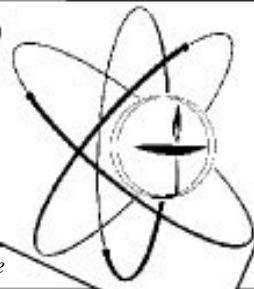


Ferment*



A Publication of the Unitarian Universalist Young Adult / Campus Ministry Office

January 2000

Issue 13

“RESIST THIS!”

UU's Peacefully Storm the Castle in Seattle

by Alison Purcell



Young Adults battle corporate domination in Seattle, WA
11/30/99 (photo by Jim Davis)

Filling my lungs with the cold morning air, I feel the pure energy of the day pulsing through me. It is a damp morning, like many in Seattle, with a light rain that chills down to the bone. But today is no ordinary day, it is a day that will go down in history, when the people stood up and cried, “We are not going to take this anymore.”

This past November, a group of approximately 50 UU youth and young adults came together for three days to mobilize against the WTO (World Trade Organization) meeting in Seattle. The conference, “Resist This,” focused on putting our UU principles into action and standing up for the injustices caused by the rapidly expanding free trade. The East Shore UU Church was our home-base and housed over 300 UU's and non-UU's throughout the week from places such as Ontario, Colorado, and California. A *Seattle Times* reporter visited our headquarters to report on how UU's were doing so much to support the effort.

Monday morning began with a civil disobedience training at University Unitarian Church led by members of DAN (Direct Action Network) that emphasized nonviolence and solidarity. We were briefed on how to conduct ourselves most effectively in the protest and what to do if arrested. We broke up into ‘Affinity groups’ of 5-15 people to ensure safety and good communication.

That night we took part in a human chain around the Seattle Exhibition Center where over 10,000 people joined hands to call for a cancellation of global debt. From steelworkers to activists, the intergenerational crowd consisted of people from a variety of backgrounds. Once the crowd had circumscribed the entire Center we began chanting: “We’re here, we’re linked, the WTO stinks!” As I walked back to our group’s meeting spot, songs such as ‘We Shall Not Be Moved,’ ‘Dona Nobis’ and ‘Freedom is Coming’ wove their passionate melodies throughout the mass. It was beautiful to see people coming together from so many places for a common cause. I felt excitement mounting within me for the coming days of protest and resistance.

Tuesday morning we gathered at Seattle Central Community College where we broke up into affinity groups to enact different forms of protest. My group linked arms with a human chain at a large intersection to prevent WTO delegates from getting to the convention center. I must admit, I was a bit scared at times, protesting five feet from police in riot gear, but after an hour and a half of standing near them and watching them chat with each other and casually eat Dorritos I began to see a more human side to them.

At noon we gathered near Memorial Stadium to join the March for Fair Trade. Labor unions, environmental organizations, and student groups were just some of the assemblages that made up the tens of thousands that joined this march. I swapped stories with workers as I walked to see why people were so passionately fighting the WTO. Everyone had their own particular reasons, but they could all agree that the WTO needed to be changed or abolished. Engulfed by this sea of people I was filled with an overwhelming sense of unity. Huge cheers erupted as the march joined up with the activists in the front lines downtown. It was a playful and passionate atmosphere with huge puppets and sea turtles marching through the streets. The only thing that soured the day was the 10 or 20 vandals who thought it would be cool to smash windows and spray paint walls. These individuals were few and far between, but received the most press coverage.

What did I take away from this experience (other than a t-shirt that says: “I was in the WTO protests and all I got was this stupid t-shirt”)? No seriously, what these acts of resis-

(see ‘WTO’ page 2)

**to be in an excited or agitated state -- to stir with passion*

IN FERMENT...

Greetings,

Our world abounds with myths, from creation myths to beauty myths to the Horatio Alger myth i.e. "You can grow up to be anything you want to be." Myths are harder to change than facts or statistics. I once took a class on myth and the professor said, "If you believe it, it's true."

Our UU movement also abounds with myths. Such as:
- Young adults are not interested in religious community
- 90% of all of our young people leave the faith
- That they will return when they have children to raise which is somewhat incongruous.

In a young adult survey a few years ago, one young adult voiced it well. In response to the question "What do YA's want from their religious community?", she said, "Acknowledgment as adults, albeit young and often inexperienced. Expectation that we remain, and regret it if we leave. While many other religions also lose a large portion of their young adults, I know of no other religion that EXPECTS their young adults to leave."

Since only 10% of our members grew up as UU's (that may also be a myth, I don't know) that does not mean that 90% of our young people leave. So my dilemma is: "How do we change the old myths that say 90% of our young people leave the faith and young adults are not interested in religious community?"

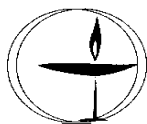
What is difficult is that UU membership is based on the numbers reported to the UUA by congregational leadership. If you are not a member of a congregation, you are not counted. You may be part of a campus ministry group, or receive *Ferment* (over 5,200 do), or attend conferences or are involved in district or continental leadership communities, but if you are not a member of a congregation, you do not get counted.

Our Young Adult Movement is on the MOVE. Young adult and campus groups, district leadership and conferences are proliferating. Read this issue for the exciting new developments afoot. But myths are hard to change. How will the wider UU world know that our work is effective, that we are, in fact not myth, bringing in and keeping our young people? Can you change a myth? How? I would be glad for any ideas.

In ferment,



Donna DiSciullo
Young Adult/Campus Ministry Director



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Ferment is a tri-annual publication of the Unitarian Universalist Young Adult/Campus Ministry Office. Its intent is to provide a forum for the "excited and agitated" voices of Unitarian Universalist Young Adults as they observe our denomination and our world on the eve of the 21st Century. Annual subscriptions are free to Unitarian Universalists aged 18-35, \$10/yr to all others. Address subscriptions to



Donna DiSciullo.

MISSION STATEMENT YOUNG ADULT/CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE

The mission of the Young Adult/Campus Ministry Office is to advocate, educate, train and develop resources for Young Adults, and those engaged in Young Adult Ministry, with particular emphasis on encouraging congregational based Young Adult groups, district-wide Young Adult structures and the establishment of Campus Ministries that reflect the Principles and Purposes of Unitarian Universalism and its commitment to becoming a culturally diverse, anti-racist, anti-oppressive institution.

Submission deadline for the next issue is: April 1, 2000 (no foolin').

Please send all art, poetry, articles, announcements and praise to:

Alison Purcell, editor
(see contact info above)

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2000 Young Adult Ministry Award

The Young Adult Ministry Award Committee is seeking nominations of persons who have contributed to, enhanced, furthered the cause of, been committed to and are active in ministry to young adults (18-35).

Young Adults, who has impacted your life?

Submit a one page statement describing the nominee’s history, experience working with young adults, qualifications and other pertinent information to:

Young Adult/Campus Ministry Office, 20 Nassau Street, Suite 510-511, Princeton, NJ 08542, (609) 252-1412 or ddisciullo@uua.org (email applications OK).

Award and prize of \$500 will be presented at the 2000 General Assembly in Nashville, Tennessee.

DEADLINE: April 1, 2000.

Nominee does not have to be a young adult.

Contributors in this issue:

Kent Matthies
Erin Uloth
Kathleen Jones
Justin Schroeder
Joey Lyons
Meg Muckenhaupt
Twanna Hill
Kevin McCulloch
Jennifer Jako
Rob Cavanaugh
Sharon Hwang Colligan
Alison Miller

WTO continued from page 1

tance taught me was that people in our country need to be standing up for what they believe on a daily basis. If we are silent we are contributing to the corporate take-over. They want us to remain silent so they can manipulate the system to their benefit right before our eyes. So I say to all of you: “Take a stand!” Stand up for your rights or one day they will be gone.

The other realization I had was that C*UUYAN can be a powerful vehicle for change. “Resist This” is just the beginning of a growing number of UU Young Adult events that focus on social justice. I think it is imperative that as a marginalized liberal people we join forces to fight against the wrongs in the world and support what we think is right (even if it means supporting the right—unlikely, but not impossible). As young people we have the energy and resources

to change the world. This summer David Taylor and Leone Reinbold participated in a workshop at Opus by ‘Art and Revolution’ focused on creating street theater at the WTO protest in November. Both of them had limited knowledge of what the WTO was, but by the end of the week they decided to organize more intensely with DAN. They both worked full-time for college credit this past fall and became chief organizers of the protest. David described to me the enormity of planning this resistance: “Imagine planning General Assembly with 10 times the people and a fraction of the budget.” David and Leoni are just two examples of a C*UUYAN event sparking action.

Who will be next? It could be you.

-Alison is your friendly Ferment editor, in her last term at the University of Oregon.

***Much thanks to Paula Nett and Andrea Townsend for making “Resist This” a reality. They rock!**

Two Steps Forward, One Step Back

by Rev. Kent Matthies

Sitting in the grass under a beautiful star filled night we faced one another. In our circle, each person had a lit candle and we felt the glow and connection of our spirits. Ali DeMateo, the President of the American University Unitarian Universalists student group (Washington, DC) led fifteen of us in a worship on the rich abundance and miracles of Mother Earth. Grace filled my heart with the knowledge that ultimately we are all “dust to dust.” Many were inspired as we renewed our dedication to environmental ethics and working to protect the planet. The worship, laughter and hugging — in this safe place — gave all of us warmth and excitement to face the next week of activities. This was a great night for Unitarian Universalist campus ministry at American University (AU). Throughout the fall, AU chaplain, Roger Butts has done a great job of creating and leading solid programs.

But it has not always been this easy. This is our third year of working to reactivate and institutionalize UU campus ministry at AU. At many points in our journey this ministry has been extremely challenging and frustrating. Many planned activities have only drawn three, two, or one person. A number of people from the local congregation (River Road Unitarian Universalist) offered to help the UU effort at AU, but at certain points we didn't know exactly how they could help. There have been many days and weeks when a small number of dedicated people have wondered if this thing would ever take off.

I am in my third year as the Director of the Campus Ministry Program for Unitarian Universalists (CampUUs) in the Joseph Priestley District. I love and cherish my job more every day, but this is not easy ministry. Almost every day I am in my office, or on a campus, or in a church meeting, or with a group of ministers I find out that some of our ministry is going well. New groups of students at various universities are beginning to create their own UU groups. Many of our local groups have better programs and attendance than ever.

On the other hand, almost every day I find out that some things are not happening as we wished. I am a chaplain at the University of Maryland where in three

years we have not yet achieved official student organizational status. At St. John's College in Annapolis, MD we started a strong and healthy UU student group three years ago. The main leader graduated and the group disappeared. We will have spent much of our CampUUs seed grant money by the end of this fiscal year and only 17% of our budget is secured for next year (00-01). In order to stay positive, the mantra I repeat on a daily basis, sometimes on an hourly basis, is: “Two steps forward, one step back.” At the continental, district and local levels of campus ministry we should expect this ratio of setbacks and successes to hold true. We should not take most disappointments personally and we should celebrate even the small victories.

In the midst of all the ups and downs thank goodness for the moments of clarity when we know in the depths of our minds and hearts why we do this work. This October was the one-year anniversary of the murder of Matthew Sheppard, a gay college student in Wyoming. UU churches and college groups all across the continent came together to honor our sadness and anger over this and many other hate murders which happen in this country every year. We also came to celebrate that our religious communities are places of safety and justice for people of all sexual orientations. We are called religiously to share these values and ideas with the world.

With this mission in mind students and campus ministers from local groups come together at CampUUs gatherings to learn about what has worked well in publicity, outreach, leadership development, social justice, and worship. One of the biggest benefits from our trainings is the realization that almost every local UU campus group experiences slow growth and organizational difficulties. We are members of the Unitarian Universalist movement. Through thick and thin we must stick together in our efforts to meet the religious needs of college students.

- Kent is the current Director of the Campus Ministry Program for Unitarian Universalists (CampUUs) of the Joseph Priestley District.

CALL ME A FEMINAZI

BY ERIN ULOTH

I'm taking this great class right now called *The Sociology of Gender*. It's one of those classes that you take and the whole time you think, "This is a class everybody should be taking." I've just convinced one of my roommates to take it, despite her fears that it is a "just for feminists" class.

To be honest, it *is* a feminist class (although you'll never get my lecturer to admit it), but this is of course in accord with how I define feminism. We were discussing just the other day the phenomenon of hating feminists and the connotations of the word. I mean really, what are feminists angry about? Violence. Inequality in the workplace. Inequality in most places, actually. Exploitation of women's bodies. Are these such crazy things to be angry about? And yet, most people are more upset with feminists for being angry than they are with the actual problems. These perversions of a gendered society *won't just go away*.

It's a fantastic example of irony, actually, that society has such an easy time targeting women trying to change things; do you think more people would listen if men were leading the feminist movement? Of course, if men were leading it, it wouldn't need to exist (not that men are the only dissenters to the movement). But that's beside the point [or it illustrates it (god, I LOVE these twists)], if men did indeed lead it, don't you think people would pay serious attention to the issues? Might you agree that people don't take feminism *that seriously because* it is women making the waves?

I don't have solutions to any of this. Wish I did. I just wonder what *would* happen if *everyone* took a gender class. Gasp! We might just reach an understanding.

- Erin Uloth is a fabulous and dynamic woman currently attending the University of Wisconsin in Madison, WI and a member of the newly formed C*UUJAN Conference Committee.

Community, Community, Community

By Kathleen Jones

I believe Unitarian Universalists are, by nature, very independent people. Generally speaking, we were either raised to believe in our own individuality or were attracted to the church because of that virtue. Yet, even independent individuals desire a community. A supporting community exposes members to new ideas, and supports them as they make sometimes confusing or challenging independent decisions. As members begin to define who they are as individuals, a supporting community helps them to celebrate their decisions.

That was the community found at the "CampUUs Leadership Training" this past October at the Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church in Bethesda, MD. Sixty people representing fifteen institutions of higher learning attended this training.

UU's in college face decisions not always faced by the rest of the UU community.

UU's in college face decisions not always faced by the rest of the UU community. In our distinct campus worlds we are defining as new adults what we want to be and what it means for us to be Unitarians. This conference helped to give us some of the tools to face these decisions. The workshop "Articulate (Y)our Faith" forced participants to form articulate statements defining the Unitarian religion and its principles. We role-played the committed Christian and the UU youth, facing a situation we all have experienced: defining and defending our religion to those unfamiliar with it. We were exposed to new answers to questions that we have all faced, whether we chose to accept or reject those answers.

The best part of the conference, for me, was interacting with other UU young adults. I was given new ideas and new thoughts, new ways to attract members to my campus group, and new activities for the group. The biggest gain was a new commitment to my religion. I left feeling like I had made the right choice when I became a Unitarian. It was a community I found freeing, inspiring, and thought provoking; a community of which I wanted to be a part.

- Kathleen is currently a student at George Mason University

Mountain Desert District Young Adults Hold First Conference Ever!

By Justin Schroeder

On the weekend of Nov 5-7, 1999 the Young Adults of the Mountain Desert District gathered together at the Uncompahgre Unitarian Universalist Society church in Grand Junction, CO, for a weekend of worship, workshops and celebration! During the conference, we met to brainstorm and envision the future of Young Adult activities in the MDD. We identified a core Young Adult Committee and have another conference planned for **April 14-16, 2000 in Colorado Springs, CO**. We also plan to do more cluster conferences as our district is so spread out. A special thanks to Joey Lyons for giving us the kick in the pants we needed to pull together this conference! If you're in the MDD and would like to help plan future events, please contact Justin at 970 484-6609 or justinmschroeder@yahoo.com.

The Talk Box Touch the Heart

Joey,
Joey,
Joey

by Joey Lyons

I travel a lot as your humble quarter time UUA Young Adult/Campus Ministry Field Organizer, and recently read a story about Dim Sum. As a born and raised UU, who also happens to be part Chinese, I had that typical mixed-race, small town, adoptee, raised-in-a-white-community-and-church reaction which was a bit of shame for not knowing.

Dim Sum means *Touch the Heart* and it made me think of all the young adults out there in our liberal religious faith. Dim Sum is a delicious diversity of foods all shapes and sizes, sampled together in a range of cooking techniques. I thought to myself, "This sounds like our young adult movement." *Touch the Heart* is exactly what I want our young adult movement to give each one of us in a meaningful and wonderful way.

I have a challenge for us, which I believe will help us grow as a movement and deepen our commitment as Unitarian Universalists. C*UUYAN¹ needs to move into the business of promoting social justice in our communities. We've been around for almost a generation, building a loose network, coming together in spiritual community. Now that we are a UUA-sponsored organization, we have the resources and organizational capacity to tackle social action, and this will be a beacon to rally and take C*UUYAN to the next level.

We need a vision, and the energy to make a political statement. I think both are out there among people like you, and I would love to hear from you about what you are concerned about in your community. People like you and I are constantly putting our values and beliefs into action, taking our liberal yet religious faith as a call for equality and compassion in our communities to fight injustice and oppression.

Is this a popular idea among our existing C*UUYAN leadership? Taking a stand, and allocating precious resources to specific social action will have critics. Yet, the future success of C*UUYAN will be our ability to reach and organize people on the edge of our young adult movement - and I believe a majority of them are the activist, concerned citizen, student radical, action-oriented, justice-seeking young adults. Do you think C*UUYAN should take visible stands against issues such as oppression, the rights of youth, the prison-industrial complex, living wages and dignity for all workers, and community-based organizing?

I make these statements with an ear to the ground, witnessing the interfaith efforts of UU students in DC, Living Wage organizing by UU young adults in SF, underground experimental music in Denver led by post-YRUU people, hunger and homelessness activism and service in Cambridge MA, the call to action in Seattle challenging the World Trade Organization, and the dozens if not hundreds of UU young adults involved in Union Summer, UUSC Just Works projects and AmeriCorp programs. Is there grass-roots support for C*UUYAN to take a page from our history books with a new dose of 21st century activism?

*-Joey Lyons, 26, is an environmental justice organizer in Portland, Oregon and moonlights as the UUA Young Adult/Campus Ministry Field Organizer. He also serves as Conferences Coordinator for the C*UUYAN Steering Committee. Contact him at joeyl@hevanet.com or (503)490-5639.*

1. C*UUYAN is the Continental Unitarian Universalist Young Adult Network

How to Kill a Religion

By Meg Muckenhoupt

Meandering with Meg

It's the middle of the winter and you're bored: how about plotting to destroy your church? It's not as hard as you think. Here are the four easy steps to denominational death:

- 1) **SEPARATION** - Gather together the most energetic, creative, socially conscious new members of your church in one big room. Let's call them the "Boosters." Tell them that they're special, wonderful people. Continue by telling them that they're so amazing that they have different needs from the rest of the congregation, which would be better filled by meeting with other Boosters than bothering with the rest of the church.
- 2) **ISOLATION** - Arrange for the Boosters to have their own meetings at times when no one else is in the building. Encourage them to take on new leadership roles and responsibilities, but only in groups made up entirely of Boosters. Casually mention that non-Booster committees are "boring" and "don't get anything done."
- 3) **DISAFFECTION** - Lead small-group worship services where each Booster gets to talk about his or her own problems, but isn't

required to respond to what anyone else has to say. They'll get used to concentrating on themselves instead of learning how to listen and worship as part of a congregation. If a few of the Boosters do sneak off and attend the regular Sunday-morning service, they'll complain that the service is "boring" and "doesn't speak to me," and leave.

4) **REJECTION** - After the Boosters have been meeting for a few years, tell them that they can no longer use the church. Do not invite them to New U classes. Let them find their own heartbroken way back - they will if they're *really* UU, after all.

This scheme is guaranteed to be effective. After a few years, only weary refugees from other religions will be left in your church - hardly a group that can maintain its numbers, much less threaten the right-thinking world with a liberal faith.

There's even a name for this plan. It's called YRUU. And you wonder where all the young adults are...

- Meg can be reached at [<megm@world.std.com>](mailto:megm@world.std.com)

Welcome to a place where the words are bold and provocative.
Please feel free to respond and react to what is said in:

Twanna's Tirade:

A Religion for the Tolerant: A Conversational Moment

By Twanna Latrice Hill

N: "Thanks for taking a few moments to sit with me. I was just curious about a couple of things I'd kind of heard about UUs and UUism."

UU: "No problem. I can't speak for all UUs, but I'll do the best I can."

N: "Great. I was wondering, given that UUism is a liberal religion, how is it possible for UUs to be as tolerant as they claim to be?"

UU: "I don't want to make it sound like we're more enlightened than everyone else. It's just that, we as UUs don't look down on those of other faiths or those who don't share our convictions - either religious or political."

N: "So, UUs are not elitist?"

UU: "We respect the beliefs of others. We simply disagree with them."

N: "I see. So, what about bigots?"

UU: "Bigots?"

N: "Yeah, bigots: those who would deny basic rights to people of color, gays and lesbians, women, the physically and mentally challenged, you know, pretty much anybody who's different?"

UU: "They're just plain old ignorant."

N: "And you don't have a problem with that?"

UU: "Of course we have a problem with that. They need to be educated, but until they become educated, we certainly must do everything in our power to undermine their agenda."

N: "Okay, I get it. How about republicans?"

UU: "Well, the fiscally conservative republicans are one thing. They're all for a more economically just society, they're just not necessarily convinced that liberal economic policies will bring that about. And the fact of the matter is, most of us UUs aren't crying broke, there's a few more fiscal conservatives around here than you might think."

N: "And the social republicans?"

UU: "They don't realize that government intervention facilitates the provision of appropriate services to the disenfranchised among us: the poor, the undereducated, those whose early environments shape their world view. They don't realize we don't need more prisons, but earlier intervention with positive mentoring, effective therapeutic modalities, and vocational training. And the schools, they don't realize how much money we need for the public schools! Our society cannot evolve if we allow these kinds of..."

N: "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to get you so fired up. One more question, just so I'm clear. What about the pro-life folks?"

UU: "You mean those misogynistic anti-choice bastards who want to control my body?"

N: "Well there are women that are also anti-choice?"

UU: "Well they don't have to have an abortion if they don't want one!"

N: "But they believe in the sanctity of life and that life begins at conception."

UU: "That is not the point!"

N: "I even know UUs who are pro-life, err, I mean, anti-choice."

UU: "My body is my own! In the first place, there is no room in this discussion for men because they can't get pregnant! And in the second place, I have just about had it with these holy-rollers! Don't you realize that these anti-choice folks are the same ones who discourage sexual education and want to cut social programs for the parents of unwanted children!"

N: "Hey, sorry. I didn't realize..."

UU: "What do you mean you didn't realize? These people, they want to control us, cram their beliefs down our throats!"

N: "Um, you know, I think I ought to be going."

UU: "Right now as we're sitting here, they're plotting, planning..."

N: "Okay fine. It's been um, well, I mean..."

UU: "Right now they're planning the destruction of civilization as we know it. Do you know what they want?"

N: "Uh, no."

UU: "Complete and total world domination."

N: "Yeah, sure. Well, thanks for taking the time..."

UU: "We must be ready. To arms, to arms!!! Oh, dammit, we UUs support gun control... I know! To debate! To debate!"

- Twanna LaTrice Hill is an unapologetic radical liberal. For her, Unitarian Universalism is a religion and a movement!

'N' is an unsuspecting non-UU.
'UU' is our friendly and noble UU.

C*UUYAN NEWS

(Hey yo yo UU's — it's time for another block-rockin' C*UUYAN (takin' care of) BUSINESS REPORT! Grab hold tight.)



SPONSORED ORGANIZATION

It's official. As of the UUA's October Board of Trustees meeting, C*UUYAN is a SPONSORED ORGANIZATION of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. That's right, folks! Our modest little network has become the young adult program wing of the UUA.

The most immediate result of this change is that the UUA will, through the Young Adult/Campus Ministry Office, begin to absorb C*UUYAN's OPERATING EXPENSES. Our sponsorship proposal to the UUA included line items for Steering Committee travel expenses (\$16,000), scholarships to get district young adult representatives to ConCentric (\$5,000), and General Assembly program expenses (\$3,000). In addition, the proposal asked for full-time funding for a permanent, two-year rotating YOUNG ADULT INTERNSHIP (See page 12 for how to apply) in the Young Adult/Campus Ministry Office, starting next September, and for a half-time Field Organizer and Continental Conferences Coordinator to assist with annual and special events. C*UUYAN will continue to draw program funds from the annual revenues generated by Opus and ConCentric, and eventually from the planned upcoming UUA capital campaign.

Over the coming year, the Steering Committee will continue its conversation with the UUA Board and Executive Staff to finish working out details of the new relationship.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The C*UUYAN SC met in Cleveland, Ohio November 12-14. Many thanks to Shar Hudson and Amanda Rhodes, who bent over backward to host our meeting.

We met jointly with the C*UUYAN Fundraising Committee, UUA Development Director Bob Snow, local Opus planning committee liaison Jeanne Swan, C*UUYAN webmaster Stephen Starkey, and Young Adult/Campus Ministry Direc-

tor the Rev. Donna DiSciullo. We reviewed the structure of the UUYAN WEBSITE, considered ways to institutionalize ANTI-RACISM and ANTI-OPPRESSION in our work, discussed our plans for OUTREACH TO YRUU (the UUA's high school-age youth program), reviewed our BUDGET, made plans for next summer's CONFERENCES, and began the lengthy process of sketching out our five-year GROWTH PLAN for young adult ministry. Check out www.uuyan.org for the meeting minutes.

In addition to the meeting, we were joined by local youth and young adults on Friday night for an age-related discussion, and by local young adults on Saturday night for dinner and socializing.

FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

This spring we will launch our first-ever young adult ministry fundraising campaign with a FULL-PAGE AD in the *World*, the UUA magazine that is sent to UU's everywhere. We will compliment the ad with a direct-mail campaign to our supporters. Keep an eye out for the ad, and help to spread the word about young adult ministry among UU's in your area!

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

The members of the Conference Committee have all been selected. They are: Joey Lyons of Portland, OR; Lydia Deering of High Point, NC; Janet Nelson of Lantzville, BC, Canada; Erin Uloth of Madison, WI and Justice Waidner of Tulsa, OK.

NEXT MEETING

Our next Steering Committee meeting will be February 24-27, 2000, near Washington, DC. As always, our Steering Committee meetings are open to everyone! Contact us for more information.

—Kevin McCulloch, Facilitator

Laurel stares down the camera
photo by Alison Purcell

Hey, I'm Laurel, one of the more recent additions to the C*UUYAN Steering Committee. I am pleased to deal with all things that pertain to spending and acquiring money cause I really like numbers (no joke). I also like Lionel Ritchie and Celine Dion too...so there.

- Laurel (Finance/Fundraising Coordinator)

Phoebe listens very attentively
photo by Alison Purcell

Howdy, my name is Phoebe and I'm your mountain momma finishing up at Sarah Lawrence College in New York, missing the West Virginia hills and thinking about the future. I am C*UUYAN's liaison to Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (The UU Youth Organization serving ages 14-20).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Creating Sacred Space, a circle worship leaders training conference, will be hosted by the San Francisco UUYAN and PCD-UUYAN, **Feb 4-6, 2000**. Location and cost TBA. Contact Sharon Hwang Colligan: <sharon@warmcove.com>, or Colin Bossen, (415) 864-8363 for more information.

The Metro New York district has been reawakened! Come one, come all to the Young Adult Retreat on Feb 11-12, 2000.

Calling all youth and young adults: On **April 29, 2000** Metro New York District is hosting our first district-wide bridging at All Souls, NYC. For more details and to register for these exciting events contact Alison Miller, 212-535-5530 or amiller96@aol.com.

A GRAND TRANSYLVANIA TRIP 2000 Twenty North American UU youth ages 15 - 20 will be selected to travel to Transylvania, Romania for two weeks in August, 2000 to attend a World Gathering of Unitarians, visit historically significant Unitarian places in Transylvania, and spend 3 days at a youth conference with Transylvania Unitarian youth. For itinerary and photos from the 1999 trip, please visit our website <http://www.tiac.net/users/rcordes/aug99.html>.

For more information contact Cathy Cordes: (781) 275-6181 or <ccordes@teamflow.com>

A West Coast Young Adult Summer Conference is in the works! The tentative dates are: July 6-9, 2000. Contact Diana Carpenter for more information: <DiMata@aol.com>

Want to Work in the UUA Washington Office?

WANTED: Passionate, motivated, justice-seeking, politics-liking interns to join the advocacy work of the Unitarian Universalist Association Washington Office for Faith in Action. Work to pass campaign finance reform, preserve church-state separation, protect civil rights, promote economic justice, save the environment, and support the UN!

Internships are accepted on a rolling basis. They must be at least 2 months in length and are unpaid, but it is possible to receive college credit for them. Practical experience with either the UUA or justice advocacy is preferred.

* For more information, contact: Rob Cavanaugh, Washington Office for Faith in Action (202) 296-4672 x15 or uuarob@aol.com.

For more events/announcements visit the C*UUYAN website at www.uuyan.org

Bloodlines by Jennifer Jako

I thought I wasn't at risk. In 1991, I had sex only once with an old friend and didn't use protection. Finding out I was infected with HIV at age 18 made me feel like a glass ball that had been dropped on concrete, shattering everywhere. I immediately decided to be open about my HIV status to give people a wake up call.

When I enrolled in college in 1994, it was quickly made known to me that there was another HIV+ girl attending the same school. I invited her to a national conference for HIV+ youth. As we filled out the applications, we started talking. This talking turned into a collaboration that would last four years.

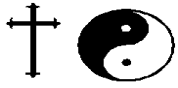
We needed to help people like us feel less alone and help others understand what we were going through. We decided to create a documentary film about HIV+ youth from across the United States. After three and a half years of Top Ramen, innumerable all-nighters, fundraising and filming, our film premiered on MTV in December 1998. It repeated on MTV this World AIDS Day, Dec. 1, 1999.

The educational version, "Blood Lines," is available

to be used in schools. I am sponsored in part by the Kaiser Family Foundation to present my story and film to audiences nation-wide through May 2000. If you have an idea for an assembly, let's organize it as this is the last year I am speaking.

- A passionate artist and activist, Jennifer Jako has attended West Hills Unitarian Fellowship and First Church in Portland, OR. Her very first disclosure of her story to a large audience was an October 1992 youth conference in Wenatchee, WA.

www.blood-lines.org, is a web site version of the film. The Blood Lines site is an online resource of HIV information and support for young people. It includes: Ask the Sexperts - a forum, Links, FAQs, HIV+ Youth Stories and more. I appreciate additional links or comments from those who visit. This site needs to be about the information you want to know. Contact me at jako@teleport.com or 503-235-5256.



STRANGER IN A NOT SO STRANGE LAND



By Rob CAVERNAUGH

On a beautiful weekend in late September, I and two dozen others from across the country came together to talk about young adult ministry and plan a conference on the topic. We lamented the loss of young adults from our congregations. We discussed why they leave and how we can get them back. In our worship services, we sang short chant-like songs, meditated, and shared our thoughts and feelings. If you think this sounds like standard UU fare, you're right.

But it wasn't. It was a meeting of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCC) Young Adult Ministries Team. The Unitarian Universalist Association is not allowed to be a member of the NCCC—since it is Christian and we are not—but we participate in many of their activities as observers or friends.

Two distinct aspects of my experience at the meeting were particularly powerful and noteworthy. First, I was amazed at how similar our UU struggles with young adult ministry are to those of the mainline Protestant denominations. It was simply amazing to hear Baptists, Brethren, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Disciples of Christ, and United Church of Christ folks describe their work and dreams for young adult ministry. Except for our obvious theological differences, our experiences and visions are not substantially different. Relative to these denominations, our own UU young adult movement was ahead of some and behind others. The biggest difference—and an important one—is that Unitarian Universalism is a *growing* religion, whereas most mainline Protestant denominations are not. We've got a great message, so spread the word! The future of Unitarian Universalism is our responsibility.

Second, I was able to participate in, appreciate, and enjoy Christian worship like never before. I've been to many interfaith and Christian services that I got little out

of because they were not inclusive in any way. I imagine that this has happened to many a Unitarian Universalist. Knowing that I would be one UU among many Christians, I accepted far in advance that the language used in worship would not speak to me. I chose to "go with the flow" with words about God, Jesus, and their power and love. Letting my guard down, so to speak, enabled me to truly identify with the thoughts and feelings my new friends were having as they expressed themselves spiritually. Through song, silence, and sharing, I related to the power and energy each derived from her or his own faith—and I felt that power in my own heart and soul. It was a wonderful experience. I left those worships with not only a deeper appreciation for Christianity, but also with a stronger sense that we're all on the same team. I'm no closer to being a Christian now than I was before, but I'm certainly a better Unitarian Universalist.

That being said, I hope those of you with the time and inclination will join me (and several hundred Christian young adults) for "Come to the Feast," to be held in Chicago May 26-29, 2000. Officially, the conference is "An Ecumenical Young Adult Ministry Event from the Young Adult Ministry Team (National Council of Churches)." Unofficially, it's an opportunity to learn from, share, worship, and build bridges with great people doing great work.

For more information, check out: www.cometothefeast.org. For more information about the NCCC Young Adult Ministry Team or related interfaith young adult work, feel free to contact me, Rob Cavanaugh, at robhav@erols.com, daytime phone 202-296-4672 x15.

- Rob currently works in the UUA Washington Office for Faith in Action.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY / Nashville, TN / JUNE 22 - 26, 2000

General Assembly 2000:

"Fulfilling the Promise, Sharing our Destiny"

GA is the annual meeting of Unitarian Universalists. It is a fabulous opportunity not to be missed! Meet UU young adults from all over the country, build your skills and have an all around great time. For up to date information on activities, housing, and staff opportunities for GA 2000 check www.uuyan.org.

We need a few good souls to be on GA Young Adult/Campus Ministry Staff!

Positions available: Outreach Coordinator, Worship Coordinator, Coffee House Coordinator, Exhibition Booth Coordinator, and Chaplain. Staff receive small stipend. Visit www.uuyan.org for job descriptions or contact Joey Lyons joeyl@hevanet.com

Deadline: Postmarked by February 15, 2000

GA Young Adult/Campus Housing

Stay with other young adults/college students at GA 2000 in Nashville, TN. Housing for 5 nights at a GA hotel will be \$130-160 (price TBA) per person with four to a room. If you are seeking alternative affordable housing such as homestays, the deadline to contact us is April 1, 2000. Send GA Housing Form to: Alison Miller, 1157 Lexington Ave, New York, NY 10021. GA Housing Form available online at www.uua.org or by contacting Alison Miller at (212)535-5530x18 or amiller96@aol.com.

Need money for GA?

Contact the General Assembly Office at the UUA for applications for one of 30 scholarships to GA including free registration and \$500 for travel expenses. Phone: 617-742-2100.

Email: gaoffice@uua.org.

Get your GA Registration forms through the UUA GA Office. Visit their web site at www.uua.org/ga or contact them at (617) 742-2100, ext. 209 or email: gaoffice@uua.org.

UU Circle Worship and Tribal Legacies

Written by Sharon Hwang Colligan

(Edited by Cathi Ishida)

UUs sometimes define Circle Worship in terms of the seating arrangements in the worship space: worshippers sit in a circle rather than in pews. We explain that this represents the equality of all participants, allows for the active participation of all circle members, and creates intimacy among worshippers. One popular way to describe the theological and cultural meaning of Circle Worship is to say that the circle carries feminist values of nurture, interrelation, egalitarianism, intuition, and respect for nature, whereas the pew-and-pulpit structure carries the patriarchal values of dominance, hierarchy, and elitism.

Another way to define Circle Worship is to say that it is a liturgical movement emerging directly from within our UU tradition, from our community values, principles, and sources. More specifically, it is the form of worship that emerges from those of us who were raised with UUism from childhood or early adolescence, those of us who escaped the formative imprint of an alien religion.

Our Sunday schools, youth programs, and UU families are not perfect, and teachings that contradict our sacred principles abound in the culture and media that surround us. But, given the sense of smallness and inadequacy our parents and religious educators often struggle with, I think they frequently fail to see the power of what they *do* accomplish.

The accomplishment I see is this: they have raised children in a minority culture. A culture where girls take leadership confidently alongside boys, and both trust that they will be held in kindness when they cry. A culture where the holy is seen in nature as well as in sacred teachings of many human traditions. A culture where the inherent worth and dignity of each being is treasured as part of the awesome interdependent web of all existence. A culture which organizes its sacred rituals in the form of a circle, governs itself with love and fairness, and stands up strongly to the oppression that confronts it. A culture where an individual spiritual path is respected as one among many. Our culture, our UU Circle Worship culture.

I perceive Unitarian Universalism as a tribal religion, hidden, like many others today, under a surface layer of Christianity. Separated, like many other tribal peoples, from its ancestral homelands. Like many others, we are hard pressed to find words to explain our traditional spirituality to the dominant culture. The dominant culture expects a doctrine, a master, a creed, or at least a set of beliefs; we reply with our traditions, our friendships and family bonds, our ways of being with one another. We do not, after all, ask each other to “believe” in anything beyond the experi-

ence of heart and mind. We do have some words we use, strategies to explain ourselves to the theologians: we take our Principles of human relations and say they are “beliefs;” we use words like “process theology” or “feminist spirituality.” But joining with us is not a matter of theology, but of community, a recognition of kinship and a shared spirit. We teach newcomers our history, our world view, and our ways of relating to one another with respect and justice. When they have learned our songs and joined their heart to the love of our fellowship, then they are one of us, and the spiritual joining cannot be undone. We are a people, not a creed.

Like most tribal peoples today, UU’s have some historical baggage to sort out. Some of it relates to cultural confusion and shame: like many non-dominant peoples, we find ourselves reluctant, or simply unable, to speak of our religion to outsiders with pride. Some of it is historical trauma we pass on through the generations: over and over we send our youth and young adults away from the beloved community forever, as our adults reenact the unhealed story of fleeing in pain from the churches in which they grew up. Some of it is the painful history of complicity, of a dominating culture using one tribe against another: we continue to pretend that our ancestors the Puritans came here from England seeking freedom from oppression, and not from Holland as part of a colonial force, signing an economic contract with an unsavory businessman in exchange for a chance to build a new world in their own image. Some of it is the complex internal debates so many tribes are facing in the era of Empire.

I see the Circle Worship of UU youth and young adults as our generation’s contribution to the long process of healing from conquest, damnation, and Inquisition. Each generation liberates us from another layer of the imposed religion: from Trinitarian dogma, from Hellish terrorism, from compulsory Christianity, from the ban on nature-worship, from gender oppression. It is time now for the Pagan generation, to heal our people from racism and the cultural ban on our tribal identities.

- Sharon Hwang Colligan is a leader in the San Francisco UUYAN, and a member of the Pacific Central District UUYAN Steering Committee. Contact her at sharon@warmcove.com

If you are interested in writing for this column of UU Young Adults of Color, send your writings to Cathi Ishida, Shades of UU Editor, <ishida@IfA.Hawaii.Edu>

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JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

FULL-TIME, PAID INTERNSHIP IN YOUNG ADULT/CAMPUS MINISTRY

The Young Adult/Campus Ministry Internship is a **two-year position** for an **18-35 year old UU** at the **UUA headquarters in Boston, Massachusetts**. The new intern will work closely with the Young Adult/Campus Ministry Office Director and other UUA staff, as well as the C*UUYAN Steering Committee and local and district young adult leaders, to conduct outreach to young adults, advocate for young adult and campus ministry in our association, and develop programs and resources for young adults.

The intern will be responsible for answering inquiries and providing support to local young adult groups, helping to organize young adult committees at the district level, developing and revising materials, providing conference support, conducting trainings, helping to extend young adult outreach on the Internet, and helping to implement young adult initiatives regarding social justice and other issues. The job will involve travel, irregular hours (including weekend commitments), and some administrative support.

Good candidates will be 18-35 years old, self-motivated, able to work independently, detail-oriented, and able to live in the Boston area. Strong computer skills, experience providing telephone or email assistance, community organizing or young adult leadership experience, a commitment to UU young adult and campus ministry, a commitment to anti-oppression/anti-racism work, and the ability to articulate your Unitarian Universalist faith are all strong qualifications.

Applications are due April 1, 2000. The decision will be announced by May 1st, and the position begins September 5, 2000. The yearly stipend will be \$23,500 (before taxes). For more information or an application, contact the Young Adult/Campus Ministry Office, 20 Nassau Street, Suite 510-511, Princeton, NJ 08542, (609) 252-1412 or ddisciuillo@uua.org.