



Key Connections

December 2009 - Volume 18

Special Membership Issue

the Quarterly Newsletter of the AUUA

Presidential Ponderings

Holiday Gratitude

As we head into the holiday season, I am reminded that this is the time to meditate upon and express our gratitude for all that we have in this world!

One of the many things that I am grateful for is the loving embrace of my liberal religious community, and all the good people who devote countless hours taking good care of our members and institutions.

You will see in this issue a set of articles penned by your AUUA Board members on what membership in the AUUA means to them - I hope you enjoy them, and perhaps take a moment to reflect on some of the joys and gifts your colleagues in the AUUA may have given you over the years.

"...I am grateful for the loving embrace of my liberal religious community..."

In fact, if you think of something good, please don't hesitate to send your thoughts to your AUUA newsletter editor!

AUUA Professional Days 2010 - See You in Minneapolis!

We are already working on our program for AUUA Professional Day, which will be held prior to this year's General Assembly in Minneapolis, Minnesota! Gosh, can the end of June really be just around the corner? I hope that everyone has June 21-22, 2010, down on the calendar for our AUUA events, and June 23-27, 2010 down for the Assembly itself.

Paid, professional Membership Coordinators will also be gathering under the AUUA banner for their own Professional Day activities, and we will be meeting together for our Tuesday night banquet and lunch on Wednesday.

I know times are tough, but I do hope that many of you will be able to join us in Minneapolis this June!

Listserv Available to AUUA Members Only on 01/01/2010

The AUUA membership drive is going well, and we will be able to announce some numbers in the near future. This is one more reminder that the AUUA listserv, Church-admin-uu, will be going "members only" in January 2010. We have a special rate of \$40 per member being offered at this time, so I am looking forward to a wonderful increase in our membership! If you haven't done so already, please use the form included in this newsletter or visit the AUUA website at www.auua.org and download a copy.

Holiday Wishes

In closing, I'd like to wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season! Whatever your particular spiritual practice, I hope that this particular holiday season is meaningful and fulfilling to each and every one of you! "See" you next year!

Happy HolyDaze!

Chuck

Charles B. Rosene

President, Association of Unitarian Universalist Administrators

Membership

Feeling Unappreciated?

Do you sometimes feel unnoticed and/or unappreciated for the responsibility you hold and the work you perform at your church?

For those of you who are members of the AUUA, you know the value of the organization; the support of your peers is priceless! But did you know that there are over 800 Unitarian Universalist churches with Administrators, but only 160 of you are members of this organization? While the intellectual and emotional support of your peers is indeed important, the other major benefit of the AUUA is that we bond together - not in an "us vs. them" mentality - but as a group of business professionals who hold ourselves and our peers to a standard of excellence. The work we do is a form of ministry, or as some folks like to call it, "administry".

While many of our congregations appreciate the work of their Administrator, many of them still do not. It is up to us as a professional, collegial organization to help ensure that all of our colleagues are receiving the support and respect that they so deserve. This is a social justice issue! As Unitarian Universalists, we covenant to "respect the inherent worth and dignity of every individual"; our First Unitarian Universalist Principle doesn't just apply to the work done outside our churches or for our congregants; it should apply to all paid staff working within our churches also!

This fiscal year, we have reduced our membership dues to \$40.00, starting September 1, no matter how large or small your church or organization may be. We hope that this will make membership possible for those who find this organization helpful. If you have already paid your dues for the next year and have paid more than \$40, we will apply the credit to the next fiscal year, starting September 1, 2010. Because we are lowering the dues to make it possible for everyone to join, the listserv will be available for AUUA members only as of January 1, 2010.

There are many benefits to AUUA membership (*including our website - read more about that in this newsletter*), but the collegial bond which we enjoy and the support that we share with one another is crucial in helping our congregations to recognize us as religious professionals. Certified Religious Educators and Music Directors can now stand proudly on the stage with Ministers at General Assembly to be recognized. It is our goal that certified Administrators have that opportunity available someday soon as well!

If you have any questions or need more information about our new membership program, please contact Mary Ellen Morgan at businessadmin@uucb.org. Membership Applications are available at www.auua.org and in this issue of the newsletter!

We look forward to counting you among our membership!

Mary Ellen

Mary Ellen Morgan

Membership

Phillip

Phillip Brock

Newsletter & Website

What I Love About the AUUA - from Your Board of Trustees

The AUUA gives me colleagues to talk with, answers to silly questions, and most of all the feeling of not being alone out here in church office land. I get some pretty strange requests ("I just moved to town and need a doctor"), talk to people who have just lost a sibling, husband, etc. and it always brings me back to AUUA members who are dealing with the same issues and somehow life doesn't seem so bad.

Sue King Vice-President

I work in the cold basement of a granite church in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Sometimes, if I look in the picture across from my desk in just the right way, I can see the alley behind the church. My membership in the AUUA allows me to see beyond that alley. Through the listserv I hear how other church administrators solve problems, I learn about valuable resources for my church, and I also get to see how alike we all are.

During General Assembly, Professional Day gives me the opportunity for professional development while meeting my peers. At Cluster meetings here in the Northern New England District, I get to know others who do the same work that I do. I hear about how other churches are handling everything from the economy to sanitation. I laugh at the funny stories we all accumulate, and feel concern when one of us needs extra support. These are the Administrators I really get to know, the ones I can pick up the phone and call when I have a problem, and the ones who listen with care and compassion when I am the one that needs support.

There is a world beyond my alley window, and the AUUA helps me access it.

Julie Slayton Frank Treasurer

I came to the congregation I work for with a 17-year background in non-profit management but without a background in Unitarian Universalism. Becoming a member of AUUA helped me in understanding Unitarian Universalism better in my own congregation, other congregations, the Mid-South District, and the Unitarian Universalist Association. Participating in AUUA Professional Days and working on the AUUA Board has connected me with a support system of other Administrative Professionals, given me many resources like the AUUA listserv, and has enhanced my skills as an Administrator. I know that when situations arise and I need advice I can pick up the phone or send an email to another AUUA professional and get valuable feedback. If you have to keep recreating the wheel you will become tired. But, if someone is willing to share with you how they made their wheel, then you can engage together in a process to make a better wheel. This collaborative process can energize you and give you a great sense of accomplishment and kinship.

Sherri Wiseman Secretary

Nothing has been more important to my work as a Unitarian Universalist Administrator than my membership in the AUUA. I have a knowledgeable and experienced group of colleagues who always knows the answers to my questions and has done the research on the best software and equipment for the job. Because of this, I look much smarter than I really am! (Don't tell anyone!)

Mary Ellen Morgan Membership

I have been a member of the AUUA since 2006, but my schedule and finances didn't allow me to attend Professional Day in 2007 and finances kept any staff from my church attending General Assembly at all in 2008! It wasn't until I was able to attend Professional Day at General Assembly in June of 2009 that the importance of my AUUA membership became so apparent to me. I met so many wonderful colleagues while in Salt Lake City, and we got to share so many stories and experiences that it was a great reminder to me that I was indeed not alone! The joys and sorrows of our jobs are what we all share, not to mention the great ideas and assistance we receive from each other on the Administrator listserv. For those of us that are geographically isolated and not able to attend cluster meetings, having that connection with all of you (and your insight and experience) is crucial!

Phillip Brock Newsletter & Website

Finding the AUUA after working at a small to mid-sized congregation for more than five years was the answer to many administrative prayers! Having been a member now for several years, I am constantly making use of the many wonderful new ideas and suggestions offered by other administrators on the AUUA listserv. The AUUA Guidebook has a prominent place on both my virtual and actual desk top and has become a go-to resource not only for me but our congregational leadership. I am excited to be planning to attend my first Professional Days conference in 2010! As church administrators, we are in a unique position in our churches as well as our communities; it is important for us to share and support each other as we meet the challenges of our individual positions.

Shaye Gambrell

At times the role of Church Administrator can be a lonely one. My membership in AUUA provides me with the support of a community that understands the issues, challenges, and joy that I face every day. I value the shared expertise and fellowship provided by this organization.

Katie Loughary

What's important for me is the sense of being a part of something larger and reaping the combined knowledge of those who have more experience than I. This knowledge is often available on the listserv or with a phone call, but I prefer the actual meetings we have, such as Professional Day. The chance to discuss and learn in detail is readily available there and helps make my membership wonderfully valuable.

Jeter Walker



AUUA Mailing Address:

Our new mailing address is:

P.O. Box 10991

Napa, CA 94581-2991



What's Happening At The AUUA?



What Would You Like to See?

Our website, www.auua.org, is fairly basic, but we are in the process of looking to develop it further with the hope that it can become a comprehensive, multiple-use tool for all of us.

What would you like to see? What do you think would be helpful to have readily available?

Our newsletter, *Key Connections*, is the newsletter of the AUUA and is here for us as well.

Please send me your ideas, opinions, and insights for the website and newsletter. While I cannot promise or guarantee that we will implement everything, we are definitely interested in your input!

I look forward to hearing from you!

Phillip

Phillip Brock
 Newsletter & Website
phillipbrock@yahoo.com



Have News You Would Like to Share?

Introducing: *Wheel of Life*

In order to allow us to get to know and to celebrate and support one another, we will begin a newsletter column where we can share our joys and concerns. When you have news to share, please send it in to Phillip at phillipbrock@yahoo.com and let him know it is for the new *Wheel of Life* column. New babies, anniversaries, educational achievements, promotions, etc. - let us know!



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 All Souls Church, Unitarian

Sharing Our Journey

Learn something new and helpful? Have a great tip you would love to share with other Administrators? Send them in to *Sharing Our Journey* and we will feature them in the newsletter on a space-available basis.

Aisle Width & Fire and Safety Code Compliance

In the Sanctuary of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Spokane, they use movable chairs instead of fixed chairs or pews. This always presented a logistics problem in maintaining accurate aisle spacing to adhere to local fire codes, especially with regards to wheelchairs.

The local code specifies that a minimum of 42" must be maintained on all aisles and facility exit pathways. The combination of movable chairs and "too many cooks in the kitchen" resulted in a setup that was not always in compliance.

In order to make setup (and spot-checking other people's setups) easy, we bought a large swatch of heavy felt and cut out a 42" circle. This felt circle can be laid on the floor and you can see in an instant if an aisle or exit pathway is in compliance. We used felt because our Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall have hardwood floors, so you may need to use a different material altogether for ease of moveability (maybe plexiglass for carpeted floors?). We used a circle because the 42" code used locally is a minimum for a wheelchair to be able to turn around and navigate in.

I hope this helps or gives you ideas of your own!

Phillip

Phillip Brock
 Newsletter & Website





Membership Application / Renewal

Please complete the form and mail with a check for \$40.00 to:

AUUA
c/o Mary Ellen Morgan
P.O. Box 10991
Napa, CA 94581
businessadmin@uucb.org

Name: _____

Title: _____

Congregation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

In your job, do you have primary or supervisory responsibility for any of the following? Please check all that apply:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Systems Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Office Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Finance or Fund Raising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food Service Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Facility Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel Management | | |

How many people do you supervise? _____

Please list their job titles:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Please continue on back of the page if needed.