

ANZUUA Australia New Zealand Unitarian Universalist Association

ANZUUA Report for ICUU Council Meeting.

The work of the ANZUUA Executive for the last year has been primarily focused on internal housekeeping. This follows from the decision at our last conference in Perth to change our name from the Australian New Zealand Unitarian Association (ANZUA) to the Australia New Zealand Unitarian Universalist Association (ANZUUA) This has required us to rewrite our constitution, giving us the opportunity to update it as well. Besides the name, there were two other big changes. Firstly, we have altered the nature of our membership from allowing individual memberships for ministers, to corporate memberships only, making us an association of groups. Secondly, we have expanded the executive from a small elected body of four to having a delegate from each group, which now numbers nine. The new constitution will go to the next conference for ratification.

We have also adopted a protocol to cover website content. We had nothing in place prior to this, which caused some concern with some members. I have included the protocol at the end of this report.

Undoubtedly the most radical change to how we operate is the adoption of using Skype for our meetings, which has revolutionised our administration. Prior to this the cost of conference call meetings restricted executive meetings to perhaps two or three a year. The last meeting before using Skype cost us over \$800 for an hour. Now, we meet monthly at no cost. This has enabled us to complete the work I have described above. It is amazing to think that nine of us, across 4 time zones, can meet for an hour a month at no cost to the organization. It also allows us to keep in touch and I can report that all groups are ticking along nicely, all offering an interesting range of programmes.

With our re-organisation substantially completed, our focus will now turn to considering some projects that will be more outward looking and have a more direct influence on the wellbeing of our members. These could include re-establishing our magazine, Quest, looking at high profile visiting speakers to raise our profile or producing our own homegrown service guide to supplement both Singing The Living Tradition (UUA) and Hymns for Living (British GA)

We are also beginning the planning for our next conference in Sydney in October 2009.

In conclusion, I would say that we are in good heart down under, and are looking forward to a productive couple of years ahead.

Kind regards

Derek McCullough, President ANZUUA

ANZUUA

A PROTOCOL FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ANZUUA WEB SITE

- 1 The purpose of the web site is to promote Unitarian Universalists in Australia and New Zealand
- 2 To support Unitarian Universalist principles
 - Freedom of religious expression
 - Tolerance for religious ideas
 - The authority of reason and conscience
 - The never ending search for truth
 - The unity of experience
 - The worth and dignity of each human person
 - The ethical application of religion
 - Care for our planet earth
- 3 The web should list the contact details of all paid up member groups
- 4 Associated groups and individuals can only be listed with the approval of the Executive Management Committee by simple majority

- 5 Information in regard to social action causes can only be approved by the Executive Management Committee by simple majority
 - 6 The web site must not discriminate in terms of race, religious ideas, gender or sexual preference
 - 7 Any items that may be contentious in terms of any of the above must be referred to the Executive Committee for approval by simple majority
 - 8 The content shall comply with the laws of Australia and New Zealand.
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CUC – Canadian Unitarian Council

HIGHLIGHTS From the CUC Board MEETING – SEPTEMBER 2008

The CUC Board met at the YMCA Geneva Park Conference Centre near Orillia, Ontario from September 18th to the 21st, 2008. The CUC is currently facing some significant challenges in terms of staffing (in light of recent staff departures), volunteering (we haven't identified enough volunteers to follow those who have completed several years' service) and revenue (given poor current and anticipated returns on our investments in what appears to be a faltering market). Our September meeting addressed all three of these challenges, and moved forward in several areas. The summary below reflects the highlights of those undertakings. We will be sending an expanded update to presidents and ministers shortly, and we will make this available on the CUC website.

1. **Sustainability.** The Board is committed to a CUC that operates with a sustainable staffing model, by which we mean that our paid staff are clear about what work they are being asked to do, that the amount of work being requested is reasonable, and that we treat our staff in accordance with our principles. In addition, we have to be realistic about the amount and kinds of work we can expect to accomplish through volunteer efforts. We are developing a budget proposal for 2009 that is part of a long-term commitment to balanced budgets. We do anticipate that this year's budget will need to carry a deficit, but we are striving to make sure that the amount of the deficit will be less than it had to be last year.

We are particularly pleased that Linda Thomson has agreed to serve as our Acting Executive Director at least to the end of this calendar year, and perhaps beyond, to assist us in developing a model that takes into account the current realities. (While she serves in this capacity, we will contract for an assistant who will temporarily take on much of her work as DRS-East. A two-year interim Director of Lifespan Learning position is also currently being advertised, and we anticipate that it will be filled by the end of October. That job description also includes assisting in the development of our sustainable model.)

We will provide information along the way and offer opportunities for regular dialogue, so that our membership becomes an integral part of the directions we choose to follow. We recognize, of course, that any final decisions will have to be made at the annual meeting.

2. **Staying Oriented Towards our Mission.** It is this board's perception that we are in a necessary and predictable transition, not a crisis. For many months we have had a team working on reviewing our board policies to more directly relate them to the CUC's mission ("Growing vital religious communities in Canada"). In doing so, we can develop adequate monitoring systems to ensure we meet our goals on an on-going basis.

3. **Going-4-ward.** The Board continues to move forward with the short-term plan presented at the Annual Meeting in Ottawa. We will be offering opportunities for input through workshops at each of the regional fall gatherings. Highlights of where these initiatives stand are attached.

4. **Covenantal Relationships.** Within our CUC, we create religious communities wherever individual UUs come together to be nurtured, to grow, and to act. We are a "community of communities", and our communities include not only our congregations, but also our Youth, our Ministers, our Lay Chaplains, our Social Responsibility Groups, and other groups of UUs who gather for common purpose and shared values. By developing formal covenants between our communities we can have a clearer understanding of our relationships, how we work together towards our shared goals and our responsibilities to each other. For example, we are already well on the way to

establishing a formal covenant with ministers through their professional organization, the Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada (UUMOC). We are also delighted to report that, at our meeting, the Board committed to create a covenant with the Canadian youth community (struggling in the wake of major changes in continental programming by the UUA) through a revitalized and re-mandated Canadian Advisory Youth/Adult Committee ("CAYAC").

The Board re-affirms that there is no implied hierarchy in the relationship between the CUC and the member congregations. We are all in service together. The CUC is the creation of its member congregations, conceived as a way to act in concert to accomplish things that can't be accomplished alone. We understand our role as trustees to be that we ensure that the communities within our midst coordinate, connect, and build coalitions.

The CUC Board is committed to dealing fairly and decisively with the current challenges facing the CUC. By acknowledging the covenantal relationships between the communities that make up the CUC, we see its continued success will hinge upon a sense of shared ministry that must pervade our movement. The Board came away from this meeting electrified by the possibilities.

Board of Trustees, Canadian Unitarian Council
 Jean Pfleiderer, President (Eastern Region)
 Calvin Drake, Vice President (Central Region)
 John ("Mich") Michell, Treasurer (Western Region)
 Ron Bulmer, Secretary (Eastern Region)
 Peter Scales (BC Region)
 Jan Greenwood (BC Region)
 Jean Armstrong (Western Region)
 Rev. Christine Hillman (Central Region)
 Ex-officio: Linda Thomson, Acting Executive Director
 UUMOC Observer: Rev. Carole Martignacco
 Youth Observer: Sean Neil Barron

RSCU Religious Society of Czech Unitarians

The Religious Society of Czech Unitarians is organizing a student competition this year. Students up to 26 years of age were invited to submit a research and reflection paper responding to the following topic: Creative Religion – Religion for Contemporary World. The purpose of the competition is to invite young people to ponder what can be offered by a free-thinking religion to the people of the 21st century in the broad social context.

In June we also established a new congregation Church of the Wider Fellowship of Czech Unitarians which is open to all those isolated individuals who for any reason cannot participate in the life of our standing congregations.

petr samojsky

Unitarisk Kirkesamfund - Danish Unitarians Latest Report (April 2006)

Dear John

Here are our answers :-)

Your A) "If you have any particular issues you would like to bring to the attention of the Executive for discussion, please let me know as soon as possible;"

We have no particular issues for the Executives to discuss.

Your B) "If you could write a two or three paragraph report about how you are getting on and what issues/ programmes you are dealing with, the Executive would appreciate receiving this;"

As many Unitarian congregations we have to deal with dwindling membership numbers, but we also have to maintain an aging building.

One thing we deem important for attracting new members is an attractive website. We have employed a programmer, and am in the middle of renewing it, and hope the new site will be up and running in the near future.

We are also still working on becoming recognized as a religion by the Danish Church Ministry. The process has been going on for years; the ministry thinks we are just a philosophic discussion club. It is not because we as Unitarians feel the need for public approval, but along with official approval comes the permission for possible donors to deduct their donation in their own tax.

We have work in progress about collecting Unitarian "holy" stories. We hope to put together a booklet with these stories and use it to show others what we believe in. However, it is a rule that it must always be open to changes, new tests in and others out.

Your C) "If you could give an indication of this year's financial contribution to ICUU, amount and timing, that would also be appreciated."

As soon as I can, I'll get a check made for US\$200, and send it to Rita Lazar. It is our 2006 contribution.

You also asked if we have changes to our information on icuu.net. The text is fine though the numbers have changed to the worse, unfortunately.

Please correct:

- About 100 family members to about 55 family members.
- About 135 supporters to about 110 supporters.

greetings from Marianne and Lene

Yours, Tara -

Latest Announcement from EUU European Unitarian Universalists (Sept 2008)

The Kaiserslautern UU Fellowship is pleased to announce that registration has begun for the ***EUU Fall Retreat, 31 October – 2 November 2008***.

The 2008 EUU Fall Retreat will take place at the Mittelmosel-Jugendherberge Jugendgästehaus ***Traben-Trarbach***. The theme speaker/minister will be the ***Rev Jill McAllister***. She is currently the minister at People's Church, Kalamazoo, Michigan and past president of the ICUU.

Her theme talk is titled ***"Finding Your Spiritual Home."*** It is based on Buddhist practices (translated into Unitarian Universalism) concerning the four central virtues: Loving-Kindness, Compassion, Sympathetic Joy, and Equanimity (collectively referred to as the "Brahma Viharas"). She has found this to be a wonderful format for considering and practicing centering and mindfulness, and for helping UUs understand and articulate their own needs for spiritual practice.

In order to reduce costs and make this Retreat family friendly/affordable, we will be staying at the Middle Mosel Youth Hostel. Rooms are basic but clean and all have a toilet, bath or shower in suite. ***Towels are NOT provided***, so please bring a nice, large, fluffy one with you from home. (A small towel may be rented from the Hostel staff for 1€.) The Hostel is small but should serve our needs well. We have reserved the entire facility so we will be the only guests that weekend. ***There are very few single rooms available***. Please do not request one unless absolutely necessary. Lodging preferences will be taken on a ***"first registered – first served"*** basis. If you have any special needs (mobility difficulties, dietary restrictions, etc.) please make them know to the Retreat Committee when registering so that we may attempt to accommodate them.

Please ***register early*** to guarantee your place. The Youth Hostel will be completely occupied at approximately ***74 adults*** (depending on specific room allocations). Registrants beyond the youth hostel's capacity will be referred to local hotels/guest houses.

The Kaiserslautern UU Fellowship is looking forward to seeing you at what promises to be a wonderful Unitarian Universalist retreat on the Mosel.

Latest Report from the Finnish Unitarians (October 2006)

Dear John

We continue to meet at the Quaker meeting room here in Helsinki on the first Sunday of every month. The meeting includes chalice lighting, a sermon which is usually the topic for discussion.

In the city of Kuopio there is an other gathering meeting in the home of reverend dr. Thomas Elwain.

Our membership is now about twenty and then there are friends who participate mainly through the list.

We are now planning to register the society as a religious body, which would give us the right to conduct weddings.

Among us is now Ms. Heidi Rautionmaa who has a degree in theology so we are going to have more "professionalism".

We will have in December our tenth anniversary. We are going to have a special meeting to celebrate this.

I will inform about that soon.

Best wishes

Antti Pelkola

Deutsche Unitarier Religionsgemeinschaft – German Unitarians

-Der Vorstand-
Auslandsreferat
Wolfgang Jantz



There is an exciting mood in the "Deutsche Unitarier Religionsgemeinschaft". There is searching and discussion all over the Congregations.

In Spring most of our leaders from the congregations all over Germany meet in our Unitarian Center Klingberg at the Baltic Sea, which some of you might know, as we had also ICUU meetings there. We had a checking of the actual situations and a discussion with some results of pledging how to face the financial and spiritual challenges of the future. Our **Meeting Center Klingberg** is one of our financial problems. The financial resources of Klingberg has been, beside Unitarian meetings, -- family-education and art programs. Those activities are getting less and less support from the public institutions and the unstable economic situation brings many families to the point to cancel all the expensive, which are not absolutely necessary. It's Horst Prem and Klaus Fiebig, which are facing the energy problems in instillation environment Technology, but still

Another challenge is the need of manpower in our congregations. We are, as indicated in our short introduction on the ICUU homepage a **"deliberately lay-led movement which tends toward scientific and philosophical humanism, while acknowledging other faith traditions."** The lay leadership is in discussion now. Especially our members between 30 and 40, Young Families or single parents feel the need to have professional help. Let's see what is happening at our next

biannual GA "Unitariertag" at Pentecost which will be a first important step to present ideas from "Young Generation"

The "Deutsche Unitarier Religionsgemeinschaft" is member of three Umbrella Organisations, which are all the tree very important for us and explaining our Unitarian, Free religious and Philosophic commitment.

The Iarf as an Interfaith Organisation for example is the bridge for us German Unitarians to keep the contact with the other Free religious Groups in Germany and Europe.

The DFW (Dachverband Freier Weltanschauungsgemeinschaften) connect us to the Freethinkers and Humanist Groups (Freidenkern und Humanisten).

The ICUU is our bridge to the Unitarians in the World.

Summer Activities:

Youth Exchange. Which was a success by Unitarian and Free religious Cooperation. Contacts to ICUU and IARF have been helpful:

Cornelia Cotton of our Fellowship has put together the attached article which may be helpful for publicity:

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Briarcliff, Croton & Ossining (UUBCO), <uucroton.org> in Westchester County, north of New York City, is connecting its youth and families with Unitarian and Freireligioese (free religion group) youth and families in Germany through an international exchange program this summer which they have started with the help and guidance from professional staff of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council (UUPCC) and the Deutsche Unitarier (DU - German Unitarians) group. The program was made possible when such a program was discussed among Barbara Beach, Director of UUPCC, Rec. Eric Cherry, Director of International Resources, Advocacy & Witness of the UUA, Wolfgang Jantz and Antje Paul, officers of the DU, and Shahan Islam, a youth group leader and member of the Board of the UUBCO Fellowship, who was sent by the church board and its minister, Rev. Jim Covington, to a meeting of the International Council of Unitarians & Universalists (ICUU) in Oberwesel, Germany, in November, 2007.

IARF CONFERENCE – BELFAST - 24-27 JULY 2008

A German Delegation of four persons participated at the Regional IARF Conference. Again mixed Unitarian and Free Religious. Also at this Congress could we meet Personalities like Richard Boeke and Arpad Szabo which are feeling the commitment to be active in both organisations.

Bishop Arpad Szabo – “Our Common Challenge” at IARF Belfast

“Religious language calls us to act, ... to embrace our lives and the life of our world with gratitude and reverence. If we apply this ...to interfaith work, then our challenge is to create opportunities for religious people to share in talking about and praying for our world, in doing what we can together, and in supporting each other ...”

It was good to have been there in Belfast and to find out at the side of those people, which suffered a long time under the Civil War, peaceful solutions for the future. The Church Building in Rosemary Street, Belfast couldn't be used for two years. It was continuously under gunfire, caused by the nearby British Police headquarters.



We “Deutsche Unitarier Religionsgemeinschaft” are strongly involved in the struggle for Human rights and the separation of State and Church. There is no Religious freedom without human rights. We believe that religious freedom is for all, not only for some religions. Religion should be taught in school as an ethic subject and should not separate the students.

May be you can discuss at your EC and decide how could you give us some mutual help in this point.

Wolfgang Jantz, Auslandsreferent der "Deutschen Unitarier Religionsgemeinschaft"

HUNGARIAN UNITARIAN CHURCH

No Report received, none on file. This group remains very hard to contact.

INDIAN COUNCIL OF UNITARIAN CHURCHES

No Report received, but the latest report from the Unitarian Union of North East India (end July 2008) follows:

To all friends and well wishers of the Unitarian Union

Greetings to one and all!

Base on Rev. D.P. Pariat and Rev. P.G. Marbaniang report of their meeting with UUPC at the GA recently, the Executive Committee of the Unitarian Union which met at the Robin Roy Memorial Hall, Madan Laban, Shillong on the 17 July, decided to create a cell to co-ordinate and monitor the Partnership programmes between the churches in the West and the Churches of the Unitarian Union North East India. The Cell is authorized by the EC to look into all the matter relating to Church Partnership vis-à-vis Unitarian Union.

The Cell to be known as Unitarian Union Partnership Cell (UUPC), Rev. Derrick Pariat will be its Chairman, Rev. P.G. Marbaniang will be the Secretary and the members are Rev. Nangroi Suting, Rev. Darihun Khriam and DKB Mukhim.

The installation ceremony of the New Officials of the Unitarian Union was held on July 27 at the Unitarian Church Jowai in the presence of over 1000 members attending the service. The President Rev. Derrick Pariat has spell out the road map of the new EC and announced that during these three years the Unitarian Union will focus on Leadership Development in all the Churches of the Unitarian Union.

Since its inception more that 120 years ago, the Union is following a leadership style which is unique to itself; all the churches are led by lay leaders who have little or no training on matter relating to church ministry. Unlike our counterpart in the west where we have trained ministers to minister to the churches, the Unitarian Churches are either led by Chairman, Secretary of the church committees, Member Boards or member of the church committee. In a way it is a joint responsibility of the leadership in the church, one may think that this is a good leadership style because everybody is responsible or atleast involved. But the argument is the leaders have no training what so ever in ministering the church which is very important in a democratic faith groups like ours.

During HK Singh's period, the Khasi Unitarian was blessed to have Rev. David Edward, Rev. Hiah Pohlong both evangelist trained by the Welsh Presbyterian. The duo converted to Unitarianism while they were pastors of their respective churches, Rev. Hiah Pohlong a pastor of a Presbyterian Church, Thangbuli and Rev. David Edward was a pastor at the Presbyterian Church, Shangpung.

I for one strongly believe that Leadership in the Church needs to be professionalized, by that I mean we need to improve our skills and the way we conduct our ministry. Gone are the days that leadership in the church will simply be on a voluntary basis, and we conduct worship and perform our services just because we have to do it. We need to have somebody trained to lead the church and who know and understand what he is doing.

Of late we notice the emerging of evangelical churches which are much smaller than ours in number but their progress is rapid compare to ours. I think this is a case in point that if we want to grow we need to have leadership that are trained in leading services, pastoral care and leaders that have deep understanding of one's faith.

The incumbent leadership is of the opinion that atleast those who are in the leadership in the church should have some kind of a Lay leadership training to enable them to enhance leadership capacity. In view of the challenges, the Association has conducted weekend training for church leaders in Bhoi Rymbong area of Ribhoi District, and recently on the July 19 and 20, weekend training was held at the

Kharang Unitarian Church for the leaders of the 4 churches in the Kharang Sub Circle.

The training was well received and we are hoping to conduct more training in the future. We hope that these training will help leaders to develop leadership skills that they need for doing ministry in their respective churches. We also learned from the previous training we had conducted, that such training was able to boost their confidence and in a way also empower them. The training was on leading worship, conduct rites of passages, basic Khasi Unitarian beliefs and pastoral care.

On the 16 of August the Association of Minister Unitarian Union in collaboration with the Ministry Development Committee of the Unitarian is convening the 2nd Annual General Meeting of the Association of Ministers in which all those involved in doing ministry in the churches are invited. The invitees includes the church visitors, church workers, secretary and chairman church committees, secretary and chairman women wing of the Unitarian Union, secretary and chairman of the youth wing of the Unitarian Union.

The Ultimate goal is; we hope to see in three years time strong, vibrant and independent churches, with strong leadership. In the process we also hope to create a strong second rung leadership which will take over the mantle of leading the Unitarian Union when our tenure is over.

Khublei~~

To Nang Roi~~~

Rev. H.H. Mohrmen, General Secretary, Unitarian Union

Unitarian Christian Church of Indonesia (a.k.a Jemaat Allah Global Indonesia)

Report to the ICUU Executive, London, 22-25 October 2008

As Unitarian Christian Church of Indonesia (a.k.a Jemaat Allah Global Indonesia) is preparing the third national convention next year, there are both opportunities and threats that our church faces.

Unitarianism is more widely known these days here due to our prolific publications which are distributed throughout the country. There are persons from other denominations who made personal phone calls after reading our books claiming they are Unitarian also, although they haven't joined us officially yet. The latest book being prepared to publish is our elder and national chairman Tjahjadi Nugroho's titled *Jesus: My Lord, My Teacher, My Friend, and My Brother*.

On the other hand, there are influential figures who conspicuously detest our existence. A famous Christian scholar vowed some times ago that he would fight to banish Unitarianism from Indonesia. He makes a kind of tour around big cities, publishing books and making seminars discrediting Unitarianism (i.e. our church, our books, our elders, especially our chairman Elder Tjahjadi Nugroho). He challenged Elder Tjahjadi Nugroho to hold an open debate about Jesus, which we accepted – we're still negotiating about the details. We demand that the event must take place in neutral place, led by neutral moderator, and held before open (not exclusive) audience.

In August, we also got a "special" visit from a Christian Society Advancement head officials of the Indonesia Religious Affairs Department (a special ministry in our government that possesses the right to legalize or to ban any religious denomination, including our church). They investigated whether our church is affiliated to Jehovah's Witnesses and criticized our weak points (i.e. loose membership, minimal number of members, etc.). We believe they can't do us much harm now considering an excellent relationship we have with key political figures. But this aversion is still a threat that we must be aware of in the future.

Inside the church, there are good and bad news, too. Our Jakarta congregation which was once dormant is active again as new members join the old ones. Meanwhile, Elder Ellen Kristi is working on a pilot project about children religious curriculum in Semarang. So far it goes so well and the children are enthusiastic to follow the studies and activities. The next step is to train potential mothers in other congregations to be children Sabbath class teacher. The youth and young adults participate actively in church services, besides having their own activities. They have just had a 2-days retreat last July 2008 and right now they're exploring possibilities to volunteer in two local NGOs (focusing on street children and on addict rehabilitations).

The bad news is that we lost some members by death. The congregation that suffers most loss is Sukorejo (3 members). The number of our total active members from four major congregations (Semarang, Sukorejo, Solo, and Jakarta) and other minor ones (Klaten, Surabaya, and Yogyakarta) is about constant, 250 people. We will bring the nominal of our contribution per member to ICUU Council Meeting next year.

Best wishes for your meeting there!

Ellen Kristi, UCCI General Secretary

Nigeria – Unitarian Brotherhood Church, Lagos

There has been no report from the UBC since notification of the deaths of their minister and the bishop.

UUCP – The Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines

No Report received, but we have had information that Rev Henry Legaje resigned as President in July 2007 and after a period of committee leadership, Rev Nihal Attanayake was elected President.

Poland – Polish Unitarian Church

No Report has been received, although John Clifford visited Poland in May 2008, met with two of their members, and made a report to the Executive telephone conference later that month. A representative of the Polish Unitarian Church, Czesław Głogowski, will be attending part of the Executive Meeting to discuss the present state and future status of the Polish Unitarian Church.

South Africa SOUTH AFRICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION □ (Interim) □ □

Report to ICUU Executive Committee □ October 2008 ● ●

1. There are four established and longstanding Unitarian communities in South Africa, namely the Cape Town Congregation (+ - 100 members, worship services every Sunday), Johannesburg Fellowship (15 members; meets once per month); Durban Fellowship (15 members; meets twice per month) and Somerset West (25 members; meets twice per month). ● ●
2. Cape Town Congregation - A new minister, Rev Roux Malan, commenced on 1st July 2008, after my retirement on 30th June. (We have now doubled the number of formally accredited Unitarian ministers in South Africa. There are now TWO of us, viz. Roux and me!) ● ●
3. Durban Fellowship - They have applied to the State authorities to have one of their members registered as a marriage officer. This is a first time situation for SA Unitarians, as up till now only Cape Town has had a licensed marriage officer. ● ●
4. On the subject of marriages, same-sex marriages are legal in SA (since December 2006). I continue to hold marriage licences for hetero and same-sex marriages and since August 2007, Cape Town has registered close to 50 such marriages to date. ● ●
5. The overall morale of the four communities is good; there is a renewed sense of purpose and commitment to the future of Unitarianism in SA arising from the last national assembly of the four communities held in Westville, (outside Durban), in the province of KwaZulu-Natal in August 2007. ● ●
- 6 South African Unitarian Association (Interim) - We are moving forward strongly towards the formalising of our national association. An interim steering committee was elected at the last national assembly and a constitution is currently being drafted. We intend to hold a national assembly to approve the draft constitution in 2009. ● ●
- 7 There is also a proposal to establish a South African National Fellowship with a view to catering for Unitarians and like-minded people who live in cities / towns where there is no formal Unitarian presence, so as to be part of the national family of Unitarians. Out of this proposal may come a South African equivalent of the UUA's Church of the Larger Fellowship. ● ●
- 8 We are also in the early stages of upgrading our national website. ● ● ●

Gordon R. Oliver □ October 2008 □

Spanish Unitarians and Universalists¹***Status Report for the ICUU***

Dear ICUU ExCo members,

We are glad to send you a brief report about the status of U*U congregations in Spain.

A new Spanish U*U fellowship has been founded in the city of A Coruña, in the region of Galicia (north-west of Spain). The leader is a young Spaniard, Adi Varela Cangado, with a Jewish religious background. The group is in full agreement with the already existing U*U congregations and the principles of the ICUU. Their congregational website is <http://uucoruna.blogspot.com/>. We are happy to welcome the Coruña Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in our family of Spanish Unitarian Universalist congregations.

Furthermore, two Internet-based groups are also starting. One is strictly Christian, whereas the other seems to be a mixture of Pagan and Buddhist beliefs with a liberal outlook and an affinity with U*U principles. Both e-groups are using Yahoo mailing lists for their networking and growth, and there are active list members in several areas of Spain. Whereas the Christian Unitarian group seems to be reluctant to having any kind of cooperation with Unitarian Universalists, the UU/Pagan/Buddhist group seems more receptive and open. We will be attentive to future developments in both e-groups and whether they become "physical" and how they relate to others.

As for the previously existing U*U congregations in Spain, the Madrid congregation is keeping its meeting schedule, according to their public announcements, but they do not share any further information or work together with other UUs, either nationally or internationally. Attempts for further contact and exchange of views have been received by them rather coldly.

The Barcelona U*U congregation, the first that was organized in Spain in 2000, is currently in a time of transition with a renewal of membership and of leadership after several core members of the original group left or became uninterested in attending meetings and helping to run the group anymore. Jaume de Marcos remained the only leader for a while, but he has already expressed his intention to let others move the group forward after many years of leading and facing (a few) good and (many) hard times. The group is meeting irregularly while a new leadership is slowly and hesitantly developing.

The legal status of Spanish U*Uism is still uncertain after two failed attempts at being recognized as a religious association. The two rejections of this recognition by the Spanish state, arguing that U*U cannot be qualified as a religion, were hard blows for the continuity of a national association of Spanish Unitarians. While a new and less restrictive law of Religious Freedom is expected to be passed in the next few years, local groups are individually looking for legal status as cultural associations.

Respectfully submitted by Jaume de Marcos, ICUU Spanish delegate

Unitarian Universalist Association of Sri Lanka

Unitarian Universalist Association Of Sri Lanka (14 .09 .2008)
61/3 old Road.Nawala.Rajagiriya. Sri Lanka.

It is almost 13 years completed for the Unitarian Universalist Association In Sri Lanka. Our beginning was very enthusiastic and energetic. We met many friends in the different ethnic groups and also in the different areas of the Sri Lanka. We had very good opportunities to start UU religious groups among our friends with better understanding. We carried liberal and independent thoughts through UUism among our society.

Unfortunately every thing had been changed in Sri Lanka within politics and we faced unavoidable threaten and challenges from fundamental Buddhist groups. There are about 276 Christian churches had been destroyed and 4 Christian clergymen had been killed last 14 years. Ten days before a group of Buddhist monks forcefully entered to the Hindu temple and destroyed their temple.

We wanted to say that we are moving very slowly here.

¹ Provisional name while lacking recognition as a religious body from the Spanish state.

From the beginning we had very active UU group in Northern part of the Sri Lanka. Unfortunately entire area of the Northern part (Jaffna LTTE area) is now War zone area.

At present UU work has been mainly decentralized in the Western Province. In addition to the Main group there are 4 small groups are functioning well. We are functioning without any facilities and without any help of ICUU or UUA. It is fact that we believe we are isolated even we won't get any religious materials like UU books. For long time we had not clear understanding with International organizations. I believe our relationship has been deviated by IARF. I am sorry to say that I am who introduced IARF to Sri Lanka.

- (1) Godakawela
- (2) Kurunegal
- (3) Kandy
- (4) Pannipitiya

We have few proposals,

- @ we need some UU literature
- @ We need Leadership training
- @ The UUASL having proposed many time that there should be ministerial training for a member in our group. Walter Jayewardene secretary of UUASL ready to undergoing for the training by his expenses if ICUU backing him.

These are the details of UUASL. I believe this brief is enough at the time being as you instructed us.

Please note that our monthly meeting is to be held end of this month. [September]
Yours sincerely, Walter Jayewardene.

Unitarian Church in Transylvania

No Report received other than about the possible venue of CM09. The Church is holding elections this autumn that may affect the role of our first-line contact, Rev Dávid Gyerő. The ICUU Executive decided in October 2008 to warmly accept the kind invitation of the Unitarian Church in Transylvania to hold the 2009 Council Meeting in Kolozsvár. The Council will be 1-5 September.

British Unitarians: The General Assembly of Unitarian & Free Christian Churches

No Report received but we will be holding our Executive Meeting in their HQ building and we expect their Chief Executive, Rev Steve Dick, to present a report.

United States of America: Unitarian Universalist Association

Report for ICUU

This annual update on the work and the activities of the UUA is prepared in order to update the ExCom of the ICUU. Perhaps the most notable fact in UU land in the United States is that Bil Sinkford completes his term as President in June, 2009. Rev. Laurel Hallman and Rev. Peter Morales are candidates for his position and the race is on. It is hard to discern what effect the election of either candidate will have on the UUA and international work. My belief, however, is that it will be negligible, as the international activities of the UUA are now firmly embedded in the new Office of International Resources, Re. Eric Cherry, Director. One of the important legacies of Bill's Presidency will be the institutionalization of our international work. Whereas it was formerly a function of the particular interest of the person occupying the President's office, now it is less subject to the whims of that individual and more an ongoing program of the UUA grounded in the Board's statement of international engagement.

The Memorandum of Understanding which has been negotiated between the ICUU and the UUA is a large step towards the institutionalization of our relationship and provides a baseline against which the UUA can evaluate its relationship with the ICUU. Again, having such an understanding is crucial in making the relationship less dependent on personalities and more a function of mutually agreed upon

protocols and programs. The UUA Board is pleased with this development. And to be clear, the institutional relationship of the ICUU is with the UUA Board, not the UUA administration. For purposes of program development, the Office of International Resources provides the primary linkage with the ICUU, but in matters of policy and institutional connection, the Board Liaison is the primary contact.

I welcome your concerns and queries.

Respectfully,

Rev. Will Saunders, UUA Trustee and UUA Liaison to ICUU, Sept 18, 2008
