

**Minutes**  
**Monthly Envoy Conference Call**  
September 22, 2020 at 3pm & 6pm Eastern

I. Welcome and Introductions

a. 3pm

- i. Allison Hess (UU@UN, NYC)
- ii. Terry Van Brunt (North Shore UU Society in Lacombe, LA)
- iii. Jerry Ross (First Parish in Bedford, MA)
- iv. Jeannie Lewis (San Marcos UU Fellowship, TX)
- v. Ron Glossop (Alton, IL)
- vi. Dana Burch (Community Church of New York)
- vii. Marilyn Mehr (All Souls Church in NYC)
- viii. Barry Lee (North Shore UU Society in Lacombe, LA)
- ix. Irvin Waller (First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, ON)
  1. First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa is hosting the Holtom Peace Lecture at 7pm Eastern on Thursday, 24 September. The lecturer is Kate White President of the UN Association of Canada and Vice President of the World Federation of UN Associations. The poster is available with more information at <https://www.firstunitarianottawa.ca/>. All are welcome to attend, register at [tinyurl.com/HOLTOM2020](https://tinyurl.com/HOLTOM2020)
- x. Carroll Webber (Greenville, NC)
- xi. Nasreen Gagner (UU Congregation of Long Beach, CA)

b. 6pm

- i. Allison Hess (UU@UN, NYC)
- ii. PJ Deak (Unitarian Society of New Haven, CT)
- iii. Janet Bendowitz (UU Congregation of Shelter Rock, NY)
  1. Had a concert on the grounds and working on Green Sanctuary status
- iv. Bill McPherson (University Unitarian Church in Seattle, WA)
- v. Marietta Tanner (UU Church of Arlington, VA)
- vi. BJ Allen (San Marcos UU Fellowship, TX)
- vii. Peggy Montgomery (All Souls Church in NYC)

II. UN & Office Updates

- a. UN General Assembly is underway. Watch the proceedings on UN Web TV <http://webtv.un.org/> and you can see summaries on UN News: <https://news.un.org/en/>
  - i. The general debate (happening this week) is not actually a debate. Member States take turns delivering speeches. Since the early years of the GA, the first country to speak has been Brazil because, according to the UN Protocol and Liaison Services, no one seemed to want to be the first to speak, and Brazil went first on several occasions, which then became a tradition.
    1. The second spot goes to the host country (the U.S.), and then the order of speakers follows a complex algorithm reflecting level of representation, geographical balance, the order in which the request to speak was recorded, and other considerations.
- b. UN 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

- i. UN Commemoration in the General Assembly was September 21. Short recap: <http://webtv.un.org/watch/player/6193204796001>
  1. Janet: Recommends that all subscribe to Pass Blue for great coverage of the United Nations: <https://www.passblue.com/>
- ii. For the 75th Anniversary, the UN conducted a survey and held “Global Conversations” this year to get input on where people see the world going and the UN’s role into the future. The report on those results was just published and a summary can be found here: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/09/1072552>
- iii. UU@UN Event: Save the date for 6pm Eastern on Thursday, October 22. This event will reflect on how the world has changed through the UN’s work in the last 75 years, with a particular focus on the UU Office at the UN and how important the UN is to Unitarian Universalists. A save the date will be sent out this week which can be shared widely.
  1. Featured speakers will include:
    - a. Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray, President, Unitarian Universalist Association
    - b. Rev. Alicia R. Forde, Director, Unitarian Universalist Association International Office
    - c. Hawa Diallo, United Nations Department of Global Communications (invited)
    - d. Chris King, United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs
    - e. Bruce Knotts, Director, Unitarian Universalist Association Office at the United Nations
    - f. Craig Mokhiber, Director, New York Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
    - g. Bobbi Nassar, Co-chair, Nongovernmental Organization Committee on Human Rights at the United Nations
    - h. Vyda Ng, Executive Director, Canadian Unitarian Council
    - i. Gillian Sorenson, International Rescue Committee, formerly Assistant Secretary General at the UN, then with the UN Foundation. She is a lifelong UU.
  2. Jerry: Struggling to find airtime (couldn’t get a date for UN Sunday) because there’s so much competition for other things going on with the congregation. Would love to get a brief time in the Sunday before that event to invite people to attend, would like to showcase what the UU@UN does and gain interest. Encourage people to sign up for and attend this event. To what extent will that suffice for a UN Sunday service?
    - a. Allison: Sixth Principle requirements (see link below) are less strict than Blue Ribbon award was, so doesn’t need to be a *worship service*. Would be great to have a conversation of some kind afterwards to have more involvement from congregants who attended, reflection on connecting what was mentioned during the event with the congregation’s activities. If you can do

something that shows a little more involvement than just attending, then that counts!

3. Dana: If you can't get on the calendar to do a whole worship service, maybe do a small ceremony. Persuaded Allison to co-lead a UDHR event celebration a year ago, small event with individuals lighting candles in a circle and offering small readings prepared on little slips of paper lifting up passages from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The general idea is small ceremonies are pretty neat, quick, intimate.
  - iv. BJ: Just came back from a convergence of people for Unity & Peace – 11 days of Zoom. The information from the convergence is all available online <https://peaceweekend.org/up/>, there was a big focus on the SDGs and on climate change. There was a proposal for an 18<sup>th</sup> goal on zero animal cruelty.
- III. Sixth Principle Award reminder (see requirements: <https://www.uua.org/international-justice/un/6thprincipleaward>) [Here's a link where you can share shorter announcements about this award.](#)
- IV. 2020 UN Sunday on the theme of *All In for Climate Justice: People, Power, Planet*. Recommended date for this year is Oct. 25 because it's the closest Sunday to United Nations Day Oct. 24. Any day that works for your congregation is fine too though. UU@UN is working on additional resources e.g. video to introduce the offering. Mobile donations: Just text UNSUNDAY to 51555 to donate via mobile phone. What have you got planned, what questions do you have?
- a. Marilyn: Hosting an event on Zoom in the afternoon on UN Sunday Oct. 25. Young people going to speak about the future of the UN, looking 75 years forward and back
  - b. Nasreen: Spoke with new Minister Rev. Lissa about UN Sunday and got an enthusiastic response, even moved the service that was originally scheduled for that day. Will share survey with the congregation to gauge interest
  - c. Jeannie: Bruce is giving the UN Sunday service on climate justice. They usually have about 50 people tuning in but could accommodate up to 500 people, so told Bruce that if he wanted to invite any other congregations to participate in that service on UN Sunday that he'd be welcome to do that.
  - d. Irvin: No difficulty promoting the event in the congregation for this Thursday, highlighted the WHO, used Greta Thunberg's speech from the climate summit, highlighted Black Lives Matter and the Decade for People of African Descent. It really is a time when everybody needs to get behind the UN to solve these problems. There is a much more dramatic case to be made because of climate, poverty, violence. Is there a video that promotes the SDGs? Can get people to look at the next 10 years and is incredibly important.
    - i. Allison: Here's a 40 second one: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vc8-7VnclbA>
    - ii. (By the way, I also found this incredible 34-minute video made for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN called: Nations United: Urgent Solutions for Urgent Times <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVWHuJOmaEk> Share it with everyone!)

- iii. Ron: There is a group of people interested in long-term thinking and that's young people! Give young people a chance to share ideas about what can be done. Encourages Esperanto as a nationality-free world language.
  - e. Janet: Getting started on UN Sunday planning, Bruce will deliver a pre-recorded sermon
  - f. PJ: Plan to stick to the USNH tradition of holding UN Sunday in January or February; after the holidays people are looking for something interesting to happen, so UN Sunday has worked well being held then.
  - g. Marietta: Likes to do UN Sunday right before Halloween to connect with Trick-or-Treating for UNICEF. (Not sure what UNICEF is doing this year...) (here's something? <https://www.unicefusa.org/trick-or-treat>)
    - i. BJ: Just heard on NPR that people are recommending using cloth masks not just regular Halloween masks
  - h. BJ: Any youth who attended the Seminar might like to contribute to UN Sunday?
    - i. Janet: The UN Sunday resources include RE activities for young people to participate in.
  - i. Marietta: Hard to make UU@UN a priority at the congregation, but have a new minister, hopefully will also recruit a new Envoy and drum up more enthusiasm.
  - j. Peggy: All Souls NYC is never allowed to have a Sunday worship service for UN Sunday but looking forward to a UN Sunday afternoon zoom program at All Souls co-led by youth Envoy
  - k. PJ: Given that we're all virtual... do your congregations record the services and post them later? Can we watch other UN Sunday services? Would certainly be interested!
    - i. Marietta: Services are always on YouTube, can see them several weeks back in the archive <http://www.uucava.org/livestream/>
    - ii. Janet: Can see the recorded services at [www.uucsr.org](http://www.uucsr.org)
  - l. Bill: Have spoken with ministers about doing UN Sunday and haven't got agreement yet.
- V. Role of UU@UN Envoys
- a. How do you describe your role in the congregation (not what the website says, but what you say it is/what you do)? What would you like to be doing that you aren't and what's getting in your way?
    - i. Jeannie: Writes a report monthly for the congregation, usually a shorter summary of the Envoy meeting.
    - ii. Irvin: New Envoy and new Member of the Board. Priority: to help the congregation be more involved with the UN mission. Not so hard, because there's a fair amount of support from the congregation generally. Planning to make a report every 6 months at the congregational meeting to incite people to get involved. Want to get young people involved; used to have a group of ~6 people attend the Seminar but not any young people currently involved. Current Canadian UN ambassador is pretty good and everything happening in the U.S. makes the congregation more interested in the UN. Now have a forum every Sunday – just did one on nature, one of the SDG goals, proposed by someone else in the congregation. Growing general awareness and have climate action as

a major theme in the congregation. Very puzzled by U.S. The UN is a major way of advancing UU principles

- b. Peggy: The more that you can have at least one partner as an Envoy the better! Don't ever be shy about calling the office, talking to Allison, talking to Bruce
- c. Marietta: Wish the broader UUA would speak more about this program, glad that UUA President is going to be at the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary event. The congregation talks about lots of important things that have international implications but not connecting it to the UN explicitly.
- d. PJ: Agree with Peggy: Has had an intergenerational team for a while, but it's harder to foster intergenerational connections virtually. This is one of the ways the Seminar is so important! PJ is very motivated and has cleared a number of other things off his congregational plate so can focus more on UU@UN
- e. Janet: Ministers are very supportive and have congregational affairs committee; Janet appreciates having blog & other updates that can be easily shared.

VI. Adjourn