



UULMNJ BULLETIN FEBRUARY 2015

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Let's face it. This winter is getting us down. Snow is beginning to feel like a permanent fixture and the storms are relentless. If the winter doldrums have a way of entering your psyche, consider volunteering with UULMNJ. Yes, a good way to shake off a winter malaise is to get more involved in things that matter. Consider investing some time in UULMNJ. Our strength rests with the volunteer contributions of our fellow New Jersey Unitarian Universalists.



Many UULMNJ opportunities are available. Here are just a few you might consider:

- Join a task force. We have six task forces that research and decide upon important legislative initiatives: economic justice, immigration, healthcare and reproductive justice, environment, ending the New Jim Crow, and gun violence prevention. Or help us research emerging issues like racism or marijuana legalization.
- Join our development committee to help expand the future potential of UULMNJ.
- Consider serving on the board.
- Help out with UULMNJ fundraisers.
- Help organize a rapid response group in your state legislative district.
- Research potential court cases for our Legal Advocacy Project.
- Help produce YUUR Voice video programs on current issues.

Please email or call if you're interested in helping UULMNJ serve justice. I would love to talk to you.

If volunteering isn't in the cards right now, how about an afternoon of renewal and relaxation? Join us for our First Annual MUUSIC Festival, a collaboration of seven UU congregations, and the first performance of a combined UU state chorus. It's all happening March 8 at 3:00pm at the Morristown Fellowship. See details below. This is a New Jersey first you won't want to miss!

And don't forget, registration is now open for our Annual Plenary, on April 18 hosted by the Montclair Congregation. Go to UULMNJ.org to register or see details below.

I'm looking forward to seeing or hearing from all of you in the near future.

Faithfully,
Craig
director@uulmnj.org
609.672.7331

UULMNJ ANNUAL MEETING
SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2015 IN MONTCLAIR
REGISTRATION IS OPEN AT WWW.UULMNJ.ORG

What you can look forward to:

- **Keynote Address:** “The Modern Inconvenience of Race”
Junius Williams, Director of the Abbott Leadership Institute, Rutgers University
- **Important Task Force meetings:** Immigration Reform, Gun Violence Prevention, Criminal Justice Reform: New Jim Crow, Environmental Justice, Health & Reproduce Justice, Economic Justice

Who should attend:

- Anyone looking for ways to make a difference by putting their faith into action in partnership with UULMNJ
- Congregational liaisons, social action committee members, congregational leaders, ministers, staff
- UULMNJ Task Force members

We look forward to seeing you in Montclair!

YUUR VOICE VIDEOS NOW AVAILABLE!

UULMNJ’s Educational Video Program “*YUUR Voice*” is available to be shown in your congregations. Five programs and related study guides are available on the UULMNJ YouTube channel.

- **Economic Justice – Housing:** Rev. Eric Dobson of FairShare Housing and Joyce Campbell of Catholic Charities
Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSLSoVPX-qk&feature=youtu.be>
Study guide: <http://bit.ly/1EII9WS>
- **Climate Change:** Rohn Hein, Jeff Tittle (Sierra Club, NJ) and Jim Walsh, (Food and Water Watch)
Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2KA0KMzN0Go&feature=youtu.be>
Study guide: <http://bit.ly/1BjOiFf>
- **The New Jim Crow:** Al Stansky, Roseanne Scotti, Drug Policy Alliance, and Alex Shalom, ACLU
Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oF20DI5Xm94&feature=youtu.be>
Study guide: <http://bit.ly/1DCIsiw>
- **Immigration Detention:** Ted Fetter, Bill Westerman (First Friends) and Papa Faye, detainee
Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lN14IHJES7A&feature=youtu.be>
Study guide: <http://bit.ly/1AOSLyw>
- **Immigration and Young Refugees:** Ted Fetter, Sally Palley (First Friends) Anna Bonilla-Martinez and Stuart Sydenstricker (Winds of the Spirit)
Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7mEe9hcEHY&feature=youtu.be>
Study guide: <http://bit.ly/1CFa4kP>

FIRST ANNUAL NEW JERSEY MUUSIC FESTIVAL

Sunday, March 8 at 3:00pm hosted by the Morristown Unitarian Fellowship

Join in a celebration of our faith, equality, compassion, and justice through song. Music ensembles from across the state will showcase their finest and come together for a UU All-State performance. All proceeds will benefit the work of UULMNJ.

https://salsa3.salsalabs.com/o/50930/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=80655

UULMNJ SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

UULMNJ is looking for two college students who would like to work with UULMNJ this summer. These are sponsored by the UU College for Social Justice. The work is 25 hours per week and comes with a \$1500 stipend. For more information contact director@uulmnj.org or apply directly to www.uucsj.org/internships.

UULMNJ NETWORKING

UULMNJ continues to work with in partnership to further our mission. Here's a sampling of what Rev. Craig has been up to recently:

- Keynote speaker at the Supportive Housing Alliance Conference
- Attended Supreme Court hearing on COAH at request of FairShare Housing
- Met with ACLU coordinator of their new Legalization of Marijuana campaign
- Attended the Anti-Poverty Network conference, served on the planning committee
- And attended via conference call:
 - SANS Executive Committee and nationwide meetings
 - Integrated Justice Alliance (member of their steering committee)
 - Interfaith Immigration Coalition

CONCERT AT FIRST UU FELLOWSHIP OF HUNTERDON COUNTY

Dreaming Tree Coffeehouse is a contemporary folk music series at the Old Stone Church. Sponsored by the First Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Hunterdon County, Dreaming Tree Coffeehouse spotlights nationally renowned musicians playing in a historic building with superior acoustics. The concert series will benefit organizations that promote social justice. On Friday, March 13, Joe Jencks will lead the program for the benefit of the UU Legislative Ministry. Joe Jencks is an international touring performer and award-winning songwriter. His career is based as much in ministering to the human spirit as it is in the performance of music. Information at <http://hunterdonuu.org/dreaming-tree-coffee-house/>.

BRING UULMNJ INTO YOUR CONGREGATION

The Board is extending our outreach into congregations through our Congregational Relations Committee (Elaine Nigam, Chair) and Development Committee (Nick Lewis, Chair). Our goal is to reach as many congregations as possible with one of several programs that are designed to provide information about UULMNJ goals and achievements and to give the opportunity for more involvement.

There are several options for these congregational programs:

- Justice Served: Review of UULMNJ goals, organization, accomplishments, opportunities to be involved; has been presented in Montclair and Morristown.
- Informal Sunday Service: UULMNJ Board members present the service based on Justice Served Model

- Sunday Service: Executive Director, Rev. Craig Hirshberg leads the Sunday service; followed by a program focused on UULMNJ.
- Video Program: Presentation of one of the new UULM social justice videos at a congregation with discussion led by UULMNJ or congregation member.
- Board Meeting: Board members present an overview of UULMNJ at a Congregation's Board Meeting.

The Board will be presenting a service at the Lakeland Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in March and at the First UU Fellowship of Hunterdon County in May. Rev. Craig will be leading a service at the Unitarian Church in Summit in May followed by a program to introduce UULM accomplishments. The Congregational Relations Committee visited the UU Congregation of South Jersey Shore for an informal discussion on UULMNJ; other visits are planned for the Dorthea Dix UU Community. If you would like to learn more about the Legislative Ministry and would like to schedule a similar event in your congregation, contact Frances Prestianni at fprestianni@gmail.com.

UULMNJ DEVELOPMENT UPDATE – WELCOME TO DIANE CONNELL

We are pleased to announce that we have hired Diane Connell as the UULMNJ Development Director. Diane is a UU with extensive experience at the congregation and district level. She brings to the job 12 years of consulting work, and an understanding of New Jersey congregations and Unitarian Universalism from her work with the UUA Annual Program Fund. She offers an infectious enthusiasm and an appropriately aggressive vision for UULMNJ's financial development. Diane will be working with the Development Committee and the Board to expand and solidify our fund raising efforts from the past several years. We look forward to expanding our financial base and our advocacy activities.

Thanks to the good works of UULMNJ's Administrator, Laurice Grae-Hauck, we launched our first Giving Tuesday campaign and our electronic holiday giving letter, receiving about \$4000 in end of year gifts.

And in other good news, we were awarded our fourth year of support from the UU Funding Program for infrastructure building. The program highlights congregational education, including our video program. We received a \$12,000 grant, and a \$4600 matching grant that must be matched with new monies, with the funds dedicated to support the administrator's salary for the upcoming year.

ISSUES UPDATE

If you are interested serving on a task force, contact the task force chair or director@uulmnj.org. We are also looking for volunteers to serve on our *communications, congregational relations, development, and finance* committees, all critical to the well-being of UULMNJ. See our volunteer sign-up form for more options. Please contact Rev. Craig, UULMNJ President Frances Prestianni (fprestianni@gmail.com), or your congregational liaison to let us know how you would like to get involved.
http://www.uulmnj.org/images/documents/annualmeeting2014/VolunteerSignup_April_2014.pdf.

Our issues have been rather quiet over the past few months, but that is changing quickly. Keep an eye on your email and the UULMNJ website for updates.

Criminal Justice Reform, End the New Jim Crow, Task Force

The task force is currently asking UUs to take write to NJ senators and the governor about the Solitary Confinement Bill S2588, to limit the use of solitary confinement. See the UULMNJ website for details, and for the task force's legislative summary.

Chair: Al Stawsky, alynways@gmail.com

Economic Justice

As UU's we believe in the worth and dignity of every human being, That is why the Economic Justice Task Force of the UULMNJ stands with other nonprofits and faith-based groups to advocate for affordable housing We are supporting legislation that aims to reduce the impact of foreclosure, speed recovery, and maintain or increase levels of affordable housing. See the UULMNJ website for more details.

Chair: Lorraine Wearley lorrainewearley@gmail.com

Environmental Justice

Bill Potter has volunteered to be the interim chair of the Environment Task Force. The task force's priority for the coming year is to work toward's NJ Free's energy goal of 80% renewable electricity in New Jersey by 2050.

Other area of interest:

- The People's Climate March was a great opportunity to demonstrate that there is interest and concern about the state of the earth, but now will need to follow up with meaningful action.
- What congregations can do around environmental issues and green practices
- Also: a fracking waste transportation bill, stopping pipelines from going through sensitive areas, getting New Jersey back into the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), and the development of wind power.

Chair: Bill Potter potterrex@cs.com

Gun Violence Prevention

The gun violence prevention task force continues to work with New Jersey Together to get New Jersey municipalities to use their buying power to get gun manufacturers to stop selling to rogue dealers and invest in smart gun technology. An update on this effort is posted on the UULMNJ website.

Chair: Diane Finn finnflynn@verizon.net

Immigration

Their priority issue for the coming year will be wage theft legislation, as well as drivers licenses for undocumented people.

Chair: Ted Fetter fetter4@verizon.net

Healthcare and Reproductive Justice

The focus of the task force is safe access to reproductive health services, and to speak to the other task forces about intersections and ways to work together. The task force will also bring on intimate partner violence, starting with research and education.

Chair: Rev. Kathleen Green usr.minister@verizon.net

SIGN UP FOR UULMNJ NEWS AND ACTION ALERTS

Do you want to get more information about upcoming events, educational events, local legislation, and action alerts? Please send your contact information to admin@uulmnj.org and we will sign you up. And follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/uulmnj) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/uulmnj>)!

OUR DENOMINATION

From the UUA

Honor Selma Sunday Anywhere You Live

From Carey McDonald, UUA Outreach Director: “I don’t know about you, but I have been so moved by the legacy of Selma. Watching the power of this singular moment in American history unfold through the film Selma (even the trailer will give you chills), I was moved by the story of Jimmie Lee Jackson and proud to see UU’s Rev. James Reeb and Viola Liuzzo find their place in the struggle, even when they all paid the ultimate price. I’m halfway through Rev. Dr. Mark Morrison Reed’s new Skinner House book Selma Awakening. I was inspired by the bold message shared by five of my colleagues who are Women of Color, noting how the Sankofa message of “reach back and get it” applies to today. And I find myself wondering – if it were 50 years ago, would I have answered the call to justice?”

If you can’t be there in Selma in person to mark this anniversary, there are so many ways to keep Selma alive wherever you are. <http://standingonthesideoflove.org/blog/honor-selma-sunday-anywhere-you-live/>

Youth-friendly discussion guide for *Selma*: www.uua.org/documents/selma_movie_discuss_guide.pdf

Will You Commit2Respond?

Commit2Respond’s first big campaign is coming up in two months: Climate Justice Month. Climate Justice Month, running from World Water Day (March 22) through Earth Day (April 22), will take participants on a spiritual journey through daily messages preparing them to commit to long-term actions for climate justice, along the way fostering learning, reflection, and discernment. By the end of the month individuals, families, groups, and whole congregations will make commitments and begin taking long-term action. Sign up for Climate Justice month at www.commit2respond.org/act and help get the word out about this powerful spiritual opportunity.

UUA is a Green Workplace

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) has received Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum Certification for its new headquarters located at 24 Farnsworth Street in Boston’s Innovation District. <http://www.uua.org/news/pressroom/pressreleases/299194.shtml>

Study guide helps congregations explore “Escalating Inequality”

The study guide offers resources to help UU congregations educate themselves on classism and economic inequality, and to explore possible actions they might take to effect change.

<http://www.uua.org/economic/escalatinginequality/index.shtml>

Just Acts Newsletter – February 2015:

http://org.salsalabs.com/o/1272/t/0/blastContent.jsp?email_blast_KEY=1316600

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Blue Buckets Campaign

Communities throughout the world are dealing with threats to their water access as a result of climate change. While climate change may be affecting communities in different ways, the common thread is that the most successful solutions are community-based and community-led. Join the Blue Buckets campaign to learn more about water issues in your own community, while also raising money to help families near Kenya’s Kakamega rain forest and in other places to protect their water supply.

http://actnow.uusc.org/site/PageNavigator/Blue_Buckets_Sign_Up.html

Rights Now – UUSC Newsletter – Winter/Spring 2015

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/254112390/Rights-Now-Winter-Spring-2015>

Or download as a pdf at http://www.uusc.org/sites/default/files/rightsnow_ws2015.pdf.

Choose Compassionate Consumption

UUSC defends living wages, fair trade, and workers' right to organize — and you are essential to these efforts. <http://www.uusc.org/campaigns/choose-compassionate-consumption>

UU-United Nations Office

Intergenerational Spring Seminar – April 9 - 11

The UU-UNO (Unitarian Universalist United Nations Organization) hosts an annual Intergenerational Spring Seminar, where youth and adults from around North America come together to spend three days in New York City learning about an issue of global concern. The 2015 seminar will focus on the criminal international justice system, considering UU engagement with such issues as: the death penalty, the new Jim Crow, disability rights, school to prison pipeline, mental health, mass incarceration, immigration detention, Canadian justice or lack of for indigenous women, human trafficking, why are people imprisoned, and positive examples of restorative justice. Registration deadline is March 17.

<http://www.uua.org/international/events/seminar/index.shtml>

NY Metro District: www.uumetrony.org

Joseph Priestley District: www.jpduua.org

Central East Regional Group: www.cerguua.org/

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Do you have an event or announcement that you would like included in our bulletin? We would especially like to include news about the many social justice events and initiatives that New Jersey's UU congregations are involved with. Send an email to director@uulmnj.org and let us know what you are up to so that we can share it with others across our state.