



Partner Church News

A publication of the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council
Connecting Unitarian and Universalist congregations around the globe

Volume 14 Number 1

Spring 2007

FIRST, A KISS ON BOTH CHEEKS...

Now, Go Steadily on Your Way!

BY BARBARA KRES BEACH

Benjamin Franklin famously remarked, "Older women are grateful." I have graduated into that unenvied state. And I am grateful, though, at this moment, not precisely in the way that sly old Ben had in mind.

I am grateful for having been with the UUPCC at the creation in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1993. I am grateful because when I look out at our members, our friends, our partners, I see an amazing panorama of committed congregations and incredible leaders.

I am grateful because I see an organization where laypeople across our denomination have come together, learned from one another, bumped up against one another. I see laypeople and ministers doing the work of partnership, people who give not only time but money—serious dollars—because they feel a personal connection with this work and believe in it.

I am grateful for the Greater Washington Area PCC, where
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Khasi Hills: the Smit church with its school at the side. Smit is a potential partner for East Shore, along with the Kharang church. (Story, p. 11)

REFLECTIONS ON A VISIT TO INDIA:

Setting Policy by Listening to the People

BY RICHARD FORD

I spent two weeks in India during the first part of March. In part the visit was to overlap with a study tour of 12 UU travelers, mostly from the Seattle area and Washington, DC. I also took the next steps to launch the UUPCC capacity building program in India. My first task was to meet with a colleague, Dr. Kyrham Nongkynrih, who teaches at North Eastern Hill University and will be responsible for managing the field assessment teams in Meghalaya. He asked me to teach a class in one of his graduate seminars in social theory. I was delighted.

The classroom I walked into had 35 or 40 bright, young students, mostly women. These were the next generation of leaders and innovators in Meghalaya's social programs. An interesting group; an important role for them once they completed their training; and a pivotal group to influence social well-being for the people of the Khasi Hills over the next 30 to 40 years.

I explained I would focus on village institutions as a means to stimulate sustainable livelihoods. I asked how
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The Mission of the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council is to foster and support partner church relationships between North American congregations and congregations in all other countries where partnering is sought and welcomed. This includes countries where partners are already active.

A Working Model

(Continued from page 1)

many of the class had grown up in villages. Silence, smiles, and no response. So I asked again. More silence. It gradually penetrated my brain that no member of the class had grown up in one of Meghalaya's villages even though more than 2/3 of the people live in rural communities. I asked if the rest of the student body was largely urban-based or how many of their student friends came from village backgrounds. Again, more smiles and more silence.

What did I learn (and later confirmed in conversations with Dr. Nongkynrih)? Very few—possibly less than 5% of rural Meghalayans—ever get close to a university classroom, let alone graduate. Limited finances, poor facilities in village schools, demands to work to support rural family livelihoods, and clouded vision keep Meghalaya's rural poor impoverished. Later in the visit I had a long talk with a young man who had worked in the local coal mines for six years, walking an hour and a half morning and

evening to/from work, walking and crawling another 2 kilometers to get to the face of the coal seam, and then 8 to 10 hours of dangerous and back-breaking work, and receiving a pittance of a wage for his 12 hour days. It was the only job he could find because he had no skills.

What are these stories telling us?

- Poverty is real in Meghalaya and has been a way of life for many generations,
- If present trends continue, the poor will remain poor, in spite of government, donor, and charitable programs,
- External interventions and outside money may be helpful, but they may not, depending on who designs the programs and policies and how they are managed,
- Systematic listening is the first step toward setting programs that enable the people to pull themselves out of

poverty and that the people will support and sustain.

In response to this message, the UUPCC capacity building program will conduct its first community needs assessment in Meghalaya state in the village of Puriang, in cooperation with its UU partner church in Fairfax, Virginia. Two or three additional communities are in line for later assessments and, as the program in the Khasi Hills takes shape, they will have assessments and follow up of their own. It was a memorable visit and yielded concrete, practical, and highly positive results. If poverty is to be reduced in Meghalaya it will be because the people have learned tools and organized themselves to solve their own problems. UUs are now engaged in this process. What better way to make UU values UU practices? ●●

**Next PCC Deadline:
August 31, 2007**

PARTNER CHURCH NEWS is the newsletter of the UU Partner Church Council, an independent affiliate organization of the Unitarian Universalist Association, started in 1993.

This newsletter supports the mission and goals of the Partner Church Council.

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The UU Partner Church Council is a 501(c)(3) charitable tax-exempt organization.

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For any other information, contact the UUPCC office at 781-275-1710, or uupcc@uua.org, or PO Box 88, Bedford, MA 01730
Visit the web site at: www.uupcc.org

RESOURCES

Recently as I was looking for resources about our international partners I came across the extensive 16-unit curriculum on the ICUU web site: www.icuu.net. The curriculum, *Garden of Unitarian Universalism* by Melinda Sayavedra and Marilyn Walker has step by step directions, information on history, worship services and handouts. The unit on the Philippines is not completed at this time, but I would encourage anyone interested in the international information to check out this terrific resource.

The International Council of Unitarians and Universalists is a network of Unitarian, Universalist and Unitarian Universalist organizations. Member groups come from 23 countries, so besides countries with partner churches the curriculum includes many areas such as Poland, Australia, UK, Western Europe, Pakistan and Africa.

—Barbara Weber

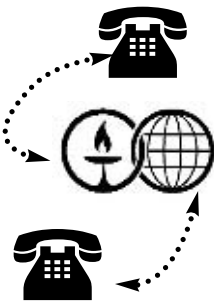
JOIN US ON THE NEXT IN OUR SERIES OF UUPCC VIRTUAL CONFERENCES

May 16, 8:00 p.m. (Eastern Daylight Time)

“Conversation with the Leaders” with Barbara Kres Beach, Harold Babcock, and Cathy Cordes

Look for announcements on the PCC-Chat line, or in your mailbox! Meanwhile, read the summary notes of the last call, “Update on India Partnerships” on page 8 of this issue.

To register: Contact the UUPCC office at register [@uupcc.org](http://uupcc.org) —or call 781-275-1710



Include: * your name * city/state * which call(s) you will attend
You will be sent an email with the call-in information 2–3 days before the “Virtual Conference.”

Go Steadily on Your Way

(Continued from page 1)

representatives from 25 churches link in the common cause of partnership. And for their C2C (capitol to capitol) project—Washington to Bucharest—forging a new partnership with a small congregation in the capital of Romania.

I am grateful for our pay-your-own-way Board of Trustees, planning the goals for the year, writing policy, bylaws, letters and tens of thousands of emails, working and laughing together in Tulsa, Oklahoma, cared for by some amazing hosts and hostesses, nourished by affection and great dinners, and after three days of sweat and steam, looking across the meeting table and agreeing, “We’re ready. We CAN do this together.”

I am grateful for an Executive Director who has got to be the best in the business! We have struggled, worked, won, and laughed together.

I am grateful for our excellent staff, who help us do our mission-airy work.

I am grateful for the next Board Chair, to whom I offer this challenge:



Barbara Kres Beach, Chair, Board of Trustees, UUPCC

capacity, to strengthen partnership, to do economic fairness, to help partners get money for their own projects and pay it back, Grameen Bank-style;

- Collaborate with the panoply of UU international organizations, each with a mission, history, and passion to share; and
- Help us to be priests and prophets for one another and for our shared ministry.

Most of all I am grateful for YOU, dear partners throughout the world, and for my friends, critics, and curmudgeons in the US. You write emails that scorch the page, then telephone and lavish love. You are intelligent, clear-headed, and talented. And I see you—

- Work to make what we have done over the last 14 years pale in comparison to what we will become;

- Work to open new doors and new continents—beginning with Africa and Latin America—and work to build community

most recently in Ohio and Virginia, in Arizona and Massachusetts—electrified by the need to move our Association into the healing circle of international commitment.

You have given me joy because you know exactly what it takes to reach across the continent and across the world. I kiss you on both cheeks. Do not give up this journey.

I want to conclude this final column as your Board Chair with benedictory words that touched me the first time I heard them in the rich, resonant voice of Paul Carnes, former UUA President, of blessed memory:

“Fix thou our steps, O Lord, that we stagger not at the uneven motions of the world, but go steadily on our way, neither censuring our journey by the weather we meet, nor turning aside for anything that befalls us.”

Amen! ●●

Photo of B.K.B. by David Tilson

EXEC DIRECTOR

Year-End Update

BY CATHY CORDES

As you know, I have been on “half-time” loan to the UUA. I will be returning to UUPCC full time as of July 1. As we prepare for General Assembly and our Annual Meeting, my mind is swirling with all the activity. But it also gives me an opportunity to reflect on all that is happening. It is easy to get lost in the details, so let me try to bring you up to date on all that UUPCC is doing and will be working on through the summer and fall.

Elizabeth Hacala, my right arm and highly valued office coordinator, is leaving the UUPCC to pursue development of her own graphics design service. Elizabeth has kept many balls in the air with grace and skill and she will be sorely missed. She will actually

continue to do some work for us and I, for one, am most thankful for this. I will miss her greatly and wish her well in her new endeavors.

Andrea Yopez has joined us and is currently learning all she can before Elizabeth leaves. I know you all join me in welcoming her to the staff. She is a great addition and I am most pleased to be working with her.

Lee Boeke Burke has been doing outreach to new congregations and wants to hear from you about churches in your area that might be interested in partnership. She is currently working with several churches in the process of becoming partners and is supporting a UUPCC presence at District Meetings. She will be at the booth at GA so stop by and see her if you come to Portland.

Ann Gary is our unsung heroine as network coordinator. Her service and

commitment to UUPCC is beyond compare. She dedicates countless hours every week helping you, and the networkers who help you, sustain and nurture your partnerships. I am so thankful that she is a part of this international movement.

Ann, Kimberly Bares and Lee Boeke Burke are working on a process to help congregations revitalize and strengthen partnerships. They know from talking with many, many churches that our international partnerships are no different from other relationships—they need care and attention if they are to thrive. And like any relationship, there is an ebb and flow to them. Watch for this report in the mail soon and stop by the booth at GA to get some great ideas for your church.

(Continued on page 5)



GENERAL ASSEMBLY • Portland, Oregon

Annual Luncheon, Award Presentation and Meeting

Saturday, June 23, 2007 • 11:30 AM–1:00 PM • Doubletree Hotel—Holladay Ballroom



2007 *Louis C. Cornish Living the Mission* award to be given to Dr. Árpád Szabó, Bishop of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church during the Annual Meeting lunch.

Please get your lunch tickets by Thursday at our booth in the Exhibit Hall.

PLUS—Two Workshop Opportunities

Our Partners in Faith— A Global Worship Service

Thursday, June 21 • 10:45 AM–12:00 PM
Oregon Convention Center—Room D133-134

The UU Partner Church Council invites you to celebrate traditions of Unitarian and Universalist worship with Rev. Erika Orbán, Transylvania; Rev. József Kászoni, Hungary; Rev. Dr. Petr Dolak Samojský, Czech Republic; Rev. Leon Hopper, and Eva Cameron, U.S.; and will include elements from our partners in the Philippines and India.

Across Cultures and Time: Life in 1930s Transylvania

Friday, June 22 • 2:45 PM–4:00 PM
Oregon Convention Center—Room F152

The UU Partner Church Council presents a dramatic reading from Christine Morgan's letters bringing to life her marriage with Rev. Ferenc Balázs. The letters center on their life experience in the village of Mészkö, the Alabaster Village. Rev. József Kászoni, Budapest, Hungary will provide the historical context of 1930s Transylvania.

SPEAKERS: Debra Smith, Gwyn Reid, Rev. József Kászoni

VISIT OUR BOOTH # 436

Do plan to stop by our booth in the Exhibit Hall. Ann Gary and Lee Boeke Burke will be joined by Pat Rodgers, UUPCC Board members and a host of others. Visit your friends, sit down for a while, charge your cell phone, view photos from partners around the world, play with RE materials, shop for books, pins, luggage tags, all NEW *Reflection Travel Journals* and more. Pick up a free UUPCC nametag lanyard! Get a LAST MINUTE lunch ticket before Thursday noon. This is a great opportunity to bring a friend to learn more about partnerships and to learn about new opportunities. Ask questions, get lunch tickets or just hang out. *Come and see us!*

UUPCC Program Events at General Assembly

The UUPCC GA Planning Committee is pleased to announce two very special events at this year's GA in Portland. The first of these is on Thursday at 10:45 in Room D133-134 featuring Rev. Leon Hopper leading *Our Partners in Faith — A Global Worship Service*. Rev. Hopper will be joined by Rev. Erika Orbán, Transylvania; Rev. József Kászoni, Hungary; Rev. Dr. Petr Dolak Samojský, Czech Republic; and Rev. Eva Cameron, U.S.; as they celebrate traditions of Unitarian and Universalist worship including

elements from our partners around the world. It promises to be a very special worship service.

The second event will be a dramatic presentation on Friday at 2:45 in Room F152. *Across Cultures and Time: 1930's Alabaster Village, Transylvania* presents a dramatic reading from Christine Morgan's letters that brings to life her marriage with Rev. Ferenc Balázs, in 1930's Transylvania. Rev. József Kászoni will provide the historic context of Transylvania at that time. The presentation is the work of

Gwyn Reid, from Boise, Idaho who has taken the material from the letters of Christine Morgan.

Debra Smith, also of Boise, Idaho will be performing. Rev. József Kászoni, minister from Budapest, Hungary, will provide additional comments. He recently published a Hungarian version of *Alabaster Village*.

There will be a special announcement from UUPCC at this event, so be sure to attend! ●●

Get your tickets early! Annual Meeting and LUNCH!

Join all the UUPCC family for lunch at General Assembly on Saturday June 23 from 11:30 to 1 pm. We will have a wonderful slide show with pictures from our partners around the world. If you have a favorite you would like to contribute please send an electronic copy to ccordes@uupcc.org no later than June 1.

We have adjusted the menu from last year as your request. This year's lunch will feature a full buffet lunch with a choice of Pacific Northwest Salmon or Roasted Vegetable and Spinach Rigatoni, salads, dessert and beverage for \$25.00. You must order tickets no later than Thursday noon. They can be purchased now with a credit card online at www.uupcc.org/online. We will have a limited number of tickets available at our booth—#436 in the exhibit hall for purchase on Wednesday or Thursday (before noon.)

We will also be presenting the Louis C. Cornish "Living the Mission" award to the Rev. Dr. Árpád Szabó, Bishop of the Transylvania Unitarian Church. (See article at right.)

The lunch will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in the Holladay ballroom. There are no facilities at the Convention Center available for meals. The Doubletree Hotel is a short distance from the convention center, so plan a little extra time to get there.

In addition to the slide show, lunch and award, there will be a brief meeting for the purpose of electing board members (see nominations elsewhere in this newsletter) and consideration of bylaw changes. If you are a member in good standing, you will receive an Annual Meeting packet in the mail in early June with copies of these materials. If you wish to come to the Annual Meeting and not to the lunch, please plan on arriving by 12:15.

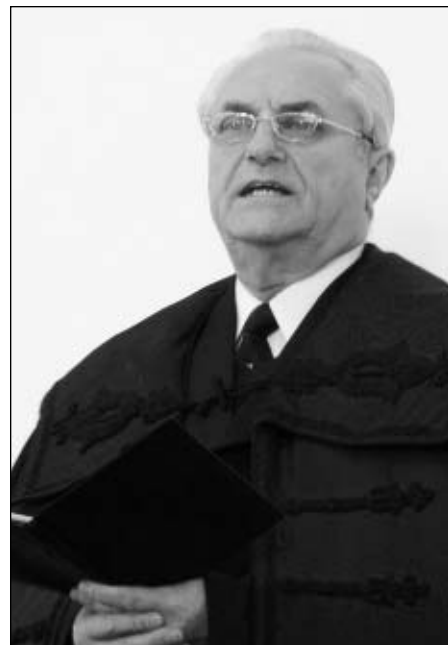
This promises to be a special event that you won't want to miss! ●●

THE 2007 LOUIS C. CORNISH "LIVING THE MISSION" AWARD

The Board of Directors of the UUPCC is pleased to announce that the recipient of the "Living the Mission" Award this year is the Rev. Dr. Árpád Szabó, Bishop of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church. The award will be presented Saturday, June 23 during the Annual Meeting Lunch at General Assembly in Portland, Oregon.

Dr. Szabó has led the Transylvanian Unitarian Church for ten years. He has been a key contributor to the international movement embracing Unitarians and Universalists worldwide. He has unceasingly battled against oppression in his homeland, while welcoming hundreds of pilgrims to his church, his office and his home.

We know that many of you have met Bishop Szabó personally and will want to add your congratulations to him on this occasion. He will be at General Assembly and will be speaking at several workshops. Check the program for his schedule.



The UUPCC is collecting photos of the Bishop with American visitors for a slide show during the lunch presentation. If you have an electronic photo you can share, please send it to ccordes@uupcc.org as soon as possible.

Executive Director's Update

(Continued from page 3)

Ruth Gibson retired from her full-time work as a minister of religious education and joined the Board of Directors last year, and are we glad. She is bringing her considerable skills to bear for UUPCC. She has put together a working group of RE folks and is working with the Religious Education committee in Transylvania. They are currently exploring ways to work together to share methodology, ideas and materials. Contact her if you are involved in RE and want to connect to this group.

Ruth also recently completed a "Reflections Journal" booklet. This booklet gives those on an international pilgrimage a way to reflect on all that happens and to help you make your trip more meaningful. We have

combined it with a small journal that we are sending to all those who travel with UUPCC. The journals will be available for purchase at GA (and on the website soon.)

Many of you have been inquiring or talking about microcredit. UUPCC knows this is a complicated process that needs great care, thought and structure to set up. Toward this end, we will be doing research to see how to make this work for our partners that are interested. If you have been thinking about this direction, we want to hear from you. Please write me an email at ccordes@uupcc.org

We are currently putting all the pieces in place to hopefully republish *Alabaster Village*. This delightful book is the story of Ferenc Balázs, a young Transylvanian minister from the

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NOMINEES to the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Executive Committee 2007

Each year at this time we receive the recommended nominees to the UUPCC Board of Directors. We are pleased to announce that all nominees are returning for a second term. Here is what the Bylaws read about terms on the Board:

Selection and Terms of Office. The elected members of the Board of Directors shall be selected for three (3)-year terms, four (4) elected each year at the Annual Meeting of the UUPCC. In case of a vacancy on the Board of Directors, the remaining members of the Board of Directors may appoint a replacement to fill the unexpired term. A person may serve a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms, except that a person appointed to fill a vacancy may serve no more than eight (8) consecutive years. Terms shall begin at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting.

BELOW ARE NOTES ON EACH OF THE NOMINEES:

FOR THREE YEAR TERMS TO 2010: (Four positions available)

Harold Babcock, Newburyport, MA

Harold Babcock has served UU churches in Minnesota, Maine, and Massachusetts since his graduation from Harvard Divinity School in 1982. He has been minister of the First Religious Society in Newburyport since 1995, which also marks the beginning of his active participation in the partner church movement. He has made six visits to Transylvania to visit Newburyport's Partner Church in Ujszékely, and worked with eight members of his congregation in 2003 to work on the guest cottage, which is being built on the church grounds there. Newburyport's partner minister, Zsolt Jakab, has visited in Newburyport twice, in 1999 and 2005. Newburyport has had fifteen adults and ten youth visit their partner church.

Harold has completed terms on the Boards of the Church of the Larger Fellowship and the Harvard Divinity School Alumni/ae Council. He currently serves the Society for Ministerial Relief and the Unitarian Service Pen-

sion Society. He is a past Secretary/Treasurer of the UU Ministers Association. Harold looks forward to helping to spread the word about the UUPCC's inspirational work with our international partners.

Richard Beal, Brunswick, ME

Currently an interim minister in Brunswick, Maine, and a candidate for a settled ministry in that state, Richard has been serving UU churches for twenty-five years. Having visited Transylvania in 1970–71 he was immediately interested in Bill Schultz and Natalie Gulbrandsen's call to revive the old Sister Church program. He was among those at the GA in Charlotte who organized what is now the UUPCC. A long-term Board member, he has made eleven or twelve trips to Eastern Europe (Prague, Krakow, Budapest, etc.), altogether spent about ten months there, and served for two years as the PCC president. At the moment he serves on the Pilgrimage Committee.

Eric Cherry, North Easton, MA

Eric Cherry is the Parish Minister of Unity Church of North Easton, MA. In 1998–99 he served as the English teacher for Unitarian seminarians in Kolozsvár. He has also been a District Networker for the PCC in Prairie Star District and Ballou Channing District. Eric is also a member of the Ballou Channing District Board of Directors, the BCD UUMA Chapter Executive Committee, and a founding member of the UU Massachusetts Action Network (UUMAN). Eric, along with his wife Linda Rose, led the 2003 and 2004 UUPCC youth trips to Transylvania.

Linda Lu Burciaga, Newburyport, MA

Linda Lu has a 28-year career as a social worker with children and adolescents (probation, mental health)—nine years for the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health. She is married to Rev. John Burciaga, interim minister of the Kingston, Massachusetts congre-

gation, and has 2 adult children and 2 grandsons.

She was the Massachusetts Bay District Coordinator for the 2003 General Assembly in Boston and during the past 37 years has been an active member of 4 UU congregations. Linda Lu was the Mass. Bay District Vice President of the Board, Chair of the Nominating Committee, PCC networker for Mass. Bay District, and a member of the Fund for a Just Society and Chair of the Fund for Unitarian Universalism. She is currently a member of the Board of the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation (UUWF) and will be its President at the end of this year's GA. Linda Lu also serves as a member of the Nominating Committee of the Church of the Larger Fellowship.

Nominees to the Nominating Committee (One position available)

Linda Lu Burciaga is a current member of the UUPCC Nominating Committee and has been nominated to serve a second term expiring in 2010.

Process for Additional Nominations

Nominations for the Board or to the Nominating Committee may also be submitted by petition as long as the information is received by the UUPCC Office no later than 45 days prior to the meeting. The deadline this year is May 8.

NOMINATIONS BY PETITION. A UUPCC member who is not included in the list presented by the Nominating Committee may be nominated for the Board of Directors or the Nominating Committee by a petition signed by ten (10) or more voting UUPCC members and delivered to the Chair of the Board of Directors not less than forty-five (45) days prior to the Annual Meeting along with a statement by the candidate of his/her willingness to accept the nomination.

The election to these positions will be held during the Annual Meeting, June 23 at General Assembly in Portland as prescribed by the Bylaws.

Transylvanian Unitarian Radio is Born!

BY BOB TRIPP, UU CONGREGATION OF FAIRFAX

A dream of Unitarian minister Zsolt Solymosi has become a reality with the launching last fall of the Transylvanian Unitarian Radio on the internet. The English-language programs (originally scheduled twice a week starting in February) have been scaled back to respect Zsolt's and Ben's very busy schedules. The programs will continue on an individual, ad hoc basis. Look for emails to the PCC Chat and TURadio groups from Zsolt and/or Ben telling us when each future program will air.

Ben Legg, the current English teacher at the Protestant Theological Seminary in Kolozsvár, works with Zsolt to broadcast the English-language programs. These cover a wide range of topics about life among Transylvanian Unitarians, life in Transylvania generally, relationships among Transylvanians and North American UUs, theology, etc. There are also weekly Hungarian-language talk shows.

There are guests on the programs.



Rev. Zsolt Solymosi in the studio, during one of the first live English language broadcasts on T.U.R.

Most of the programs are live and interactive. A major aim is to connect folks in North America with folks in Transylvania. As Ben puts it, "we want your virtual feedback on our message panel. We want to make this interactive, so please give us your thoughts while you listen." At the TUR website there is a place to send emails *while the*

show is on the air. Also, one can contact Zsolt directly at zsolt@unitarianradio.ro and Ben at leggab@gmail.com

TUR is on the air 24/7, with Hungarian, Romanian, English, German, etc. music in an eclectic variety between the talk shows. In time, one goal of TUR is to incorporate into broadcasts the lives and activities of Unitarians in the Khasi Hills and UUs in the Philippines, and to have a once-a-week broadcast in Romanian. There already are several shows in Hungarian, including programs by students at the Unitarian High School in Kolozsvár (János Zsigmond Unitárius Kollégium-JZsUK) and at the Unitarian Theological Seminary.

Why a Transylvanian Unitarian radio? This is how Zsolt puts it: "Because there is a great need. We have a wonderful message and story from Transylvania to elsewhere in Europe to North America to India and to the Philippines, and a great history going back more than 450 years." Zsolt was able to develop his TUR idea during his year as the Balázs Scholar at Starr King in Berkeley in 2005-06.

TUR broadcasts from a studio room provided by Transylvanian Unitarian Bishop Árpád Szábo in the Unitarian headquarters and JZsUK building

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HOW CAN ONE TUNE IN TO TUR?

For PC users, one must have the online player Winamp to listen to TUR. This can be downloaded for free at www.winamp.com.

For Mac users: www.videolan.org/vlc.

These downloads are safe and they work!

Then visit the TUR website at www.unitarianradio.ro/site/index.php. Along the top on the right click on *Live*, and that will bring up TUR. Click on the American Flag, which also is in the top right section of the first page, for the English language version of the website. The website is being updated as fast as possible.

In addition, one can join the new TUR Radio Yahoo group set up by Rodger Matlage, chair of the Concord, MA, PCC. It serves as the primary email group for TUR and has supporting information, including extra help for setting up your computer to listen in. Go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TURadio/> and follow the directions. If you already have a Yahoo ID joining is straightforward. If you do not have a Yahoo ID, you will be prompted to get one. As part of that process, you will be asked to create a Yahoo email address. But you never have to use it for email. You can provide your current email address to Yahoo which will then use that for all emails to you.



Transylvanian Unitarian Radio

(Continued from page 7)

in the heart of Kolozsvár. The room was soundproofed and generally outfitted with the help of students and graduates of the Unitarian High School. Visitors to the station are welcome.

See also Jane Greer's 3/9/07 *UU World* article "Unitarian radio station has global ambitions."

(www.uuworld.org/news/articles/20668.shtml)

For any other questions, suggestions, or interest in donating to the maintenance expenses of TUR, please do contact me at trippm@yahoo.com or 703-742-0929. (You may also contact Rodger Matlage at rmattlage@yahoo.com.) ●●



Guest musician, Rev. Boti Koppandi performs for the TUR audience.



Székely Gates at Szejkefurdő, outside Székelyudvarhely where the annual World Gathering of Unitarians is held. The gates lead to the grave of Orbán Balázs.

India Virtual Conference Summary

BY RUTH GIBSON

On April 8, twelve participants in the Virtual Conference on India heard an update from Dee Idnani, who had just returned from the Khasi Hills. Several of the participants had been with Dee for a Khasi Hills pilgrimage for part of her stay.

Dee reported on the news in four areas—Partnerships, Unitarian Schools, Community Development, and Church Finances.

• **Partnerships:** Nine of the 37 congregations in the Khasi Hills have partners, and all partnerships are flourishing and have had visits. There are 10 more congregations that are still seeking partners.

• **Unitarian Schools:** Many UU congregations run schools, tuition-free and open to everyone in the community. A new government school assistance program is being implemented in some Khasi Hills communities, providing help with building improvements, sanitary facilities such as latrines and drinking water, mid-day meals, a few books and salaries for teachers. However, this is not being universally implemented and the program may be cut back or cut entirely. Donations from UU congregations and individuals provide additional support for schools and for a book bank.

• **Economic Development:** Cell phone coverage is spreading in the Khasi Hills and this is making it possible to have internet access in many towns and villages. We heard from Dick Ford, who was in India to lay the groundwork for Community Capacity Building assessments. The first pilot project will begin in February or March of 2008, in the village of Puriang. (Kyrдем has been selected as a back-up site)

• **Church Finances:** The Unitarian Union of Northeast India has been informed that funding from the UUA, which has recently been cut in half, will be discontinued entirely by 2010. The funds they receive allow them to offer travel reimbursements for the ministers and church visitors who provide leadership to the congregations, none of whom receive salaries for this work. This is most discouraging to them, but they are striving to find other ways to generate income. The only immediate source is to ask those volunteer leaders and other members who happen to have paying jobs, to increase their donations to the church. This topic has generated considerable discussion, in the phone conference and since then, on pcc-chat. North American participants have been assured that the Partner Church Board of Trustees is vigorously advocating continued support to the UUA Board, and have been

encouraged to become informed about this matter, and to discuss it with the UU Board Trustee from their district if they are concerned.

Other topics discussed included the work of the International Council of Unitarian Universalists and different options for making book donations. A more detailed report of this Virtual conference has been posted on the UUPCC website. And for more information on any of these topics you may contact Dee Idnani at didnani@yahoo.com.



Executive Director's Update

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1930's, as told by his American wife Christine Morgan. We plan to publish a combined English / Hungarian version. Watch for an announcement soon and do come to the GA dramatic presentation on this topic. It was developed by Gwyn Ried of Boise ID by compiling notes from Christine Morgan's letters. See details on the GA program elsewhere in this newsletter and look for an announcement about the book soon. It will make a great gift for Transylvanian friends.

Our bi-monthly conference calls have gotten good reviews and we intend to continue this service. We have been sending postcards announcing the calls as well as posting on PCC

Chat. Recent programs included India with Dee Idnani, Community Assessments and organizing with Dr. Richard Ford, planning a congregational trip with John Dale and an annual open discussion with the UUPCC leadership. *If you have a topic you would like to hear more about, drop us a line and let us know.*

All of this serves to remind me how fortunate I am to work with such an amazing dedicated group of people—from the Board, to our volunteers, to our staff, to YOU. This is a grassroots movement, not designed from the top down but rather responsive to and guided by the member congregations and their partners around the world. I am very grateful to be a part of all of this. ●●



"With Feri and Enika in front of the Meszkő church." —a photo from *Alabaster Village: Our Years in Transylvania* by Christine Morgan.

INTERNATIONAL CONVOCATION OF UU WOMEN

Plans are underway, led by Southwest Women's UU Association, for an International Convocation of Unitarian Universalist Women in Houston, Texas on February 25–28, 2009. Put the date on your calendars now and check out the website at www.icuuw.com for more information and contact names. Your congregation might want to think about bringing someone from your partner church or sponsoring a woman from another country to attend the conference.

OPEN TO ALL

2007 Council of ICUU

The biennial meeting of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) brings together congregations and groups from all over the world—from North East India, Philippines, Canada, Romania, Germany, EUU, United Kingdom, Indonesia, Africa, South America, United States, and more. The purpose of the meeting is to conduct the business of the ICUU member groups. And it is much more! Special religious celebrations, services, sharing, discussion, cultural events, and workshops go hand-in-hand with the ICUU business meetings.

The ICUU biennial gathering provides a rare opportunity to discover how Unitarians, Universalists, and Unitarian Universalists make an impact in the world. Talk with groups steeped in history and tradition and those in form-

ative stages. Come to Overwesel, enjoy the hospitality of one of Germany's finest hostels, and become acquainted with the tradition, history, and gorgeous natural beauty of this region. There will be many opportunities for you to become more deeply involved.

Here are some of the topics that will be discussed:

- *How does my congregation relate to the international family of U*U communities?*
- *How do international partnerships work, and what makes them successful?*
- *How I can promote global citizenship and UU values found in U*U communities outside my home country?*
- *Where can I travel and meet other U*U individuals for conversation, worship, sharing of personal and religious-community photographs and ideas?*
- *How can I gain new insights into a broad variety and spectrum of religious insights?*

- *How can I help foster the expansion of U*U religion into other parts of the globe, addressing concerns about doing so without the taint of imperialism?*

The ICUU is a 12-year old organization that has met every two years around the world ever since its founding in 1995. Starting with a small founding meeting in Essex, Massachusetts in 1995, the biennial gathering of representatives has slowly expanded its range of national member groups and representation and its participants and non-delegate representatives. U*U individuals are welcomed, and specific program items are designed to foster and nurture better international understanding among all members of our global community.

Interested in learning more? Go to the website, www.icuu.net. Online registration will be available soon. Costs are being controlled to encourage your participation. ●●

—submitted by Cathy Cordes

Visit to our Partner Church in Budapest

BY KATHLENE R. WILLING, FIRST
UNITARIAN CONGREGATION OF TORONTO

In January of 2006, when I was contemplating my retirement from teaching, and people were asking me what I was going to do, I came upon a notice in our church bulletin that a group was being organized to visit with our partner church, Bartok Béla (formerly Second Unitarian), in Budapest. September appealed to me tremendously—imagine taking off when school would be starting! I promptly joined the planning committee of about 13 people who were considering taking the trip.

The plan was to be there for our partner's Thanksgiving, September 24th, to spend a week sightseeing together in Budapest and surroundings, and then to present a "North American style" service for the members of the Bartok Béla Congregation the following Sunday. We also decided to bring them a gift of music in the person of our Music Director, Peter Tiefenbach who would present some Bartok music in concert.

The trip was an eye-opener for me! I had never been to Eastern Europe let alone Budapest, and although I had seen numerous photos I was still



A gift of music: Toronto's Peter Tiefenbach presents Bartok music in concert.

amazed at the beauty that surrounded me. My concepts of church were also challenged, the idea that a church could be hidden inside a large residential building and not be a building on its own was new to me. Tucked away on one end of a courtyard, Second Unitarian Budapest's doorway faces you as you enter. The courtyard, filled with light, is surrounded by apartments on four levels, one of which houses the minister Sándor Leta, his wife Erika and their family.

There were more eye-openers to follow. Having only a North American experience of Unitarianism, I was expecting something similar to our services. I was surprised that they celebrated their Thanksgiving with a communion of bread and wine. Complete with communion silver and a white lace cloth to cover the table.

But no matter where you go in the world, there are some things we Unitarians do that are familiar, hence the "coffee hour" after standing and shaking hands in the receiving line. It was fun to watch the children behave just as ours do, running around and playing with one another and rushing up to the table to take "just one more" cookie. So much like being at home that I felt a real connection to these people.

The following Sunday, we presented our service to them. We opened with a reading in many different languages, including French, German, Maori, Japanese, and Polish, spoken by several in our group and a few from the Béla Bartok congregation. We sang hymns that were common to both our congregations—they in Hungarian and



Toronto-Firsters with Sandor Leta and family at the courtyard door of Budapest's Béla Bartok church.

we in English. Our homily was about Ferenc David, and we again had coffee hour.

In spite of the language barriers, we were still able to communicate. The minister, the Bishop and one of the young women from their congregation spoke English. One of our group who had made a diligent effort to learn 10 Hungarian "useful phrases," was applauded for her efforts and her fine pronunciation.

Our partner church arranged for a dinner for us and other members of their congregation at the home of the president of the women's group. As we sat out in the back yard in the warm weather and chatted with other members, I talked about my former colleague who is an Olympic swimmer. She had mentioned that her grandfather and her mother were also Olympians and their names were on a plaque in a park near the Hungarian Parliament building, and that her mother's picture was in a restaurant dedicated to the

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Olympics somewhere near a main street. I was bemoaning the fact that I wasn't sure where to find the restaurant or the park. When I mentioned the names of her grandfather and mother, the gentleman next to me got excited. It turns out my friend's mother and his mother are related (second cousins) and he pledged to find the restaurant for me. Talk about six degrees of separation, I was astounded that no matter where in the world one could be, that the old cliché still works—it's a small world!

Besides the translations they provided as we toured their city, having a partner church was beneficial in so many ways and made our visit memorable. The president of the Bartok Béla arranged a guided tour of the Parliament Building with someone who worked there. This tour also had an extra bonus as we viewed first-hand the protests in front of the Parliament Building that were splashed all over the world as being disruptive. *Not so!* The people were quite peaceful in making their point about their disappointment in their government. Our partners helped us figure out the transportation system, took us on tours of the Great Synagogue in Pest and on the Buda side, Gellert Hill, Buda Castle, the composer Béla Bartok's house and gravesite. They explained much to us about the food and the language. It was like visiting relatives who cared.

My husband and I stayed on for a second week after that, and although I had found the Olympic park a few blocks from the Parliament building with Zita's help, I had still not found the restaurant. I had sort of given up on the quest, but the evening before we were to leave, Sándor called to let me know that Felicien had found the restaurant and on the morning I was to leave I hurried over to Champs near the Great Synagogue and found my friend's mother's picture on the wall: "Gyenge Valerie, Helsinki 1952." Wow! Friends and partner churches come through. ●●

Our Religious Journey to the Khasi Hills

BY BILL LAUMAN, BELLEVUE WA

East Shore Unitarian Church, located in Bellevue, Washington, has had a long and rewarding relationship with our partner church in Torock-ószentgyörgy, Transylvania. This partnership was initiated in 1990 by our Minister Emeritus, Rev. Leon Hopper. Since that time 6 groups from East Shore have visited our partner church working on various projects, we have had several visitors from there and last year eleven members of our Youth Group visited our Transylvanian partner.

In January, 2005 Rev. Hopper was part of a delegation which visited several Unitarian churches in the Khasi Hills of India. Upon his return, he gave a sermon and a forum about his experiences. He told us that there were approximately 10,000 Unitarians in about 30 congregations in the Khasi

Hills. This intrigued several of us, and we decided to form a task force under our Partner Church Ministry to explore establishing an additional partner church relationship in the Khasi Hills. We began by sending questionnaires to the 7 U.S. churches that already had partnerships in India. The responses were mixed ranging from one failure to several which had only Religious Education relationships to several strong total partner relationships.

As we continued our exploration, we contacted Dee Idnani who chairs the Indian partner church committee in Fairfax, Virginia. Fairfax has a strong partner relationship in the village of Puriang. Dee had visited many of the Unitarian congregations in the Khasi Hills and was looking for American partners for several of them.

Given our wishes and expectations, Dee recommended the dual congregations in the villages of Smit and Kharang which she thought would be a good match for us. These congrega-

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Travelers posing in front of the Taj Mahal: left to right, back row – Bill Lauman, Sharon Cooper, Marion Connell, Roger Corn, Mary Lou Lewis, Ruth Gibson. Front row: Fran Corn, Dee Idnani, Lisa Gillispie, Cathy Perry.

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tions share a minister, Darihun Khriam, who had interned for one year at the UUA, speaks excellent English and has access to a computer at the internet café about 30 minutes from her home. This was important to us as we had found that communication was very important in our excellent Transylvanian relationship.

When we contacted Darihun, one of the first questions we asked was what her congregations expected in a partner church relationship. We liked her response: “what I would expect from our partnership is a mutual friendship which will inspire us here and also our friends there—just by knowing that we are so close to one another and that we care even though we are far apart by distance.” They felt isolated both geographically and theologically and were seeking a connection with like-minded Unitarians.

At this point in our exploration, Dee Idnani began organizing a trip to the Khasi Hills through the UUPCC. We felt that before we proposed marriage we should meet our prospective partner to see if it was a good fit.

In February, 2007 six of us from East Shore joined four other American

Unitarians in Delhi. Three of the others already had partner churches in the Khasi Hills. After a couple of days in Delhi we started for the Khasi Hills. The journey involved a 2½ hour plane trip to Guwahati and then a harrowing 4 hour ride to Shillong which was to be our base. The villages with Unitarian congregations are ½ hour to several hours from there. They are remote but certainly worth the effort to visit.

During the week we visited 8 different Unitarian congregations to give us perspective. One day we all visited our partner/prospective partner churches. Those of us from East Shore visited both Smit and Kharang. Like most Unitarian churches in the Khasi Hills our two congregations each operate a school open to all children of the village regardless of religion. At each church the children lined both sides of the sidewalk leading to the entry. We shook hands with each child and were greeted with a *khublei* or a hello. In each church the adults welcomed us and the children sang us a song. We then had a question and answer exchange. The children asked how we had gotten there and had we ever seen the sea. None had seen a plane or the sea. Most had not traveled more than 30–40 miles from their village. The adults asked about friendship and the meaning of a partner church relationship. It was a moving experience for all of us.

On Sunday we returned to each congregation. At their request we led much of the service. This was in the tradition of their lay-led congregations. There was much singing in Khasi, of course, and we stumbled through the songs reading from the hymnals which they had given us. At the conclusion of the service, we presented them chalice banners and sang “Make New Friends” which we taught them in English. We had truly made new friends.

Our impressions were many. The principal impression was that of commitment. It is not easy being a Unitarian in India. Even in the Khasi Hills they are a small minority. Their visitors/ministers receive only a small stipend

if anything. Their teachers earn little though their service is great. These leaders are dedicating their lives to their Unitarian values. We were also inspired by their patience and persistence. Unitarianism in India has had its ups and downs since its inception on September 18, 1887 under the leadership of Hajom Kissor Singh. They have persevered and as their goal states, they continue to *To Nangroi* — “Keep on Progressing.”

As for East Shore, the six of us each returned with our own feelings, but we shared the emotion of awe and admiration. Our reception could not have been warmer, and we departed with a feeling of connectedness and friendship. We will be recommending establishing a partnership with Smit and Kharang. While this will be a different relationship than our partnership in Transylvania, we are confident that it will be just as rewarding.

Maybe *your* congregation should begin a religious journey to the Khasi Hills. ●●

RIVER ROAD'S NEW PARTNER:

Kyrdem in the Khasi Hills

BY Marion Connell, RIVER ROAD

Did you know that 1 in 10 people on the planet is an Indian under 25 and that 77% of all Indian students drop out of school before the age of 14? These are not just cold statistics to the 223 members of the Unitarian Church of Kyrdem, River Road's new partner in India. They are doing something about this unfortunate situation by sponsoring the Mawblang School (K-4) on their own property and making it free and open to all comers. Several of its 78 students are Presbyterian and Catholic although most are from Unitarian families. Many Unitarian churches in northeastern India provide schools in their localities as their principal commitment to social action.

River Road's Partner Church Committee recently sent \$900 to help purchase textbooks, furniture for the school, nutritious supplements, and uni-



The “Church Visitor” of both the Smit and Kharang churches, Darihun Khriam, and her daughter Dakimin. Darihun lived in Boston between September 2001 and July 2002, interning at UUA headquarters, and visiting with the first four congregations partnered with Khasi churches.

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forms for the students of the Mawblang School. This amount also provided a small salary supplement for the three teachers, who otherwise earn less than \$20 per month. The committee will continue to work with local leaders to explore other needs of the community for which River Road may be able to provide assistance. To kickstart this important dialogue, they have invited their contact person with the Kyrдем church, Khlur Mukhim, to visit Bethesda, Maryland, early next year. River Road is also continuing to support its 15-year partnership with the Unitarian Church of Fiatfalva, in Romania.

Marion Connell, representing River Road, visited Kyrдем in February as part of the Unitarian pilgrimage led by Dee Idnani. She presented a colorful banner to the lay-led congregation as a token of the new partnership and spoke with many villagers, encouraging them to keep their children in school despite the short-term economic hardship this represents for poor farmers in the Khasi Hills. Children who do attend school go from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. and then usually work until dark in the fields with the rest of their family. Kyrдем is in a remote, rural area that has yet to receive any benefit from the economic upturn now being felt by some of India's major cities. ●

Meeting the UUs of the Philippines

BY LEE BOEKE BURKE

For two weeks this past February I had the exceptional opportunity to travel to the Philippines to meet our coreligionists there and forge new bonds between us. As the UUPCC's new Outreach Coordinator, I was most focused on gaining a good understanding of the UU Church of the Philippines, making personal connections, discovering ways that we could best create and nurture new partnerships and laying the groundwork for a future UUPCC trip. I relayed my goals to Nihal Attanayake,

the Director of the Faith in Action department of the UU Church of the Philippines and the head of their Partner Church Program, and asked that he fill my itinerary with relevant experiences. "Bring it on!" I said. And he brought it on.

Traveling primitive roads, deeply rutted by the massive trucks used to haul the sugar cane harvests, I road tripped to the mountainous northern part of Negros Island with Nihal, Rebecca Quimada, Joseph Santos-Lyons, and our highly skilled van driver Ricky. Over four days' time, we visited nine churches and fellowships.

A a joyful message for us all was that I was very happy to meet them and that I hoped we could grow to know each other better.

Each time we were warmly and enthusiastically greeted by the congregants who often sang or danced for us and offered us fresh coconut, mango, or taro root. Joseph, the first UUA intern to ever serve in the Philippines, explained that he had been working with the emerging UU fellowships in Metro-Manila and shared photos of UU activities there. He sought to learn the whereabouts of the young people who had left the small, poor agricultural villages of Negros to find a more prosperous livelihood in Manila or some other large city. They were hoping to reach out to these young people. He also brought magazines and balloons for the children.

I explained that I was there to get to know them better and to help grow our UU connections. I was delighted to be in a land of sunshine and warmth, especially considering the minus-40 degree wind chills back in Wisconsin at the time. For a people living in a tropical land where the growing season is forever, this was a big exercise for their imaginations. What was easy for them to understand was that I was very happy to meet them and that I hoped we could grow to know each other better. This

was a joyful message for us all.

Then I asked them to help me introduce them to the UUs of North America by drawing pictures of "what was in their hearts... what they dreamed about." I explained that I would share these pictures at GA along with the photos that I took and this would be a way to for us all to connect. Although unaccustomed to this form of communication, they took up the challenge, often with smiles, self-conscious giggles and an expanding enthusiasm for the project. Prominent visual themes were the church and its importance in their lives, their homes and families, their connection to the land and the beauty of flowers, their symbol of love. Their desire for increased opportunities for education for their children, decent and available medical care, better livelihoods and access to better water systems, roads, etc. also surfaced.

Rebecca, the daughter of UUCP founder, Toribio Quimada, and past president of the organization, served as translator when needed and she and Nihal invited the UUs of Negros to share more about their dreams and realities. We were especially touched by a young man from Doldol who serves as a part-time lay-minister for the church. Arman is college-educated, speaks fluent English as well as several other languages and has a very deep desire to learn to understand the UU faith better and be able to explain it to others. How many of us also wish we could understand our faith better and explain it well to others? His sincerity was very touching.

We were also very touched by a young woman in Aquino who wants to be a pre-school teacher for the children there. In the Philippines, if a child is unable to attend pre-school for any reason, they are closed out of the educational system. This policy has closed the door on "higher education" for many UUs as has the low but prohibitive cost of education for UU school-aged children who often have to leave school to work on their parents land. This young woman's determination has

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led to the creation of the first UU preschool in the Philippines and it will open this spring.

I could go on and on about the many touching stories of this trip. After a day of rest that included a visit to Siquijor Island (think feisty blue crabs, a misty, rainy mountain hike, exotic turquoise waterfalls, laughing family times with Lundy Mae Quimada's family and an unanticipated late night return over high seas to Dumaguete), we were back on the road again. This time Joseph and I traveled to the southern part of Negros Island with Henry Legaje, the UUCP president, and Susan Quisel, the RE Director of the UUCP. We visited 6 churches/fellowships including Nagbinlod, the village where the first Community Capacity Building experience was tried. We saw the progress that had ensued and the empowerment of the village women.

We also met a community of refugees from their mountain village home. Their minister had preached a sermon that the government felt was too liberal. Perhaps, the government thought, he was a communist. They all fled for their lives. Things have calmed down now but the threat of violence exists for liberal social reformers. How often do we realize how fortunate we are for our freedoms?

After another day of rest, this time visiting spectacular Apo Island with Henry and Melca Legaje, I spent a day in Dumaguete, the location of the UUCP National office. We shared all we learned and looked ahead. We had a moving farewell ceremony. Then Henry and I left for Manila to visit two more churches and a University discussion group. We also were able to attend the final hours of an exhilarating youth conference.

Some of the most profoundly touching moments of my visit occurred in Manila. The Bon Bon UU Church is located in one of the most desperately poor areas of Metro-Manila. When one approaches the home where the services are now being held, one must walk

through a garbage dump and into a house that has a cement wall topped by barbed wire just 3 feet outside the entrance door. When we visited the Sunday service, we were greeted by a full house of smiling faces. They sang "Enter, Rejoice and Come In," did Joys and Concerns and also sang "Spirit of Life" in English. During Joys and Concerns we learned that a seven year old girl, a member of the congregation, had been killed by gang gunfire just three days before. The young woman who lived in the house-church commuted four hours a day for a minimum wage job and dreamed of being a minister. We are so different. We are so much more alike. We are all Unitarian Universalists and we are all on paths of discovery and compassion.

There are many churches in the Philippines searching for partners. If you would like to learn more about the possibility of partnering with a UUCP church, please contact me, Lee Boeke Burke, chickadeetree@earthlink.net. Please contact me also if you are considering the possibility of travel to the Philippines; our next trip will be in March of 2008. ●●

ST. JOHN'S UU IN CINCINNATI, OH 13th Annual Transylvania Partner Church Dinner

BY TOM AND MARY DARNER

Each year since 1994, St. John's UU Church in Cincinnati, Ohio has held a Transylvania dinner in celebration of its partnership with the Unitarian Church of Nyárádszentlászló, Romania. This unique event, seating over 140 guests, has become the social highlight of St. John's church year. The dinner, which raises over \$1,500 each year, is unique in a couple of ways. First, the dinner, organized by the Friends of Szentlászló, has never been catered. This year's dinner was the result of the combined efforts of over 110 St. John's members and friends. Second, ticket prices are kept very low, \$15 for an adult, in order to involve the maximum number of members and

friends in the activity.

The evening starts with appetizers and wine and is followed by pre-dinner musical entertainment in our sanctuary. This year's entertainment was by the Millinius String Quartet, a group of graduate students from Cincinnati's College Conservatory of Music. This year's music was extra special as the string quartet was led by Virgil Lupu, a Romanian student who grew up in Cluj. The musicians were given flowers by one of our young girls dressed in the traditional Székely folk dress, a dress once worn by the daughters of our partner church minister, the Rev. Mihály Kiss, and his wife, Rózsa.

After the musical entertainment, our guests adjourned to our social hall for a sit-down dinner, served by the youth of St. John's. The hall, which was decorated the evening before by St. John's parents and children, displayed Transylvania folk art and large print photos of Transylvania people and places. This year's menu included pork loin roast, *palacsinta* (savory cheese-stuffed crepes), *mititei*, paprika potatoes, mushroom soup, Hungarian style vegetables and salads, home-made breads, and Hungarian apple cake. While the dinner is being served, our younger children are treated to their own meal and a special program on life in our partner church village.

This year's dinner followed the unanimous approval by the St. John's congregation of a new covenant of friendship with our partner congregation in Nyárádszentlászló. It also followed a series of on-going bread and soup luncheons which fund our *Bread for the Elderly Program*. Under this program, each elderly person in our partner congregation is given a free loaf of bread each week. Interestingly, this means that the two major partner church fund raisers at St. John's involve members and friends simply giving of their time and paying to attend the Transylvania dinner or eating at one of our periodic Sunday luncheons. Fundraising couldn't be more fun. ●●

UUPCC Annual Appeal Donors

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in memory of Louise Wickham
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Thank you to all of you who so generously responded to our Annual Appeal. Your continued support UUPCC to strengthen and grow international partnerships and sustain our global vision.



This list of Donors covers donations between April 1, 2006 – March 31, 2007

UUPCC Pilgrimages: Ten Years of Bringing People Together

For more than a decade the UUPCC Pilgrimage Service has helped to cement the bonds between North American UUs and their partners overseas. In recent years we have expanded our portfolio of travel services in order to provide multiple and varied pilgrimage opportunities for Unitarian Universalists of all ages. However, the focus and core offering of our service remains Congregational Pilgrimages. 2005 & 2006 saw almost 500 North American UUs representing more than 50 congregations travel with us to visit partners around the globe. These pilgrimage groups ranged in size from 4–40 and we worked with each of them to customize an itinerary that met their time frame and interests. To begin planning your pilgrimage email our travel coordinator, John Dale at jdaleuupcc@yahoo.com. For more-independent travelers we also offer a la carte services such as airport/village transfer, car & driver services, car rental, and experienced guides/interpreters. If your church is not partnered or you are not able or willing to organize your own group we offer a number of group tours for UUs of all ages and interests which are described below.

Toward this end, we are happy to help groups and individuals with travel plans in Transylvania and Hungary. Our services include:

Congregational Pilgrimages—Travel aboard the UUPCC van on a life-changing visit to your partner church. Low all-inclusive price includes transportation, meals, lodging, guide(s), and translator(s). Our in-country experts will work with you to develop a customized itinerary that fits your interests and timeframe.

Choir Concert & Large Group Tours—Looking to expand the horizons of your music program? UUPCC Travel Services can facilitate your choir's international tour. Buses, performance venues, hotel arrangements, and side tours are all part of our large group service portfolio.

Other Services

- Guides & Translators • Bucharest Airport Pickup & Drop-off • Accommodations (Home stays, Hostels, and Hotels)

For more details or to schedule your trip please contact our travel coordinator John Dale at jdaleuupcc@yahoo.com, or visit our website at www.uupcc.org/trips.html.

2007 Travel Opportunities

Our 2007 season will include the following unique and life-changing pilgrimages.

Homoród Holiday

July 12 – 24, 2007

UNITARIAN VILLAGE LIFE & OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES

Registration deadline: May 25, 2007

Take time out this summer to renew your spirit, make new friends, and reconnect with loved ones on this life-changing pilgrimage to Transylvania. Specifically tailored for active UUs and their families, this affordable trip offers a unique opportunity to experience the beauty of this enchanting land and immerse yourself in the daily rhythms of rural village life. Our multi-generational village activities will include hiking and cycling, horse cart rides, traditional crafts, Hungarian cooking lessons, cheese and bread making, blacksmith demonstration and much more. Departing from Bucharest, Romania the tour also includes a stay in a mountain resort, a cable-car ride high in the Carpathian Alps, and tours of fabulous castles. The trip departs from and returns to Bucharest, Romania.

\$1,200 adults, (\$600 children 12 and under sharing accommodations) + \$50 registration fee. Does not include airfare to/from Bucharest.

Transylvanian Thanksgiving

September 25 – October 5, 2007

Discover the singular beauty of the Carpathian Alps and the fascinating history of the walled churches of Southeastern Transylvania. Departing from Bucharest, this trip visits Peles castle, home of the Romanian royal family, the unique fortress churches of the Háromszék region, and the Saxon towns of Segesvár & Biertan (UNESCO World Heritage sites). It includes two nights at mountain resorts and a 3-day visit to your partner church where you will celebrate a traditional Transylvanian Thanksgiving.

\$1,350 per person, double occupancy + \$50 registration fee. (Add \$250 single supplement). Includes ground transportation, meals, lodging and fees. Cost does not include airfare to/from Bucharest, Romania.

Visit the UUs of the Philippines

In March of 2008 there will be a UUPCC sponsored trip to visit the UUs of the Philippines. This adventure will include visits to our fellow UUs in Metro-Manila and on the large tropical island of Negros. You will have an opportunity to deepen your awareness of a culture and people who are living out their UU faith with courage and hope and have alot to teach us. Please mark your calendar and be prepared to

have your assumptions challenged and your sense of who you are as a UU deepened!

Watch the UUPCC website for update with more specifics or contact Lee Boeke Burke for more information, chickadeetree@earthlink.net 920-729-9182

Prairie Pilgrimage to the Cradle of Unitarianism

September 10– 23, 2007

Discover the living tradition of Unitarianism in historic Transylvania and Hungary! Don McKinnon, former member of the UUA board of trustees, and Rev. Stefan Jonasson, UUA Director for Large Congregations, will host this once-in-a-lifetime tour to the “holy land” of our liberal religious faith. Several participants from the Canadian prairies and northern plains states have already signed up and we would welcome mountain folks, hill people and seacoast citizens to join us. Everyone is welcome on this prairie pilgrimage!

Departing from Bucharest, Romania, we'll wind our way through mysterious Transylvania on our way to Budapest, Hungary. Along the way, we'll visit the Unitarian church at Székelyderzs, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site;

(Continued on next page)

Notices

the birthplace of Vlad Tepes, the historic Dracula; the Church of the Edict in Torda, where the only Unitarian king in world history proclaimed the first Edict of Religious Toleration in 1568; enchanting Kolozsvár, the centre of Unitarianism in the time of Francis Dávid, and Castle Déva, where Dávid was imprisoned and martyred in 1579. We'll worship with the oldest existing Unitarian congregation in the world and meet numerous Unitarians in the historic villages and cities along our path, while enjoying the breathtaking scenery of the Carpathian Mountains and the Danube valley. Our journey will conclude in Budapest, where we'll tour the Dohany Street Synagogue and the national Unitarian headquarters, before enjoying the opportunity to tour some of the city's magnificent cultural sites or cruise the "Blue Danube."

The prairie pilgrimage grew out of Stefan and Don's experience of visiting Transylvania four years ago. They dreamed of returning one day with a band of UUs from from the center of North America to share with them what they both describe as "a life-transforming experience."

In consultation with the UU Partner Church Council, Don and Stefan have developed an itinerary guaranteed to bring alive nearly 500 years of Unitarian history and introduce participants to their Unitarian cousins in the cradle of our faith. Information about the tour can be found at <http://members.shaw.ca/global-unitarians/> or by contacting Don McKinnon (donmckinnon@shaw.ca) or Stefan Jonasson (smjonasson@shaw.ca).

For further details on all these trips please visit our web site at www.uupcc.org/trips.html



Rev. Zsolt Solymosi in the studio of the newly-launched Transylvanian Unitarian Radio.

Erdély Maps: Two maps of Transylvania. Both give place names in Romanian, Hungarian, and German:

Erdély, covers all of Transylvania. The scale is 1:500,000 and the map lists cities, towns, and most villages. \$15.

Székelyföld also by Cartographia, is a newer map, covers the Székely area where most Unitarian churches in Romania are concentrated. The scale is 1:250,000—twice as large. Every village is shown. \$15.

Send your check to: Emery Lazar,
18 Mountain Laurel Lane, Castleton VA 22716.
All profits go to the UUPCC.

B&B Guest House in Barót

Alpár Kiss, minister of Barót/Baraolt, offers visitors to Barót and other Covasna County

(Háromszék district) towns, reasonable lodging in a newly remodeled facility. To make a reservation, contact Kiss Alpár, Str. Libertatii nr. 24/525100 Baraolt / Jud. Covasna / Romania (011-40-267-377-446) Alpár@honoris.ro.

Fenyökút Guest House

Fenyökút is close to the well-known pottery village of Korond and is served by the same minister. The guest house is next to the church, and has room for 9 people, a fully modern bathroom, and kitchen. The hiking and natural environment are worth a visit. To book the Fenyökút guesthouse, contact church president: Molnár Ferencz, Fintina Brazilor, Nr. 119, Odorheiu 535600, Jud: Harghita, Romania.

First-Ever Tours to Visit African Unitarians

October 5–October 18, 2007 and October 19–November 1, 2007

Tour Guide: Janice Brunson from Phoenix Arizona, and four young Unitarian leaders in Kenya and Burundi

Janice Brunson writes: "I recently returned from six weeks in Africa where I visited and stayed in the homes of our brothers and sisters in religion, Unitarians in Nigeria, Burundi and Kenya. I am happy to report that Unitarianism in Africa, while relatively new, is alive and well. The experience was both memorable and profound, and I want to share it with others." Janice adds some personal information for those who do not know her, "I have been a member of the UU Congregation of Phoenix and now serve as a board member. I also represent Arizona in Washington, D.C., serving my second four-year term as National Committeewoman for the Arizona Democratic Party."

Included in the tour are: Unitarian services in Kenya and Burundi, visits with many Unitarian congregations, the gorillas and Memorial Center in Rwanda, the fabric market and a pygmy village in Burundi, and a safari in Kenya. Cost covers all land transportation, including round trip airfare between Kenya and Burundi, all lodging, most meals and all park fees. Each participating local congregation will receive an honorarium. The tours will be led by young, accomplished, African Unitarians. You are responsible for making and paying for your own reservations from the U.S. to Nairobi, Kenya.

For the itinerary and a registration form please visit the UUPCC website at www.uupcc.org/trips.html. For more specific information, contact Janice Brunson, 480-596-0462 or janicebrunson@yahoo.com.

Cost: \$1950, does NOT include airfare to and from Nairobi. Minimum number for tour to go is 10 participants. Deadline for registration is July 30, 2007. Full payment is required by August 31, 2007.

UUPCC LAPEL PINS

These pins make a great gift for you, your partners or for members of your local partnership committee. (Actual size—3/4 inch wide)

\$5 each—or 10 for \$35. Price includes regular shipping.
To order send check to: UUPCC, P.O. Box 88,
Bedford, MA 01730



Download the Gift Form from our web site: www.uupcc.org/services.htm (or use the form below)

NOTE: Funds transmission is a benefit of UUPCC membership. A transferor of funds should make sure that her/his/its dues are up to date. If your church is not a UUPCC member, dues will be deducted (\$50 for churches under 100 members, \$150 for churches over 100 members).

PARTNER CHURCH GIFT FORM FOR TRANSMISSION OF FUNDS

FOR TRANSFER OF FUNDS THROUGH THE U U PARTNER CHURCH COUNCIL

Please enclose a form with each check for funds to be transferred. Please type or print clearly.

Note: Funds transmission is a benefit of membership in the U. U. Partner Church Council

Make check payable to: *UU Partner Church Council* Mail to: UU Partner Church Council, PO Box 88, Bedford, MA 01730

Date _____ **Transferor is:** Church Individual Other Organization
Name _____ Phone (____) _____
Address _____ City/State/Zip _____
Contact Person _____ E-Mail _____

Transfer Is: Total US\$ Amount _____ Check # _____

Recipient(s) is (are): Partner Church Other Church Individual(s) Other Organization (Please check all that apply)

Name _____
Full Address _____
Contact Person _____ Title _____

PURPOSES—DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS—OTHER INSTRUCTIONS (please be explicit and concise):

Please remember to:

1. Send this form *with your check* to the UUPCC office [address above]
2. Separately inform named recipient or contact person that funds are coming, and their purpose
3. For Transylvanian transfers, use *Hungarian* names for named recipient or contact person—use *Romanian* for address
4. Send whole dollars only—no cents
5. Make check payable in U.S. dollars

TRANSFERS ARE SENT AT THE END OF EACH MONTH.

How to Send Money to Transylvania

The UU Partner Church Council, in cooperation with the Unitarian Headquarters in Kolozsvár, has developed a process for the transfer of funds for UUPCC members. Download the Gift Transfer form at www.uupcc.org/services.htm or use the form above.

When sending checks, it is important to include:

- The name and address of the donor church, individual, or organization

- The name and email address of the contact person in your congregation or organization, if applicable
- The name(s) of the recipient(s) of the funds
- Specific instructions for the distribution of funds
- You should also separately contact the recipient(s).

Funds received by the 20th of the month will be wired around the end of the month to a bank in Kolozsvár where they are received in U.S. dollars,

and converted to Romanian lei prior to disbursement.

Recipients in Transylvania are notified by Unitarian Headquarters in Kolozsvár that funds have been received. Funds are distributed directly to the churches, organizations or individuals designated. Receipt of delivery is sent to the Partner Church Council treasurer and are, in turn, sent to the original donors.

This process takes place every month and is reliable. The UUPCC assumes the bank fee in the U.S. There are no other fees.

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Dr. Judit Gellérd, HONORARY PRESIDENT
zizi315@yahoo.com

Please contact Ann Gary at ak.gary@verizon.net
to join the ranks of networkers!

To find the name of the UUPCC networker assigned
to your church, go to www.uupcc.org and click on
"Who Is My Networker?"

UU Partner Church Council Vision & Mission Statement

Vision: The vision of the UU Partner Church Council is that partner relationships between North American congregations and churches around the globe will be forged and sustained wherever they are desired—and that these relationships will be of high quality, firmly based, mutually beneficial, responsibly sustained, and linked by a joint and mutual covenant. We envision a commitment to international engagement as a moral and spiritual principle that is integral to Unitarian Universalist congregational life.

Mission: The mission of the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council is to foster and support partner relationships between North American congregations and congregations, schools, and agencies in all other countries where partnering is sought and welcomed. This includes countries where partners are already active, such as Romania, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, as well as other countries where new partnerships are now beginning, such as the Philippines, India, and Poland.

We will:

- BE a bridge that connects congregations around the world;
- REACH across boundaries to collaborate with old and new partners;
- CREATE transformational opportunities for pilgrimage and hospitality, for learning and for service;
- CHALLENGE ourselves theologically and open ourselves to changed values and behaviors;
- INITIATE partnerships that promote global friendships, international awareness, human rights, and a better world; and
- SUSTAIN this global vision, enlarging and renewing it as new occasions teach new duties.



ADOPTED AT THE
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE UUPCC,
JUNE 24, 2006.

Invitation to Membership

If you or a friend wish to receive this newsletter three times a year and to support and participate in Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council programs and goals, please fill out this form to join us.

DATE: _____ —ONE YEAR MEMBERSHIPS— New Membership Renewal

\$30* Individual Membership \$50* Family** Membership \$_____ Individual or Family Membership *PLUS* gift for UUPCC program support

\$50 Congregational*** (*under* 100 members) \$150 Congregational*** (*over* 100 members)

MEMBERSHIP DUES will increase to \$150 for churches with more than 100 members. If your budget does not allow you to pay the increase this year, you may renew at the old rate of \$100 for the 2006–2007 membership year.

Name: _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City/State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

Telephone _____ E-Mail _____

Please add my email address to the PCC-Chat list so I can keep up to date on the latest UUPCC news! ****

UUA Church Name/City _____



* Canadian members please send \$25 for an individual membership or \$42 for a family membership in U.S. funds by check or USD money order to the UUPCC address below.

** A family membership consists of two adults residing at the same address (receiving one newsletter).

*** A "congregational subscription" provides you with up to four newsletters mailed to the church.

**** Your contact information will be used solely by the UUPCC and will not be shared with other organizations.

Make your tax-deductible check payable to
UU Partner Church Council

Mail your invitation and check to:
UU Partner Church Council / P.O. Box 88 / Bedford, MA 01730-0088



Partner Church News

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