

Minutes
Monthly Envoy Conference Call
Thursday, January 17, 5pm Eastern

- I. Welcome and introductions
 - a. Allison Hess (UN Office, NYC)
 - b. Bill McPherson (University Unitarian Church in Seattle, WA) Preparing for Bruce's visit in March
 - c. Carroll Webber (UU Congregation of Greenville, NC)
 - d. Peter Marmorek (Neighborhood UU Congregation in Toronto, ON) CUC is hosting a healing and reconciliation session at church
 - e. Nasreen Gagner (UU Church of Long Beach, CA)
 - f. Christine Blasman (Conejo Valley UU Fellowship in Thousand Oaks, CA)
 - g. Lynda Wilson (UU Church of Birmingham, AL) UUCB Refugee Interest Group is exploring becoming an independent interfaith refugee ministry in Birmingham. Possibly going to receive a family from DRC/Angola who have crossed the Mexican border to USA
 - h. Joanne Dufour (Olympia UU Church, WA) Coordinating w/ Bill a trip for Bruce in March with 4 locations to speak. Joanne also manages a [bi-weekly Disarmament blog](#) for the UU-UNO.
 - i. Phyllis Baxter (UU Church of North Hatley, QC)
- II. Discussion: Incorporating global agendas into congregational justice ministry
 - a. COP24 in Katowice, Poland: UN Framework Convention on Climate Change conference aimed to establish a rulebook for the Paris Agreement commitments countries made
 - i. Shortly before the conference in Katowice, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) [published a report](#) saying the initial Paris Agreement goal of limiting global warming to 2 degrees C is still far too much for the planet to handle – must limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C max. But currently we're on track for 3-4 degrees C so... huge changes are needed. At the start of the conference, U.S., Russia, Saudi Arabia, & Kuwait rejected the findings of the IPCC report.
 - ii. The Paris Agreement included a guarantee of financial help from the wealthy countries to assist developing countries to achieve the Paris goals. However, the wealthy countries have not lived up to that promise and poor countries are angry.
 - iii. At the end of the conference (kept working long after it was scheduled to end) the delegates (even the U.S.) agreed on a consensus document and a rulebook. Both of these docs are disappointing versus what was hoped for and are insufficient in terms of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees, but since it felt for most of the conference that an agreement would never be made, even a disappointing agreement felt like a success.
 - iv. At the conference: The U.S. federal government delegation was relatively invisible, unlike the "We Are Still In" contingent of state and local leaders in the

U.S. that are still committed to the Paris Agreement. The We Are Still In group was very prominent!

- v. Countries like Russia and India were touting their forest preservation and wildlife preservation efforts (nothing about sustainable energy etc.)
- vi. Congregations should all work to become [Green Sanctuary](#) congregations and be involved with UU Ministry for Earth and the new [Create Climate Justice](#) platform.
 - 1. Bill: 17 states and a group of cities made the U.S. Climate alliance (We Are Still In) are working towards 26% reduction of emissions by 2025, and then further beyond that. WA is one of the 17 states. Have 2 bills in the legislature that mention the Paris Agreement and affirm support for fulfilling those goals
 - a. JUUSTICE Washington (state UU advocacy network) is working together to push for those bills
 - b. UUs got started with People for Climate Action and visited the city and county council members and some of the staff to try to bring about emissions reductions.
 - c. From [Bruce's COP24 report](#): "The most unethical decision ever made in the history of the world was the decision by U.S., Russia, Saudi Arabia, & Kuwait not to recognize the IPCC report"
 - 2. Peter: Congregation has solar panels that heat & provide energy for the church.
 - a. Bill: University Unitarian Church is currently rebuilding, and is considering solar panels in the new building!
 - 3. Allison: It's really important to bring these UN policies and action plans to your local leadership and get them on board with the goals (e.g. Paris Agreement, Sustainable Development Goals, Global Compact for Migration, CEDAW) it's pretty much a cliché by now, but "Think Globally & Act Locally" is really what Envoys do to connect their congregations & communities with the United Nations
- b. [Global Compact for Migration & Global Compact on Refugees](#) – at a 2016 Summit, the UN adopted "The New York Declaration" that called for the UN to establish a [Global Compact on Refugees](#) and a separate [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration](#) which were adopted in Dec. 2018.
 - i. There are separate compacts because not all migrants have the international protection afforded to "refugees" by international refugee law. The Compact for Migration establishes a framework of standards of treatment to which *all* migrants are entitled, whether they qualify as refugees or not.
 - 1. (A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.)

- ii. The NGO Committee on Migration has created a compendium of “Concrete Policies, Practices, and Partnerships to Promote Implementation of the Global Compacts for Migrants and Refugees” Take a look at some of the examples that have been successful so far (esp. those implemented by church organizations and/or community-based groups) and see what might work for your congregation to be involved with:
https://ngomigration.files.wordpress.com/2018/12/ngo-com-policies-and-practices-for-gcm-implementation_rev-3-dec-2018.pdf
- iii. They’ve also published a one-pager about the Global Compact for Migration
https://gallery.mailchimp.com/8093208e6abb2fb927fe1267f/files/10e1810c-b6c8-4f72-bce5-03f9d56af3d1/GCM_at_a_glance_FINAL.pdf
- iv. Lynda: Refugee Interest Group has been working for the last 2.5 years. Birmingham doesn’t have a resettlement agency so they’ve been doing advocacy & etc. Bruce Knotts and Wakar Uddin (spoke at Seminar 2018 about Rohingya crisis) each came to Birmingham and spoke. Raised funds for a refugee camp in Jordan (Zaatari). Now they’re hoping to formally become an interfaith group that can resettle families (currently just 10-15 people who are consistently active). The local Imam moved recently from West Virginia and was involved with an interfaith ministry there – they got approved to be a local resettlement group resettling 30 families per year – but then the state department took that approval away from them after Trump took office. Recently though they accepted 2 families and are having a very positive experience – trying to see if Birmingham group would have resources to do a similar program. Moving forward on potentially resettling a family in a shelter in Austin, TX.
 - 1. The shelter in Texas (Casa Marienella) is reaching out to groups all over the country in search of sponsors to provide temporary help for 6 months while migrants wait to get work permits – there is a great need to help these asylum-seeking families (primarily from the DRC or Angola).

III. Office Updates

- a. Preparing for Commission on the Status of Women forum – Submitted 2 proposals, but they’ve been slow this year so we haven’t yet found out if we’ll be hosting anything.
 - i. CSW63 is at the UN Headquarters March 11-22. If anyone would like to attend, the UU-UNO can authorize guest participants so let Allison know!
 - ii. 2019 theme: Social protection systems, access to public services, and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
- b. [Intergenerational Spring Seminar](#) is coming up soon! April 10-13 in NYC. *Equity in Action: Gender in an Intersecting World* is the theme.

- i. Registration is open until February 25th. Envoys get a \$50 registration discount. (Early registration ends next Monday though, 1/21, so if you want to get the best rate, don't forget!)
 - ii. Envoy dinner will be Thurs afternoon 4/11, including time for information sharing and networking!
- c. Dana Greeley Sermon Competition – submit sermons by Feb. 1st! The topic for the sermon competition is the same as for this past year's UN Sunday (migration). Find more info about the competition at <https://www.uua.org/justice-programs/awards/greeley> for a chance to win \$500 prize
 - i. Don't need to be a minister to submit a sermon!
- d. Blue Ribbon Congregation Deadline is coming up March 31st! Allison is contacting Envoys whose congregations are close to meeting the requirements. Email her if interested in status.
- IV. UNICEF Youth [Speech contest](#): Could be a great way to engage youth to encourage global citizenship. One of topic options is Migration! (speeches just need to be 4 mins long)
 - a. Deadline is Sunday, January 27, 2019
- V. Adjourn