

Giving Life the Shape of Justice



Prairie Star District Annual Conference
April 28-30, 2006
Downtown Sheraton Hotel
Iowa City, Iowa

Social justice, a core Unitarian Universalist value, sparks discussion, debate, and decisive action in each of our UU communities. As people committed to justice for all, not just in the US but around the world, we invite you to share an exciting weekend of fellowship, inspiration, and involvement in Iowa City, an award-winning university town set on the lovely (and lively!) banks of the Iowa River.

Hosted by the Unitarian Universalist Society of Iowa City

Schedule	General Session Highlights
<p>Friday, April 28</p> <p>Registration 4:00 - 7:00 PM</p> <p>UU Bookstore and exhibits open 6:00 - 7:00 PM</p> <p>Opening celebration and banner parade 7:00 - 7:45 PM</p> <p>Keynote address 7:45 - 8:45 PM</p> <p>Keynote discussion 8:45 - 9:15 PM</p> <p>Worship service 9:30 - 10:00 PM</p> <p>Saturday, April 29</p> <p>Breakfast, and table topics 7:30 - 9:00 AM</p> <p>UU Bookstore and exhibits open 8 AM - 7 PM</p> <p>Judy Lecture 9:00 - 10:15 AM</p> <p>Workshop A 10:30 - 11:45 AM</p> <p>Awards luncheon 12:00 - 1:15 PM</p> <p>Workshop B 1:30 - 2:45 PM</p> <p>Refreshments 2:45 - 3:15 PM</p> <p>Workshop C 3:15 - 4:30 PM</p> <p>Business meeting 4:45 - 6:15 PM</p> <p>Social time, cash bar 6:15 - 7:00 PM</p> <p>Banquet 7:00 - 9:00 PM</p> <p>Youth-led worship service 9:15 - 10:00 PM</p> <p>Sunday, April 30</p> <p>Breakfast, and table topics 7:30 - 8:45 AM</p> <p>UU Bookstore and exhibits open 8:00 - 9:30 AM</p> <p>Choir practice 8:15 - 9:15 AM</p> <p>Worship service at the Englert Theatre 9:30 - 10:30 AM</p>	<p>Keynote - Friday, 7:45 PM</p>  <p>Making A Difference in a Globalized Age: Lessons from the Field Johanna Chao Rittenburg <i>Manager, UUSC Economic Justice Program</i></p> <p>Learn more about the impact of civil society movements from all over the world as Johanna shares stories from the economic justice partnerships and human rights and workers rights program being developed at the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. She will describe how local community-based efforts (such as PSD, UU Small Group Ministries, social action committees, and youth groups) have become vital members of coalitions that tap into larger policy and advocacy efforts for social and economic justice. She will conclude by examining the theological roots of our faith, which provide a foundation for faith in action.</p> <p>Before coming to the UUSC, Johanna worked as a community organizer and activist on racial and social justice projects and as a mediator in the district court system. She helped build bridges between diverse communities on contentious issues, and started several policy projects and organizations focused on the immigrant and Asian-Pacific Islander community. Johanna has degrees from Stanford University and the John F. Kennedy School of Government, and was named a Lucius N. Littauer Fellow in 2005.</p> <p>Judy Lecture - Saturday, 9:00 AM</p>  <p>The Revolution Starts Now The Rev. Valerie Mapstone Ackerman, MSW, MDiv <i>Red Dog Farm and Retreat Center, Haskell, OK</i></p> <p>At a time when words like peace, compassion, understanding, and reason have become suspect, it is the duty of peaceful, compassionate, and reasonable people to stand up and make their voices heard. This revolutionary idea must include a gentle spirit and a commitment to non-violent action. It IS possible to change the course of human events, but only if we prepare ourselves in mind, body, and spirit. Because Unitarian Universalism has always borne a heretical heart in matters religious and social, let us fulfill our legacy and step forward to be the change we want to see in the world.</p> <p>Valerie grew up in a working class town near Pittsburgh, PA. Married young and divorced quickly, she knows the social welfare system from the client's side. After graduating with degrees from the Universities of Pittsburgh and Michigan, and from Meadville-Lombard Theological School, she worked with young people, in reproductive health care, as an advocate for homeless children, and for residents of public housing. A community organizer, politician, therapist, and adjunct faculty member of the School of Social Work at U-Michigan, she has served UU congregations in four states. Her ministry now includes itinerant preaching, consulting with UU boards and congregations, advocacy for peace and justice, hosting spiritual retreats and discussion groups, and award-winning writing.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Sunday worship service will be held from 9:30 - 10:30 AM at the newly renovated Englert Theatre, located a short 1-1/2 blocks from the hotel. Built in 1912, the Englert has been a venue for such stars as Sarah Bernhardt, Paul Robeson, Ethel Barrymore, Otis Skinner, and Harry Lauder. This Iowa City gem has been restored to its former beauty after nearly a century of transformation.</p> </div>	

General Information

ACCOMMODATIONS

Sheraton Iowa City Hotel
210 South Dubuque Street
Iowa City, IA 52240

The Sheraton is located in downtown Iowa City, three blocks from the beautiful University of Iowa campus (directions to the hotel will be part of your confirmation packet). It is surrounded by restaurants, art galleries, book stores, and interesting shops, and is less than four blocks from the historic UUSIC building.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

A discounted rate of \$99 per night per room for one to four occupants is available. Children under age 18 may stay free with a parent. Rooms must be reserved by **March 27, 2006**.

For discounted rate, please be sure to specify that you are attending the Unitarian Universalist Prairie Star District Conference.

Phone: 800-848-1335

Fax: 319-337-7037

Web: www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/praiiestar/

Free parking is available for conference participants in the city ramp adjacent to the hotel.

MEALS

Adult registration includes Saturday breakfast, lunch, and dinner; and Sunday breakfast. If you prefer vegetarian meals, please indicate this on your registration form.

REGISTRATION

Registration is \$130 for adults. Please photocopy the registration form for each attendee 12 years old and older. Early bird registration (\$115) for adults must be postmarked by **March 27, 2006**. To register online, visit www.psd.uaa.org/conf/.

BANNER PARADE

You are invited and encouraged to bring your congregation's banner (and pole) for the Banner Parade Friday evening, and banners will be exhibited throughout the conference. To learn more about banners, visit www.uua.org/ga/bannerspecs.pdf.

CHOIR

Please check the choir box on your registration if you would like to sing with the conference choir at the Sunday Service at 9:30 AM.

QUESTIONS? Contact Peggy Houston, 319-351-1438, PLHouston@mchsi.com.

YOUTH PROGRAM

Youth registration is \$50, which includes housing and meals. All attending youth must be sponsored by an adult attending the conference. Let your congregation know if you are willing to sponsor a young person. Youth activities will be held at the UUSIC building, 4 blocks from the hotel; and youth will provide the Saturday evening worship service. Youth registration must include both the Youth Social Action Conference Registration Form and the PSD Annual Conference Registration form.

FOR CHILDREN K-6

Scenes of Justice – We're More Alike than Different! Children K-6 will explore stories from around the world through activities, games, and art. Parents and participants at the conference will be invited to stop in and participate in any of the projects; and children will eat with their parents or adult sponsors, so this will be a truly integrated experience for the whole family. Registration is \$40.

CHILD CARE

Child care will be available at the hotel for children ages 3-5 years. The fee is \$40 per child; registration must be received by **March 27, 2006**.

Many thanks to Anders Haig, who designed our conference logo.

Help us give the "shape of justice" a very human and very local face by focusing UU generosity on the Johnson County Shelter House in Iowa City.

Shelter House, our county's only general use homeless shelter, offers shelter, basic and transitional resources, and encouragement toward self-sufficiency to anyone in our community who needs it. And we can help them meet this need if each of us participating in the conference **brings items** to donate to Shelter House. The folks there tell us that what they need most are:

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|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bath towels (new or gently used) | <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry detergent | <input type="checkbox"/> Toothpaste |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning supplies | <input type="checkbox"/> Peanut butter | <input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrushes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee | <input type="checkbox"/> Phone cards, prepaid | <input type="checkbox"/> Women's personal hygiene items |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diapers, disposable | <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet paper | |

Let's gather so much that our UU generosity is truly newsworthy! In addition, 100% of the offering at the Sunday Service will be contributed to the Shelter House.

Please -- come with an open heart and an open wallet!

SESSION A Workshops
10:30 to 11:45 AM, Saturday, April 29

A1 - A Field of Dreamers and Doers: UUs and Social Justice in Iowa

Tom Lo Guidice, PSD Social Justice Coordinator and member UU Fellowship of Dubuque, IA

Service. Education. Witness. Advocacy.

Community Organizing. Knowing where to start to work for change in our society can seem like an overwhelming task. It's important to choose the best type of action according to congregational interests, skills, and talents. In this session, we will explore types of social action and hear from three Iowa congregations (small, mid-size, and large) and the work they are doing. All of the represented congregations are members of the Iowa Cluster of the Prairie Star Social Justice Network.

A2 - Singing in the Oral Tradition

Paul Soderdahl, UU Society of Iowa City, IA

Songs handed down in the oral tradition are tools for engaging in daily activities and coping with life events. These songs of protest, of freedom, and of peace give power to those who fight for justice. Our singing will draw from calls and chants, spirituals, gospels, hymns, African music, and contemporary songs. You don't need any musical training to participate. You just need to bring your voice and a willingness to join in the vocal community. Youth, young adults, and families with children are also encouraged to participate in this workshop.

A3 - The Revolution Starts Now, Part 2

Rev. Valerie Mapstone Ackerman, MSW, MDiv; Red Dog Farm and Retreat Center, Haskell, OK

Though many UU congregations have thriving social service programs, few enjoy effective social justice programs. What's the difference? Can we find ways to save the "babies in the river" AND stop them from becoming endangered in the first place? Share your stories of frustration and success, and learn some techniques for assessing and strengthening your congregation's social justice programs.

A4 - Mission, Music, and Money

Rev. Don Rollins, Nora UU Church, Hanska, MN

We UUs swim in a sea of ever-increasing and often complicated advice on church governance and growth. This workshop asks and answers the question, "What is essential for a people to become the 'beloved community'?"

A5 - The Engaged Citizen and the Common Good -- Getting Started

Elaine Rockwell, First Unitarian Church, Des Moines, IA

As UUs committed to changing the world for the better, where do we start? How can you start an informed conversation about "everyday social justice" within your congregation? Based on *Turning to One Another*, by Margaret J. Wheatley, the conversation begins with two questions: "What is my faith in the future?" and "When have I experienced working for the common good?" To close, we will brainstorm actions for practicing the common good, as individuals and as a church community.

A6 - Think Globally, Act Locally: Global Outreach from Local Fellowship

Bob Anderson, Unitarian Fellowship, Ames, IA

Learn about opportunities to promote international education, development, and peace through local initiatives.

A7 - Civil Marriage for Everyone Now

Rev. Virginia Wolf, UU Congregation of Eau Claire, WI

Seventeen states have passed constitutional amendments banning same-sex marriage or similar legal protections; other states are in the process of trying to pass such amendments. Is yours one of these? What are you doing about it? What might you do about it? What is at stake here? Why should you get involved, no matter what your state might or might not be doing? Come share your ideas and carry home ideas from others.

SESSION B Workshops 1:30 to 2:45 PM, Saturday, April 29

B1 - What Can You Do to Help Reduce Poverty in the World?

*Charles Fantz and Genia Peterson Kornhaber,
UU Fellowship of Topeka, KS*

The UU United Nations Office has developed a new program, "Every Child Is Our Child." It is a way for UUs to connect with the UN's Millennium Development Goals in Ghana. Come find out how you can help educate children who have been orphaned by AIDS, reduce poverty, and promote gender equality.

B2 - Gilead and a Vision of Life

Marilynne Robinson, Congregational United Church of Christ of Iowa City, IA

Winner of the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for fiction, Marilynne Robinson is a faculty member in the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop. Her novel *Gilead* recounts the experiences and thoughts of a small-town Iowa minister, writing to his young son as he feels the approach of death. Meet with the author to discuss this novel, described as a "hymn of praise and lamentation" that reflects on themes of "faith, courage, forgiveness, solitude, friendship, grace, as well as human weaknesses..."

B3 - Faith Activism and the Living Wage Movement

Johanna Chao Rittenburg, UUSC Economic Justice Program Manager

How are faith activists playing a powerful role in generating positive social and economic change? How do we move from the "Word" to the "world"? View a new documentary on the Santa Fe Living Wage campaign and engage in a discussion about faith-labor-community coalitions that are having a profound impact for economic justice.

B4 - Making Your Congregation Young Adult Friendly

Andrea Anderson, Dakota UU Fellowship, and David Leppik, member of PSD Board and First Universalist Church, Minneapolis, MN

All Unitarians Universalists share in the challenge and responsibility of making our congregations places where people are encouraged and enabled to become increasingly mature, responsible adults. A primary

aspect of this challenge is to engage young adults in the life of each of our congregations. If we are to do that, we each need to contribute to making our congregations more young adult friendly.

B5 - Board Basics 101

Nancy Heege, PSD Executive, and Prairie Star District Board Members

What's the proper role for board members in a UU congregation? Should board members be concerned with day-to-day operations, or should they keep their focus on the long-term vision? How should our time be spent at board meetings? What orientation does a board member need? Join us for a conversation about "Board Basics."

B6 - How the Intelligent Design Movement Impacts Our Congregations, Communities, and World

Fritz Franzen and Sam Wormley, UU Fellowship of Ames, IA
Join us as we explore these questions:

- What is science?
- What is evolution?
- What is Intelligent Design?
- Should it be taught as science?
- Why should we care?

B7 - AMOS Changed our Church: One Church's Experience with a Community Organizing Strategy

Sally Boeckholt and Rev. Mark Stringer, First Unitarian Church, Des Moines, IA

In a workshop sponsored by the Prairie Star District board, representatives from First Unitarian Church, Des Moines, discuss how their church became involved with the Industrial Areas Foundation, the challenges they faced, and what they gained. Then you can share your successes and challenges with community organizing. Learn more about the invigorating role that community organizing can play in the life of our UU congregations.

SESSION C Workshops 3:15 to 4:30 PM, Saturday, April 29

C1 - Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters: A Report from Prairie Star Social Justice Network Working Group

Tom Lo Guidice (UUF, Dubuque), Betsy Allis (First Universalist, Minneapolis), Bob Cernia (UUF, Northfield), Vicki Pratt (Second Unitarian, Omaha), Jo Haberman (First Unitarian, Minneapolis), Mary Westfall (UUF, Manhattan)

Learn about the work of southern Iowa, southern Minnesota, eastern Wisconsin social justice clusters and the Metro Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA). Speakers explain how religious principles motivate their work, and provide a one-page summary of cluster work and contacts.

C2 - Was George Washington a Closet Unitarian?

Clair W. Keller and Fritz Franzen, UU Fellowship, Ames, IA

At a rural tavern, an itinerate minister (Fritz Franzen, in costume) interviews George Washington (Clair Keller, in costume) in an effort determine his religious views. After the interview, the audience will discuss whether Washington's responses reflect the Unitarian values of his time.

C3 - The Growing Branches of Stonetree

Dawn Cooley, PSD Stonetree Coordinator and First Unitarian Society, Minneapolis, MN

Come see the exciting capabilities that have been added to Stonetree Version 2 (www.stonetreeuu.org), a great web resource. We would love feedback from people listed on Stonetree, as well as from those who use it to find resources for their PSD congregations, exchange ideas, and locate speakers and arts resources via this unique "Unitarian Universalist Recommended" resource!

C4 - Youth Conferences: The YAC and the Seal

Lucky Dehn and Kira Pontiff, both members of PSD Youth Adult Committee and UU Church of Minnetonka, Wayzata, MN

From enthusiastic support to boycotts, youth "cons" evoke strong reactions from parents, church staff, advisors, and the youth who attend them. What happens there? Are they safe? Find out what cons provide our youth, and at what risk. Learn about important changes to the "Seal of Approval" for youth cons in our district.

C5 - Engaging Our Theological Diversity

Nancy Heege, PSD District Executive, and Kathy Bowman, PSD Vice President and Unitarian Church, Davenport, IA

In our congregations, people hold a variety of beliefs. What, then, holds us together? What features, if they were taken away, would leave something that is no longer recognizably Unitarian Universalism? A discussion about the 2005 Commission on Appraisal report, *Engaging Our Theological Diversity*. Participants will take home an adult education curriculum outline.

C6 - Making Justice Possible for the Indigenous Peoples of the Prairies: Going Beyond Indian Gaming

Thomas M. Disselhorst, Bismarck (ND)-Mandan Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Join us to examine justice issues facing the indigenous peoples of the prairies. What are our prejudices, and the prejudices of our communities? What perceptions among both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples, and what institutions and policies, prevent justice from becoming a reality? Finally, what can we as UUs do to make our principles come alive on this issue, and to make a difference? Our voices have always been most powerful when we are seeking justice. Come prepared to be honest in expressing your views -- and expect to be challenged!

C7 - What is "Social Justice" Anyway, and How Can We End Homelessness?

Rahima Wade and Gay Mikelson, UU Society of Iowa City, IA

Explore, question, and challenge your ideas about "social justice" through an interactive exercise to examine our views, appreciate multiple perspectives, and further our understanding about how to work for social justice. Using homelessness as the focus, we will share project ideas, explore barriers and generate new possibilities for working on the causes of homelessness in our communities and our world.



While you are here, be sure to visit our unique home at 10 S. Gilbert Street, 4 blocks north of the hotel.

Come early and stay late!

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Iowa City welcomes you to our community! Many conference participants tell us they plan to extend their stay by a day or two, for Iowa City has much to offer! We hope you will, too.

Iowa City

- ★ Third most educated metro area in the US in 2005
- ★ “Top Business Opportunity Metro for 2005”
- ★ “Super City of the Future”

Architecture

- UUSIC’s own, century-old church, a unique and rare survivor of 19th century Unitarian architecture on the prairie
- Old Capitol, territorial capitol built in 1840
- UI Pentacrest, Greek Revival at its most impressive
- Carver Hawkeye Arena, soaring modernity and winner of several architectural awards
- Beautiful Victorian homes throughout the city

Entertainment

 the weekend of the conference:

- UI Hancher Auditorium, *The Crucible*, by Arthur Miller
- Jazz, rock, folk, blues, country, and contemporary music -- all within easy walking distance of your hotel
- Annual Riverfest 2006, and Riverbank Art Fair, three blocks west of the hotel, with arts, crafts, music, and more

Shops – Import/export shops, art galleries, antique and book stores, coin and jewelry shops, funky clothes, kitchenware, records/CDs, art supplies, toys!

Restaurants – African, Chinese, Korean, French, Japanese, Indian, Mexican, Vietnamese, Greek, Italian, Irish, American, pub grub, deli, vegetarian, espresso, ice cream parlor – you name it!

Museums

- UI Art Museum – Mauricio Lasanski, Childe Hassam, Martin Lewis, Reginald Marsh, Joseph Pennell, John Sloan; “American Prints and Drawings - the January Collection”; and “Time and Space in African Art.”
- UI Museum of Natural History – Take a 500-million-year journey through Iowa geology, ecology and native cultures; also Bird Hall, Mammal Hall, a wonderful giant sloth, and a great tornado.

Wildlife –The Iowa River runs through the middle of the campus, and here you can see bald eagles, Canada geese, and a variety of other wildfowl. Peaceful walking paths make it easy!

In the area

- Amana Colonies, 15 miles west
- Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, 7 miles east
- Kalona and its Amish community, 20 miles south

Prairie Star District
Unitarian Universalist Association
122 W. Franklin Avenue, Suite 303
Minneapolis, MN 55404

2006 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Minneapolis, MN
Permit No. 3032



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