

Letter to community ministers
The Rev. Jody Shipley
UU Community Ministry Center
Berkeley, CA
Sept. 21, 2001

(This message was sent to 300 UU's ministering in the field)

Dear Friends who are ministering in the community.....

There are so many of you touching and opening avenues in this world. My thoughts and prayers are with you these days.

I have just returned home from meetings at Meadville/Lombard on their expanded Modified Residency Program. On Tuesday Nan Hobart, their new chaplain, gathered us at noon. During the service Jim Hobart, her husband, added to our reflections. Now there will be a government response to this tragedy. What will be our religious response?

What will be our religious response..... created from the fabric of our Unitarian Universalist history, our experience and our wisdom as individuals and congregations?

I shift through the many names of each of you and thoughts about the work you do; and I am aware of the many hands that are reaching into this anguished society. And I think of the many stories you bring back to us. And the many doors for service you open for us in the ministries that you serve.

The world into which we send you needs us now more than ever. And we who gather for comfort and clarity need you, too. Draw a picture for us of the world as you experience it. Call us to help you in the ministries you serve now. And from these pathways we will answer Jim's question..... "What will be our religious response?"

May you gain strength from the bonds we have made together. May you have courage to find a better way from the wisdom we continue to discover together. May the ministries you serve open new doors for new answers in a world where war only destroys.

If you are far afield in the work we have sent you to, send word back. If you can come home, come and ask for our help, so the response from these old visions of unity and freedom can become a strong answer to this question Jim brings us. I and many others look forward to hearing from you.

May the ways of peace touch us all.....