

CATALYST

HIGHLIGHTS FROM MULTICULTURAL GROWTH REGARDING RACIAL AND ETHNIC CONCERNS

Engaged in recognizing and “re-storying” ourselves for a multicultural Unitarian Universalist future

General Assembly 2011:

This year’s General Assembly in Charlotte offered many opportunities to engage with our denomination’s 50-year history, as well as to look forward to the next 50 years and how we can grow in new ways. We’d like to particularly lift up what a talented and vibrant group of leaders attended our anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multiculturalism training this year.

Every other year, this training is held for newly elected and appointed committee members after General Assembly. Organized by Multicultural Growth & Witness, this year’s training was facilitated by **Rev. Hope Johnson, Dr. Mark Hicks, and Rev. Josh Pawelek**. Attendees represented the newest leadership on the Board of Trustees, the Nominating Committee, the GA Planning Committee, the Commission on Appraisal, the Commission on Social Witness, and the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Committee. Participants left with a commitment to infusing their committee work with anti-oppression.

One of the activities of the day invited each participant to contribute pieces of wood and stones to a structure meant to represent the Beloved Community. Along the way things fell apart and were built anew—here is the Beloved Community we built! We invite you to try this exercise in your own congregation.



photo by Alex Kapitan

Exciting New Resource:

Great news! **Keep Talking, Start Doing: Ten Ways to Deepen Your Congregation’s Multiculturalism Journey** is now available. Whether you’re beginning this journey or you’ve been on the path for many years, this brand-new resource will give you some tools to help you do, or continue to do, intentional work within your community around anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multiculturalism. To view it, visit <http://www.uua.org/leaders/idbm/multiculturalism/introduction/185106.shtml>.

General Assembly 2012:

As we look toward GA 2012, it is with a spirit of humility, solidarity, and urgency that we contemplate the many ways in which we can make ourselves more ready for this crucial upcoming Justice GA. Next year's General Assembly presents a unique opportunity for us to bring our best selves to the table. When communities and people of faith make the effort to prepare ourselves to engage in responsible, accountable justicemaking, it makes true solidarity more possible.

Rev. Orlanda Brugnola offered a successful Responsive Resolution at this year's General Assembly, urging those UUs who don't know Spanish to use the next year to gain some Spanish language skills. As Rev. Brugnola has said, "Especially in matters of faith, it is a solace to hear the language that greeted us at our birth." If we arrive in Arizona next summer with a spirit of respect, love, and welcome—and with some proficiency in Spanish—we will stand a better chance of being useful to our partners in Phoenix.

One of the paths to multicultural competency is broadening ourselves by learning languages other than those we grew up speaking. And as our country's demographics shift, an understanding of Spanish and other languages will help us to engage in deeper relationships within our local communities. We encourage you to partner with other congregations near you to engage in creative learning opportunities around language, culture, and GA 2012.



Building the World We Dream About:

This month, we'd like to draw attention to the **Florida District**, which has done impressive work recently around anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multiculturalism. Florida District Executive **Kenn Hurto** shared the following reflection on one congregation in particular:

"Our **Port Charlotte Unitarian Universalist** congregation is small but mighty! It involved over one-half of its 84 members in a year-long study and exploration of Building the World We Dream About. This outdid every other Florida congregation! The experience was so positive, that nearly all participants have signed up for part two starting this fall. The planning team did a superb job through sermons and Q&A sessions prior to the program launch to educate and motivate their members. In this next year, we will learn what difference the course is making in individual, congregational and community life."

Congregations, districts, and regions are engaging deeply with Building the World We Dream About (BtWWDA), tailoring the curriculum to their needs by collaborating with Multicultural Growth staff. If you've already engaged with it (or if you'd like to learn more), please email **Alex Kapitan**, Congregational Justice Administrator, at akapitan@uua.org. We want to support you and celebrate your work!

Dream with us. Strategize with us. Build community with us. Support us...Join us in this holy work.

Living our faith,



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