culture?

The idea of multigenerational community challenges the modern ideal of putting people in boxes for all their needs (babes in daycare, kids in school/sports/scouts, youth in high school then college, and our elders in gated “over-50s” developments). Our church communities could offer a more dynamic and

intricate energy, encouraging the formation of relationships within and across many identities, including age. This multi-identity community structure would encourage people to benefit from both homogenous and diverse groups, to help all discover individual wholeness and connection with the whole.

What does a multigenerational congregation look like? Every age group is a participant, leader, and recipient of every part of the life of the church (e.g., worship for ALL ages, pastoral care of ALL ages, social justice for and with ALL ages, governances including ALL ages, learning happening with many ages together both as teachers and learners). At the same time each generation is empowered, honored, and uniquely served (i.e., there are still programs and ministry unique to that generation). The NORM is a room filled with people of all ages who choose to be there because of a shared interest, such as singing, cooking, talking about books, planning for a fundraiser, talking about who to hire, or selecting good community-building games to play. Age-based groups can also form alongside of these multigenerational activities in order to meet specific needs or interests.

Multigenerational Congregation

by Judith A. Frediani (From *Essex Conversations*)

What would a truly multigenerational congregation look like? It would be the ultimate committee of the whole: a community in which everyone is seen as teacher and learner; in which every age and stage of life is equally valued and equally supported by whatever tangible and intangible resources the community has to offer; in which every age and stage of life is allowed to *contribute* whatever tangible and intangible resources it has to offer; a community in which no decision is made about the life of the community—whether in the area of worship, physical plant, fundraising, budgeting, social action, the arts, education, or any other—without consideration of its impact on and opportunities for every member of the community.

