

Minutes
Monthly Envoy Conference Call
Tuesday, July 16, 2019 3pm & 6pm EDT

- I. Welcome and Introductions
 - a. 3pm
 - i. Allison Hess (UN Office, NYC)
 - ii. Jeannie Lewis (San Marcos UU Fellowship, TX)
 - iii. Janet Bendowitz (UU Congregation at Shelter Rock, NY)
 - iv. Marilyn Mehr (Unitarian Church of All Souls, NY)
 - v. Peggy Montgomery (Unitarian Church of All Souls, NY)
 - vi. Dan Kohnstamm (Glacier UU Fellowship in Kalispell, MT)
 - b. 6pm
 - i. Allison Hess (UN Office, NYC)
 - ii. Bill McPherson (University Unitarian Church in Seattle, WA)
 - iii. Karen Miller (Unitarian Universalist Church of Olinda, ON)
 - iv. Sarah Pinho (First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles, CA)
 - v. Joanne Dufour (Olympia Unitarian Universalist Church, WA)
- II. It's summer – time for fun games...
 - a. If you had to replace your hands with kitchen implements... what would you choose?
 - i. Jeannie: tongs & metal scoop for ice
 - ii. Janet: Salad servers
 - iii. Marilyn: knife & fork
 - iv. Peggy: enormous bottles of water
 - v. Dan: sharp knife to cut
 - vi. Allison: oven mitt & wooden spoon
 - vii. Bill: Spatula & spoon
 - viii. Karen: same! Spatula & spoon
 - ix. Joanne: Spoon & tongs
 - b. UN Trivia Game!
 - i. The UN has its headquarters in New York City, but it also has three main offices in other cities in the world. Can you name all three?
 - 1. [Geneva](#), [Nairobi](#), & [Vienna](#).
 - ii. What are the six languages of the United Nations?
 - 1. Arabic, Chinese, French, English, Russian, Spanish
 - iii. What countries are permanent members of the Security Council?
 - 1. Russia, U.S., China, France, UK
 - iv. Which of the following countries was NOT a founding member of the United Nations?
 - 1. Brazil
 - 2. **Switzerland** (did not join the UN until September 2002.)
 - 3. Nicaragua
 - 4. Syria

- v. Which UN organization has a flag that contains a variation of the Athens Parthenon above and below the initials of the organization on a blue background?

- 1. UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization)

III. UN & Office updates

a. Experiences at UUA General Assembly

- i. UU-UNO hosted a workshop on our 6th Principle along with our colleagues in the UUA Int'l Office and a youth leader who's been involved with UNO for several years.

- ii. International UU Reception at which Blue Ribbon Awards were presented!

iii. Envoy Brunch

- 1. Idea for 3-week Adult education class in congregations, looking at a topic on an International & National level (first week), the same topic at the State level (second week), and at a Local level (third week). (at Joanne's congregation, they'll do this about climate change with Bill as guest presenter for the first week's discussion)

- a. UU-UNO is considering developing some lesson plans to help congregations duplicate this format for a three-week course based on different topics addressed at the UN. Stay tuned!

- b. Jeannie – Congregation holds Weekly Adult Education before services and would be interested to incorporate something like this.

- c. Dan – Congregation is looking for adult RE possibilities. This idea sounds really good.

- iv. Dan: Is there a UU climate entity? Yes! It's called Create Climate Justice (www.createclimatejustice.net) a community organizing hub for UU climate activists (joint program of UU-UNO, UU Ministry for Earth, and UUA's Green Sanctuary Program)

- 1. Janet: UUCSR is green sanctuary. Would like to be involved with CCJ.net

- 2. Allison: Sign up online, and join a group. The group "Unitarian Universalist Climate Action Network UUCAN)" is a good place to start! There's also a "Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office (UU-UNO)" group, but not much is happening there so far! Check out the conversations, start your own conversations, share or use resources that you find...

- v. Dan: Ware Lecture was quite good, by poet Richard Blanco. Also Dismantling White Supremacy was a big theme throughout GA.

- vi. Bill: Highlight was procession of Species w/ UUMFE.

- vii. Joanne: Much enjoyed UU-UNO offering.

- b. Summer Interns are working on awesome projects on each of their program areas (gender equity, LGBTQ rights, climate justice, & migration justice) – we're already over halfway through the summer! ☹️

- c. Ongoing this week (& last week) is the annual High-Level Political Forum at the United Nations where the UN reviews the status of the Sustainable Development Goals
 - i. The year's focus is "Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality", the UN is reviewing Goals 4, 8, 10, 13, 16, and 17. Click each goal below for Progress of each in 2019:
 1. [Goal 4](#). Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
 2. [Goal 8](#). Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
 3. [Goal 10](#). Reduce inequality within and among countries
 4. [Goal 13](#). Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
 5. [Goal 16](#). Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
 6. [Goal 17](#). Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
 - ii. Check out the Special edition [report on progress towards the SDGs](#) overall by the Secretary-General for the 2019 HLPF – this gives an update on the status towards achieving *each* goal of the 17, not just the 6 focused on this year.
 - iii. As the world overall struggles with rising ethnonationalism, the UN is confronting a lack of human rights leadership, especially with regard to SOGI human rights (sexual orientation & gender identity). It's more important than ever for the UU voice at the UN to remain strong.
 - d. Upcoming in August: UN Civil Society Conference in Salt Lake City.
 - i. Marilyn: Description of the conference says as many as 3,000 people from all over the world. Interestingly, it's in SLC = conservative part of the country
- IV. UN Sunday is coming up with the theme of *Equity in Action: Gender in an Intersecting World*, Packet is now online at www.uua.org/unsunday
- a. Jeannie: will forward UN Packet to minister & worship chair
 - b. Janet: UN Sunday at Shelter Rock on October 27 will focus on ECOC. Great! (btw, one of the Millennium Development Goals that ECOC was created to address is MDG 3, to promote gender equality and empower women; The ECOC program is a partnership with the Queen Mothers, traditional women leaders in the community we work in who are charged with caring for orphans... they have empowered themselves through this work which we are proud to support. Also we sponsor two girls for every boy in the program in order to advance the opportunities for girls)
 - i. Allison: Thought: UU-UNO should create a UN-Sunday-like packet for planning a worship service about ECOC.....
 - c. Dan: Gender identity was a big emphasis at GA – Why has gender identity issue moved and been taken up by young people so quickly? Allison's guess is that prior generations set stage for coming out to be less of a big deal and the internet has allowed people access to supportive communities and resources for people who may otherwise have been or at least felt all alone.
 - d. Sarah: Entirely lay-led congregation. Will use the packet as possible.

- e. Karen: A former art student of Karen's is trans and has produced videos of his experiences. Karen will ask him if he would like them to be shared with UUs.
- V. Stuff going on for Envoys locally:
- a. Joanne: Disarmament news is bubbling up in Washington. Mini nuclear weapons in Texas are trying to be loaded onto submarines at Bangor Naval Base near Seattle. Physicians for Social Responsibility is picketing the naval base and saying "If you're ordered to press the button to launch nukes, don't do it. It's an illegal order." A bill that denies authorization to use money to deliver and deploy the nuclear weapons has passed the House of Representatives. Joanne's retirement home will host a presentation from PSR about their efforts to stop the small nuclear weapons from being moved to Bangor Naval Base. Envoys should consider how their local communities can be involved – if Washington says no, the powers that be will likely try to put them somewhere else.
 - i. Karen: These days people all just talk about Canada running for Security Council seat, and not much other conversation about UN topics. Anyone in Michigan who may be able to speak about this?
 - 1. Joanne: See if Physicians for Social Responsibility has a chapter in MI and can come visit. They may also have a chapter in Ontario.
 - ii. Some Reps. are talking about endorsing the ban on nuclear weapons.
 - b. Bill: It was great to see UU-UNO folx at GA. Focusing now on getting people from University Church to attend the Spring Seminar (2020 topic = climate justice)
 - c. Sarah: First Unitarian LA is bilingual and also very poor, which feels very different from other churches. Lots of energy these days goes towards protesting at detention sites. Request for Allison: when you hear anything from UN officials on this, please share. (Here are some articles in reverse chronological order, including one from today!)
 - i. Article from UN News July 16, 2019: ["Severe' new US asylum restrictions will put vulnerable families at risk, UN refugee agency says"](#)
 - ii. Article from UN News July 8, 2019: ["UN rights chief 'appalled' by US border detention conditions, says holding migrant children may violate international law"](#)
 - iii. Article from Newsweek March 18, 2019: ["Trump Administration Accused of Ignoring UN Requests for Access to U.S.-Mexico Border"](#)
 - iv. Article from NY Times June 5, 2018: ["Taking Migrant Children From Parents Is Illegal, U.N. Tells U.S."](#)
 - d. Sarah: Made an announcement about being a new Envoy at the congregation and got an amazing response with three people who were excited to join! Now Sarah is looking at how to start an Envoy team. Considering taking turns making announcements at services, etc. Anyone has experiences being on an Envoy team? How to share the work?
 - i. Bill: is using climate action team as the Envoy Team.
 - ii. Allison: Suggest posting this question on the UU-UNO Envoys facebook group
 - e. Karen: Congregation is honoring Canadian veterans and especially a veteran at the church (You may see online a picture of Karen w/ Canadian flag... that's why!). Would like UU churches to have UN flags to fly. Can Envoys get a flag from the UU-UNO? Allison will bring this to other staff for discussion.