



The Religious Leader

NEWS FROM THE MINISTRY AND PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP STAFF GROUP • PRE-GA 2003

IN THIS ISSUE

1/2

The Front Page

Compensation Progress Notes

3/5

From the Director

Staff Group Directory

A Letter to My Colleagues:
Please Take Care of Yourself

Getting Real About Anti-Racism, Anti-
Oppression, and Multiculturalism

MPL Research Project

GA 2003 Events

6/7

Ministerial Credentialing/ Internship Clearinghouse

A Letter from David Pettee
From the Internship Clearinghouse

7/8

Religious Education Credentialing

A Letter from Beth Williams

9

Settlement

Interim Ministry Hopefuls Take Note

Interim Ministers-to-Be Take Note

Agricultural Report

Meetings at General Assembly

10/11

Professional Development

It Was on Fire When I Lay Down on it

11/12

Resources & Possibilities

THE FRONT PAGE

Compensation Progress Notes

Ministers, educators, administrators, musicians, and other church staff—and their employer/congregations—should all be pleased by the new salary figures endorsed by the UUA trustees and recommended for implementation by local UU religious societies.

While growing out of previous UUA salary recommendation structures, the new ranges are also linked to salaries paid to staffs of nonprofit organizations with comparable responsibilities. This data was obtained from the Abbott-Langer Co., a highly regarded compensation research organization. Ministerial salary ranges, for example, take into account the current salaries paid to Executive Directors and CEOs of nonprofits with similar-size staff. Religious Educator salaries reflect those of Program Managers and Directors of Education. Similar jobs in nonprofits were used to shape salary ranges for various levels of church Administrators.

This approach provides employers with empirical data on which salaries can be based. It invites congregations to match the salary ranges offered to, and being accepted by, persons with skills and responsibilities similar to those shown by church workers. At the same time, congregational staff can point to wages paid to other professionals in secular employment as guides for their own compensation.

Important information was also obtained from the January 2003 survey of compensation patterns paid by UU congregations.

Congregations submitted data about wages and benefits of more than 2,000 employees. That survey was a first, in that local societies could enter their data on-line via the UUA website. The survey response from churches with paid staff was very high—53 percent overall—and over 85 percent among congregations of 250 or more members. Such a high response is attributable to the compensation consultants who made many phone calls urging participation by societies in their districts.

The survey and database were developed by the UUA Information Technology Staffing Group. The survey goals and tabulation were primarily the work of Ron Green, an independent compensation and benefits consultant who has contributed to the current UUA compensation program since it was conceived in 1996.

Developed by the lay-led UUA Committee on Compensation, Benefits, and Pension, the new ranges were approved by the UUA trustees on April 26, 2003. The

**GA 2003
Information on
Pages 4–5**

STAFF GROUP DIRECTORY

FIRST INITIAL LAST NAME@UUA.ORG
(EXAMPLE: DHUBNER@UUA.ORG
UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)

GRIFFITH BELL
MFC ASSISTANT
617-948-6452

MICHELLE BENTLEY
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
773-643-6988

PETER BOULLATA
UUMA ADMINISTRATOR
617-948-6414

A'LLYN ETTIEN
ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR OF MPL
617-948-6406

EMILY FARBMAN
RE CREDENTIALING ASSISTANT
617-948-6418

JEAN HARTMAN
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT
617-948-6437

NANCY HEZLITT
SETTLEMENT ASSISTANT
617-948-6408

DAVID P. HUBNER
DIRECTOR OF MPL
617-948-6407

CHRISTINE MAY
MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALING ADMINISTRATOR
617-948-6403

RALPH MERO
CHURCH STAFF FINANCES DIRECTOR
617-948-6404

KEN OLLIFF
INTERNSHIP CLEARINGHOUSE COORDINATOR
617-948-6415

DAVID PETTEE
MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALING DIRECTOR
617-948-6402

JOYCE STEWART
RETIREMENT PLAN SPECIALIST
617-948-6421

JOHN WESTON
SETTLEMENT DIRECTOR
SETTLEMENT@UUA.ORG
617-948-6409

BETH WILLIAMS
RE CREDENTIALING DIRECTOR
BETHWILLIAMS@UUA.ORG
617-948-6417

TRACY WITHY
INSURANCE PLAN ADMINISTRATOR
617-948-6401

MINISTRY AND PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP
STAFF GROUP
25 BEACON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108
FAX: 617-742-2875
LOCATED: 41 MOUNT VERNON, 4TH FLOOR

THE RELIGIOUS LEADER IS PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES
A YEAR BY THE MINISTRY AND PROFESSIONAL
LEADERSHIP STAFF GROUP. PLEASE SEND COPY
FOR THE FALL 2003 EDITION IN MS WORD
TO JEAN HARTMAN (JHARTMAN@UUA.ORG) BY
NO LATER THAN AUGUST 15, 2003.

TYPESETTING AND EDITORIAL BY
ANNMARIE G. KLYZUB KALMAR,
KALZUB DESIGN

UUMA, LREDA, AUUA, and UUMN representatives on the Council on Church Staff Finances had an opportunity to review the Committee's proposals on April 10, 2003 before they were submitted to the trustees.

The new ranges for ministers recommend minimum increases of 8.92 percent and 14.32 percent for clergy serving congregational memberships of fewer than 150 and 150 to 249 members respectively. Increases in minimum salaries of 10.58 percent, 5.71 percent, and 3.88 percent are recommended for churches of 250 to 499, 500 to 749, and over 750 members, respectively. Based on the survey data, it is felt that such increases in the minimums of the ranges are practical and achievable by congregations. Over 91 percent of congregations reported paying ministers at or above the 2000 minimum recommendations. There is more work to be done to achieve the previous minimums for religious educators.

Tying salary recommendations to church size is an imperfect linkage, but it is more widely used and realistic than other indicators, such as the church budget. Efforts to limit payroll expenses to an arbitrary percentage of the overall budget are usually disparate. There are some small churches with large endowments or other income that can afford to adopt the salary recommendations for the next size larger congregations. Larger congregations in most denominations can show themselves to be more generous employers.

The new ranges for educators and administrators recognize the efforts of LREDA and the AUUA, working with the UUA Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group, to provide continuing education and credentialing programs for their members. There are salaries recommended for at least three job titles for educators, administrators, and musicians. Staff who can see increased professionalism reflected

in increased compensation have stronger motivation to grow in their performance.

In order to accommodate the budget planning cycle of most congregations, the new salary ranges are slated to take effect January 1, 2004, although some societies may want to adopt them earlier.

The new salary recommendations replace those in effect since July 1, 2000, and are posted on the UUA website. Look for 2004 compensation recommendations at www.uua.org/ministry/ocsf. The 2000 recommendations included Geo Indexes that reflected variations from a national norm that could be used by local congregations. This feature proved very popular and is continued in the new report, which again will recommend that congregations provide a standard array of employer-paid benefits to all staff working half time or more.

The new salary ranges are also available from the district compensation consultants who can meet with local societies to assist them in establishing programs for achieving the UUA's fair compensation guidelines. There is no cost to the congregations for this UUA-provided program.

Fair compensation is seen as both a social justice issue and a sound management practice. Congregations that provide fair pay and benefits can feel proud of how their staff are treated, and they learn over time that adequate compensation is a key ingredient in attracting and retaining staff who contribute to excellence in worship and religious programming.

There will be four workshops on clergy and church staff compensation at the UUA General Assembly in Boston this June and the compensation consultants will be providing workshops and additional materials at the district meetings throughout the year. ●

—Ralph Mero,
Church Staff Finances Director

A Letter to My Colleagues: Please Take Care of Yourself

Write this on Passover and Easter is this Sunday. The last several months have been very difficult ones for all of us. War. Economic decline. Uncertainty. Fear. You know the litany. You have lived it. So have those we serve, both in congregations and in the larger society. There are ample reasons for celebration: New lives coming into being, love blooming, and the constancy of friends. But there is also a sourness to it: The images of war, harsh words spoken, and a kind of free floating anxiety.

A month or so ago I had the opportunity to spend a day on retreat with ministerial colleagues from the northern suburbs of Washington, D.C. Liz Learner coordinated the day. Patrick O'Neill came down from Wilmington to be the worship leader. Among the things he said first to the gathered ministers was that they should relax, he was the minister that day. We had Greek food. We were led through mind and body exercises by a consultant. It was Heaven. (I believe our Universalist theology allows that use of the word, defining it as something of this world.) It was healing. It was needed.

Soon, the Leadership Council of the UUA goes away for its own retreat. Mary Harrington is our leader. She has asked us to bring "a poem, psalm, or reading that is especially meaningful to you." She has suggested that we wear comfortable clothes, and bring a good pen and a journal. It is what we need.

Please take care of yourselves dear colleagues—ministers, religious educators, administrators and musicians. Our ministry, our work, our hope is needed now. In order to point out the goodness of life and reasons for hope and joy, we need to

be in good enough shape ourselves to see it ourselves.

Please go on a retreat yourself. You may not be able to get away physically, but find the time to sit in a garden or park, find a place of quiet, read a poem, talk to a friend.

May your spring and summer be times of healing, growth, and joy. See you at GA. ●

Regards and Deep Thanks,
David Hubner, Director of Ministry
and Professional Leadership

Getting Real About Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, and Multiculturalism

I want to report to you on some of the anti-racism (AR) and anti-oppression (AO) challenges that face us, what we in MPL are doing to try to better understand them, and how we are laying plans and taking at least first steps in more actively addressing them.

Over the past several months, we have become noticeably more active in UU anti-racism and anti-oppression initiatives, directly as a staff group and in association with the several groups and agencies with which we work. We have done so, I think, not because of mandates from above, but because we have come to see the need more deeply and have decided that we must do more to address it. We in MPL want to be among the leaders in UU AO, UU AR, and social justice work.

- The directors of MPL recently decided to commit ourselves to: (a) address AO, AR, and social justice issues more actively; and (b) explore how we might more effectively help UU ministers and religious educators and other UU leaders and congregations come to understand these issues.

- The new RSCC evaluation team was staffed in an inclusive way and has been asked to do all its work with a particularly sensitive AO and AR lens.
- The MFC continues its efforts to get a better handle on these matters. At its meeting in Chicago in mid-March, the MFC: (a) consulted with Danielle DiBona, Vice President of DRUUMM; (b) made a commitment to make sure that all members of the MFC have up-to-date AO and AR training; (c) decided to have at least an annual accountability consultation with DRUUMM; (d) set up its own internal AR and AO sub-committee; (e) made plans to spend part of each meeting on AO and AR issues; (f) decided to revise and strengthen the AO and AR competencies; (g) committed to explore ways to more effectively help congregations learn more about AO and AR issues, particularly to be more open to ministries by historically marginalized people; and (h) made plans to conduct an AO/AR assessment of MFC rules, policies, and procedures.
- David Pettee and Beth Williams have met with Taquiena Boston and other members of the Identity-Based Ministries staff to explore ways to make sure that our RE and ministerial credentialing systems are supportive of diverse candidates.
- David Pettee, John Weston, and Michelle Bentley are MPL's representatives on the Diversity of Ministry Team (DOMT). Its most recent meeting was, by all reports, filled with energy, ideas, and commitment. They are taking

a new look at DOMT's mission and goals.

- Members of MPL staff are participating actively in various programs led by the UUA staff AO and AR team (STAAR) and by Identity-Based Ministries.
- David Hubner met with the UUA's Journey Toward Wholeness team in October and, with Michelle Bentley, participated in an AO and AR consultation in Boston in April.
- David Hubner and David Pettee intervened quickly and effectively at a career center recently when learning of insensitive and possibly homophobic comments made by one staff member to gay and lesbian candidates. An agreement was reached with the center. The counselor involved will no longer see UU students and we have made arrangements for an

in-service training of staff at the center by Keith Kron.

We are very aware of and challenged by the continuing serious difficulties people of color, particularly male African-American ministers, have in finding lasting settlements in UU congregations. We are at a critical juncture on this issue. MPL, the MFC, DOMT, and others are working hard to find ways to help congregations learn more about AO and AR issues so that they can better provide situations where ministers and other leaders of color will feel at home and valued. ●

MPL Research Project

One of the key goals of MPL is to get a better sense of the critical career points and patterns for UU religious professionals so that we can provide better services and

resources to ministers and religious educators as their professional lives unfold and develop. The great news is that Brad Greeley and Eugene Pickett have volunteered to help us see what the data we have on hand can tell us about ministerial development. They have already started to look at information in our database and records and from other religious groups to develop outlines of career patterns. We are very sensitive to issues of confidentiality, so any report will contain an aggregate of the data gathered and will not contain information on individual careers. If you have questions about the study, or ideas about how to make it most useful, or if you specifically do not want information about you included our work just let me know. We are very grateful to Brad and Gene for their generous offer of time, intellect, and experience. ●

—David Hubner

GA 2003 Events: Sponsored by Ministry and Professional Leadership and Related Organizations

**Professional Days:
Wednesday, June 25**

Sheraton Hotel: Room locations TBA

SESSION A: 1:30–2:45 P.M.

- **Categories/Tracks**
Rev. Roberta Nelson
Continues through Session B
- **How Are Ministers Doing the Work of Anti-Oppression, Anti-Racism, and Multiculturalism?**
Committee on Ministry for Anti-Oppression, Anti-Racism, and Multiculturalism, UUMA
Continues through Session B
- **Options for Community Ministers**
Roger Brewin
- **What Lies at the Heart of Your Call to Ministry and Professional Leadership?**
Rev. Dr. Michelle Bentley,
Rev. Beth Williams
- **Productive and Creative Models for Team Staffing**
Rev. Makaanah Morriss, Rev. David Hubner,
Andrea Lerner, DRE

SESSION B: 3:00–4:15 P.M.

- **The Religious Education Credentialing Program: Everything a Minister Should Know**
Rev. Beth Williams, Rev. David Hunber
- **For Ministers Entering Search**
Rev. John Weston
- **Ministry and Money**
Rev. Dan Hotchkiss
- **OK, Now What? Continuing Education at Mid-Career**
Rev. Dr. Michelle Bentley, Rev. Craig Roshaven

Friday, June 27

- **Becoming a Teaching Congregation**
Rev. Dr. Kenneth Olliff, Rev. Nan Hobart,
Patti Lawrence
Hynes Convention Center 204: 10:00–11:15 a.m.
- **Understanding Ministerial Categories**
Rev. Dr. Roberta Nelson
Hynes Convention Center 301: 10:00–11:15 a.m.

- **The Impact of Women on UU Ministry**
Rev. Dr. Gretchen Woods
Hynes Convention Center 208: 10:00–11:15 a.m.
- **Thinking About Ministry**
Rev. David Pettee
Hynes Convention Center 209: 2:45–4:00 p.m.
- **New Salary Recommendations for Church Staff**
Dr. Barb Brown, Ron Green
Hynes Convention Center 306: 2:45–4:00 p.m.
- **The RE Credentialing Program: Everything Congregations Should Know**
Rev. Beth Williams, Rev. David Hunber
Hynes Convention Center 106: 4:30–5:45 p.m.
- **Will We Ever be Able to Retire?**
Rev. Ralph Mero, Matthew Petralia
Hynes Convention Center 208: 4:30–5:45 p.m.
- **Worship Services: A Team Project**
Beth Norton, Rev. Gary Smith
Hynes Convention Center 309: 4:30–5:45 p.m.
- **Preparing to Meet the MFC**
Phyllis Daniel, Rev. Leslie Westbrook
Hynes Convention Center 308: 8:45–10:00 p.m.
- **Godly Play: Finding Our Spiritual Direction Through Creativity**
Rev. Dr. Jerome W. Berryman
Hynes Convention Center 313: 8:45–10:00 p.m.

Saturday, June 28

- **The Professional Leader's Role in Anti-Racist, Anti-Oppressive Congregations**
Rev. David Hubner,
Rev. Dr. Michelle Bentley
Hynes Convention Center 309: 1:30–2:45 p.m.
- **New Paradigms in Religious Education**
Gail Forsyth-Vail, Rev. Elizabeth Strong
Hynes Convention Center 207: 1:30–2:45 p.m.
- **Church Office Basics**
Beverly Francis, Sue King
Hynes Convention Center 208: 1:30–2:45 p.m.
- **Interim Ministry—Making the Most of It**
Rev. John Weston
Hynes Convention Center 201: 3:15–4:30 p.m.

- **Building a Great Volunteer Team**
Barbara Lightheart
Hynes Convention Center 208: 3:15–4:30 p.m.
- **Paying What's Right, Not What's Left**
Marlene Brown, Tom Loughry
Hynes Convention Center 205: 5:00–6:15 p.m.
- **Becoming a Teaching Congregation**
Rev. Dr. Kenneth Olliff, Rev. Nan Hobart,
Patti Lawrence
Hynes Convention Center 308: 5:00–6:15 p.m.
- **Creativity and Religious Experience Among Unitarian Universalists**
Branden Miller
Hynes Convention Center 112: 8:45–10:00 p.m.

Sunday, June 29

- **Service of The Living Tradition**
Sermon: "Give 'Em the Old Razzle Dazzle"
Rev. Gary Smith
Fleet Center: 10:00–11:30 a.m.
- **Understanding Ministerial Categories**
Rev. Roberta Nelson, D.D.
Hynes Convention Center 205: 5:15–6:30 p.m.

Monday, June 30

- **The Call to Ministry and Professional Leadership**
Rev. Dr. Michelle Bentley, Rev. David Pettee,
Rev. Beth Williams
Hynes Convention Center 309: 8:00–9:15 a.m.
- **Fair Pay for Non-Ordained Church Staff**
Wendell Putney, Joyce Stewart
Hynes Convention Center 209: 9:45–11:00 a.m.
- **The Impact of Women on UU Ministry**
Rev. Dr. Gretchen Woods
Hynes Convention Center 208: 9:45–11:00 a.m.
- **Taking the Pulse of Your Congregation's Music Program**
UU Musicians Network members
Hynes Convention Center 204: 9:45–11:00 a.m.
- **A Fresh Look at Paying Church Employees**
Rev. Dan Hotchkiss
Hynes Convention Center 311: 11:30 a.m.–12:45 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE 2003 SERVICE OF THE LIVING TRADITION

Security at the Fleet Center is very tight. In general people will be able to bring in only small handbags, but no backpacks or other large containers. There will be a special entrance for those robing for the service. The entrance is the Security Entrance that is the ramped East Entrance (just beyond the East Entrance with stairs). A pass will be required to gain entry, which will be distributed by staff posted at the door. Robing will be in the Press Room. We recommend that those who are participating in or attending the service get there at least an hour before the 10 a.m. service.

A Letter from David Pettee

Dear Students, Colleagues, and Friends,

I am often asked what's happening these days with regard to those preparing for the UU ministry. Recent technological developments regarding our computer database capability hopefully will allow us to be more aware of important trends and will also assist us in more accurate long-term planning. As many prepare to head into the planning and activities that surround what will certainly be a memorable General Assembly, this is an opportune time to take a snapshot from the files of the Ministerial Credentialing Office.

Currently, there are about 450 aspirants/candidates preparing for the UU ministry. This number is a slight decrease from last year. The age range starts at 24 and ends at 73! The numbers of people transferring into the UU ministry is also on the rise, particularly from the South and Midwest regions. Approximately 65 percent of all ministerial aspirants/candidates are women. Subjectively, about 70 percent of those preparing for the UU ministry lean toward parish ministry, 25 percent are called to community ministry, and about 5 percent are called to the ministry of religious education. These are not hard numbers, as many students find their sense of call to one expression of our ministry changes on a regular basis, particularly early on. The percentage of aspirants/candidates who are considering community ministry is increasing, as is the number who imagine a hybrid parish/community settlement.

To date, almost 250 aspirants/candidates, including the transfers mentioned above, have been interviewed by one of the six Regional Sub-Committees on Candidacy. Although this sample is not yet large, there is growing evidence that meeting with an RSCC (please note if you are among the candidates who were not required to do so) points to a much more likely positive interview experience with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. Aspirants who have been granted candidate status by an RSCC and then interviewed with the MFC have a 15 percent greater likelihood of receiving a "1" or "2" as compared to those who have not seen an RSCC.

Forty-five congregations listed themselves with the Internship Clearinghouse this year, which is about the same number as last year. The current economic turn-down is hindering the establishment of new internship sites and some teaching congregations are feeling the need to pull back from offering an internship site due to budgetary concerns. We are seeing more students interested in hybrid parish/community ministry internship sites, and await the outcome of a grant request to learn if there might be funding available to support some of these creative internship ventures.

I have the growing sense that time-honored theological identities—such as humanist, Christian, pagan, or theist—do not accurately reflect how many seminarians self-describe theologically. At the risk of leaving out one or more of these theological positions, take the time to get to know one or more of our students preparing for the ministry. Ask them in what do they have faith or in what do they believe. You are sure to be enlightened and impressed!

The average debt load seems to be increasing for seminary graduates, although it is quite challenging to gather accurate information and project trends because of the limits of self-reporting. The need to be realistic about the economic implications of ministerial formation is more critical during uncertain economic times. Regrettably, at the same time some students need increased financial aid, a negative financial market directly affects available scholarships and funds.

On a different topic, the Ministerial Fellowship Committee determined at their March 2003 meeting to test, on a trial basis for one year, a change in the practice of working with written references. The current practice is that an MFC member does not contact the author of any written reference. Beginning with the September 2003 MFC interviews, the first questioner from the MFC panel *may* choose to follow up with the author of a written reference about a question or concern pertinent *only* to that particular reference.

In an effort to meet with as many not-from-Boston ministerial aspirants/candidates as I can, I am requesting that only those who live outside the Greater Boston area contact Chris May to set up an appointment. I look forward to meeting many of you at General Assembly. Please feel free to introduce yourself and say hello! ●

In the Faith,
David Pettee,
Ministerial Credentialing Director

From the Internship Clearinghouse

Spring is a satisfying time of year at the Internship Clearinghouse. Most placements have been made and the search process is winding down. Most ministerial candidates know where they'll be in the fall, although candidates know that the experience will be different from what they imagine. Most sites know who their intern will be, although sites also know that the minister who will serve them won't be exactly the same person as the candidate they interviewed.

Taking stock of the year, forty-five congregations listed themselves with the Clearinghouse for 2003–2004; and thirty-five students listed themselves with the new student database. In total, about seventy ministerial candidates will complete internships in 2003–2004. Consistent with previous years, there are enough internship sites (including those not listed with the Clearinghouse) for the number of students, but rarely enough in the geographic locations students prefer.

A few other exciting developments from this past year:

- The *UU World* published a well-received article on internships in its March/April issue.
- The internship stipend grant program offered \$31,950 to seven congregations; the deadline for next year's grant (2004–2005) has been moved to October 1, 2003.
- Meadville Lombard, Starr King, and the UUA are working together to recommend standard application and acceptance deadlines for internships, and we're jointly sponsoring a workshop at GA.
- Overall, internship stipends are moving closer to meeting the UUA's new minimum recommendation of \$1,200 per month. Also, the UUA compensation committee has now recommended higher stipends for larger congregations (\$1400 per month for congregations of 500 to 749 members and \$1500 per month for congregations of 750+ members).

David Pettee and I have been working with the MFC's Candidacy Working Group to refine our procedures for reviewing nontraditional internship arrangements, especially regarding off-site supervision and hybrid internships (part parish, part community). Later this spring we'll be posting learning/serving agreements from previous successful hybrid internship on the Internship Clearinghouse website.

So, the year closes with great expectations for the coming year—the beginning of new internships and a new search process. I'm always glad to talk with you, whether you are a supervisor, intern, or committee member, and I welcome your feedback and input.

Blessings and best wishes for the summer! ●

Faithfully,
Ken Olliff,
Internship Clearinghouse Coordinator

STARR KING SCHOOL FOR THE MINISTRY

Summer Session News: This summer, through the GTU Summer Session collaborative, we will offer “Exploring Our Spiritual Selves Through Dream Work” with Jeremy Taylor (July 14–18, 2003) and “The Spirituality of the Beats” taught by Rev. Steve Edington (July 7–11, 2003). As independent offerings, we will host “Science and Spirit: A Mathaphorical Tour” with Dr. Sarah Voss (July 7–11, 2003); “Environmental Design and the Human Spirit” with Cary Dasenbrock (July 7–11, 2003); and “Teaching the Bible to Skeptics” with John Buehrens (July 28–August 1, 2003). For information about the Graduate Theological Union Summer Session visit www.gtusummersession.org. For information about SKSM-sponsored summer courses, contact Cathleen via cyoung@sksm.edu.

Starr King On-line Courses: On-line Comparative World Religions and on-line UU Polity are scheduled for fall 2003. On-line UU History will be offered again in the spring of 2004. Visit <http://online.sksm.edu>; contact Cathleen Young at cyoung@sksm.edu; or write to Rev. Alicia McNary Forsey, Ph.D., Professor of Church History, Starr King School for the Ministry, 2441 LeConte Ave., Berkeley, CA 94709.

GA APPOINTMENTS

To make an appointment to meet with Rev. David Pettee at General Assembly, please contact Chris May, cmay@uaa.org or 617-948-6403. David is accepting appointments with people from outside the Boston area only.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CREDENTIALING

A Letter from Beth Williams

Applications to the Unitarian Universalist Association's new Religious Education Credentialing Program will be available to all religious educators on June 2, 2003.

You may be wondering whether this program is right for you or for your congregation's religious educator. In recent communications with the religious educators who

have been transitioned into Credentialed Religious Educator status from the old RE Leadership Landscape Options program into the new program, I asked them to reflect on what the credentialing process has meant to them and their congregations. I think you will find that this small selection of their responses sheds light on this question.

Gail Forsyth-Vail, Director of Religious Education in North Andover, MA, writes, "In many ways, it has been a breathtaking six years since I first made my decision to seek credentialing as a religious educator. I firmly believe that the formation process I experienced enabled me to rise to the challenges offered by a rapidly growing mid-sized congregation and to hold a vision which enabled me to work with the volunteer lay leadership to respond effectively to those challenges." Gail used the credentialing process to clarify her vocational aspirations and her commitment to professional religious education leadership. Empowered by her own professional growth, Gail, along with parish minister Rev. Lee Bluemel and the lay leadership of the congregation, helped the congregation to articulate a vision of religious education leadership that required a professional religious educator, and to revise the children's program as a worship and small group ministry model. Gail writes, "We have worked hard to communicate the understanding that youth ministry is an integral part of the ministry of the church and to set in place the structures that make it so. The parish recently added a second Sunday morning service, even while expanding its small group offerings to serve the parishioners and its community outreach in order to serve those beyond our doors. The children's and youth religious education programs have played a strong role in the expansion of our ministry." Gail also understood that being a Credentialed Religious Educator was to commit to being a leader beyond the congregation as well as in it. As such, Gail was moved to become a charter member of the Massachusetts Bay District Anti-Racism Transformation Team, and to accept the nomination to the presidency of the Ferry Beach Park Association, a UU Camp and Conference Center in Saco, ME.

Ann Barker, Director of Religious Education in Appleton, WI, describes the credentialing process as a diagnostic tool for further professional development, and a structure in which to learn and to directly apply that learning to her work in the congregation. The credentialing process also served to strengthen the mutual commitment between congregation and religious educator. Ann writes, "The process provided the opportunity to continually assess my qualifications for and competence as a religious educator. It also highlighted those areas needing further attention through continuing education. At each step of the process, I found the congregation I serve to be enthusiastic in its support and encouraging of my professional development. I believe it helped to build a stronger bond between the congregation and myself and allowed them to feel pride in their support of quality religious education. Completing this process helped me gain confidence as a religious educator and afforded opportunities to meet and learn with many other religious educators from the UUA and other traditions. As I worked

through the steps of the process, I was able to receive immediate value by putting into use within the congregation all that I was learning in classes, workshops, and conferences. This contributed to greater satisfaction in my work and directly enhanced the quality of the congregation's religious education program. Working with parish minister Rev. Roger Bertschausen and the Committee on Ministry through this process helped me appreciate the deep commitment to quality professional leadership this congregation has. As I consider myself a lifelong learner, each step in the process gave me personal joy in tackling new situations and opened new possibilities for more growth."

I believe that these reflections highlight some of the reasons why participation in the new Religious Education Credentialing program will be an important opportunity for religious educators and their congregations. Here are ways to find out more about the program and to reflect on your own vocation commitment to religious education leadership:

- Contact Emily Farbman, RE Credentialing Assistant, at 617-948-6418 or efarbman@uua.org.
- Visit the Office of RE Credentialing website at www.uua.org/ministry/reco.
- Make an appointment for a personal consultation at General Assembly with Beth Williams, RE Credentialing Director, 617-948-6417 or bethwilliams@uua.org.
- Attend workshops at Professional Days 2003: "What Lies at the Heart of Your Call to Ministry and Professional Leadership?" on June 25, 1:30 p.m. and "The Religious Education Credentialing Program: Everything a Minister Should Know" June 25, 3:00 p.m.
- Attend workshops at General Assembly 2003: "The Religious Education Credentialing Program: Everything Congregations Should Know" June 27, 4:30 p.m. and "The Call to Ministry and Professional Leadership" on June 30, 8:00 a.m.

Congratulations to the following persons who have transitioned from the RE Leadership Landscape Options program to the Religious Education Credentialing program as Credentialed Religious Educators:

Ann Barker
Eva Ceskava
Betsy Darr
Gail Forsyth-Vail
Barry Horn
Carol MacFarlane
Susan Antelis Nykolak
Ellie Smith-Sykes
Patti Withers

—Beth Williams,
Religious Education Credentialing Director

Interim Ministry Hopefuls Take Note

My record gives me good reason to be modest about my predictive skills. Nevertheless, I think it safe to say that the outlook for interim ministry this year for ministers who are not AIMs (Accredited Interim Ministers) or AIMITs (AIMs In Training) is not bright. To date, 37 congregations have received recommended lists, with another one waiting, excluding three part-time positions from the count. How many congregations will apply over the next weeks and months? Probably—this is guesswork—another 10 or so, maybe a few more, for a total of, say, 50. With 36 AIMs and AIMITs seeking new positions for the fall, it appears that only 15 or so ministers not matriculated in the AIM program will find an opportunity to serve. Compare that with this year, when 40 such folk are serving!

This is the place to say that the UUA's interim ministry program looks first to the placement of AIMs and AIMITs, i.e., those who take the extended training, attend the seminars, serve in interim ministry positions year after year, and relocate every year or two. The rationale: AIMs and AIMITs can only be there for the congregations if the congregations are there for them. Given the sharpened sensibilities AIMs and AIMITs bring to their work, this is as it should be.

Anyone tempted to think that congregational life is about spiritual values only may wish to contemplate the parallel between the contraction in the interim ministry "market" and the contraction in the national and world economies over the past couple of years. In 2001–2002 there were 109 interim ministries being conducted; in the year that's coming to an end, 89; in the year to come,

perhaps 69, including repeats. What could well appear as a dramatic increase in the interim ministry program over the past ten years or so seems rather to have been an expansionary phase in an economic cycle, the same cycle that birthed the "theology of abundance."

The intellectual pleasures of the dismal science aside, we may learn a good deal from our own responses and the responses of our colleagues to this contraction. In hard times risk-aversion increases—there are risks enough to face in just staying even!—and like everyone else, ministers with a bunker hunker down. But for those who are exposed, all those occupied bunkers might as well have a sign on 'em: "No help required."

May those of us with bunkers keep our hearts open to those without!

Interim Ministers-to-Be Take Note

For ministers who are expecting to enter upon their first interim ministry, or first in five years or more, please enroll for Orientation to Interim Ministry, which will take place in Boston on Monday and Tuesday, June 23 and 24, 2003 at the Marriott Hotel. We begin at 8:30 Monday morning, so if you are traveling, plan to arrive Sunday night. We will finish at 5:00 Tuesday afternoon. The faculty this year are AIMs David Keyes, David Boyer, and Janet Newman.

The cost of the orientation is 1 percent of the Total Cost of Ministry for the year to come (pledges are accepted—due November 1, 2003). In return, the UUA provides your food (three meals on Monday and breakfast and lunch on Tuesday), course materials, and program, and reimburses you for your room cost for Sunday and Monday nights (up to \$170 per

night per person) and for half of your transportation costs to Boston and back. Register by June 1, 2003 with Nancy Hezlitt at settlement@uua.org.

Ministers who wish to attend the orientation in the hopes of landing an interim later in the summer are welcome to attend. The cost will be \$300 in advance for food, course materials, and program.

Agricultural Report

As of this writing (April 16), 61 search committees have identified their candidate for their congregation's next called minister, with a likely seven or so to go. The situation is quite comparable to last years', but running about two weeks behind.

Meetings at General Assembly

In Boston I hope to have a half-hour private meeting with every minister who has settlement concerns, about either the present or the potential future. Top priority is ministers serving more than a hundred miles from Boston who have a completed application and Ministerial Record at the time they request the appointment. Please notify the Settlement Office of your wish at settlement@uua.org, and Nancy Hezlitt will be glad to schedule you. At the Boston Sheraton I will maintain an office in the Liberty C room. The telephone number is 617-236-2000, ext. 4636.

In addition, during Center Days I'll be doing a workshop on settlement. You and your questions and concerns are welcome! ●

—John Weston,
Settlement Director

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LUNCHEON

Community Ministers/Chaplains of Color, Latina/o, and other Underrepresented UU Clergy

Meet the President of the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC).

Discuss the hope to add 300 more chaplains of multi-ethnic, multi-cultural background to APC within the next 10 years.

Bring the UUA into discussion with the Association of Professional Chaplains, the National Association of Jewish and Catholic and Methodist Chaplains, and the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education who have Launched a Diversity Initiative to Promote Growth in the Number of *Persons of Color Who Become Board Certified Chaplains*

June 27, 2003

12:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m.

The Vineyard Room

Boston Marriott Copley Place

110 Huntington Avenue

Boston, MA

For further information regarding this meeting or if you are not a person of the underrepresented population and would like to discuss Board Certification, please contact Rev. Dr. Michelle Bentley via mbentley@uua.org.

CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Practical suggestions for continued learning, sabbatical planning, life and skill enhancement may be found in the listing posted on the Ministry web page (<http://www.uua.org/ministry/>). There you will find basic information for workshops, conferences, and seminars.

Offerings by our colleagues include:

2003 First Year UUA Ministers Seminar, an on-line seminar, May 28–June 11, 2003; contact Michelle Bentley or Jean Hartman

Basic Training for Interim Ministers led by John Weston, June 23–24, 2003, Boston, MA.

Alban Institute Seminar: Clergy Development Institute, July 8–17, 2003, Allenspark (Denver), CO; go to <http://www.org/education.asp> or e-mail education@alban.org for information.

LREDA Fall Conference with Sobonfu Some, October 10–13, 2003, sponsored by LREDA, Sacramento, CA; watch the LREDA website and LREDA-L on the internet for further information.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It Was on Fire When I Lay Down on It

A tabloid newspaper carried the story, stating simply that a small-town emergency squad was summoned to a house where smoke was pouring from an upstairs window. The crew broke in and found a man in a smoldering bed. After the man was rescued and the mattress doused, the obvious question was asked: "How did this happen?"

"I don't know. It was on fire when I lay down on it."

*This story stuck like a burr to my mental socks. . . .
Robert Fulghum*

It Was on Fire When I Lay Down on It—the title alone makes me laugh every time I just think of it. The book cover with title written in red ink and all caps appears as flames—all ablaze. My sermon based on the book had everyone, especially me, rolling in the aisles with laughter for most of the service.

The story begs further questions. Why did he lie down on the burning bed? Was he ill? Trying to end his life? Stupid? Was she high? Was he drunk? Was this his or her weird sense of humor?

When we are called upon to visit such a person, sometimes our first reaction is to find out why they did

such a funny and dumb thing. As clergy we are taught not to judge but to listen and assist. Wise instruction. We may not know why they did it, we may not know the truth, but we do know that this person has some major issue going on in his or her life if they lay down in a bed on fire. This isn't so funny. Something here's not well. If judgment were suspended a bit more often, we would be able to hear the pain, the issue, and offer real help.

God grant me the serenity to accept
the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.

A growing number of us are being drawn to alcohol more than is healthy and more than we'd like. This use, and sometimes abuse, of alcohol and/or drugs adversely affects our work and lives. Something here is not well.

We know that this profession is hard and the issues we deal with are tough. The current existential realities add yet another layer or two on an already aching society. We don't have enough quality time for family or for self. We bring our own baggage to work.

Clergy from all faith traditions struggle with these same issues regarding the nature of this work and with masking the pain with alcohol.

I remember when my dear friend, a UU minister, died as a result of his battle with alcohol. I remember the guilty feeling I had because I had not ever said anything to him about getting help with his drinking and with the underlying issues that made him not able to stop. There were several of us who shared this guilt with one another and we all vowed then and there that the next time we observed such a pattern we would talk openly with the friend, colleague, or family member about the drinking or destructive habits. Invite conversation, listen, try not to judge or enable, offer a lifetime of help. Just maybe you'll be the one that hears the silent tears and you'll drive them to and pick them up from detox—and feel somewhat better about yourself as well. To lie in a burning bed means something is not well.

If you struggle with a drinking or drug problem, call a friend, call your doctor, call your sponsor, call

AA/NA, or your GOP. You may always feel free to call this office. Get help before you isolate yourself completely or become ineffective at work or home. Get help so you can begin again to deal with the issues that you've placed high and out of reach for later leisurely destruction.

AA and other twelve-step groups did not originate the Serenity Prayer. Versions of it seem to have been used for centuries in many faith traditions and it is now in wide use outside of AA. Whether we are humanists, agnostics, atheists, or theists, most of us have found these words a wonderful guide in getting sober, staying sober, and enjoying our sobriety. Whether we see the Serenity Prayer as an actual prayer or just a fervent wish, it offers a simple prescription for a healthy emotional life.

So Be It. ●

—Michelle Bentley,
Professional Development Director

OCTOBER 1, 2003 IS THE NEW DEADLINE FOR INTERNSHIP STIPEND GRANT

Applications may be found on-line
at www.uua.org/ministry/internship.

For more information contact Ken Olliff, Internship Clearinghouse Coordinator,
at 773-426-8183 or kolliff@uua.org.

RESOURCES & POSSIBILITIES

Who Do Your Parishioners Know That Need the CLF?

How many UUs do your parishioners know who are living abroad, retired, disabled, off at college, incarcerated, or geographically isolated?

Our mission at the Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF) is to serve isolated religious liberals, offering them a spiritual home within the Unitarian Universalist movement. In our monthly newsletter *Quest* we offer a sampling of some of the best sermons by UU ministers, such as you! We include a monthly piece by our minister, Rev. Jane Rzepka. CLF kids will receive the only UU children's publication, *uu&me!* To serve our cybercommu-

nity, we offer e-mail lists to connect CLF members worldwide. Our lending library distributes worship materials for small UU groups just getting started through our Church on Loan program. And there's more—even for UUs happily involved in congregations with walls! Please publicize our website, <http://www.clfuu.org> or share our phone number, 617-948-6166. ●

UUA Calendar of Events

Make sure your event is known to your colleagues! Find out about what's coming up!

Are you searching for a training event that can improve your skills or a symposium to deepen reflection on a theological issue? Did you know that the UUA has a

calendar of events available to you to list of your upcoming event? Make sure that you visit the UUA's calendar at <http://www.uua.org/calendar>. You can fill out the simple form to list an event you're coordinating or sponsoring, or check out the calendar site for events coming up in your area or offering skills in which you are interested. ●

UU Women's Heritage Society

A reminder that the UU Women's Heritage Society publishes a series of "Occasional Papers" on the lives and contributions of Universalist and Unitarian women. Perhaps the paper you just completed could be included in this series. The Heritage Society

hopes to encourage research on UU women and welcomes contributions. If you have a piece that you would like to submit, please let us know. You can contact Joan Goodwin at jgoodbrook@aol.com or 617-524-1982 for further information. ●

Spirituality Retreat

Ministers are invited to close out this church year with a time of deepening and spiritual growth. The 2003 Spirituality Retreat will take place June 21–24, 2003 at St. Stephen Priory in Dover, MA. This retreat will be a time of renewal for those seasoned in ministry and a chance for those new to ministry to explore spiritual practice for ministerial life and work. The program will include theme talks from respected colleagues on ministerial spiritual practices; workshops on various spiritual disciplines, such as yoga, sitting meditation, contemplative prayer, meditative journaling, art, or chanting; small groups; and free time, including 23 hours of silence from Sunday evening through Monday. Attendees will be asked to participate in spiritual direction groups.

For more information, please contact Christine Robinson at crobinson@uuabq.org or look for a registration and information flyer that should arrive in your mail in late January. ●

Good News for Small Group Ministry

“Small Group Ministry is one of the great grassroots movements in Unitarian Universalism today,” says UUA President Bill Sinkford. *The Complete Guide to Small Group Ministry: Saving the World Ten at a Time* (136 pp, \$18.00) by Bob Hill is debuting at GA. Hill, one of the movement’s most ardent proponents, is district executive of the UUA Southwest District and author of the “Covenant Group Newsletter,” an e-mail list with 600 subscribers. Published by Skinner House, *The Complete Guide to Small Group Ministry* offers inspiration, guidance, resources, sample handouts, and other tools for creating covenant groups. It also includes a foreword by Thandeka. ●

Religious Humanism

Religious Humanism is an intensive summer course offered by Meadville Lombard Theological School of Chicago, July 6–11, 2003.

Arrival and registration is Sunday afternoon; departure is Friday.

In partnership with Ferry Beach, Meadville Lombard offers this intensive course for academic credit.

This course is an exploration of the history, variety, and possibilities of contemporary religious humanism. Topics include humanism within a pluralistic context, emergence of postmodern humanism, humanist ethics, and ministry among humanists. A special feature of this summer’s course will be spiritual practices of religious humanists. The instructor is Dr. Carol Hepokoski, Meadville Lombard Theological School.

For registration information contact Ms. Deborah Griffin, Registrar, Meadville Lombard Theological School (dgriffen@meadville.edu). For financial information, contact Nan at Ferry Beach (fbnan@maine.rr.com). ●



The Religious Leader

NEWS FROM THE UUA MINISTRY & PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP STAFF GROUP

Nonprofit Organization U.S. Postage PAID Boston, MA 02108 Permit No. 8652

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION
25 BEACON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02108