

Lifespan Faith Development UUA Board of Trustees Report October 2008

Office of the Director

Judith A. Frediani, Director of Lifespan Faith Development, Tapestry of Faith Project Director
Susan Lawrence, Managing Editor, Tapestry of Faith
Adrienne Ross, Tapestry of Faith Project Manager, Office Manager

Transitions

In June, 2008, we were thrilled to welcome Aisha Hauser to the LFD staff group as Children and Families Program Director. Aisha is an experienced and Credentialed-Associate Level religious educator who served Fourth Universalist Church in Manhattan this year after serving the First UU Church of Essex County, NJ for a number of years. She has held leadership positions on the Board of LREDA and its Integrity Team. Aisha has a background in journalism and social work, as well as RE, which will serve her well in her position which involves consulting with our congregations and families, developing children's programs and resources for Tapestry of Faith, guiding the development of Renaissance programs, and more.

In July, 2008 Sarah Gibb Millspaugh left the position of Adult Programs Director to become co-minister of Winchester UU church with her husband, John Millspaugh. While we will miss her, we are very excited to announce that Gail Forsyth-Vail will begin serving as Adult Programs Director in November, 2008. Gail is well-known for her religious education leadership, creative curriculum development, youth work, and anti-racism/anti-oppression work. Welcome Aisha and Gail!

Angus H. MacLean Award

We are very pleased to announce that this year's MacLean Award for Excellence in Religious Education goes to Dr. Helen Bishop for her dedicated, multi-faceted work for excellence, sanity, and effectiveness in Unitarian Universalist religious education in our congregations, districts, and Association. The award will be presented at LREDA Fall Conference in Albuquerque in October.

We encourage nominations annually for this award, and want you to know that when someone is nominated, their nomination is considered active for several years following that submission. If you would like to submit a nomination, please send your recommendation to aross@uua.org with the subject, MacLean Award.

Highlights

In July, the LFD Curriculum Office responded to the shootings in Knoxville, Tennessee by distributing a listing of Trauma Resources for Families and Congregations and publishing two program/worship guides, "Making Meaning After Disaster: a Workshop for Unitarian Universalist Adults," written by the Rev. Sarah Gibb Millspaugh, and "Together in Faith: Finding Home in Times of Trauma or Disaster" by Tracey L. Hurd, Ph.D.

Over the summer, we improved both our technical and editorial processes to improve control over the multi-step Tapestry of Faith curriculum development and online publication timeline.

We refined our content management system (CMS) software and developed an annotated version of our Word template to support authors. (Authors use a standard Word template to write their drafts; the same document passes through editorial review, author revision, and copyediting and then is loaded directly to our CMS.) We also created a Tapestry of Faith style guide and built a comprehensive list of core stories in Tapestry of Faith curricula.

In 2008 the software development project team designed a new template for non-curriculum *Tapestry of Faith* resources. The new template allows online publication of long manuscripts, broken into chapters. Our design will help the UUA's website-wide publishing of longer documents that need to, or can be, presented as a series of continuous sections.

Children's Curricula

A total of 25 congregations have field tested the three Living Faith curricula released in January, 2008: *Creating Home* (Grades K/1) by Jessica York and Christy Olson, *Moral Tales* (Grades 2/3) by Alice Anacheke-Nasemann and Elisa Pearmain, and *Toolbox of Faith* (grades 4/5) by Kate Tweedie Covey (formerly Erslev).

Currently, eight congregations are field testing the Seeking Truth curriculum, *Wonderful Welcome* (Grades K/1), co-written by Aisha Hauser and Susan Lawrence, which was posted online in September. In January, 2009, two more Seeking Truth children's curricula will be field tested – *FaithQuest* (tentative title) by Alice Anacheke-Nasemann and Lynn Ungar (Grades 2/3) and *Windows and Mirrors* by Gabrielle Farrell, Natalie Fenimore and Jenice View (Grades 4/5).

FaithQuest will highlight stories about historical and contemporary Unitarian Universalists to strengthen children's faith identity and sense of *agency* to connect with others empathetically and live out our Unitarian Universalist Principles. *Windows and Mirrors*, as the title suggests, guides children to look closely both *inward* at themselves and *outward* at the communities to which they belong, especially their Unitarian Universalist congregations. The program leads them to bring critical and compassionate lenses to their lives, guiding them to find affiliation with others who may at first seem unlike themselves; and helping them move out from "me" to "we."

Kate Tweedie Covey is currently writing a curriculum, *Living in Communion* (working title) for Grades 4/5 in the third series of children's Tapestry of Faith programs, Beloved Community. We are reviewing author applications for Grades K/1 and 2/3 programs in the Beloved Community series.

Youth Curricula

Jessica York, Youth Programs Director

Three programs were successfully posted online in the spring: *Our Families, Ourselves* (junior high), *Exploring Our Values through Poetry* (senior high), and *Amazing Grace: Exploring Right and Wrong* (our first program for grade 6).

The author of *Amazing Grace*, Rick Kimball, is currently working on our next curriculum for sixth graders, *Tell Me Why* (working title). This program introduces young people to the Big

Questions: theological questions upon which our faith is built. They will discover the ways many Unitarian Universalist answer these questions and explore their own ponderings as they practice how we come together in community to make meaning out of life.

Building Bridges: Engaging Youth with Theological Diversity is being written by Mary K. Isaacs, a religious educator and lifelong Unitarian Universalist from Texas. This world religions/religious literacy curriculum will be one of the cornerstones of our youth programming, and, as such, will be a year-long program.

Adult Curricula

See Tapestry Status report below.

Children and Families Programs

Aisha Hauser, Children and Families Program Director

I started on the LFD staff on June 16 and I have had a productive summer working on the Tapestry of Faith curricula as both an author and a developmental editor. I have a positive and fun working relationship with my colleagues on staff. Judith has been supportive and helpful when I have had any questions. I will be based offsite in NJ, but will come frequently to Boston. I serve as developmental co-editor, with Susan Lawrence, of Tapestry's *Windows and Mirrors* and one or more Tapestry Building Community children's programs. I look forward to working on family ministry and families/children of color programs and resources.

Tapestry of Faith Project Status Report

Published in Print

Adults

- *Our Whole Lives: Sexuality Education for Young Adults, Ages 18-35* by Rev. Dr. Michael J. Tino, Laura Stuart, MPH, and Rev. Sarah Gibb Millsbaugh
- *Sexuality and Our Faith: A Companion to Our Whole Lives for Young Adults* by Mandy Keithan (UU) and Lynn Young and Rev. T. Michael Rock (UCC)

Published Online – as of October, 2008

Children

- *Creating Home* (Living Faith, g
- *Grades K/1*) by Jessica York and Christy Olson
- *Moral Tales* (Living Faith, Grades 2/3) by Alice Anacheke-Nasemann and Elisa Pearmain
- *Toolbox of Faith* (Living Faith, Grades 4/5) by Kate Tweedie Covey (Kate Erslev)
- *Wonderful Welcome* (Seeking Truth, Grades K/1) by Aisha Hauser and Susan Lawrence
- *Amazing Grace* (Seeking Truth, Grade 6) by Rick Kimball
- *Art and Spirituality* by Bonita Penfold. A resource supplement for Tapestry children's programs.

Youth

- *Our Families, Ourselves* by Tracey L. Hurd, based upon a program originally created by Helen Bishop and Susan Grider, for junior high youth
- *Exploring Our Values Through Poetry* by Karen Harris, for high school youth
- *Coming of Age: a Handbook for Congregations* by Sarah Gibb Millspaugh

Adults

- *Spirit of Life* by Rev. Barbara Hamilton-Holway (field test version)
- *Spirit in Practice* by Rev. Erik Walker Wikstrom (field test version)
- *Principled Commitment* by Melanie J. Davis Stephanie Haymaker, Ph.D., Craig Hirshberg, M.Div. and Richard Bellingham, Ed.D.

Being Edited for January 09 Field Test

Children

- *FaithQuest* by Alice Anacheka-Nasemann and Lynn Ungar (Seeking Truth, Grades 2-3)
- *Windows and Mirrors* by Gabrielle Farrell, Jenice View, and Natalie Fenimore (Seeking Truth, Grades 4-5)

Being Written

Adults

- UU Theology: *What Moves Us* by Rev. Dr. Thandeka
- Leadership: *Harvest the Power* by Rev. Matt Tittle and Gail Tittle
- Unitarian Universalist History by Rev. Jacqueline Clement and Alison Cornish
- UU History of Resistance and Transformation Julia Hamilton and Colin Bossen
- Living Our UU Values (on hold until new Adult Program Director begins in November)

Children

- Beloved Community, Grades 4-5, *Living in Communion* by Kate Tweedie Covey
- Beloved Community, Grade 6, *Tell Me Why* by Rick Kimball

Youth

- *Building Bridges: Engaging Youth with Theological Diversity*

Author Selection/Proposal Phase

Children

- Beloved Community (Creating Love), Grades K-1

- Beloved Community (Creating Love), Grades 2-3

Youth

- *Virtue Ethics in Today's World*

Adults

- Theological Diversity: *Different Beliefs/One Faith*
- The New UU

Office of Youth Ministries

Mara Dowdall, Interim Director

India McKnight, Program Associate for Youth Ministry

Sarah Prager, Office Administrator

Jeremie Giacoia, Program Associate for Youth Ministry

Staffing

The Office of Youth Ministries has embarked on an interim year, during which, as recommended by the Youth Ministry Working Group last spring, our office will engage with Unitarian Universalists across our Association “to work collaboratively to build a bridge to a new framework and support system for Unitarian Universalist youth ministry.” Staffing has been designed to reflect the needs and timeframe of this interim period. In July, I began working as Interim Director. India McKnight, one of two Youth Ministry Associates last year, continues for an additional year as a Program Associate for Youth Ministry. In August, Jeremie Giacoia joined us as our second one-year Program Associate. Sarah Prager, who began as Office Administrator in May, rounds out our four-person team; unlike our other positions, however, Sarah’s is not time-limited.

To assist our office with all of these transitions, Mara attended a three-day training from September 16-18 held by the Interim Ministry Network on the fundamentals of interim/transitional ministry.

Collaboration with Young Adult Ministries

To foster greater collaboration between the Offices of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, the two offices hold regular monthly meetings during which we update one another on our respective work, and explore issues/projects of natural partnership. The two offices are updating “bridging” resources and the multigenerational Synergy worship service at GA. This collaboration is assisting us in our discernment about the future relationship of our two offices following the interim year for youth ministry.

YOUTH MINISTRY IMPLEMENTATION

Youth Ministry Working Group

This year, the Youth Ministry Working Group continues to move the recommendations of the Summit on Youth Ministry toward implementation. The Working Group is scheduled to meet three times this year in the Boston area, and will help shape the structure for our newly re-envisioned UU youth ministry. The goal of the Working Group is to make concrete

recommendations to the UUA Administration and to the Board of Trustees at its April meeting. A report will also be prepared for General Assembly 2009.

In August, the outgoing YRUU Steering Committee and the youth already serving on the Youth Ministry Working Group worked collaboratively with the support of Youth Ministry Office staff to select eight new members of the Working Group: six youth and two youth advisors. The new members were selected from a pool of over fifty applicants. The fall Working Group meeting is October 3-5 in Waltham, MA.

Honoring Continental YRUU

As part of the transition in our UU youth ministry, we plan to honor the twenty-five year history of Continental YRUU at GA 2009. It is important to recognize YRUU's contributions over the years, and to lift up its leaders, many of whom continue to be a vital part of UU community and serve our faith in significant ways.

Communications

A priority of our office this year is sharing news about youth ministry with the wider UU community. Bill Sinkford's letter to the UU community last month about the transition in youth ministry was posted on the front page of uua.org and circulated over key email lists. Our office will send a monthly Youth Ministry Office Newsletter via email, which will provide both an update on the implementation process and information about resources, core services, and events during the transition. We are also using other communications tools, including congregational mailings and UU publications like *The Religious Leader*. Our office is collaborating with the Office of Electronic Communications to restructure and consolidate youth-related materials on the UUA website.

Chrysalis Program Re-Visioning

Last winter, a meeting was held to evaluate the current structure of the Chrysalis program and recommend a new regionalized structure. As part of our interim year, Office of Youth Ministry staff will explore the exciting ideas that emerged from that meeting and consider next steps. In the meantime, we continue to support Chrysalis trainings so that there is no lapse in this core service. We are exploring the feasibility of holding a Training of Trainers in the late winter/early spring of 2009 to address a shortage in under-18 youth trainers.

Social Justice Roundtable

The Social Justice Roundtable, originally slated for last May, will be held this year. Our office is currently in the process of scheduling this event, which will involve representatives from Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, the UUA Washington Office for Advocacy, other UU-related social justice ministries/organizations, and youth and adults in our faith. The goal will be to collectively re-imagine youth social justice work and explore how youth can be welcomed into existing social justice programming. We are targeting spring 2009 for this event.

MINISTRY TO YOUTH OF COLOR

Mosaic Project Summit/DRUUMM YaYA

In August, India McKnight attended the Mosaic Project Summit in Atlanta, GA, which was organized and facilitated by Laura Spencer of the Office of Identity-Based Ministries. This

gathering was followed by a meeting of DRUUMM YaYA, held in the same location. The Youth Office is working with DRUUMM YaYA to provide scholarship assistance for youth to attend the DRUUMM Fall Conference in November.

Program Associate for Ministry to Youth and Young Adults of Color

In a major step forward for our ministry to youth of color, we are in the process of hiring an Associate for Ministry to Youth and Young Adults of Color (YaYAOC). To maintain accountability to the communities served by the position, a selection team has been created, including both UUA staff and youth and young adults of color. The selection team includes (in alphabetical order) Nancy DiGiovanni (Young Adult Ministries and position co-supervisor), Mara Dowdall (Youth Ministries and position co-supervisor), Claire Hernandez, Rev. Darrick Jackson, Laura Spencer (IDBM), and Elandria Williams.

EVENTS

General Assembly Youth Caucus

In September, India and Mara met with the GA Planning Committee to discuss the grid (schedule) for Youth Caucus at GA 2009. Youth are invited to participate alongside adults in the new UU University format. Amelia Harati and Will Delphia, the GA Youth Caucus “HUUPERS” (deans), will work with India and Mara in conversation with UU University deans to encourage youth involvement and to help ensure that the programming lives out the values of multigenerational community.

**Travel Schedules
October 2008 – December 2008**

Judith A. Frediani

October 3-5	Youth Ministry Working Group	Waltham, MA
October 24-27	LREDA Fall Conference	Albuquerque, NM
November 1-2	Groundwork Meeting	Boston area

Aisha Hauser (based in North Haledon, NJ)

October 24-27	LREDA Fall Conference	Albuquerque, NM
November	Meetings in Boston	Boston, MA

Susan Lawrence

October 24-27	LREDA Fall Conference	Albuquerque, NM
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Jessica York (based in Birmingham, AL)

October 11	MidSouth District Healthy Congregations Conference	Birmingham, AL
October 12-14	Re-Envisioning Leadership for a Hope Filled Future, Candler School of Theology Fall Conference, Emory University	Atlanta, GA
October 24-27	LREDA Fall Conference	Albuquerque, NM
November	Meetings in Boston	Boston, MA

Mara Dowdall

October 3-5	Youth Ministry Working Group	Waltham, MA
October 24-27	LREDA Fall Conference	Albuquerque, NM
December 10-12	Excellence in Ministry Summit	Seattle, WA

Jeremie Giacoia

October 3-5	Youth Ministry Working Group	Waltham, MA
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India McKnight

October 3-5	Youth Ministry Working Group	Waltham, MA
November 7-9	DRUUMM Annual Conference 2008	Lanoka Harbor, NJ

Sarah Prager

October 3-5	Youth Ministry Working Group	Waltham, MA
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