

Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice in the National Capital Region

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From the Executive Director

I call your attention to two coming events:

This Thursday, May 16 there will be an interfaith Jericho Walk seven times around the Hart Senate Office Building in DC witnessing to the pain caused by current immigration law. People will meet at 11:00 am at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation, 212 E. Capitol St., and walk in silence (no signs). It will take about 1 1/4 hours total. This is conducted by a coalition with which our Standing on the Side of Love is an ally.

And save the date of Sunday evening, Oct. 20, for our annual UUSJ Gala honoring outstanding UU social justice volunteers. Specific information will be forthcoming soon about how to nominate people in your congregation, but you can begin thinking of who is most deserving in your congregation now. There will be opportunities to nominate an emerging leader; someone who has been doing social justice work for twenty years or more; a comprehensive congregational social justice program; a group or person working on immigration, lgbtq issues, economic justice, anti-racism, affordable housing, environment; an innovative program; or a minister working for social justice. Nominations will be due Sept. 6.

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Rev. Dr. Terence H. Ellen

Executive Director

Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice in the National Capital Region

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From the Executive Director

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Unitarian Universalism

❖ *Apply for a UUSJ Collaboration Grant*

Does your congregation have a social justice program that could use a funding boost? Would a UUSJ Collaboration Grant be a possibility? Find an application [UUSJ Collaborative Fund Request Form](#)

❖ *Members of Mount Vernon Unitarian Church Pass Resolutions on Immigration and Restrictions on Gun Sales*

The membership of the Mount Vernon Unitarian Church (MVUC) in Alexandria, Va., overwhelmingly passed "statement of conscience" resolutions supporting immigration reform legislation and restrictions on gun sales, including background checks, at the Church's annual meeting, May 5.

Statements of conscience are a Unitarian Universalist tradition in which congregations take positions on issues of social justice. The resolutions allow the minister to speak out on these issues and the church to form coalitions with other churches and nonprofit organizations promoting the issues. Church members can now represent MVUC and advocate these issues to legislators in Richmond and Washington D.C. using the church banner and speaking for the church.

Following passage of the resolutions, MVUC Minister, the Rev. Kate Walker, said, "Our support for national reform of immigration policy challenges us to open our hearts and doors to the stranger. Our work for restriction of firearm ownership is based on not only our experience of gun violence in a Unitarian Universalist church in 2008, but the current culture of unchecked, unaccountable and irrational firearm sales in our country resulting in a culture of fear and anguish over the bodies of our children."

The two statements of conscience were proposed by the MVUC Social Justice Council, chaired by Georgeta Pourchot. Before the vote, she told the congregation, "The Social Justice Council feels it is important for the church to make a statement of where MVUC as a congregation stands on these issues, for the benefit of visitors and newcomers who may not know MVUC very well, for the benefit of church children who may be exposed to a variety of views on these topics and not know exactly where the church stands, and because these statements of conscience express a commitment to action."

Pourchot said the wording of the immigration statement of conscience was identical to one proposed by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) that developed a course called "Immigration as a Moral Issue," which has been taught three times at MVUC over the past year. The statement calls for measures that treat all immigrants, regardless of legal status, justly and humanely, and for an immigration policy that includes a path to citizenship; work visas that require the same worker protections available to citizens; access to the same medical care and education available to citizens; evaluation of human and environmental costs of proposed barriers to immigration; due process for detained immigrants including representation, rights of appeal, and the right to initiate lawsuits; no deportation of parents of dependent children or partners of documented residents; asylum for refugees; and collaboration with source countries to address underlying causes contributing to immigration. The motion passed with no objections or discussion.

The statement of conscience on gun legislation was developed by the Social Justice Council and slightly amended at the meeting. It advocates measures that deter the sale of firearms intended for use against U.S. residents, supports background checks for all gun sales, promotes safe havens for people to report threatening behavior, and calls for funding for the Centers for Disease Control to resume the study the causes of gun violence.

Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, who shepherded the gun legislation resolution, said, "Members of MVUC can now form coalitions with outside groups, such as the Million Mom March or Organizing for Action. With this

statement of conscience, members can present the beliefs of MVUC on the issues around gun violence and its prevention. We intend to form a social justice task force as a vehicle to act on this issue."

The meeting was attended by more than 100 members, some of whom held proxy votes for others in the 344-member congregation.

Rev. Walker noted that, "Unitarian Universalists have a long history of working for social justice based on our belief that all people have inherent worth and dignity, and deserve to live in a safe environment and society. As a liberal religious institution, we strive to work for and live an ethic of care and compassion for all people regardless of ethnicity, race or class."

MVUC, 1909 Windmill Lane, in the Mason Hill area of Alexandria Va., was founded 58 years ago by residents of the nearby Hollin Hills and Tauxemont neighborhoods. It has been active in social justice issues throughout its history, serving as a training center for freedom riders during the Civil Rights movement and working with other area churches on local issues, including poverty and homelessness.

* * *

Summary of MVUC Statement of Conscience on Immigration Policy Reform

"Be it resolved that Mount Vernon Unitarian Church advocates for measures that treat all immigrants, regardless of legal status, justly and humanely, and for an immigration policy that includes the following elements:

- A path to citizenship or legal permanent residency for those already in a country legally or illegally, as well as for those wanting to enter a country;
- Work visas that allow employment and that require the same worker protections applicable to citizens including fair wages, safe and healthful environments, and receipt of benefits;
- Allow multiple entries;
- Permit entry into the path for citizenship; and provide parity between the number of visas and the work available in the receiving nation.
- Access to the same medical care and education available to citizens;
- Evaluation of human and environmental costs of proposed barriers to immigration or other changes in immigration policy;
- Due process under the law including representation, rights of appeal, and the right to initiate suits;
- Non-deportation of parents with dependent children or partners of documented residents;
- Provision of asylum for refugees and others in fear of violence or retribution; and
- Collaboration with source countries to address underlying causes contributing to immigration."

MVUC Statement of Conscience on Gun Legislation

Be it resolved that: Mount Vernon Unitarian Church advocates for measures that: (1) deter and prevent the indiscriminate purchase of firearms for the use of violence against people who live in the United States; (2) provide reliable and empowered safe-havens for people to report behavior that is threatening before a crisis occurs; (3) provide funding at the federal level to enable the Centers for Disease Control to resume studying the causes of gun violence; and (4) support the implementation of universal background checks for the purchase of firearms.

❖ *2013 UUA General Assembly Briefing for Prospective GA Attendees*

Saturday, June 1

8:45 - 9:15 a.m. FREE Coffee, juice, bagels and fruit

9:15 - 11:30 a.m. GA Preview, Orientation, Q&A

Davies Memorial Unitarian Universalist Church

7400 Temple Hill Rd. Camp Springs, MD 20748

(Sponsored by the Chesapeake UU Growth (ChUUG) Committee)

GA Orientation Leader: Natalia (Natty) Averett (UUA Trustee)

And Susan Goekler, Chair of the UUA Commission on Social Witness

Learn what goes on at the General Assembly

General Assembly theme of “Covenant”

A special focus this year on environmental justice work – partnerships with organizations in Kentucky and Appalachia

Plenary Sessions, Workshops, Worship, and Entertainment

Doing Your Association’s Business

--the election of a new UUA Moderator

--vote on the Statement of Conscience on Immigration as a Moral Issue and the Commission on Social Witness (CSW) GA workshops on the current study issue, Reproductive Justice

--actions of Immediate Witness – philosophy and process

--vote on UUA Bylaws amendments concerning elections, appointments, committees

--vote to accept new regions, merged districts

--vote to replace existing Non-discrimination section of “Article II. Principles and Purposes” with new language under the title “Inclusion”

How to get the most out of GA

Responsibilities of Delegates

Special events not to be missed

Programs for Youth, Young Adults, People of Color

Survival Tactics

Please RSVP by email to: jgunn2000@aol.com if you plan to attend, and include the name of your congregation.

❖ *May Social Justice Bulletin from UUA Witness Ministries*

Please see our [May Social Justice Bulletin](#) (PDF, 2 pages) which includes information and resources on:

Mama's Day - May 12

Raising the Minimum Wage for Low-Wage Workers

Resources on Compassionate Immigration Reform

Summer Justice Opportunities for Youth

Ten Minute Documentary on Mass Incarceration

Petition: Support the voices of people with mental illness

In faith, Audra, Jennifer, Jessica, Meredith, Susan, and Taquiena - [UUA Witness Ministries Team](#)

See www.uua.org/justice for resources, organizing campaigns, stories, and more!

❖ *Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Calendar*

[Social Justice Calendar for 2012 - 2013](#): Plan your social justice calendar for the year. If your congregation’s social justice ministry is focusing on any of the issues below, you can join in collective national advocacy with the UUA, UU social justice organizations, other UU congregations, and community and national partners! As each justice event approaches, visit www.uua.org/justice for worship resources, action campaigns, educational materials and more!

Anti-Torture

❖ *Members of the UU Church of Arlington Request Letters to Legislators to Encourage Closing of Guantanamo*

Please do the following:

1. Call and/or write to you legislators to urge that they close Guantanamo. Below is the draft of a letter that you may wish to read or fax.

Dear Senator/Representative:

We are deeply concerned about the 166 men imprisoned at Guantanamo Bay detention center. We believe that our country can and must do better than to imprison men indefinitely—men who in the majority of cases have not been charged and who have been cleared, in fact, for release.

In this time of austerity, instead of spending nearly \$200 million to upgrade facilities at Guantanamo, our leaders should move forward with transferring detainees and closing the prison. It is particularly troubling that 86 cleared detainees remain imprisoned years after review boards deemed them no threat and recommended them for transfer. The cost to US taxpayers of incarcerating each detainee is nearly \$800,000 annually. Those who have been cleared should be resettled immediately.

A major recruiting tool for terrorists worldwide, Guantanamo makes us, if anything, less safe. We would appreciate your support in closing it down. It is a security risk; a waste of resources; and an embarrassment—or, perhaps better stated, a moral outrage.

The editorial boards of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Guardian* have called in recent days for Guantanamo's closure. United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, Navi Pillay, stated several weeks ago that "the continuing indefinite incarceration of many of the detainees amounts to arbitrary detention and is in clear breach of international law."

Desperate after years at Guantanamo with no end in sight, at least a hundred of the prisoners are on a hunger strike. Some are approaching the hundred-day mark. Timid inaction has a cost, which soon could include the very lives of the men we have imprisoned, in the great majority of cases, without charge or trial.

We call on you to exercise strong, courageous, and moral leadership. Please stand with us in respecting the most basic rights of dignity and justice. We ask you to do all in your power to ensure the just and humane treatment of the prisoners, including the trial or release of all who remain. Please bring your conscience to bear on this issue, in this moment of crisis.

Respectfully, your constituent,

2. Also, please sign a [petition](http://www.change.org/petitions/president-obama-close-detention-facility-at-guantanamo-bay) on Change.org which urges President Obama to take the steps he can to close Guantanamo, and forward it on.

sign the Change.org petition: <http://www.change.org/petitions/president-obama-close-detention-facility-at-guantanamo-bay>.

Numbers are available from the Capitol Switchboard: [\(202\) 224-3121](tel:(202)224-3121)

To locate your member of Congress online: www.house.gov

❖ *Join in the 100th Day Weekend of Action Against Gauntanamo*

Friday, May 17

May 17th will mark the 100th day of the hunger strike. The National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) invites you and your congregation to mark this day with a “[100th Day Weekend of Action](#).” Please find a time during the weekend of May 17-19 to include mention of Guantanamo in your worship service or prayers. NRCAT also invites you to hold a prayer vigil, fast in solidarity, or organize educational and advocacy activities in your congregation. To assist you NRCAT has prepared a [Guantanamo Fact Sheet](#), [Sermon Talking Points](#) and a [Bulletin Insert with an Interfaith Prayer](#). Go to www.nrcat/closegitmo for more information. Add your name to the religious leaders letter. You can add your voice to the growing chorus demanding that Guantanamo be closed by [signing the religious leaders’ letter](#). Also, please [download a petition version](#) of the letter and circulate it in your congregation, campus or community.

❖ *June is Torture Awareness Month*

During Torture Awareness Month this June, the National Religious Campaign Against Torture has a special promotion to share. We invite you and your congregation to gather signatures for the [NRCAT Statement Against Prolonged Solitary Confinement](#). During the month of June, each person who collects 25 signatures for the statement will receive a [free NRCAT T-shirt](#) supporting our campaign to end prolonged solitary confinement in U.S. prisons. You may also [order the NRCAT solitary T-shirt from our friends at t-shirtsforpeace.org](#) and each time NRCAT receives a \$5 donation.

To take advantage of this special opportunity to spread the word about solitary confinement:

Step 1: [Download the petition version](#) of the NRCAT Statement Against Prolonged Solitary Confinement

Step 2: Collect at least 25 signatures for the statement from your congregation or local community

Step 3: Mail, email or fax the signatures to us here at NRCAT, along with [this form](#) indicating your preferred T-shirt size and preferred mailing address for receiving the T-shirt

When we reach 500 signatures for the statement from a particular state, we will send the statement, along with the list of those endorsers, to that state’s governor and top corrections official, along with every member of that state’s legislature. When we subsequently reach 1000 endorsers in the state, we will send the list again – and so on. In this way, we hope to help strengthen efforts in each state to bring an end to the use of prolonged solitary confinement.

This Torture Awareness Month, join people of faith from across the country in efforts to end torture in U.S. policy, practice and culture by [organizing an activity for your congregation](#) or [joining in public events throughout June and bearing public witness against torture](#).

❖ *The National Religious Campaign Against Torture Seeks New Executive Director*

The Search Committee will be taking applications through May 31, 2013.

You can find the job announcement for a new executive director at www.nrcat.org/ExecDirSearch.

This is an important transition for the organization and the Board of Directors appreciates your help in identifying potential candidates. We ask you to share the position description with people you think might be good candidates for the job and on appropriate listservs and social media. You can share the listing that is on our [website](#) or on [Idealist](#).

Criminal Justice Reform

❖ *The National Religious Campaign Against Torture Works Against Solitary Confinement in Maryland*

Last month, WUSA9 Reporter Andrea McCarren broke the story of Paul Smith, a young man with mental illness who has been held in solitary confinement for 4 years at North Branch Correctional Institution (NBCI) in Cumberland, Maryland. During the past two years, Paul has been banned from phone calls and visits from his parents. We encourage you to [view the news coverage](#) of Paul's experience and what it reveals about the realities of mental illness and solitary confinement, and to take action. A follow-up story featuring Paul's brother can be found [here](#). The psychological and physical impact of prolonged solitary confinement are well-documented, and as people of faith, we have a critical role to play in halting its use. Ending prolonged solitary confinement in Maryland [starts with your signature!](#) The National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) is gathering endorsements from people of faith for a statement calling on government officials all across the country to take steps to end the use of prolonged solitary confinement. When we reach 500 endorsers from a particular state, we send the statement, along with the list of those endorsers, to that state's governor and top corrections official, along with every member of that state's legislature. If we subsequently reach 1000 endorsers in the state, we will send the list again – and so on. Compelled by the reality of Paul's story, now is the time to take action in Maryland. [We urge you to sign and share the NRCAT Statement Against Solitary today.](#)

Thank you for your commitment to end torture in U.S. prisons,

Laura Markle Downton
Director of U.S. Prisons Policy and Program
National Religious Campaign Against Torture

❖ *The New Jim Crow Radio Blog*

Began Sunday, January 13

Over the course of eight weeks, join others in the Baltimore-Washington area as we read and reflect together on what it means to have the first African American president beginning his second term while millions of other African Americans are relegated to permanent second-class status through the prison industrial complex. <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/revcarltones>

❖ *Juvenile Justice Resource Hub*

The Juvenile Justice Information Exchange (JJIE.org)–is launching a comprehensive Juvenile Justice Resource Hub, in partnership with the National Juvenile Justice Network and the MacArthur Foundation. The Hub will feature research, best practices, and toolkits on effective systems reform in juvenile justice. <http://jjie.org/hub/>

❖ *Series on Mental Health in the Juvenile Justice System*

The Juvenile Justice Information Exchange (JJIE.org) is releasing a six-part series on mental health in the juvenile justice system, beginning with an article examining the treatment of mentally ill youth in Cook County, the cradle of juvenile justice, and throughout Illinois. Check it out at <http://jjie.org/moving-forward-on-mental-health-for-delinquent-youth-part-2/>

Economic Justice

❖ *Presentation by Wenonah Hauter, Author of Foodopoly*

Tuesday, May 14 6:00pm dinner 7:00pm program

River Road UU Congregation

6301 River Road

Bethesda, MD 20817

[Foodopoly flyer](#)

The Environmental Task Force of RRUUC invites DC area UU congregation members to a Chalice Tuesday event on May 14. There will be a modestly priced dinner at 6PM followed by a presentation by Wenonah Hauter (CEO of Food and Water Watch) at 7PM speaking about her book, Foodopoly. There will be books for sale after her presentation. Foodopoly presents the shocking account of how agricultural policy has been hijacked by lobbyists, driving out independent farmers and food processors in favor of large Ag corporations. The impacts of these developments ripple far and wide, from economic stagnation in rural communities at home, to famines in poor countries overseas. In the end, Hauter illustrates how solving this crisis will require a complete structural shift, a grassroots movement to reshape our food system from seed to table—a change that is about politics, not personal choice. Please RSVP for the dinner at <http://www.rruuc.org/education/adult-enrichment/registration.html>

Education

❖ *Beacon House's Summer Camp Leap in Jeopardy- More Funds Needed*

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Sadly, we must sound an even louder alarm than usual for help. When we sent out last week's Shining Light Newsletter we thought we had a pretty good idea of what the City would award us for our 2013 summer camp, which would be about half the funds we will need. This week we learned that we have been put on a waiting list and might not receive any funding at all. The reason given is that Mayor Gray and the City Council have allocated so little money for summer programming that the agency could not fund many worthwhile programs.

As a result we have suspended accepting any more camp registrations. If the situation doesn't improve, Beacon House will have to run a greatly paired down version of our camp. Your contributions have thus become even more critical. It costs Beacon House about \$800 per child for a 6 week summer camp experience. Any help you can provide will be greatly appreciated by the families and children who count on Beacon House to provide an affordable, safe and enriching summer camp experience.

You may contribute online at www.beaconhousedc.org, or by mailing a check to Beacon House, P.O. Box 29629, Washington, D.C. 20017.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at gkittner@beaconhousedc.org or [202-529-0785](tel:202-529-0785). I will keep you apprised if the situation improves.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gerry Kittner

Interim Executive Director

❖ *Mentor/Support a Teen Mother in College*

Did you know that less than 2% of girls who give birth before age 18 will go on to get a college degree by age 30? Generation Hope is a one of a kind program, started by a former teen mother who wanted to see other teen parents beat the odds, that aims to change those dismal statistics. Generation Hope removes barriers to educational attainment by matching teen parents attending college in the DC metro area with individuals, organizations, and local businesses (Sponsors) to participate in a mentoring relationship that includes emotional and financial support. We believe that education is the best promise for teen parents to achieve stable and successful futures and that consistent financial and emotional support increases the likelihood that they will graduate. Sponsors get to know their Scholar and their Scholar's child very well through one-on-one mentoring as well as activities and trainings sponsored by Generation Hope. Demonstrating the power of a supportive adult, within their first semester 70% of our Scholars improved their GPAs. Ultimately, when teen mothers and fathers earn college degrees, their children are less likely to live in poverty, and our communities are strengthened. If you would like to become a part of this unique and rewarding direct support experience, please contact Program Manager Caroline Griswold at caroline@supportgenerationhope.org or [202-642-5649](tel:202-642-5649), or visit www.supportgenerationhope.org/become-a-gh-sponsor. We are also more than happy to present to any congregation or group in the DC metro area. Thank you!

Environmental Concern

❖ *Interfaith Youth for Climate Justice Seeks Student Leaders*

Application Deadline May 17

Interfaith Youth for Climate Justice (IY CJ), last year's recipient of our "Most Innovative Social Justice Program" award, is seeking student leaders for its second year. The free September- June program is designed to give high school youth of different faith traditions the inspiration, knowledge and skills to become leaders for climate justice. Students should be in 9th-12th grade in September, active in a local congregation or faith community, and interested in the environment and/or social justice. The deadline to apply is May 17th, and applications are available online at this link [HERE](#). Students meet twice a month at congregations in the metro DC area, participate in retreats, hands-on field trips, community service, and advocacy projects. We have Religious Mentors who act as resources on their religion and its environmental teachings. Students gain improved leadership skills, a deeper connection to their faith, a commitment to stewardship of the Earth, and deep friendships with a diversity of youth. To learn more about the program see the website linked [HERE](#).

❖ *Climate Change Training*

Saturday, May 18 9:30am-12:30pm
 UU Congregation of Fairfax
 2709 Hunter Mill Rd.
 Oakton, VA 22124

Kevin Coyle, Vice President for Education and Training at the National Wildlife Federation, is who Al Gore turned to to develop the training program for more than 3,000 activists to deliver the Inconvenient Truth presentations across the U.S. We want to invite climate change activists from our congregations to this special three-hour training to learn how to respond to the doubters and to confidently speak and present climate change

to our communities. The training covers, a) climate 101, the simple science basics, b) a review of current projections on the real consequences of climate change for the planet and people now and in the future, c) local DC-area implications and d) some discussion and practice around responding to common assertions by climate change skeptics. This is an important effort by an impressive trainer. It's a way to multiply and strengthen our voices by developing confident and articulate advocates. People will come away from the training with basic power points, resources, and ideas about how to communicate with neighbors, friends, doubters about climate change and steps to back away from climate chaos. For information: Rev. Rasmussen, UUCF Minister for Social Justice, krasmussen@uucf.org, [703-281-4230](tel:703-281-4230), www.uucf.org

❖ *Rally Against Fracking in Maryland*

Wednesday, May 22 5:30pm - 6:30pm
National Harbor
344 Waterfront Street
Oxon Hill, MD 20745

Join a rally against fracking at the Democratic Governors Association conference being held at the National Harbor in Maryland. Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley, the host of the policy conference, is considering moving forward with allowing fracking in Maryland. Several other Democratic governors, including Governor Cuomo (NY), Governor Hickenlooper (CO), Governor Quinn (IL) and Governor Brown (CA), are making critical decisions about fracking in their states. Many of these leaders have further political ambitions — let's make it clear to them that the path to the White House is not lined with gas and oil rigs.

❖ *Conference Call with UU Ministry for Earth on Green Sanctuary Process*

Wednesday, May 15 7:00pm-9:00pm

The contact information is [712-432-1500](tel:712-432-1500) with access code 752637#

❖ *Building a UU Young Adult Network to Work on Climate Change Issues*

Over 200 UU young adults who care about climate justice have come together from all over the United States and Canada to form a network. The members connect Unitarian Universalist faith to the work for justice for the web of all existence. The focus for the group is on creating ethical living systems - inter-generationally, internationally, among communities, among species, among ecosystems and with Earth. UU Ministry for Earth began forming this network with the leadership of Jennifer Nordstrom, our Young Adult Intern. To join the Network, search Facebook for "UU Young Adults for Climate Justice" or email uuyacj@gmail.com.

To Support the Network

UU Young Adults for Climate Justice is funded by donations from the members of UU Ministry for Earth and in part by grants from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism and the Cedar Tree Foundation. Your continued support is needed as we reach out to more concerned and creative young adult leaders. Just click on the Contribute button below and choose the Young Adult Sponsor link. Enter your donation amount to the work of the UUYACJ.

The network has already participated in several regional events, including a climate justice workshop in Berkeley, CA, the fUUel Conference for Young Adults in Vancouver, B.C. and UU Young Adult Climate

Justice Training with the Central Mid-West District Young Adult Steering Committee in Chicago.

Upcoming events

UUA General Assembly: A workshop and two strategy sessions are planned.

-- The workshop on Thursday, June 20, from 10:45 am - 12:00 pm is "Building A Young Adult Environmental Justice Network." The workshop will explore values that shape our actions and then a panel of young adult climate justice activists will share their organizing stories.

-- The first strategy session for the network will be held immediately after the workshop. The group will gather at 12:15 pm to travel to lunch together.

-- The second strategy session will be on Saturday, June 22. Meet at the GA Registration booth and the group will travel to lunch together.

OPUS 2013: Aug. 7-11 at Unicamp, a UU summer camp, approximately 1.5 hours NW of Toronto. OPUS is the annual spiritual retreat of the Continental UU Young Adult Network (CUUYAN), and the focus this year will be climate justice.

-- [To register](#)

-- [For Scholarships](#)

PowerShift 2013: October 18-21 in Pittsburg, PA will focus on divesting from fossil fuels, fracking, and stopping Keystone XL. A group of UU young adults are planning to attend.

-- To join the group: email uuyacj@gmail.com

-- [Conference info](#)

mail uuyacj@gmail.com .

❖ *TrashMonitoring Program Training*

Saturday, May 18 10:00am

Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library

5005 Duke St Alexandria, VA 22304

You've been out to a cleanup. What else can you do to be a part of the solution? Join a TrashMonitoring Program. Monitoring efforts are being revitalized so that we can provide important data about litter that will be critical in guiding new policies, tracking changes in litter, and identifying new highly polluted hotspots. By attending a training session, you will have the materials and information you need to become a Monitor of the watershed. You will be asked to adopt a site and conduct monitoring at least quarterly.

You can choose a site near you, or we can provide recommendations. **Please**

RSVP to potomaccleanup@fergusonfoundation.org if you plan to attend. For more information about the Trash Monitoring Program, additional spring trainings, or if you are unable to attend one of the training dates, please email potomaccleanup@fergusonfoundation.org, visit our website at TrashFreePotomac.org, or call [202-973-8203](tel:202-973-8203)

❖ *UU Listserve on Divesting from Fossil Fuels Set Up*

I have created a Yahoo group for those who wish to discuss divestment from fossil fuels in UU congregations.

Please send me an email if you wish to join the udivestment group, and tell me your congregation and your activity within it. Also, you may wish to see <http://www.uumilwaukee.org/content/fossil-fuels-divestment-resolution>, to see what the Board at one church recently passed.

Thank you,

Terry Wiggins (terryw@kcnet.com)

First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee

❖ *Walk for Our Grandchildren- Help Requested*

June 16-21

A group in North Carolina is planning an "Elders' Walk for Our Grandchildren" against climate change this June from Camp David to Washington, DC. Most of the group are grandparents, one is a great-grandparent. Camp David was named for President Eisenhower's grandson, and the walk's theme is: "2013 WALK FOR OUR GRANDCHILDREN: KEEP FOSSIL FUELS IN THE GROUND, CLIMATE ACTION NOW." They are seeking congregations to host meals, host events, and to host walkers overnight along their route to DC through Maryland. If your congregation is in one of the areas listed below, and you'd be interested in supporting this effort, please contact the email addresses below:

* Cathy Scott: cathytscott@main.nc.us, (828) 258-8473

* Bill Ramsy: hras@humanrightsaction.net, (314) 374-7446

Sunday June 16 destination **Lewistown, MD**

Monday June 17 destination **Frederick, MD**

Tuesday June 18 destination **Hyattstown, MD**

Wednesday June 19 destination **Gaithersburg, MD**

Thursday June 20 destination **North Bethesda, MD**

Friday June 21 destination **Dupont Circle, Washington, DC**

❖ *Baltimore Food & Faith Project of the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future Good Food Challenge*

Deadline June 28

Congregations in Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard Counties
[Flyer GoodFoodChallenge](#)

The Baltimore Food & Faith Project of the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future is pleased to announce The Good Food Challenge, an exciting opportunity to win up to \$3000 for improving the food sustainability practices within your congregation! The Good Food Challenge seeks to inspire congregations in the Baltimore area (Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard Counties) to use [The Good Food Toolkit](#) which helps faith communities of all traditions assess their food policies and practices in terms of sustainability and justice. The deadline to apply is June 28, 2013 - but don't wait! For more information about the Challenge and how to enter, visit <http://tinyurl.com/GoodFoodChallenge2013>. Contact Allison Righter at acappela@jhsph.edu or [410-502-7578](tel:410-502-7578) with any questions.

Healthcare

❖ *Maryland Conference for Faithleaders on Upcoming Changes in Healthcare*

Tuesday May 14 8:30am

Jewish Community Center 5700 Park Heights Avenue Baltimore, MD

[BJC Health Summit Flyer](#)

As a result of health reform, nearly 300,000 Marylanders will gain access to quality, affordable health insurance

coverage in the coming months, reducing the number of uninsured Marylanders by 50%. To prepare for these changes, and to help faith leaders who will likely field questions from congregants and community members about new health insurance options, the Baltimore Jewish Council, Health Care for All! Coalition and Maryland Health Connection will host a conference for faith leaders about the upcoming changes. Attendees will gain knowledge, resources and skills necessary to raise awareness about these changes in the communities they serve. See attached flyer and please distribute it to other interested faith leaders! This event is free and ample free parking is available. Faith leaders and representatives from health, family and men's ministries are strongly encouraged to attend. To RSVP please call Jasmine Estes at 410-542-4850.

Human Rights

❖ ***Vaddey Ratner, New York Times best-selling author of “In the Shadow of the Banyan”***

Friday, May 31, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

UU Church of Rockville 100 Welsh Park Dr., Rockville MD 20850

War and peace, human rights, brilliantly wrought tale of human resilience.

Ms Ratner will make a presentation followed by questions and answers regarding her award winning book published in 2012. This stunning and beautifully written novel is based on Ms. Ratner's experience when her family was driven from their native home in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, by the Khmer Rouge into a four-year nightmare of separation, forced labor, starvation, execution, and death. Ratner magnificently transforms a narrative of atrocity into a work of art as she blends the folklore and literature of her native land with the story of her own family, pays tribute to the memory of those lost, and bears eloquent witness to the indomitable human will to survive, even in the most terrible circumstances. For more info on Ms. Ratner go to:

www.vaddeyratner.com. Reviews of the book are at

[http://www.amazon.com/Shadow-Banyan-Novel-Vaddey-](http://www.amazon.com/Shadow-Banyan-Novel-Vaddey-Ratner/dp/1451657706/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1364295019&sr=1-1&keywords=vaddey+ratner)

[Ratner/dp/1451657706/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1364295019&sr=1-1&keywords=vaddey+ratner](http://www.amazon.com/Shadow-Banyan-Novel-Vaddey-Ratner/dp/1451657706/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1364295019&sr=1-1&keywords=vaddey+ratner)

Deeply discounted paperback copies of her book will be available for sale and signature by the author. Map and directions: <http://uucr.org/directions.php>

❖ ***One Million Bones Social Arts Project***

Saturday, June 8-Monday, June 10

National Mall in Washington D.C.

One Million Bones Event A social arts project called One Million Bones seeks to raise awareness of ongoing genocide and humanitarian crises in areas such as Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Burma through the creation of one million handmade human bones. The bones are being fabricated using a variety of materials (clay, paper, plaster) by students, educators, and activists across the country, and will be part of a large-scale installation event on the National Mall in Washington D.C. June 8-10, 2013, where we hope to organize over 4,000 volunteers to help us lay the bones out. The installation provokes, recalling a mass grave. The bones symbolize the lives lost to these conflicts, those still fighting to survive them and also, more hopefully, our shared humanity and responsibility towards one another. In this spirit, each bone made generates a \$1 donation from The Bezos Family Foundation, up to \$500,000, towards CARE's relief work in the Congo and Somalia. www.onemillionbones.org

Human Trafficking

❖ *Governor's Conference on Combating Human Sex Trafficking in Maryland*

Monday, May 20 8:30am-4:00pm

Community College of Baltimore County, Catonsville Campus

The Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP) and the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force (MHTTF) will host the second annual Governor's Conference on Combating Human Sex Trafficking in Maryland. This conference is a partnership of GOCCP, MHTTF, U.S. Attorney's Office - District of MD, TurnAround, Inc., MD Association of Resources for Families & Youth, MCASA, and Araminta Freedom Initiative. State and national experts will present specialized topics for law enforcement, prosecutors, government agencies, victim service providers, community advocates, and other important groups. Online registration is now open on this website: www.goccp.maryland.gov.

❖ *Global Human Trafficking Hotline Network*

With the support of a [Google Global Impact Award](#), [we are launching the Global Human Trafficking Hotline Network](#). This new alliance of anti-trafficking hotlines around the world aims to build a broader safety net for survivors of modern-day slavery and to collect and leverage data in new ways that can help to prevent and eradicate human trafficking. We are excited to be working with two core launch partners, [Liberty Asia](#) and [La Strada International](#), who have deep expertise in fighting human trafficking in Southeast Asia and Europe. The Global Human Trafficking Hotline Network is a core component of Polaris Project's global programming, [which you can read more about here](#). Our goal is that anyone held in slavery, anywhere in the world, will be able to contact a hotline and access help. By teaming up with other human trafficking hotlines, the network can offer even better resources to vulnerable communities, share data to reveal strategic insights about how and where trafficking is occurring, and ultimately, reach more survivors. From 2002 to 2012, Polaris Project focused the majority of its efforts on combating modern-day slavery in the United States. Alongside our new global programs, we remain committed to directly serving victims of human trafficking, fighting for stronger laws, and finding long-term solutions to the crime of human trafficking here in the U.S. The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) hotline continues to function as a central hub for connecting survivors to the support they need and helping communities to transform the way they respond to this issue.

❖ *You've Checked Your Carbon Footprint Now Check Your Slavery Footprint*

www.slaveryfootprint.org

Immigration

❖ *Borrow Immigration Films from UUSJ*

UUSJ has purchased the films [Which Way Home](#) and [Welcome to Shelbyville](#). Contact info@uusj.org or call 202-600-9132 to arrange to borrow either for a showing in your congregation.

❖ *Virginia Immigrant Statistics by Congressional District*

The Commonwealth Institute has released a series of excellent infographics with key information about Virginia's immigrants, broken down by Congressional district. Follow the link below

<http://www.thecommonwealthinstitute.org/2013/04/25/the-facts-on-virginias-immigrant-communities/>

❖ *Immigration Information from the UUA*

New Resources: The UUA is pleased to announce that there are new resources available to help congregations engage with immigration justice work.

[United States Immigration: Theological Reflection and Discussion](#) is a collection of 22 brief excerpts from sermons and writings about the topic of immigration offered for Unitarian Universalist congregations. Each excerpt is followed by questions for discussion. [Download](#) a copy of the resource, and or/find out more about it by listening to reflection authors Susan Karlson, Michael Tino and Colin Bossen on [The Journey Toward Phoenix](#), an internet-based radio blog hosted by Rev. Carlton Elliot Smith of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, VA. [The Doctrine of Discovery: The True Story of Colonizing the Americas](#), a video to accompany the Doctrine of Discovery [discussion guide](#).

Join the conversation on [Cooking Together: Recipes for Immigration Justice Work](#) blog.

See www.uua.org/immigration for resources, congregational stories, policy information and more!

LGBTQ

❖ *UUs at Capital Pride*

June 8 Parade

June 9 Festival

UU Congregation of Fairfax will coordinate the Capital Pride Festival booth again this year! Paula Prettyman will coordinate the design of the booth (pprettyman@yahoo.com) and Kelly Schlageter will coordinate volunteers (kschlageter@yahoo.com). It would be WONDERFUL if someone would like to be trained this year by Paula & Kelly, to be ready to coordinate the booth next year. Even if you're not sure about your availability in June, 2014, consider it! This is a great opportunity to contribute to sharing the message of our welcoming congregations with the wider community -- and it's a lot of fun.

❖ *Transgender Marylanders and HIV: The Invisible Epidemic*

Friday, June 7, 2013 from 12:00 — 1:30 pm

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 1900 Saint Paul St., Baltimore, MD 21218

Please join a community forum that will explore the causes of transgender invisibility in Maryland's HIV surveillance data and engage the community in discussion of possible solutions to improve knowledge and understanding of how HIV affects transgender communities in Maryland.

Lunch will be provided.

Free parking at lot on 20th & St. Paul

Bus lines 3, 11, 61, 64, and 64X.

To ensure that we have ample materials and refreshments for everyone, the courtesy of an RSVP is requested. Please RSVP to Maryland.RACResponse@gmail.com

For more information please contact Jean-Michel Breville at [\(410\) 767-5016](tel:4107675016).

❖ *Requests from “Interweave Connects” Editor and this Month’s Issue*

May 2013 Interweave Connect

June will be our second annual GLBTQ minister issue. If you are a GLBTQ minister, please write an article about your work. If you are a GLBTQ person and appreciate the fact that there are GLBTQ ministers, please send me an article. I would love to have some articles from straight ally ministers who appreciate their GLBTQ brothers and sisters.

The August issue of *Interweave Connect* will focus on the UU General Assembly and the functions that Interweave Continental will have at the 2013 UU General Assembly. We also like to have articles about UUs that are active in Gay Pride Celebrations. As you are preparing for your Gay Pride celebration, please send me articles and pictures!

The September issue of *Interweave Connect* does not have a theme at this time. Do you have any suggestions? Is there a topic that you think we should be looking into? This newsletter is for and about you. This May issue has an article written by our editor Tova Vitiello about Bayard Rustin. I was alive in the 60's but I did not know about Bayard Rustin until a few months ago. We always encourage people to write articles about People of color for our multiracial page.

In October we focus on Transgender issues in preparation for Transgender Remembrance Day in November.

Have a great summer. Hopefully I will see you at GA. Let me know what you think of the May issue of *Interweave Connect*, and please pass the newsletter on to anyone who is interested in GLBTQ issues.

Thank you,
Nisco Junkins
Interweave Connect niscohappy@comcast.net

❖ *Ethical Practice with Older Adults –A Focus on HIV and LGBTQ Communities*

Wednesday, June 19 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Howard University School of Social Work and the Blackburn Center
601 Howard Place NW, Washington DC 20059
Registration is free. Seating is limited.
Lunch will be provided.

This one-day workshop provides education for social workers, case managers, health care professionals and chaplains who work with the aging and vulnerable adult populations. It will develop a professional awareness and practice of ethics, HIV among older adults, and discrimination of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) older adults by home care and long term care facilities.

Presented by the
DC Office on Aging and Howard University Multidisciplinary Gerontology Center
in partnership with the
Practice and Ethics Advisory Committee, Washington Area Geriatric
Education Center Consortium.

The workshop will be approved for 6 CE Contact Hours for social workers. There is a \$15.00 fee for a CEU

Ethics Certificate – make checks out to NASW, Metro Chapter.

Register today: Email: marian.williams@howard.edu Phone: Contact Marian Williams at [202-806-4080](tel:202-806-4080)

Reproductive Justice

❖ *Reproductive Justice Curriculum from the UUA*

A brand new curriculum from the UUA, "Reproductive Justice: Expanding Our Social Justice Calling," is available for [download](#) now! This six week curriculum is rooted in our religious history and theological callings and outlines the distinctions between reproductive "health," "rights," and "justice." The curriculum offers opportunities to learn about ourselves and each other as sexual and reproductive beings and equips us to move forward, out into the world, with integrity and vision.

Service Learning Trips

❖ *Upcoming Offerings from the UU College of Social Justice*

[UUHIP: Justice for Women and Marginalized Communities in India](#)

November 10-24, 2013 | Deadline to apply: September 1

Join the UU Holdeen India Program (UUHIP) and the UU College of Social Justice for an 11-day pilgrimage to India. This journey will take us to the western state of Gujarat, where you will witness firsthand the struggles that UUHIP grassroots partners are waging for social justice.

[BorderLinks: Sustainable Futures](#)

September 19-24, 2013 | Deadline to apply: July 7

UUCSJ has partnered with BorderLinks to offer the Sustainable Futures Program: an opportunity to explore the connections between our food system and pressing social justice issues such as immigration. Learn about cross-border economic justice as well as how to challenge the dominant system of corporate farming and support sustainable alternatives that value workers, the environment, and our health. This journey encourages participants to make the shift from conscious consumer to engaged citizen.

[Haiti Just Recovery](#)

October 5-12, 2013 | Deadline to apply: July 28

On this weeklong trip, participants will work with members of the Papaye Peasant Movement (MPP), a UUSC partner, on projects to help former Port-au-Prince residents build new lives in rural Haiti. Every day, you will work with Haitian peasants to build new homes, construct food gardens from old tires, or contribute to other sustainability projects.

Youth and Young Adults

❖ *Interfaith Youth for Climate Justice Seeks Student Leaders*

Application Deadline May 17

Interfaith Youth for Climate Justice (IY CJ), last year's recipient of our "Most Innovative Social Justice Program" award, is seeking student leaders for its second year. The free September- June program is designed to give high school youth of different faith traditions the inspiration, knowledge and skills to become leaders for climate justice. Students should be in 9th-12th grade in September, active in a local congregation or faith community, and interested in the environment and/or social justice. The deadline to apply is May 17th, and applications are available online at this link [HERE](#). Students meet twice a month at congregations in the metro

DC area, participate in retreats, hands-on field trips, community service, and advocacy projects. We have Religious Mentors who act as resources on their religion and its environmental teachings. Students gain improved leadership skills, a deeper connection to their faith, a commitment to stewardship of the Earth, and deep friendships with a diversity of youth. To learn more about the program see the website linked [HERE](#).

❖ ***List of Trips and Internships***

Compiled by UUA Young Adult Spirituality and Service
Consultant, Erik Mohn.

<http://www.uua.org/leaders/justice/service>