



UULMNJ BULLETIN

MARCH 2013

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“Heart” is a word that reaches far beyond our feelings. It points to a larger way of knowing – of receiving and reflecting on our experience – that goes deeper than the mind alone can take us. The heart is where we integrate the intellect with the rest of our faculties, such as emotion, imagination, and intuition. It is where we can learn how to “think the world together,” not apart, and find the courage to act on what we know.

If you hold your knowledge of self and world wholeheartedly, your heart will at times, get broken by loss, failure, defeat, betrayal, or death. What happens next in you, and the world around you, depends on how your heart breaks. If it breaks apart into a thousand pieces, the result may be anger, depression and disengagement. If it breaks open into greater capacity to hold the complexities and contradictions of human experience, the result may be new life. The heart is what makes us human – and politics, which is the use of power to order our life together, is a profoundly human enterprise. Politics in the hands of those whose hearts have been broken open, not apart, helps us hold our difference creatively and use our power courageously for the sake of a more equitable, just and compassionate world.



- From *Healing the Heart of Democracy*, by Parker Palmer

Our UULMNJ heart has taken us many places recently, as you will read below. The difference between what UULMNJ does and what is happening in politics elsewhere is that our faith compels us to work to mend a hurting world and to heal differences, rather than to polarize and to separate ourselves from one another.

May it be so.

Faithfully,
Rev. Craig Hirshberg
Executive Director

UULMNJ ANNUAL PLENARY – APRIL 20 – REGISTER TODAY!

Saturday, April 20 • 9:00am – 2:00pm

Hosted by the UU Church at Washington Crossing in Titusville, NJ

Featuring a keynote address by Rev. Robert Moore, *The Faith Community's Role in Preventing Gun Violence*. The Rev. Robert Moore, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, has served since 1981 as the Executive Director of the Princeton, NJ-based Coalition for Peace

Action, a regional organization dedicated to abolition of nuclear weapons, a peace economy, and a halt to weapons trafficking at home and abroad.

At the conclusion of the plenary, there will be **a liaison and congregation volunteer training from 2:15 pm - 3:30 pm** covering congregational resources and legislative lobbying. All are welcome to attend; we hope that each congregation will be able to have at least one representative present for this informative session.

Register today at <https://www.formdesk.com/uufoms/UULMNJ>.

Please see the flyer at the end of this bulletin for details.

UULMNJ IN THE NEWS

The UU Legislative Ministry has been in the news in the last few weeks on the issues of Gun Control and Medicaid expansion. Our voices are being heard!

New York Times New Jersey Assembly Panel Backs Tougher Gun Laws

Rev Craig Hirshberg is quoted *“The anger coming out today is frightening me ...”*

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/14/nyregion/new-jersey-assembly-committee-approves-tightening-gun-laws.html>

The Bergen Record NJ assembly panel OKs gun control measures after lengthy hearing (Feb 13)

Another supporter of the bills was the Rev. Craig Hirshberg, executive director of the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of New Jersey, who said she was upset by much of what she heard at the hearing. *“I reject the thought that the only way to get a safer society is to expand our capacity to kill people,”* she said. *“I’m a very small voice today - I realize that - but it’s a voice that reflects many more who are not in this room.”*

http://www.northjersey.com/news/state/NJ_lawmakers_consider_25_bills_reforming_gun_laws.html

The Star Ledger On N.J. budget eve, more calls for Christie to expand Medicaid

Rev. Craig Hirshberg, executive director of the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of New Jersey, called the expansion the “morally and ethically right thing to do. If you can imagine 300,000 people standing on the steps of the capital here. They no longer have to make a decision whether to put food on their table or see a doctor.”

http://www.nj.com/politics/index.ssf/2013/02/on_budget_address_eve_more_cal.html

The Times Former N.J. Gov. Florio says now is the time to enact new gun laws

Former Gov. Jim Florio said at a Statehouse press conference today that the pro-gun organization wants to “run out the clock” and “wait for people to become disengaged again.” Rev Craig Hirshberg and Rev. Allison Miller’s (Morristown) photo appears.

http://www.nj.com/politics/index.ssf/2013/02/former_nj_gov_florio_says_now.html

“There is no better way to grow a soul in my view than to work for change that benefits the lives of others.” - Rev. Dr. William R. Murry

CONNECT WITH UULMNJ ON OUR NEW FACEBOOK PAGE

Thanks to youth board member Adam Green (Unitarian Society of Ridgewood), UULMNJ has a Facebook page! Like us at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Unitarian-Universalist-Legislative-Ministry-of-New-Jersey-UULMNJ/84778023198>.

And then let us know what you are thinking. Share how your congregation is working for social justice – others want to know, and may even be inspired by your actions.

ISSUES – GET INVOLVED

The task forces have been very busy.

- The Health Task Force finally won one with the state’s acceptance of Medicaid Expansion. Over 300,000 New Jersey residents will benefit from this important part of the Affordable Care Act.
- Gun Violence Prevention Legislation, for which UULMNJ testified in the Assembly, will be coming up in the NJ Senate in April. Your voice will be needed. The newly created Gun Violence Prevention committee is helping the congregations respond.
- New Jersey congregations are beginning to schedule appointments with their district legislators to begin building local connections. UULMNJ has newly created materials, brochures and position papers designed to better tell the UU advocacy story.

Do you want to get involved in UULMNJ and help make our voices heard? Join a task force:

- **Economic Justice:** Lorraine Wearley, lorrainewearley@gmail.com or Lew Maltby, lmaltby@workrights.org
- **Environment:** The Environment Task Force has an open position for their chair. Please contact Rev. Craig if you are interested in this volunteer position.
- **Health Care:** Carolyn Baldacchini, cal6balda@yahoo.com
- **Immigration:** Ted Fetter, fetter4@verizon.net
- **Marriage Equality Task Force:** Marty Rothfelder, mrothfelder@verizon.net
- **Gun Violence Prevention:** Diane Finn finnflynn@verizon.net or Lew Maltby lmaltby@workrights.org
- See www.uulmnj.org for more task force/issue information.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

Ellie Whitney, a member of the **UU Congregation of Princeton**, authored the article, “How to Meet the Climate Crisis,” in the Winter issue of *UU World*. She explains that a way to do this would be to establish a carbon tax: “The fastest, most effective way to change consumption patterns is to change the prices of things. If we want less CO₂, we need to tax carbon, an idea gaining traction among economists, politicians, and the general public.”

<http://www.uuworld.org/ideas/articles/280781.shtml>

Ellie will be speaking on climate change at a meeting of the Skylands Sierra Club Group, which meets at the **UU Fellowship of Sussex County**, on March 12.

The **Morristown Unitarian Fellowship** and the **Unitarian Church in Summit** will show the movie, "Living for the 32", about the Virginia Tech massacre, on April 6 in Morristown. Save the date, more details will be forthcoming. MUF has also been very active in a Morristown community coalition against gun violence.

On March 10, the **First Unitarian Society of Plainfield**'s service, "Transitioning in Corporate America: One Transgender Woman's Journey to Activism and Advocacy" will feature Stephanie Battaglino, a Corporate Vice President at the New York Life Insurance Company. She transitioned on the job in October 2005 and is a founding member of New York Life's LGBT employee resource group. More info at www.fusp.org.

And on March 2, the First Unitarian Society of Plainfield hosted a whole weekend program related to immigration. Most important, the Saturday workshop brought allies like UUs together with representatives of immigrant communities.

The **UU Congregation of Princeton** will host a forum on comprehensive immigration reform on Sunday, April 21 from 1:00 to 3:30 pm. Several speakers are involved, and Congressman Rush Holt has been invited (no confirmation yet of his availability). The goal is an educational program, with time for questions and responses from the experts, about the likely impact of immigration reform in several principal areas of the possible legislation.

The **First UU Fellowship of Hunterdon County** will be holding a yard sale on March 23 to raise funds for Habitat for Humanity.

FROM OUR DENOMINATION

Welcoming Congregation Bulletin – March 2013

http://www.uua.org/documents/lgbtq/130301_wcbulletin.pdf

Multicultural Growth & Witness Newsletter

<https://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/1272/images/feb2013.pdf>

UU Justice Action News

http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/1272/t/0/blastContent.jsp?email_blast_KEY=1267917

The Spring 2013 issue of *UU World* features the article, "**What is Reproductive Justice**," stating that women need more than a right to choose. "Reproductive justice emphasizes that everything is connected, and therefore insists we refuse to isolate or pit important social issues against each other. Instead, reproductive justice advances these rights across the interdependent web of social justice issues. As the advocacy group Forward Together puts it in their "Strong Families" initiative, reproductive justice calls on us to work towards a world where every person and family has the rights, recognition, and resources to make decisions about their gender, their bodies, and their sexuality; where every person, family, and community has what they need to flourish." <http://www.uuworld.org/ideas/articles/284019.shtml>

UUA: Reproductive Justice - <http://www.uua.org/reproductive/>

Religious Institute: Faithful Voices on Sexuality and Religion - <http://www.religioustheology.org/>

Forward Together – <http://forwardtogether.org>

For Earth Day 2013, April 22, the **UU Ministry for Earth** (UUMFE) is asking congregations to connect to issues related to realizing sustainability and to commit to actions that will help build a sustainable and just world, one congregation and one community at a time. Congregations that register their Earth Day events will be entered in a drawing to win a \$50 gift certificate from the UUA Bookstore. A variety of resources are available.

<http://uuministryforearth.org/2013-ED-Main-Page>

The **Standing on the Side of Love** campaign has urged supporters to meet with their congressional representatives on immigration reform during Congress's spring recess, March 25 to April 5. Congregations are encouraged to contact their NJ representatives.

SSL Webinar: March 13 at 8:00pm: Tips on a lobby visit, and compassionate immigration reform update - <http://www.standingonthesideoflove.org/cir/>

“Is Divestment the Only Solution to Climate Catastrophe?” The *Huffington Post* published a blog post by Tim Brennan, Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer of the UUA, about the issue of divestment from companies in the fossil fuel industry and its effects.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tim-brennan/climate-change-divestment_b_2768852.html

NY Metro District: www.uumetrony.org Joseph Priestley District: www.jpduua.org
Central East Regional Group: www.cerguua.org/. CERG is offering a wide variety of webinars this winter, see <http://www.cerguua.org/calendars/cergwebinars.html> for the schedule. On-demand webinars are also available, go to <http://www.cerguua.org/moodle/> for information.

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.

Please forward this e-bulletin to others in your congregation who might be interested.
If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please drop us an email at director@uulmnj.org.

*Please post the UULMNJ Annual Plenary flyer (next page)
in your congregation.
Thank you!*



ANNUAL MEETING 2013
Saturday, April 20, 9:00am – 2:00pm

Hosted by the UU Church at Washington Crossing
268 Washington Crossing–Pennington Road, Titusville NJ
(see www.uucwc.org for directions)

Featuring a keynote address by Rev. Robert Moore:

“The Faith Community’s Role in Preventing Gun Violence”

The Rev. Robert Moore, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, has served since 1981 as the Executive Director of the Princeton, NJ-based Coalition for Peace Action, a regional organization dedicated to abolition of nuclear weapons, a peace economy, and a halt to weapons trafficking at home and abroad. Since 1989, he has also served as part-time Pastor of East Brunswick Congregational Church. Rev. Moore contributed the preface and first chapter of the book *Breaking Silence: Pastoral Approaches to Creating an Ethos of Peace* (August, 2004 from Pilgrim Process). He has traveled widely in his various peacemaking ministry roles, including trips to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the former Soviet Union, Germany, Scandinavia, Greece, Holland, Canada, and Mexico.

Please join us at the 2013 UULMNJ annual meeting:

- UUs from all over New Jersey will be gathering to discuss past and future actions on key issues.
- Delegates from Affiliated Congregations will be voting on the new budget and members of the Board of Trustees.
- A great opportunity to meet in person with justice leaders from other congregations.

Check-in starts at 9:00am with coffee and bagels; the meeting will begin promptly at 9:30am.

There will be a working lunch provided. We rely on your donations to cover the cost of food and materials for this event.

REGISTER NOW!

Register online at <https://www.formdesk.com/uufoms/UULMNJ>

or

Contact us at 609-672-7331 or workshop@uulmnj.org

For updates and more information about UULMNJ, please visit www.uulmnj.org.