

**Minutes**  
**Monthly Envoy Conference Calls**  
October 15, 2019 3pm and 6pm Eastern

- I. Welcome and Introductions
  - a. 3pm EDT
    - i. Allison Hess (UN Office, NYC)
    - ii. Jeannie Lewis (San Marcos UU Fellowship, TX)
    - iii. Janet Bendowitz (Shelter Rock UU Congregation, NY)
    - iv. Peggy Montgomery (All Souls, NYC)
    - v. Marilyn Mehr (All Souls, NYC)
  - b. 6pm EDT
    - i. Allison Hess (UN Office, NYC)
    - ii. Phyllis Baxter (North Hatley, QC)
    - iii. Ally Brau (UU Society of Amherst, MA)
    - iv. Nora Farahat (UU Congregation of Frederick, MD)
    - v. Chris Blasman (Conejo Valley UU Fellowship in Thousand Oaks, CA)
    - vi. Marietta Tanner (UU Church of Arlington, VA)
    - vii. Joanne Dufour (Olympia, WA) recently returned from NYC and attended First Committee Meetings – lots of energy in support of the ban on nuclear weapons!
- II. UN Sunday – Envoys share about plans for their upcoming UN Sunday services
  - a. Marilyn: No plans for UN Sunday but spoke with board member about celebrating 75 years of the UN next year!
  - b. Jeannie: History of the UU-UNO/UU actions at the UN.
  - c. Janet: Youth from RE is one of the speakers, appreciate the RE resources from the packet.
  - d. Marietta: The actual UN Sunday service on 10/27 will be about the minister's recent trip to Israel. In November the minister will preach sermon about the UN Sunday subject of gender equity. Marietta is planning to incorporate United Nations into both services this fall – good to be flexible!
  - e. Phyllis: Oct. 27 UN Sunday, (Allison bring materials for Phyllis in Ottawa) Went through the material. Was originally planning to invite trans congregant to speak, but he's not able to be there in person, so he promised to send a film instead. Phyllis was trying to get someone else to come and it might end up being Phyllis and the film and the music and all of that. Will probably be fine, but it's nice to have someone else do it with you.
    - i. Have a story from Soul Matters; this month's theme is Belonging which goes very well with Gender Equity
  - f. Marietta: UN Sunday will be on the 27<sup>th</sup>; will cover a lot as it'll also launch the UNICEF collection for kids with costumes. A young person will do the story for all ages (he's 13) the story is around a Bob Marley book; on the subject of doing the right thing and talks about the UN. One thing that's been very hopeful are Allison's letters about what's

going on. Marietta uses that content in the congregation's journal every week. Call it "News from the United Nations"

- g. Chris: UN Sunday will be this Sunday 10/20, In order to couch the subject in a personal way as far as the congregation's experiences, four members will tell their own stories relating to the subject. Some re: courage to stand up and be counted either in a quiet way and or grand way
- h. Ally: This Sunday Ally's doing UN Sunday with the minister. Minister will talk about the UU connection to the topic of intersectional gender equity, and Ally will introduce it.
- i. Nora: No UN Sunday in October, spoke with minister about it but still not sure about getting a UN Sunday service on the schedule since minister plans services months in advance
  - i. Allison: suggestion = March 8<sup>th</sup> might be a good alternative date for UN Sunday this year as it falls on a Sunday and is Int'l Women's Day – though make sure to emphasize the fact that intersectional gender equity means way more than women's issues!
  - ii. Marietta: recommends starting a year in advance to get your day for UN Sunday on the calendar, and continue talking about it all year long to make sure it happens/has support from those in charge of the worship calendar.

### III. UN news

- a. U.S. Ambassador to the UN is Kelly Craft, as of Sept. 12, 2019. (Was prior U.S. Ambassador to Canada. Big donor to Trump campaign, was advisor to UN Ambassador during Bush years)
- b. Big concern at the UN about Turkey invasion of northeast Syria. Security Council met last Friday and heard from humanitarian groups (OCHA = Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs & more) who have committed to remaining in the area providing services for as long as it is possible. Refusing to abandon the Kurdish people as the U.S. did. UN Human Rights bodies also very attentive to the situation which poses threats to many segments of the population including journalists. A lot of concern also about the resurgence of ISIS...
- c. Climate Action Summit in Sept. saw a lot of countries present their plans for climate change mitigation & adaptation; less culture shift than desired but some progress towards action and away from simply grand rhetoric. Now looking towards the COP25 UN FCCC climate change conference in Santiago, Chile this December. UU representatives will be present!

### IV. Other programs going on, announcements

- a. Panel discussion on December 5<sup>th</sup> focusing on the impacts of climate change on those in society who are most vulnerable esp. people with disabilities, LGBTQI folx, & more. Further details to come including (hopefully!) live-stream information.
  - i. Joanne: Local groups are linking two existential threats = nuclear weapons and climate change. It's great to see groups lifting up both issues together. Remember: disarmament is good for the climate! Check out this organization: <http://www.nuclearweaponsmoney.org/>

- b. Intergenerational Spring Seminar on climate justice will be April 15-18, 2020
  - i. Registration will open in December! [www.uua.org/unspringseminar](http://www.uua.org/unspringseminar) for all info; hope to post schedule & general program info by first week of Nov.
- c. October 16<sup>th</sup>: 7pm Eastern will be a webinar on “What’s next after the Climate Strikes” hosted by Side With Love & others. [Register here to attend!](#)

V. Other topics for discussion:

- a. Joanne: In the First Committee (UN committee that focuses on disarmament issues) sessions last week it was heartwarming to hear 5 more countries have ratified the Prohibition on Nuclear Weapons; and a number of other countries have said they’re close! Now approaching 60% of the way toward the numbers needed for the treaty to enter into force.
  - i. Frustrations with the U.S. blocking visas for delegates appointed by their governments to attend and represent at the conference.
  - ii. Marietta: this is why it’s so important to have a UN presence at our church where we can work against the derogatory attitude towards the UN that pervades our general culture. It’s important to keep reminding people about all the things the UN’s doing – interject something about the UN into conversations around the church.
- b. Marietta: Gotta get the teenagers involved. Any advice
  - i. Allison: Invite Nora to come speak at your congregation! :) (Maybe Silver Spring is farther from Arlington than I thought...)
  - ii. Nora: In Trump times, a lot of students are coming to realize that politics don’t just affect adults but affects them directly as well. It’s important to talk to the youth as people who already understand what’s going on and see what issues they care about, with an understanding that these are things that affect them now not in their future. Also, it’s best to involve them in groups, not one-on-one; perhaps get a small group of teenagers or people in their 20s and see if they can speak to the congregation.
    - 1. (Allison share Marietta’s phone number with Nora!)
    - 2. Nora: Big action locally with student-led walk-outs on climate & gun-control; have lots of students who are incredibly active. Got to make interaction with youth a partnership rather than adults in an instruction role.
    - 3. Joanne: Share info about how weapons expenditures could be used to provide all students with free college education! Build connections between issues & highlight how disarming our planet means gun control, nuclear weapons, and everything in between.
  - iii. Marietta: Big group of congregants just went to Israel including some youth; will see if they want to talk about disarmament.
    - 1. Joanne: Israel has nuclear weapons and has NOT signed the non-proliferation treaty.

VI. Adjourn