

## Minutes – June Envoy Conference Call

June 13, 2016

4pm and 7pm Eastern

- I. In attendance
  - a. Allison Hess (UN Office, NYC)
  - b. Valerie Chapman (Halifax, NS)
  - c. Ron Glossop (Alton, IL)
  - d. Sakenya McDonald (Flagstaff, AZ)
  - e. Liza Diniakos (Thousand Oaks, CA)
  - f. Janet Nortrom (Milwaukee, WI)
  - g. Christopher & Suzanne (listening in from UUA Office of Stewardship and Development)
  - h. Bill McPherson (Seattle, WA)
  - i. Joanne DuFour (Lacombe, LA)
- II. Office Updates
  - a. There's not a lot of action happening currently as the UU-UNO is in summer planning mode (as well as gearing up for UUA General Assembly next week!). Just like UU churches, the UN tends to be less active during the summer.
  - b. Racial Justice Initiative: We're working with All Souls Church in Manhattan for an event this September to honor the founders of the Black Lives Matter movement. This is part of a lot of recent work in the UUA around racial justice and the movement for black lives in the United States. On the international level, we've been working with various other groups at the UN on the topic of colorism possibly for an event this fall at the UN. We're also hoping to plan an event this summer to raise the intersecting issues of racism and homophobia in UN circles.
  - c. Climate Justice Initiative: We had a fantastic event on Ethical Eating last month – there's a [post on our blog](#) about it that also was included in the May Envoy News. We hope to have some video from that available soon! Emphasis during the event was placed on the need to cut back on meat, not necessarily eliminate it completely (that's unrealistic). People are encouraged to opt for at least one plant-based meal per week for starters and increase over time. We will continue to address this issue in our climate justice initiative, especially in the lead-up to January 11<sup>th</sup> which is Ethical Eating Day (from the Tzu Chi Buddhist Foundation, with whom we are partnering). We're working with them to make this day more prevalent at the UN.
- III. Envoy Timeline
  - a. New Timeline for Envoys was sent around in the Envoy News. Start thinking about ideas for your UN Sunday service, sending a delegation to Spring Seminar, and whether your congregation will try to become a Blue Ribbon congregation this year. General idea is to start planning all these things during the summer so that you're ready to go come fall and you have plenty of time to meet all the relevant requirements/fundraising. Keep

your eye on that calendar as the year goes through, and remember the monthly tasks, especially reading the Envoy News!

IV. UN Sunday

- a. The UN Sunday packet is being finalized and will be sent out by the end of June. Keep an eye on your email!
- b. As usual, the UN Sunday packet contains information on this year's theme (economic inequality), connecting it to our UU spiritual grounding, a sample order of service, recommended RE curriculum, and more. This year's packet also includes a timeline and check-list to keep you on track!
- c. You can invite Bruce (UNO Director) or Allison (UNO Envoy Coordinator) to speak at your UN Sunday Service, but be sure to invite them ASAP! Schedules are filling up quickly.
  - i. Normally we ask for the congregation to cover transportation and lodging and if possible a small honorarium in the form of a donation to the office. Lodging can be staying at a congregant's home, no need to book a fancy hotel!
  - ii. Allison can help with materials to help promote UN Sunday events you're having (such as a reception where Bruce will speak). Get in touch with her to discuss details.
  - iii. Other suggestions for speakers: local members of UN Association or leader of an organization that works in the area of economic inequality. Make sure they agree to speak about what you ask them to, and make sure they know about UUism.

V. Joanne has a 5-minute block during the service (called "UN Moment") once a month. (Good idea for other Envoys to implement in their congregations!)

- a. Question: Is the UU-UNO work towards getting any UN General Resolutions? Not really, no. Focusing on raising support for programs in NGO and Member States, but not with an eye on any specific resolutions at this point.

VI. DPI/NGO Conference in Korea

- a. UNO Director Bruce Knotts was in Korea for the 66<sup>th</sup> Annual DPI/NGO Conference May 30-June 1. Overall the conference was a great success – Keep an eye on [our blog](#) for a post about the UU presence at the conference later this week!

VII. UUA General Assembly is upcoming!

- a. UNO will host 2 workshops (Thursday 3pm Sustainable Development & interfaith climate action; Friday 3pm Black Lives Matter outside our borders)
- b. UNO reception (combined with UUA International resources staff group) will be Friday 6pm-7:30pm (right before Synergy Bridging Worship). This reception will include presentation of Blue Ribbon awards and recognition of the Greeley Sermon Award Winner. Rsvp: <http://GlobalUUStory16.eventbrite.com>
- c. Envoy Breakfast will be Saturday morning at 7am! Breakfast and coffee will be provided! \$15 tickets available for purchase now: <http://EnvoysGA2016.eventbrite.com>

VIII. Other topics to discuss?

- a. Ron: We have a problem of Language Justice – less than 5% of the world's population speaks English, but English is becoming dominant. Ron is very much involved in Esperanto and will be attending international meetings around parts of Europe.
  - i. Becomes a problem with refugees – so many different languages spoken. It would be good to have a global language that is much easier to learn than English.
  - ii. In the past, Esperantists have had several programs at UUA General Assembly, especially regarding Religious Education.
  - iii. Interesting Fact: ¼ of Esperantists in New York are connected to the UUA.

IX. Next Year's Spring Seminar:

- a. Topic will be: Interfaith action to end armed violence!
- b. Will include the Rev. Chris Antal as a featured presenter – UU minister who recently retired from the US army where he served as a chaplain for several years. He retired in protest of the US government's use of drone strikes. (see his recent interview on Democracy Now: [http://www.democracynow.org/2016/6/3/i\\_refuse\\_to\\_serve\\_as\\_an](http://www.democracynow.org/2016/6/3/i_refuse_to_serve_as_an))