



## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST LEGISLATIVE MINISTRY OF NEW JERSEY

*A voice for Justice, Equality and Compassion in New Jersey*

NOVEMBER 2012

### FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Obviously, the Hurricane Sandy has occupied everyone's mind over the past three weeks. We hope you are all safe, have power and are beginning to return to normalcy. Relief and volunteer information is below. Those of us at the Legislative Ministry send out our thoughts and prayers for those who continue to struggle due to the storm.



Right before the hurricane, a BIG event happened in the life of our Legislative Ministry of NJ. About 60 people attended the annual UULMNJ Issues Workshop and chose our focus issues for the upcoming year.

The UULMNJ Focus Issues for 2012-13:

- **Economic Justice:** Support affordable housing and legislative action concerning increasing the minimum wage in New Jersey.
- **Environment:** Water Quality: Actions by NJDEP, the Pinelands Commission and the Highlands Commission that affect water quality and/or water supply; fracking related actions, including fracking waste water transport and disposal in NJ.
- **Health Care:** Adoption of the Health Benefit Exchange Act, and research on definition of hospitals.
- **Immigration:** Support the wage theft bill, pending as A1094/S969 and drivers licenses for the undocumented.
- **Marriage Equality:** Overturn veto.

We hope you will join us this year as we see change and legislative action in these areas. To get involved, please contact me at [director@uulmnj.org](mailto:director@uulmnj.org) or your congregational liaison.

In faith,  
*Rev. Craig Hirshberg*  
*Executive Director*

### HURRICANE RELIEF INFORMATION

#### **Benefit Concert to Benefit Bergen County**

To raise funds to support Bergen County victims of Superstorm Sandy, the newly formed Bergen Unitarian Universalist Relief Group - known as BUURG - will host its *Superstorm Sandy Benefit Relief Concert* on December 1, 2012, featuring rock, folk, blues, and jazz artists from around Bergen and beyond. It will be held on Saturday, December 1st at the Central Unitarian Church, 156 Forest Avenue, Paramus NJ. Doors open at 7:00pm. Music starts at 8:00pm. Proceeds go to the Moonachie Little Ferry Relief Fund, Center for Food Action of Bergen County, and the

Compassion Fund of the United Way. Tickets are \$30 per ticket for regular seating, \$100 per ticket for premium seating. Cash, checks, or credit cards accepted at the door. For information on the concert and performers, email Mark Meding at [m.meding@att.net](mailto:m.meding@att.net). For more on BUURG, visit [uuridgewood.org](http://uuridgewood.org) or call Rev. Kathleen Green at the Unitarian Society of Ridgewood, 113 Cottage Place, Ridgewood, NJ, 201- 444-6225.

### **Central East Regional Group Disaster Relief Fund**

CERG, our UU region has collected over \$100,000 to date for storm relief. If you would like to donate to the CERG Disaster Relief Fund, contributions can be sent to: CERG-UUA, 100 W. 10th Street, Suite 1008, Wilmington, DE, 19801. People can also donate online by going to [www.cerguua.org](http://www.cerguua.org) and using PayPal.

### **Grassroots Volunteering and Relief from Occupy**

You have probably read about the incredible job OccupySandy is doing in NYC. The New Jersey organization is organizing very quickly. To volunteer, donate or get help, go to <http://interoccupy.net/occupysandynj/>

Official Website for State of NJ/ Hurricane Relief:

[http://www.state.nj.us/nj/home/features/spotlight/hurricane\\_sandy.shtml](http://www.state.nj.us/nj/home/features/spotlight/hurricane_sandy.shtml)

## **ACTION ALERT – WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28**

### **Fighting Poverty With Faith Building Opportunity Through Affordable Housing for All**

#### **Call to action**

Wednesday, November 28, 2012

10:30 am – 12:30 pm

NJ State House Annex, Committee Room 4 • 155 West State Street, Trenton NJ

- For millions of Americans, safe and decent housing is unaffordable and unavailable.
- The faith community cannot stand idly by as too many of our neighbors are forced to make impossible choices among necessities such as food, rent, and medicine.
- We recognize the importance of decent shelter as a core necessity to overcoming poverty and will educate our communities about this issue and work to increase the supply of, and expand access to, housing for low income families and individuals.
- We can make a difference by speaking out collectively as representatives of New Jersey's Multifaith Community

We take up the call of our religious traditions to bring focus and attention to the need for housing that is affordable in our communities.

Conveners: NJ State Assoc. of Jewish Federations, NJ Catholic Conference, Lutheran Office of Governmental Ministry NJ. UULMNJ is a co-sponsor of this call to action.

**Come to Trenton! Check with your liaison or contact [director@uulmnj.org](mailto:director@uulmnj.org) for more info.**

## UULMNJ “RESOURCE IN A BOX” COMING TO CONGREGATIONS

UULMNJ’s congregational liaisons serve a vital role in the communication between UULMNJ and our UU congregations. In response to requests from congregations, and with help from a grant from the Unitarian Universalist Funding Program’s Fund for Social Responsibility, we have put together the “UULMNJ in a Box” resource to enable congregational action teams to more easily and effectively communicate with the members of their congregation. Two have been held to date, receiving high marks from the participants.

The third Liaison and Volunteer Training will take place on Thursday, December 6th from 6pm – 9pm at the Unitarian Church in Summit. We will provide sandwiches and fruit.

We look forward to having congregation liaisons represented at the Training who weren’t able to attend a previous session, and you are welcome to invite other congregation members who may be interested in staffing your UULMNJ table.

For those of you who have attended a previous training, please forward this email and encourage others in your congregation who may wish to participate, and then let us know who will be attending so that we may make our plans. Thank you.

## GET INVOLVED

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

- **Economic Justice:** Lorraine Wearley, [lorrainewearley@gmail.com](mailto:lorrainewearley@gmail.com).
- **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](mailto:cal6balda@yahoo.com)
- **Immigration:** Ted Fetter, [fetter4@verizon.net](mailto:fetter4@verizon.net)
- **Marriage Equality Task Force:** Marty Rothfelder, [mcrothfelder@verizon.net](mailto:mcrothfelder@verizon.net)
- See [www.uulmnj.org](http://www.uulmnj.org) for more task force/issue information.

If you would like to volunteer in another way such as serving on a committee, have a skill or talent to share, or want to be contacted to help with one-time tasks, contact [director@uulmnj.org](mailto:director@uulmnj.org).

## CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

The **UU Congregation of Princeton** will host Tamara Payne-Alex and Jim Key, the two candidates for the position of UUA Moderator, on January 20 at 3 pm, to talk about their vision Unitarian Universalism and how they would lead if elected at General Assembly 2013. The UUA Moderator is the chair of the UUA Board of Trustees and the presiding officer at each General Assembly. The 90-minute program will include a question and answer period and will be followed by a reception.

The **First UU Fellowship of Hunterdon County** is holding a “Sacred Wisdom Discussion Series.” A book of profound spiritual or religious significance is discussed at each session at

Clinton Bookshop. They are open to the general public as well as FUUFHC friends and members. Admission is free, but each month you are encouraged to purchase the book directly from Clinton Bookshop. Next session is on November 29, 7pm: “Being Peace” by Thich Nhat Hanh. Rev. Bob Janis-Dillon will lead the discussion on one of his favorite spiritual writers. <http://hunterdonuu.org/activities-and-events/sacred-wisdom-discussion-series/>

The **UU Congregation of Somerset Hills** will hold the 2nd Annual Microcredit Fundraising Dinner to Benefit Under-Privileged Women in Nepal on December 1. The funds raised by this dinner and a silent auction will be combined and donated to Friends of Nepal, New Jersey, which helps hundreds of people every year. Every \$100 donated can provide a loan for a needy family to buy a new tool, a machine, or buy two goats – millions of the world’s poor people have taken advantage of small loans to improve their lives. <http://uucshtest.org/community/social-action/>

### **FROM OUR DENOMINATION**

From the UUSC - **Choosing Compassionate Consumption:**

During the holiday season, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee encourages us to shop with our values in mind. UUSC’s online store offers ethically sourced gifts that you can feel good about buying; they offer fair-trade and sweatshop-free items, and net proceeds benefit their human rights work. [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org)

November 2012 Multicultural Growth and Witness Newsletter  
[http://www.uua.org/documents/idbm/bulletin\\_mgw.pdf](http://www.uua.org/documents/idbm/bulletin_mgw.pdf)

UU Justice Action News – November 2012

[http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/1272/t/0/blastContent.jsp?email\\_blast\\_KEY=1260153](http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/1272/t/0/blastContent.jsp?email_blast_KEY=1260153)

UUs Celebrate Historic Wins for Marriage Equality  
<http://www.uuworld.org/news/articles/280934.shtml>

NY Metro District: [www.uumetrony.org](http://www.uumetrony.org)

Joseph Priestley District: [www.jpduua.org](http://www.jpduua.org)

Central East Regional Group: [www.cerguua.org/](http://www.cerguua.org/)

### **BENEDICTION**

The following was offered by Rev. Kathleen Green, of the Unitarian Society of Ridgewood, at the Fall Issues Workshop.

Benediction by Louise Green

Who is the prophet in these urgent times?

You are the prophet, for there may be no other who will speak and act now.

The prophet hears and responds to an insistent and urgent inner voice.

The prophet speaks from an internal fountain, giving voice to another’s silence.

The prophet sees and expresses in uncommon ways, upsetting the status quo.

The prophet sends the wake-up call in the present, to shape the future.

How do I develop a prophetic voice in these challenging times?  
Observe nature and grow all parts of the tree: branches, trunk, and roots.  
Branches are the many outspreading ways of acting on inner call.  
The Trunk is steady with circles of community, rings of support widening with age.  
Roots are the grounding of the whole tree, the foundation for transformation.  
How will we hear the prophets in our complex era?  
Follow the still, small voice, even when unpopular.  
Cultivate strength and compassion.  
Watch, wait, and choose the strategic moment.  
Practice faithfulness, foresee consequences, make history.  
Offer gratitude, for in oneness with other trees, a forest grows.

### **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](mailto: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 prefer not to receive e-mail from us,  
just let us know and we'll remove you from our e-mail list.