

Minutes
Monthly Envoy Conference Calls
Thursday, April 20, 2017 1pm and 6pm Eastern

- I. Welcome and introductions
 - a. 1pm
 - i. Allison Hess (UN Office, NYC)
 - ii. Vicky Demos (UU Fellowship of Salisbury, MD)
 - iii. Suzanne Murray (UUA Stewardship & Development Office in Boston) listening in
 - b. 6pm
 - i. Allison Hess (UN Office, NYC)
 - ii. PJ Deak (Unitarian Society of New Haven in Hamden, CT)
 - iii. Barbara Lacombe (First Unitarian Church in Portland, OR)
 - iv. Bill McPherson (University Unitarian Church in Seattle, WA)
 - v. Joanne Dufour (Northshore UU Society in Lacombe, LA)
 - vi. Nancy Nowak (First Parish Church in Duxbury, MA)
 - vii. Peggy Montgomery (All Souls Church in New York, NY) - Peggy mentioned an [article about mice & monogamy from the NY Times](#)
 - viii. Carroll Webber (UU Congregation of Greenville, NC)
- II. Seminar recap
 - a. Many adaptations were made this year based on feedback from prior years participants. The programming in general was much more interactive than prior years, it included more worship services, diverse activities such as workshops, creative expression, and small group conversations. We also had most of the programming (including youth lodging w/ their chaperones) at a hostel which made logistics generally a lot easier and more comfortable.
 - b. Peggy: has been part of the Seminar planning process for several years – it was a joy to just go and be part of it without taking on responsibility for the seminar. Break out times with smaller groups (adults, youth, etc.) was so meaningful – opportunity to really discuss issues from the heart.
 - i. If indeed the topic for next year's seminar is on migration/refugees, Peggy has connections through CTAUN (Committee on Teaching About the UN) Conference on Refugees from this past January
 - c. UUCSJ was very involved in the Spring Seminar this year, both involved in planning process and also they led two workshops (1 for youth and 1 for adults) during the seminar.
 - i. PJ: Having UUCSJ on board was great in terms of them leading material and also networking with them and building relationships with UUCSJ leaders/learning about opportunities for the future.
 - d. PJ: Son Pablo had to miss school to attend the seminar so afterwards his social studies teacher asked him to give a report on disarmament to the class. He did and pulled up the website Rev. Chris Antal demonstrated in his keynote address that simulates the effects of a nuclear bomb ([Nuke Map](#)) and he demonstrated exploding the school.
 - e. Joanne: Participants worked on squares of the drone quilt (each square honors a person killed in a drone attack) and Joanne has finished sewing the quilt squares together into a

quilt. If anyone's interested, it's possible to share the quilt from church to church, as a display and also chance to make additional squares to honor victims. Opportunity for those who want to do something.

- III. Bruce is in Taiwan at the 2017 Forum on Freedom and Democracy – the theme is “Democracy, the Rule of Law, and Sustainable Development” organized by the World League for Freedom and Democracy. He went with the NGO DPI Executive Committee and afterwards they all remained in Taiwan to meet with LGBT activists as they campaign to become the first country in Asia to adopt same-sex marriage. Look out for a blog post about his trip in the next week or so.
- IV. Upcoming events for the UU-UNO
 - a. May 2nd = “Climate Induced Displacement: Realities, Rights, and Responses” 11:45am
 - i. Will be live streamed (hopefully!) from the UN Conference Room B
 - ii. Part of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
 - b. May 9th = “The Future of Incarceration for People of Color” (2-4pm)
 - i. Will be live streamed from the Church Center
 - ii. Joanne: Louisiana has highest incarceration rate in the world – those coming to UUA General Assembly, lots of efforts relating to that, be prepared
 - c. May 10th = SOGI Subcommittee Meeting once per month to plan events to be visible and influential at the UN
 - i. It will be 1pm via Zoom Video Conference <https://zoom.us/j/268869922>
 - ii. Peggy: Great article recently in PassBlue about LGBT rights ([here it is!](#)) – Envoys are welcome to subscribe to PassBlue newsletter to receive great articles about the UN (email sent daily). The subscription link is in the right-hand sidebar on the article.
 - d. June 21st – June 25th UUA General Assembly in NOLA!
 - i. Thursday June 22nd
 - 1. 1:30pm Workshop Bruce & UUSC on Human Rights and Climate Justice
 - 2. 3:15pm Workshop Voices of UU Refugees
 - 3. 5:00pm International Worship Service
 - 4. 6:15pm International Reception (including Blue Ribbon Awards!)
 - ii. Friday June 23rd (Probably 11:30am-12:45pm) Envoy Meeting!
 - e. Regional Assemblies:
 - i. Allison – will be at UUA MidAmerica Regional Assembly next week in Chicago
 - ii. Nancy – will be at UUA New England Regional Assembly this weekend in Woburn, MA
- V. UN Activities
 - a. Secretary-General just signed a new agreement with the head of the African Union for increased cooperation between the two bodies. The joint framework will enhance UN-AU partnership on peace and security issues at a time when the traditional framework for peacekeeping and other security ventures is not relevant and adaptations need the cooperation and support of as many parties as possible.
 - b. This month, Ambassador Nikki Haley of US is the President of the UN Security Council (position rotates each month between UNSC members). She recently chaired a “thematic debate” in the UNSC on human rights, cited human rights abuses by North

Korea, Syria, and Cuba. (Here's [another PassBlue article](#) about her Human Rights debate in the Security Council...) But generally keeping a pretty low profile at the UN, not saying much at meetings, not meeting with NGOs still.

- i. Joanne: Ray Acheson in her remarks at the seminar said that when countries had a convention a few weeks ago to discuss banning nuclear weapons, Haley held a press conference outside to blast the fact that the meeting was happening, but it actually caused the press to pay more attention instead to the meeting than they otherwise would have.

VI. Envoy Programs – what's going on with you/your congregation?

- a. PJ: Lots of events coming up at USNH:
 - i. Lawyer coming to speak at the congregation about immigrant justice & migration issues
 - ii. April 30th follow-up discussion w/ congregation to talk about the Spring Seminar
 - iii. May 7th Recommended Seminar read *The Drone Eats With Me* book discussion
 - iv. Conversation about school funding & school desegregation case at the supreme court
- b. Peggy: All Souls NYC is having candidate week 23rd-30th for a new Associate Minister
 - i. \$10.6 million capital campaign happening simultaneously – Peggy also periodically makes a plug for the importance of the UU-UNO!
- c. Nancy: Very few people at the church are interested in the UU-UNO but Nancy tries to get info online from UU-UNO to share.
 - i. Envoy News is a great place to find info like that to share. Allison will continue “For Your Newsletter” blurb in the Envoy News and try to make it more of a recap of what's going on at the UU-UNO rather than just announcements
- d. Barbara: congregation's newsletter is expanding to allow more opportunities for announcements and sharing!
- e. Nancy: Would love to have flyers/one-pagers to promote the UNO that can be put on the table at church.
 - i. Allison: all flyers are available to download from UU-UNO Envoy Resources website! <https://www.uua.org/international/un/envoys/resources> (scroll to the bottom of that page for pdfs)
- f. Joanne: More people in UU congregations all over need to know more about the wide reach of Bruce via his various committees!
- g. Nancy: How have Africans been involved in Resolution to address Discrimination Against people of African Descent? Not sure (referring to [Int'l Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#)? Or [Resolution Proclaiming Int'l Decade for People of African Descent](#)?)
 - i. UU-UNO hosted important event in 2015 at start of Int'l Decade called Confronting the Silence ([WebTV broadcast](#))
 - ii. Joanne: How are peacekeeping operations being observed, monitored, to hold people accountable? ([here are some resources that may or may not be helpful](#))
- h. Mary Overton in Austin, TX did a workshop on LGBTQ human rights – used the UU-UNO history video from 50th anniversary ([link to the video](#)) – Mary generously shared her presentation for the other Envoys to use.

- i. Click here to [download the PowerPoint presentation](#)
 - ii. Click here to [download the interactive case studies](#)
 - iii. Click here to [download the tip sheet](#) on How to be a strong ally to people with marginalized identities
- i. Vicky: was at CSW last month – trafficking focus, met many people, including from Nigeria, Myanmar... Hoped to attend Cities for CEDAW meeting but prevented by the snow. One of Vicky's colleagues attended UU-UNO workshop at CSW and may become an Envoy for her own congregation!
 - i. Vicky's next volume will be on trans, gender variant, and intersex people
 - ii. Watched a [panel discussion on WebTV](#) "Legal Reforms to Protect the Human Rights of Trans, Intersex, and Gender Variant People" - people from all over the world talked about laws implemented to recognize all gender identities and expressions
 - iii. April 4th European Council declaration that sterilization is a violation of privacy. No longer allowed to sterilize people before they have been able to change their name. Most places do not want to recognize trans individuals especially nonbinary trans individuals who do not identify as male or female. Vietnam has a law that allows legal gender recognition (allowing people to use the gender they identify with as their legal gender) BUT these individuals must go through sterilization before they can make a change. Not sure the reasons behind that beyond not wanting them to reproduce...? Intersex people are often victim to surgical modification forcing them to fit into the binary. In Ukraine, they have legal gender recognition but need to go through 45 days of mental health observation in the hospital before legal recognition.
- j. Barbara: First Unitarian Church in Portland's Associate Minister will take the lead on ministry while Rev. Bill Sinkford is temporarily leading the UUA as interim co-president.
 - i. *So much* gratitude from all (including from UUA staff!) to First Unitarian Portland (and to Rev. Bill Sinkford) for his service to our faith at this critical time of transition & transformation, even though he needs to be absent from his own congregation.

VII. Adjourn