



Partner Church News

A publication of the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council

Connecting Unitarian and Universalist congregations around the globe

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Winter 2009/2010

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

A Reflection on Twenty Years

BY CATHY CORDES

In 2010 we will celebrate 20 years of partnerships between Transylvanian Unitarian churches and UUA member congregations. While a sister church program existed in the 1920s, it was interrupted by World War II and many years of communism. For many UUA churches, this program faded into history, but in Transylvania, the memory of partnership remained alive during those intervening years. The institutional memory of partnership was revived when, in late January 1990, a letter was issued by then-UUA Presi-

dent William Schulz and Moderator Natalie Gulbrandsen inviting U.S. and Canadian congregations to become "sister churches" to congregations in Transylvania, and the modern era of partnership began.

As with any grassroots movement, there were many events that led up to this moment and many people who played a role in getting to that point, but I want to tell one story of one event in this history. So recently, I asked Rev. William "Bill" Schulz to share with us his recollections of the events that led up to that letter being sent to

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Natalie Gulbrandsen and Transylvanian Bishop Lajos Kovács at a meeting of the IARF in 1990. *(This picture is from a slide scanned by Rodger Matlage of the First Parish in Concord, MA.)*

BOARD CHAIR: OPEN LETTERS

Changing of the Guard

Dear Members and Friends of the UU Partner Church Council,

On October 23, 2009 I was officially appointed as the UUA's next Ambassador to the Transylvanian Unitarian Church, replacing John Gibbons who was the first to hold that title and who has moved on to become chair of the UU Service Committee. This appointment means that I have stepped down from the chairmanship of the Board of Directors as of the November, 2009

Board meeting, though I plan to remain on the Board until the end of my term in June 2010.

Fortunately for us, our vice chair Dick Van Duizend had previously agreed to take over the chairmanship of the Board in the event that I received this appointment. I know that the PCC will be in great hands under Dick's knowledgeable, committed, and skilled leadership, and I look forward to working with him in the remaining months of my term.

I can honestly say that my involvement with partnership has been the most profound experience of my life. To realize that I have friends in

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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.

Reflection on Twenty Years

(Continued from page 1)

congregations. Here is what he told me:

In the late 1980s, "official" connections with Unitarian Universalists in other countries were handled mainly by the UUA. The International Association of Religious Freedom (IARF) served as a focus and gathering point

at the IARF international council meetings. Representative members of the Council met for business meetings more frequently. Bill recalls, "The Transylvanian Unitarian Bishop was a member of that council in the late 1980s, as was I." At a Council meeting in Germany, Bill and Bishop Lajos Kovács had the opportunity to talk. They discussed Ceausescu's plan to

bulldoze Unitarian villages. Alarmed by that and what he read in newspapers, Bill reached out to UU members of Congress and proposed a trip to Romania to protest the treatment of Unitarians. The trip was scheduled for early January 1990.

In December 1989 the communist government of Nicolae Ceausescu was

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Coat of Arms of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church.

**Next PCC Deadline:
April 4, 2010**

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

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

Keep up to date on the latest partner church news without leaving home!

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE CALLS

January 26, Tuesday 8:00–9:00 PM EASTERN

Music and Partnership

Moderator: Rodger Mattlage

Special Guest: Bet Norton - Music Director, Concord, MA

How has music enriched your partnership experience? Choir trips here or there? Special music on Sundays or at other times? This call will focus on how to integrate your partner's music into your own Sunday services. Also included will be country-specific issues and ideas.

February 25, Thursday 8:00 PM EASTERN

Country Update for Transylvania

Presenter: Rev. Harold Babcock (as the UUA's new Ambassador to Transylvania)

Cathy Cordes is putting together a committee to organize a celebration of the PCC's 20th anniversary (July 23–25, 1990 was the official start in Kolozsvár).

March 9, Tuesday 12:00 pm eastern

Update with Eric Cherry on International UU Activities

We're at a special moment of growing collaboration between congregations, organizations, and U/U national groups around the world. This call will describe how that's happening and how you and your congregation can be a part of it.

April 13, Tuesday 8:00 PM EASTERN

UU BUILD Program in the Philippines

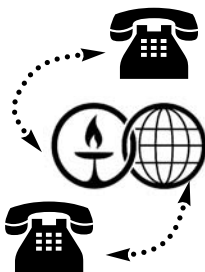
Presenters: Eric Cherry, Lee Boeke Burke, and Nihal Attanayake

Updated information about the Philippines dormitory project.

May 6, Thursday 8:00 PM EASTERN

Annual Call with the UUPCC Leadership

Presenters: Richard Van Duizend and Cathy Cordes



TO REGISTER FOR A CALL, send an email to

office@uupcc.org or call the office 9–5 Eastern Time weekdays at 781-275-1710.

Include * your name * city/state * the topic/date of the call you will attend. You will be sent an email with the call-in information 2–3 days before the call (*please let the office know if you don't have access to email*).

Feel free to submit questions to the speakers ahead of time by email: office@uupcc.org.

Recordings of most previous conference calls are available. We routinely record our Virtual Conferences and post them on the website after the call. You can download those recordings—www.uupcc.org, click on Resources / Virtual Conference Calls / Past Virtual Conference Calls—and listen to them on your computer.

Reflection on Twenty Years

(Continued from page 2)

ousted in Romania. Bill said there was some discussion about what to do, but in the end the delegation decided to carry on with their planned visit. (On page 7 of this newsletter, you can read trip report that Bill delivered to the UUA General Assembly in June 1990.) The group, comprised of Bill and his then-wife Linda Lu; Natalie Gulbrandson and her husband Mel; Rev. Gary Smith, minister in Concord, MA; U.S. Congressman Chet Atkins; Barbara Greene, a Canadian Member of Parliament; Bob Alpert, head of the UUA Washington office; Romanian government officials; and others had been arranged through the U.S. Embassy in Bucharest. The trip was a little chaotic, and government officials did not know what was going to happen next, but meetings were held anyway.

From Bucharest the group traveled to Kolozsvár by train. With the borders open—albeit difficult and intimidating—there were new opportunities to connect to our religious heritage and to the thousands of Unitarians of Transylvania. At the end of that tour, Bill and the others asked Bishop Kovács what they could do to help. He asked them to reinstitute the sister church program, so upon their return home, Bill and Natalie issued the invitation to partnership.

This was, of course, just the first seedling of what has now blossomed into an astounding partner church

TELLING YOUR STORIES

Each church that became a partner has its own unique story to tell. As part of the celebration planned by the Transylvanian Unitarian Church, Bishop Ferenc Bálint-Benczédi has invited us all to capture the history of our partnerships in writing. This is a wonderful time to reflect on your own partnership.

- Does your church know the story of how it began?
- Who was involved in those first years?
- Have you exchanged visits with your partners?
- Have you planned joint projects?
- Who has kept the partnership alive?
- Have you exchanged sermons, made connections with your RE classes, exchanged gifts, and shared your lives?

Taking time to create a living document for your own congregation is a great way to record the richness of your connection with your partner. And while we encourage you to write down and share your stories for your own benefit, we also hope to collect these stories into a book that can be published and shared with the wider Partner Church community. If you write the history of your partnership, please send us a copy by emailing it to office@uupcc.org so that it can be included!

movement. In 1993 the UU Partner Church Council was organized as a grassroots effort to support the partnership movement. Soon thereafter the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) was organized to connect the international UU network at the top level.

Today there is a robust network connecting Unitarian Universalists and Unitarians worldwide. UUPCC partnerships exist not only in Transylvania, but in Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, the Khasi Hills of India, and the Philippines, and most recently in Hong Kong, Burundi, Uganda, and Nigeria.

If you are reading this newsletter, you are a part of this great network, which connects us all in an amazing web of relationship.

During this year we hope you will find a way to mark this significant milestone and we invite you to join in the celebrations of twenty years of partnership that will take place from July 22 to 25, 2010 in Kolozsvár, Transylvania.

Exact plans are not yet firm but we know the celebration will include a conference, concerts, dinners and worship services. Members of the UUPCC

(Continued on page 5)

STORIES

"Two villages, one community" is what we call this picture—it represents many stories. First Parish in Bedford's first visit with their new partner, Abásfalva, occurred in the summer of 1994. More than 80 members and friends of FPB have been on that and the subsequent pilgrimages.



Open Letters: Changing of the Guard
(Continued from page 1)

Transylvania who have become like family to me is a continual surprise and joy, and now because of my work as Chair of the Board of PCC that experience of friendship beyond our borders has been expanded to include friends in India, the Philippines, and Africa. What an incredible and, for me, unexpected privilege that has been! And I know that I am not alone, for this has been the experience of many who have engaged in the partnership movement.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve this organization about which I am so passionate, and for the support you have shown me during the last two and a half years of my chairmanship.

I also want to thank Cathy Cordes for all of her help and for her hard work on behalf of PCC; it's a cliché, but it's true: I couldn't have done it without her. We are truly blessed to have such a talented and committed Executive Director!

Harold Babcock

Dear All,

I am honored to serve as the Chair of your Board and am humbled by the example of Harold Babcock's vision, leadership, and compassion. Thank you Harold for all that you have done, and all that you will be doing in your new role.

For those of you whom I have not yet met, let me provide a brief introduction. I have been a UU since age 7 when my parents, attracted by the wisdom and world view of Rev. Homer Jack, joined the Unitarian Church of Evanston, Illinois. I currently live in Falls Church, Virginia, right outside Washington, D.C. My wife Sharon and I have been members of the UU Congregation of Fairfax since 1974.

My day-job is as a management consultant for courts. I feel blessed to be able to help dedicated judges, lawyers, court administrators, clerks, and others improve the administration of justice. But for the past 19 years, the activities that have inspired, energized, and fulfilled me the most have been:

- building the relationship between my congregation and our partners in Szentgerice/Galateni, Transylvania and Puriang, Meghalaya, India;
- seeing the mutual accomplishments, learning, and friendships that have grown; and
- recognizing that our faith is not just for well-educated Americans, but has provided and continues to provide strength and hope to many throughout the world who must daily battle hunger and many forms of oppression.

From my colleagues on the Board and staff of the UUPCC and conversations with many of you, I realize that I am not alone in these feelings.

I look forward to working with and for you to extend and strengthen the bonds and benefits of partnership.

Dick Van Duizend



REV. HAROLD BABCOCK NAMED UUA AMBASSADOR TO TRANSYLVANIA UNITARIAN CHURCH

An increasingly essential element of the UUA's commitment to maintain and develop "Right Relationship" with Unitarian/Universalist judicatories around the world is the "International Ambassador Program." These Ambassadors help the UUA to be a good partner by promoting effective communication, spiritual communion, cooperative involvement in projects, and the development of interdependency in global relationships.

The UUA was deeply appreciative to the Reverend John Gibbons, who served as the UUA's Ambassador to the Transylvania Unitarian Church for nearly two years and completed his

service in October, 2009.

And, the UUA is immensely grateful that the Reverend Harold Babcock agreed to be named by UUA President Peter Morales as the next Ambassador to the Transylvania Unitarian Church. Rev. Babcock began his service on October 27, 2009.

Reverend Babcock will serve along with Reverend Abhi Janamanchi, Ambassador to the Unitarian Union of Northeast India; and Reverend Fred Muir, Ambassador to the UU Church of the Philippines—who continue their profound service to U/Uism.

Rev. Morales wrote to Rev. Babcock on his appointment—"By virtue of

your good offices, I trust that the faithful ties that exist between the UUA and the Transylvanian Unitarian Church will be strengthened, and that our institutional relationship will continue to develop." It's hard to imagine that another American UU could be better qualified for that important work than Rev. Babcock.

Isten vezéreljen! És köszönöm szépen, Harold

Rev. Eric Cherry, UUA Director of International Resources

Reflection on Twenty Years

(Continued from page 5)

Board will be there, as will Bill Schulz, Linda Lu Burciaga and Judit Gellérd, who worked so tirelessly to raise awareness of the Transylvanian Unitarians and to support early partnerships. John Dale, our Travel Coordinator in Transylvania, is ready to help with travel arrangements on the ground as needed.

We will post details on PCC-chat (our email discussion forum) as they become available and will have a further report in the next newsletter. If you are not on PCC-chat and would

like to be, send an email to office@uupcc.org and we will add you to the list.

Bishop Bálint-Benczédi also wants us to reflect and celebrate the remarkable connections that we have forged, and elsewhere in this newsletter you can find more information about plans for collecting the histories of our partnerships (see box, top of page 3).

Twenty years is a long time and a lot has changed. In that time, this organization was born and, with your help, has blossomed. American UUs have connected around the world with

people who share our faith and, in the case of Transylvania, hold our historic roots. We have examined our own beliefs in the light held high by others. We have made friends and expanded our families. We have all been blessed—and sometimes challenged—through partnership. May it continue to be so.

Even as we reflect on the marvelous results of partnership we also look forward and imagine the next 20 years of partnership. May our future be even more closely tied to Unitarians and Unitarian Universalists around the world as we find strength in this amazing faith! ●●

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Cornish “Living the Mission” Award

BY BARBARA KRES BEACH

The UUPCC Board is accepting nominations for the 2010 Louis Cornish “Living the Mission” Award. John Gibbons is chairing a committee composed of Leon Hopper and Richard Beal who will make recommendations to the Board of Directors at their meeting in March. We hope you will give careful thought to whom you might wish to nominate for this great honor. The following guidelines may be helpful in your deliberations:

- The award is named for Louis C. Cornish, early twentieth century president of the American Unitarian Association. Dr. Cornish was a visionary internationalist who devoted much of his life to forging global bonds for liberal religious groups. He headed a task force on human rights for ethnic Hungarians in Romania, and visited the Philippines to initiate connections with Unitarians there. In the spirit of Dr. Cornish, the award recipient should have made significant contributions to international relationships.

- The recipient should have made an outstanding contribution to global church partnership, and to the partner church movement.
- The contribution should be, as nearly as possible, of the same magnitude as the contributions made by previous recipients.
- The recipient should not be a current member of the Partner Church Council Board of Directors.

All suggestions will be appreciated. Please include with your nomination a brief statement describing the contributions and attributes of the nominee. Submissions should be received by and sent to, Committee Chair. Please, DO NOT send any recommendations via PCC-Chat.

Formal presentation of the Cornish Award will be made at General Assembly during the Partner Church Council’s annual meeting luncheon. We hope that many of you will join us.

Nominations may be sent to the UUPCC office via email (office@uupcc.org) or by mail to the UUPCC office at PO Box 88, Bedford, MA 01730. ●●

Previous Recipients of the Louis C. Cornish Living the Mission Award:

2009 – the Rev. John Eric Gibbons
2008 – the Rev. Dr. Spencer Lavan
2007 – Dr. Árpád Szabó
2006 – Natalie Gulbrandsen
2005 – the Rev. Richard Boeke
2004 – the Rev. Peter Raible
2003 – Patricia Rodgers
2002 – the Rev. Richard F. Beal
2001 – the Rev. C. Leon Hopper
2000 – the Rev. Dénes Farkas
1999 – Dr. Judit Gellérd



Rev. Dénes Farkas, receiving his Cornish Award during the 2000 General Assembly.

NEW AWARD ANNOUNCED:

Sustaining Stewards

In honor of 20 years of partnership the UUPCC Board is happy to announce a new, not-yet-named award. We recognize that long-term partnerships do not automatically sustain themselves. It takes attention, time and loving care to maintain long distance connections and nurture friendship. Often this work is not publicly recognized though it is this crucial grassroots work that keeps the partnership thriving and keeps the congregations involved.

Whether your partnership is twenty years old or two years old, whether your partner is in Transylvania where the first partnerships were formed or in Hong Kong, one of our newest partners, there is bound to be one or more people who tend lovingly to the rela-

tionship over time. They do the hard work of maintaining communication (so much easier now than in the first years when writing letters was the *ONLY* way). They organize trips. They organize fundraisers and church events. They write newsletter articles. They are committed internationalists and dedicated to their partners.

Plans are to award several of these each year because we know there are so many who are worthy of this recognition. This year—2010—at General Assembly we will recognize 20 recipients in honor of the Twenty Years of Partnership. Nominees will be accepted through February 26, 2010. Please fill out the application form and have it signed by the chair of the

church governing board or church minister. We want to make sure that the church knows and can also recognize the special contributions this individual has made.

All nominations of individuals from US and Canadian churches will be considered by a selection committee to be named by the UUPCC Board of Directors. Twenty recipients will be chosen in 2010. If your nominee is not recognized this year, you can nominate them again next year. Please mail the form from this newsletter (also available at www.uupcc.org) to UUPCC, PO Box 88, Bedford, MA 01730-0088. Must be postmarked by February 24 to be considered for 2010. ●●

SUSTAINING STEWARDS AWARD NOMINATION FORM

UUPCC would like to honor the hard-working volunteers in your congregation who has given dedicated service to your partnership over the years. We know there are many of these folks out there who deserve to be recognized. We will recognize 20 such people this year at the UUPCC Annual Meeting. Their names will be listed in the Annual Report to UUPCC Members and in the newsletter. They do not have to be present at General Assembly to be recognized.

Date: _____

Name of Nominee: _____

Address: _____

City / ST/ Province / ZIP (Postal code) _____

US or Canadian Church name: _____

Partner Church City and Country: _____

Please provide a narrative of the service provided by the nominee (use additional pages if necessary):

Signature of minister or church governing board chair: _____



Please return this nomination form to UUPCC Stewards Award, PO Box 88, Bedford, MA 01730. If your nominee is not selected this year, you can nominate them again next year.

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Excerpt from the Annual Report of President William Schulz to the 1990 General Assembly

And now let me address the last institutional magnet for new members that I want to mention, and that is our history. For me personally of course the highlight of this past year was our visit to Transylvania where that history began. Ten of us, including Natalie and Linda Lu, Barbara Greene, a member of the Canadian Parliament, and Representative Chester Atkins of Massachusetts, were in the party. Tomorrow morning you will have an opportunity to hear from Mr. Atkins whose participation was so critical to our success.

Our journey had been planned months before the fall of Ceausescu. Nicolae Ceausescu was without qualification the most vicious dictator in Eastern Europe. In a desperate effort to reduce the Romanian national debt he had exported Romania's resources at the expense of the people's fundamental needs. Food grew hard to find; heat and electricity were severely rationed in the winter months, and all imports were forbidden.

But that was not the worst of it. The monitoring and persecution of Romania's citizens by the secret police, the so-called Securitate, was severe and thorough. We had an amusing experience of this on our 1987 visit when Natalie said to her husband, Mel, in the presumed privacy of their hotel room, "Melvin, I just can't stand all the wood chips in this Romanian toilet paper. I've got to have some Western toilet paper." And, sure enough, the next day in the Gulbrandsen's room—but not in mine—was Western toilet paper.

The churches and the ethnic minorities—particularly the Hungarians—were singled out for special vilification. All Unitarians in Transylvania are Hungarian and Ceausescu was intent upon eliminating all vestiges of Hungarian culture. That was the ultimate rationale for the plan to destroy 8,000 villages, many of which con-

tained minority populations.

Fortunately the terror ended on December 22nd, 1989. The revolution began, you may recall, in the city of Timisoara when the Securitate tried to arrest a Reformed minister named László Tőkés who had been outspoken in his criticism of the regime. Amazingly enough, members of Tőkés' congregation surrounded his church to protect him. Some of them held up their children in front of them, thinking that the Police would not shoot children. But they were wrong.

The slaughter at Timisoara sparked the revolution. Within days students filled the streets of Bucharest and the Army turned against Ceausescu and the secret police. Nicolae and his wife, Elena, fled the palace and were quickly arrested and executed on Christmas morning.

Our delegation entered Romania only three weeks after the revolution. I want to show you just a few slides that will give you a sense of the experience.

[SLIDE NARRATION]

Bucharest in January is a cold and forbidding place. This is the central square where the major confrontation between students and the Army on the one side and secret police forces on the other took place. Hundreds were killed here. The places where they fell were marked with simple candle memorials. A city park had been appropriated as a cemetery and re-named Heroes' Park. The makeshift graves of dozens of young people were marked with personal memorabilia, including surfboards. To come face to face with the fact that so many young people died for freedom was an emotionally wrenching experience.

Bucharest itself—once called the "Paris of the Balkans" but stripped by Ceausescu of much of its architectural brilliance—displayed the vivid aftereffects of the fighting. The most tragic loss was the National Library that had housed the nation's most important manuscripts—hundreds of years of history burned to ashes. The tunnels that Ceausescu's secret police had installed beneath the city and from which they often emerged to spread their terror were exposed for all to see.

(Continued on page 8)



Bucharest, 1990: National Library with memorial candles—a tribute to those who died in the December 1989 uprising. (This picture is from a slide scanned by Rodger Mattlage of the First Parish in Concord, MA.)

Schulz: 1990 Annual Report

(Continued from page 7)

There were signs of hope as well:

- *The insignia of socialist Romania cut out of the national flag.*
- *Tanks bedecked with flowers.*
- *Long lines waiting for the first uncensored newspapers in more than forty years.*
- *A library which three weeks before had been stacked with the works of Elena and Nicolae Ceausescu—those works now being discarded.*
- *And finally a ‘Victory’ snowman.*

Transylvania—eight hours by train from Bucharest—lay tranquil in the winter snow. A new day had dawned. This is the “mother church” of Unitarianism in the city of Kolozsvár. Meet your Unitarian sisters ... and brothers ... gathered under the ancient words displayed in every congregation: ‘Egy Az Isten’—God is One.’

One of the highlights of our trip was the opportunity to come to know the hero of the revolution, László Tőkés, whose courage at Timisoara had finally broken the back of the oppressor. What a moving experience it was for me to stand with László Tőkés and Congressman Atkins as we greeted the hundreds of members of the Unitarian Church in Marosvásárhely following our service there. And how great our prayer that their future will be a free one.

[END OF NARRATION]



Rev. László Tőkés, of the Reformed Church, “Hero of Timisoara” at his surprise visit to the church in Marosvásárhely. (This slide was scanned by Rodger Mattlage)



Part of the 1990 Delegation: Linda Hartke (Rep. Atkins’ Chief of Staff), Linda Lu and Bill Schulz, Rep. Chet Atkins, Natalie Gulbrandsen, and Rev. Gary Smith.

(This slide was scanned by Rodger Mattlage, First Parish in Concord, MA..)

Our original purpose in going to Romania had been to express our love and concern for the plight of our Unitarian sisters and brothers. As it turned out, good fortune had offered us an unparalleled opportunity to observe and perhaps even in some small way to shape a new society in the making.

Thanks to the American embassy and Congressman Atkins, we had access to top officials of the new government, leading dissidents, students, religious leaders, and leaders of the opposition parties.

Perhaps our most important meeting took place with the Acting Director of the Office of Religious Affairs—a man named Twadder. Three weeks earlier this office had been called the Ministry of Cults but after the revolution, had been re-named to reflect a more respectful attitude toward the churches. Under Ceausescu, Mr. Twadder had been one of the churches’ great nemeses, enforcing state restrictions with an iron hand. But the day we met with him Twadder had suddenly ‘got religion.’

Among the things he assured us was that all religions would be permitted to practice their faiths—including the previously illegal Quakers, Brethren, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and Mormons. No further limits would be placed on the number of students permitted to prepare for the ministry,

priesthood, or rabbinate; Bibles and other religious materials would be freely available; and there would be no limits placed on permits to construct or renovate church buildings. As far as we know, these assurances have been respected.

And yet the situation in Romania remains a fragile one. Tomorrow Chet Atkins will bring us up-to-date but there is no question but what ethnic tensions remain and political and economic turmoil is still widespread. The plight of the thousands of babies with AIDS has received much attention.

Unitarian Universalist congregations have responded warmly to the needs of our religious brothers and sisters. I am proud to tell you that 125 UUA churches have entered our “Sister church Program” linking them to a Unitarian congregation in Transylvania. We will do all we can to help re-build Unitarianism in Transylvania and I think it is not an overstatement to say that if Romania does eventually establish a stable democracy and if human rights are respected and religious freedom maintained. It will be in part at least because of the timeliness and conduct of our visit and the continuing efforts of Congressman Atkins and our UUA congregations to see to the advent in Romania of a promising new age. ●●

New Publication Brings Transylvanian Unitarianism Alive for UU Partners

An “oral history” in which the Rev. Nagy Ferenc, affectionately known as Feribacsi (say *fer-i-batchi*), tells of his life and times has recently been published by Campicello Press. The title and subtitle sum it up: *Feribacsi in His Own Words; The Rev. Nagy Ferenc—His Story, His Art, His Songs—from Segesvar, Transylvania.*

Nagy recounts his story with warmth, insight, and humor. Growing up in Transylvania, being a member of the oppressed Hungarian minority in Romania, becoming an internal refugee during World War II (fleeing first the Germans, then Allied bombs, then the Russians), serving as a Unitarian minis-

ter during the era of Communist totalitarianism—all figure in the story he tells. Edited by George Kimmich Beach from interviews with Rev. Nagy, the text is richly illustrated with Nagy’s own paintings and songs. The book gives young people and adults a vivid sense of the struggles and the joyous faith of Transylvanian Unitarians in the last century, and continuing today. Recommended for RE teachers! ●●

—BARBARA K. BEACH

Available for \$15 (postage & handling included) from Campicello Press, P. O. Box 417, Madison, VA 22727. Inquiries: gkbeach@aol.com. This book will also be available at the UUPCC booth at General Assembly.



1990: the Romanian flags with the hammer-and-sickle symbols cut out. (See Schulz Report, p. 7,8) (This slide was scanned by Rodger Mattlage)

SHARE THE NEWS...

We encourage you to share UUPCC News articles with your church. Churches have permission to duplicate and circulate this newsletter and/or to reprint portions of it in their own newsletters. If you are reprinting an excerpt, please credit the *UU Partner Church News* and include our website address (www.uupcc.org) for those who might want more information.

UUPCC Board Welcomes New Board Member

Rev. Vail Weller, minister for the UUs of San Mateo CA church, has agreed to join the Board as of the January 2010 meeting. She is replacing Rev. Jon Luopa who has had to resign because of other commitments. While we are sorry to see Jon go, we are grateful to Vail for agreeing to step in to a board position.

Rev. Weller’s church is partnered with Cabiguhan in the Philippines. They have been very active and involved. Several members visited in January last year along with Vail, her son and her father. Vail is committed to her partnership in the Philippines and also the partner church movement. On our website at www.uupcc.org/sermons, are three sermons: one that Rev. Weller preached in the Philippines, one that included reflections by other members from San Mateo who traveled with Rev. Weller, and another by Rev. Weller that she preached on their partner church Sunday.

The Board is pleased that Rev. Weller is willing to serve and welcomes her. You will have a chance to meet her at General Assembly along with all our board members, at the annual UUPCC Business Meeting and lunch. ●●

Christmas Angels in Cincinnati

BY CATHY CORDES

Tickets were bought months ago as plans were made for the Balint family, Róbert and Réka and children Dalma and Mátyás to spend the Christmas break on the East Coast. No one planned on the snowstorm.

But as they arrived in Minneapolis, MN to change planes, they were told they were being diverted to Cincinnati, OH because the flight to Newark, NJ was cancelled. They knew no one in Cincinnati. Róbert called Barbara Weber. Barbara’s husband planned to meet them in Newark—so Barbara told

Róbert to get on the plane, and not to worry because we would have a solution by the time they arrived in Cincinnati.

Barbara called me, Cathy—and I gave her the names of several Partner Church people in Cincinnati. Barbara eventually talked to the church board president who shared three more names and the last of them gave her the name of parishioners Cliff Shisler and Linda Heath, who live close to the airport.

Not only did Cliff and Linda meet Róbi and family at the airport, they brought them home and then hosted them for two days until their flight could be rescheduled. They gave up their own bedroom, even though they

had just returned from an overseas trip themselves.

Cheers to angels Cliff and Linda and family. *Thank you* from all of us for taking in the travelers. The moral of this story is that we all belong to a wonderful family of caring UUs around the world who will take in fellow UUs when they have nowhere else to go. I know that the Balint family and many others in Romania or Negros Island in the Philippines or the Khasi Hills of India or many other places would do the same under similar circumstances. I am thankful for the family of UUs that we can all call friends.

More about the Balint family on page 13.

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COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP NEWS

In the Philippines: In December, Richard Ford just completed a training session for facilitators there and visited several sites of previous CCB workshops to get updates. The trip was quite successful and the progress in the communities has been substantial.

In Transylvania: Krisztina Pall and Izabella Péter facilitated a CCB workshop in Fiafalva. Phyllis Thorburn from River Road UU Church (Fiafalva's partner church) was there as an observer. The report has now been posted and can be read at www.uupcc.org/communitydevelopment.

In mid-January, Krisztina Pall and Emöd Farkas will facilitate a CCB workshop in Gyepes (partnered with Yarmouth, ME). Rev. Jennifer Emrich and Barbara Trentacosta from Yarmouth will attend as observers.

In India: The government has announced several new programs specifically targeted at rural areas. The application process requires communities to include some participatory community planning results in order to be eligible for these programs. The CCB process (and resulting documentation) has been effective in meeting this requirement for some communities. UUPCC is hoping to receive funding to provide an extending training session for facilitators so that more communities can qualify.



Rev. József Szombattalvi speaking in September at the dedication ceremonies of the new community building in Székelykeresztúr, Transylvania.

Please see the story on page 15.

In Memory of the Reverend Polly Guild



It is with much sadness that we note the death of the Reverend Polly Guild on November 7, 2009. Polly and her husband Ted were serving as UUA International Program Directors in 1990 when the Partner Church program was started. She was also instrumental in starting the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists and was an active member of the International Association of Religious Freedom.

She truly ministered to the entire international Unitarian Universalist community. She and Ted established the Ted Guild Microcredit Bank in the Philippines. She was well known in many countries—India, Japan, Pakistan, and Romania just to name a few. Her devotion to the international community of UUs was a driving force in her life. She was a friend to so many around the world. The partner church community has lost a great friend and she will be dearly missed.

Reverend Lucinda Duncan, who followed Polly in ministry at Follen Church in Lexington, Massachusetts, had this to say about her: “She shaped her life with integrity, courage and love right up to the very end, and gave all of us who knew her—and even those of us who didn’t—so much. Ministry

among us, and among so many people around the world, was her life. We are grateful for her love, her grounded wisdom, and her endless service to the cause of Unitarian Universalism.”

The Rev. Brian Kiely, Unitarian Church of Edmonton, Canada and the President of International Council of Unitarians and Universalists remembered Polly with these words: “On November 7 we lost one of our strongest and most persistent advocates for international Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist connections. Rev. Polly Guild of Massachusetts died after a period of illness. While her death was expected, it was still a great loss to all who knew her and to Unitarians and Universalists around the globe who may never know the effect of her pioneering work.

“As member, leader and friend of the IARF, the ICUU, the Partner Church Council and hundreds of individuals around the world Polly helped grow our sense of community across borders, oceans and continents. It always seemed that if there was a gathering, she was there. A former Executive Member of the ICUU, Polly in recent years sat in as our resident

historian and archivist. As new leaders emerged, she helped us learn the history and the context so that we could do our best work.”

Polly was a steady influence in the world of international Unitarian Universalist faith during her long career. She kept the flame of international involvement burning when so few others were even paying attention. She worked tirelessly on behalf of our international UUs, both personally and professionally. Her strength, leadership and personal involvement remain an inspiration to so many of us. She made a great difference in the lives of so many UUs both here in the U.S. and abroad. We know the UU faith is much stronger today in many parts of the globe because of her life’s work.

Before she died, Polly made a contribution to the UUPCC. The UUPCC Board of Directors is pleased to announce that, in keeping with Polly’s example, her gift will be used to help strengthen and develop partnerships with our newest partners in several African countries.

We will miss her.

CATHY CORDES, FOR THE UUPCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

New Partnership with Hong Kong Announced

UUPCC is pleased to welcome our newest partner church relationship between Plano Texas and the Unitarian Universalists Hong Kong.

Here is what Plano Texas has to say about why they want to be a Partner —

“We anticipate opportunities for both congregations to learn more about their colleagues in other parts of the world. Since the UU Hong Kong community is a new UU group, we envi-

sion opportunities for our church of ~200 members to assist them as they grow by sharing our experiences and resources. Since Unitarian Universalism is relatively new to Hong Kong and China, we hope to support the development of Unitarian Universalism in that region.”

And here is what the congregation in Hong Kong has to say:

“We are a budding UU community with very limited resources. We are the only UU presence in Hong Kong, and probably in the whole China. We want to gain connection with an established

UU congregation overseas to relate with the larger UU community worldwide and to obtain congregational growth experiences and resources such as worship and religious education materials.”

It is exciting to see partnership spread to a new country and to see UUs in China. The partnership is working on translating information about the UU faith into Mandarin so that it is accessible to more people. We wish this partnership well and look forward to hearing about it in the future. ●●



Rev. Róbert Balint.

Christmas on the East Coast

BY CATHY CORDES

This year's Balázs Scholar is Róbert Balint. He is studying for the year in Berkeley, CA at Starr King School for the Ministry. He is here with his wife Réka, daughter Dalma (8) and son Mátyás (2½). This year, several partner churches joined forces to bring the family to the East Coast during the Christmas break. Róbi preached on several Sundays and the family joined him for many discussions, potlucks and visiting. They stayed in Devon, PA, Alexandria, VA, Lynchberg, VA and the Boston area. They visited Washington, DC, Philadelphia, and in the Boston area—the UUA and the UUPCC offices.

We know that Róbi is studying at Starr King but we had the opportunity to ask Réka, his wife and their children about their activities while Róbi is

studying. Réka says that mostly she stays at home with Mátyás. In Transylvania she was working for the government in the local council office that oversees the restitution of property. She researches titles and deeds in an effort to restore land to the owners from pre-communist days. Mátyás is a very bright, happy 2 ½ year old who is learning both Hungarian and English. Réka did not know English when she arrived here, but has picked it up very fast.

Dalma started second grade in an American school in September not knowing English at all. It is now January and her English is amazing! She teaches Mátyás when she comes home from school. Réka tutors her after school in Hungarian, Romanian and math so that Dalma will not have to repeat grade 2 when she returns home.

They will be at General Assembly in Minneapolis MN in June before they return to Transylvania in early July. We hope you have a chance to meet them either here or in Mészkö. ●●



Réka Balint.

THE BALÁZS SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Balázs Scholars Program was named for a young Unitarian Transylvanian minister (Balázs Ferenc, in his native Hungarian) who graduated from the school in the 1920s. He became the minister in Mészkö, the "Alabaster Village," (Cheia in Romanian) in 1930. There he ministered to the residents, brought health programs and economic development to the impoverished local valley, wrote, mentored seminary students, and, with his American wife Christine, restored the historic Unitarian church.

The Balázs Scholars Program is funded by donations from individuals and the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council, and from honoraria, donations and Sunday service collections from the churches where the Balázs scholar preaches. We appreciate your help to sustain this important program. Checks for donations should be made out to Starr King School with the notation "Balázs" and sent to Starr King School, 2441 LeConte Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709.

Learn more about Balázs Ferenc in the book, *Alabaster Village* (see page 21.)



Dalma and Mátyás Balint.

Singers Wanted—UU European Concert Tour!

BY JOHN DALE

The UU Choir of Albany, NY is organizing a concert tour of Eastern and Central Europe in June/July of 2010. Their tour will begin in Bucharest, Romania on June 23rd and conclude in

Prague, CZ on July 5th.

Concerts are being planned in Brassó, Marosvásárhely, Kolozsvár, Budapest, and Prague. They currently have 20 people committed to the trip, but would like to add a few more voices from other congregations. If

you are interested in being a part of this tour please contact me (jdaleuupcc@yahoo.com) and I will put you in touch with the organizers and share with you the detailed itinerary. ●●

WEST VANCOUVER, BC CANADA

What a Celebration!

BY BRIAN WELWOOD
NORTH SHORE UNITARIAN CHURCH

My wife, Kay and I had been dreaming about a trip to the Dalmatian Coast for several years, and it all came together this fall. When we told our partner church minister Rev. Mihály Kiss and his wife Tünde of our plans, they invited us to the celebration of the completion of the interior restoration of their church—which had been ongoing for many years and of which we had seen some pictures. Almost since the day our partnership with the church in Hódmezővásárhely, Hungary began in 1994, our Partner Church Committee at North Shore Unitarian Church in West Vancouver, BC (NSUC) has been raising awareness and funds to support their ministry: and that meant facilities to operate in.

When Mihály and Tünde arrived in 1986 the church and other buildings were in such disrepair after years under the communist regime, that the town wanted some of the buildings demolished. They and a small group of dedicated members fought to keep the property intact, and now they were going to celebrate.

Kay and I first visited them on a Partner Church tour with John Dale in 2005, and we had seen that a lot of



Part of the restored church, with stained glass windows.

restoration and renovation had been done, but a lot more was needed in the sanctuary—especially to bring it back to something they could really be proud of. I looked at the industrial-looking windows and asked if they had once been stained glass. “Yes” said Mihály, “not very fancy but simple and beautiful.” I wondered if there was some way that we at NSUC could fundraise for individual windows, and asked how much one might cost. He thought that maybe \$1,500 would pay for one window. At our 2006 fundraiser we raised enough to pay for about 2.33 of those windows; a nice start, but was only about 10% of the total cost.

It turned out that our enthusiasm for what they had accomplished and the constant support of our church allowed Rev. Kiss to leverage our support with local and national governments to get funding to complete the windows, tear out and replace the crumbling sanctuary floor, rewire the church, replaster and repaint the whole interior. Rev. Kiss also got sizeable contributions from some local (non-Unitarian) supporters as well as lots of volunteer labor and discounted prices from several contractors. Probably the largest contributions of hard labor came from Rev. Kiss himself and his brother Miklós—who is a wonderful glass artist and spent almost two years in his “spare” time designing and creating the stained glass window units.

We arrived a week later than originally planned due to the passing of the Unitarian Bishop of Hungary, Csaba Rázmány, and to accommodate the pres-



Rev. Mihály Kiss and family with Brian and Kay Welwood, in Hódmezővásárhely, Hungary.

ence of Bishop Bálint Ferenc of Transylvania. This is when we realized that this celebration was probably a slightly bigger deal than we had imagined, and we maybe should have packed our dress shoes after all! We certainly have never been involved in a church event quite like this.

It was so full of pageantry and formality yet warm and family-like at the same time. We really felt welcomed, loved, and appreciated. We stayed the weekend in Mihály and Tünde’s rental suite (which NSUC contributions had helped make possible) while they shared the rest of their modest quarters with their three sons, a cousin and his wife, Tünde’s mother and Mihály’s three siblings and their spouses.

We all pitched in to clean, cook, and set up for a big group meal on Saturday night, and the big Sunday service. And it was a big Sunday service; two and one half hours by the time it ended and everything in Hungarian including the communion wine from 120-year-old goblets. As well as Bishop Bálint there were nine Unitarian ministers from both Hungary and Transylvania, ministers from the local Evangelical and Calvinist churches, top lay leaders from both the Hungarian and Transylvanian Unitarians, national and local government representatives,

(Continued on the next page)

Reports, News & Travel Stories

(Continued from page 15)

famous local musicians, the city choir, and other dignitaries. And they almost all spoke. It was all recorded by the national radio station for later broadcast! So, it was a very important, and touching, and lengthy celebration of which I enjoyed every minute. We hugged and said goodbye to the family members from Transylvania late Sunday afternoon and promised to reconnect when our choir visits there next May on the 100th anniversary of the completion of their church building.

By the time we left for Sarajevo and Dubrovnik with a good Hungarian breakfast under our belts and Mihály's sandwiches in hand we could truly say, as Tünde did in her follow-up email, "I think you are very good friends."



Ivan Kristoffy reading Rev. Gary Smith's letter to the congregation during the Saturday dedication service.

CONCORD / SZÉKELYKERESZTÚR

A Remarkable Partnership Year!

BY RODGER MATTLAGE
FIRST PARISH IN CONCORD, MA

While every year finds our two congregations interacting in various interesting ways, 2009 has been a truly momentous year for the partnership between First Parish in Concord, MA and the Unitarian church in Székelykeresztúr ("Keresztúr") in Transylvania, Romania.

Youth Service Pilgrimage (YSP): In the first half of the year we worked together to plan our fourth biennial YSP, culminating in 18 youth and 6 adults traveling to Keresztúr in July. As we had during our 2007 YSP, we worked side by side with Keresztúr's youths and adults on their Community House restoration project. The building had been confiscated by Romania's Communist regime back in the mid 1900s and was not returned to the Keresztúr congregation until 2007. During those fifty-plus years the building had been so neglected and abused that only the walls and foundation were salvageable. Three feet of dirt and

debris had to be excavated from the basement. All the floors, the roof, the porch, and the finished surfaces of the walls had to be demolished and replaced. (See photos at: <http://tinyurl.com/yjaf8j2>) Besides the work done during the 2007 and 2009 YSPs, the First Parish congregation also provided financial support from special Sunday collections, fund-raising events, and individual contributions.

In addition to our work days, we broadened and deepened our relationships through activities including, but certainly not limited to, sightseeing and camping in the Firtos hills, swimming at "The Strand" in neighboring Soskút and at the lake in Rugonfalva, folk dancing at the Berde Mózes Unitarian high school, communal meals, sleepovers with host families, and spending time with students sponsored by members of the Concord congregation. (See photos at: <http://tinyurl.com/yjqctyz>)

We experienced first-hand the far-ranging network of innumerable good samaritans when chaperone Nancy Reilly was struck by a motor-cycle and seriously injured. She spent the latter half of her pilgrimage in hospitals in Székelyudvarhely and Marosvásárhely. She and her husband Phil (who

dropped everything and flew from Concord to join her) were watched over, cared for, and nourished in body, mind and spirit, by ministers, minister's spouses, and countless others from the surrounding Unitarian communities. The Transylvanian Unitarian community also stepped forward to help the rest of our YSP pilgrims so that we all felt safe, supported, cared for, and able to continue with our program. Thankfully, and due in no small part to her Transylvanian Unitarian caregivers, Nancy is now fully recovered and getting back to her normal very active life. (Note: A lesson learned—we will insist that all of our future pilgrims are covered by "emergency medical evacuation insurance"! None of us was. For more about this, please see the UUPCC's travel page at www.uupcc.org/tripplan.html.)

Keresztúr Unitarian Community House Dedication: After planning for a year, Ivan and Ursula Kristoffy, Rodger Matlage and Patricia Brinkman, and Peggy Claybrook (long-time members of the Concord partnership community) returned to Keresztúr in September to represent First Parish at the two days of

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Reports, News & Travel Stories

(Continued from page 15)

ceremonies, festivities and church services to celebrate the dedication of the finally-finished community house. On behalf of the Concord congregation, we presented a set of wind chimes for the porch of the Community House and an accompanying plaque as a permanent memento of our partnership. (See photos of the house and celebrations at: <http://tinyurl.com/ykluzgx>.)

Keresztúr's Astonishing Gift to

Concord: During the summer, Keresztúr's Rev. József Szombatfalvi learned that Concord was not immune to the tough economic times in America. First Parish was forced to cut back its budget, reduce support for some programs, and lay off three staff members. Additionally, it was short more than \$350,000 of its \$4.5 million capital campaign goal for the renovation of its meeting house and expansion of the religious education wing. When József learned about this, he rallied his congregation to start its own campaign to raise money to help with Concord's capital campaign.

Back in Concord, preparations were wrapping up for the annual Transylvanian Thanksgiving service on September 20th. This was one week earlier than the traditional Transylvanian Unitarian Thanksgiving (normally on the last Sunday in September) so that Concord's celebrations would

coincide with Keresztúr's Community House dedication celebrations.

Over the morning coffee with the Concord delegation in Keresztúr on Sept. 19th, József revealed that his congregation had pledged to raise \$10,500 for Concord's capital campaign! Yes—\$10,500! Moved to tears by this enormous generosity, we worked together with József on the announcement of this astonishing gift which we emailed back to Winslow Pettingell, co-chair of the Concord PCC, that evening.

The next morning at the services in Concord, Réka Gagyí, a Keresztúr college student staying and working in Concord for the summer, and a long-time friend of many in the Concord congregation, presented a short welcoming speech from Keresztúr. She then handed József's announcement to Rev. Gary Smith. To say that Gary and the congregation were astonished is an understatement. Gary was literally speechless when he read the announcement for the first time during the 9:00 service. And when he read the announcement aloud to the congregation, there were audible gasps of surprise and long-lasting applause at both services, and a standing ovation at the 11:00 service. There were very few dry eyes in the sanctuary that morning!

The Concord Meeting House

Dedication: In November, with the expansion and renovations finally complete, Concord held its dedication service and gala celebration. Because First Parish is a historic landmark in Concord, the events were attended not only by members of the congregation but also by many officials and members of the surrounding community. In honor of our Keresztúr partnership, and in recognition of both their financial support and their longstanding friend-

ships with, and spiritual support of, members of our congregation, we dedicated the terrace and loggia in front of the expanded RE and office wing as the "Keresztúr Terrace". We commemorated it with a brass plaque similar to the one that was installed at the Keresztúr Community House in September. (See photos at: <http://tinyurl.com/ydsaebt>)

We look back at 2009 with a deep sense of connection and gratitude for this wonderful partnership and all the wonderful people in Transylvania and America who make it possible.

Many thanks and best wishes!—
Nagyon szépen köszönjük és minden jót!

STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

A Visit to Poland

BY BODOR LÍDIA EMESE

As students at the Protestant Theological Seminary in Kolozsvár, we always search for occasions which bring us together, which change the routine of the university lifestyle. One of these special occasions was the long weekend we spent together at the end of April/beginning of May. We dared—and we realized together a wonderful and unforgettable trip to Poland, not only as students, but with our teachers.

Our destination was Krakow, where we spent the nights in a hostel. But we visited Auschwitz, Birkenau and the salt mine in Wielichka.

After long hours of traveling late into the evening we arrived at the hostel. Following a well-deserved sleep, the next day was full of new adventures. We had heard a lot about Auschwitz and Birkenau before, but being there we could experience a small piece of the atmosphere of the concentration camps. It really puts a spot on your mood, if you spend a few hours there.

We spent the second part of the day at the world-reknoned salt mine;
(Continued on the next page)



The "Keresztúr Terrace" is part of the newly-renovated building at First Parish in Concord.

Reports, News & Travel Stories

(Continued from page 16)



Enjoying the Krakow town square.

we were deep under the ground like never before. It is a wonderful place: with its silence and depth, our energy was returned to us. The closing ceremony of the day was a common dinner with specifically-Polish food and drink. It was an extraordinary day with great moments which will remain alive in our memories.

Saturday was the Krakow day. We spent the whole day in the city, astonished by the great atmosphere, looking at the famous places and buildings. And we gave something from us to the

center of the city. For the enjoyment of all the passers-by, we performed traditional Hungarian folk music and dance. It was a great feeling.

The way back home was long as well, but we returned to Transylvania richer in feelings, adventures and memories. And this trip certainly was an irreplaceable chance to get to know better not only the world but each other. I feel lucky that I was part of it!

Philippines Partnership News

(Excerpted from a report by Nihal Atanayake, Chair of the Faith in Action office of the UU Church of the Philippines and Manager of the Ted Guild Village Bank)

UUA Ambassador Visits UUCP

In April, Rev. Fredrick John Muir, the Ambassador of the UUA to the UUCP was the keynote speaker at the Church Annual Convention. Rev. Muir held a retreat for the UUCP staff and a workshop for the ministers. We were able to address many concerns of the UUCP with Rev. Muir.

Community Capacity Building Program

Support for the Capacity Building work, including follow-up meetings with local officials and oversight, commenced during 2009 with Rev. Henry Legaje and Mr. Arman Pedro working in the north and the south of the Island. They were provided with an honorar-

ium from the UUPCC, and Ms. Eileen Higgins assisted them. Their task was to organize communities and plan for ways to build consensus of community needs and approaches to address them.

The visit of Dr. Richard Ford during the second week of December produced a first draft of the Handbook for Facilitators of Community Capacity Building work. We had a two-day workshop for facilitators, and visited four communities on Negros Island.

Partners Visit

San Mateo, California visited their partners in Ulay/Cabiguhan on Negros Island. It was a wonderful visit and San Mateo formed a lasting bond with their partners. They are working together on projects to extend the chapel, strengthen the RE program, and a Sunday feeding program they developed for the children and adults. A kitchen was constructed so meals could be prepared at the church. San Mateo is also sponsoring two students' education and plans are underway for more student support. Through the efforts of Carol Cook, who has helped in so many ways, six boxes of books were sent for the children.

Other Partner Updates

Monte Vista, California and Calapayan worked on a project to construct a one-and-a-half kilometer pathway leading to the chapel. Monte Vista is planning a visit for July 2010.

Honolulu, Hawaii is helping their partner in Caican renovate the chapel and develop a RE program and a Sunday feeding program for the children.

Castine, Maine raised funds for their partners in Aquino for ministers, Religious Education UU School, and feeding program. We were able to start RE classes for four age groups. The Cansayan Chapel was renovated, yet there is more work to be done. Castine is also organizing a program to support education for students in the community.

San Diego, California is partnered with Malingin. San Diego church member Len Pellettieri successfully

(Continued on page 18)



In a street Krakow: the Kolozsvár theological students perform traditional Hungarian folk dances—for the enjoyment of the passers-by.

Reports, News & Travel Stories

(Continued from page 17)

connected with Rotary International to complete the Malingin electrification project. The visit of Rotarian Josie Perpetual of Paradise Valley Rotary of San Diego to Malingin in the Philippines, connected with the Electrification project, is a significant event. (See pictures and article below.)

Student Sponsors

The Partner Church Council found backers for the Student Sponsorship program. Seven students have now been identified. Many more are waiting, so there are plenty of opportunities for sponsors.

Other News

In June, there was a tragedy in Nataban: a UU woman was brutally mur-

dered by a young man in the community. We called for assistance from our North American friends and tremendous support came in from the UUA, PCC, and Carol Cook. We are helping the whole community, as they express fear for their lives; we also help the family members seek justice for the woman who died. The UU leader in Nataban has offered his land for all those who wish to come and live closer to each other. We have built six houses for them with the personal contribution of Carol Cook of San Mateo, California. The murderer is behind bars. The Judiciary proceedings have begun. We have hired a private lawyer for the family of the deceased. The six year old child of the deceased is the main witness. Vickie Milde of Fox Valley UU Fellowship of Appleton, Wisconsin has offered student support to continue

her education. Lastly, we have provided the family with capital investment for farming.

The death of Rev. Polly Guild was unexpected and sad. Her contribution to the UUCP is beyond measure, and has caused tremendous impact. We shall keep her memory alive through the Ted Guild Village Bank program. The Corvallis UU covenant group led by Sandy Houtman of Oregon State, raised funds for the TGVB Micro Finance program.

In September, disaster struck the Philippines with Typhoon Undoy. Many UU congregations of North America and the Transylvanian Unitarian Church, expressed concern, and sent relief funds to help UUs who were affected in the Philippines. ●●

ELECTRIFICATION OF THE VILLAGE IN THE PHILIPPINES

ANOTHER SUCCESS STORY OF THE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The First Unitarian Church of San Diego, USA partner of Malingin UU Congregation in the Philippines, first made their visit to Malingin in March 2008. The five member group joined a tour of the Philippines sponsored by the Partner Church Council led by Lee Boeke Burke. Then in Malingin there was a community gathering to talk about a community priority. It was felt that the existing secondary electric live wire that ran on bamboo poles was a danger to life as it often fell off due to the heavy rains and winds.

Through the exerted efforts of the group, today the Rotary is joining hands with the First Unitarian Church of San Diego to provide electricity to two clusters of the village in Malingin Bago City, Negros Occidental in the Philippines.

—Rev. Nihal A. Attanayake, Director Church Partnerships Philippine Church

Thanks to First Unitarian Church of San Diego, Paradise Valley Rotary, The Rotary district of California, and Rotary International for providing the needed funds for the electrification project and thanks to Rotary Bacolod East of the Philippines for contributing and managing the project.



Here in the pictures are Engineers from the Electric Company in Bacolod City Philippines with Rotary Secretary past and Present Presidents of Rotary Bacolod with community leaders in Malingin.



**MADAN LABAN, SHILLONG,
KHASI HILLS**
Founder's Day

A letter to Charlotte Seth, DRE of Unitarian Universalist Church of Roanoke, Virginia from Bah ("brother") Pearl Green Marbaniang of the Madan Laban church in the Khasi Hills.

Dear Kong ("sister") Charlotte,

Greetings from all at the Church. I received yesterday the splendid card that you sent us for Founder's Day. You have a very good R.E. team, I must say. The children will be delighted when I show it to them on Sunday and will make a beeline for the butterfly stickers [you sent].

Founder's Day was celebrated in a grand manner this time. We had the Governor of the State attend as the chief guest and the children presented a beautiful welcome song. The Governor was all praise for "this liberal and tolerant faith". He was amazed to see an interfaith gathering which took part in chalice lighting. The kids had fun throughout the celebration and prizes were distributed to the winners of the various competitions organized as part



Founder's Day celebration at Madan Laban church.

of the celebration. Oh yes, we had eight friends from the East Shore congregation visiting us during the celebration. They had wonderful times.

The orphanage is doing well and has been a great blessing to the 14 orphans who are being taken good care of by two mothers.

The pictures sent here are from the

Founder's Day worship service. You see the children singing, the Governor lighting the chalice, a Catholic priest and a Buddhist monk lighting candles.

Bye for now. Hope to hear from you soon.

Khublei, Bah Pearl.



UUPCC Pilgrimages: Bringing People Together

For more than a decade the UUPCC Pilgrimage Service has helped to cement the bonds between North American UU and their partners overseas. We provide multiple and varied pilgrimage opportunities for Unitarian Universalists of all ages. For more details on any of the following services or to begin planning your pilgrimage contact our travel coordinator, John Dale, at jdaleuupcc@yahoo.com and visit our website at www.uupcc.org/tripplan.html.

Congregational Pilgrimages—Travel with us on a life-changing visit to your partner church in Eastern Europe, India, or the Philippines. Low cost all-inclusive land-packages include transportation, meals, lodging, guide(s), interpreter(s). Our in-country experts work with groups of 5 to 50 to develop a customized itinerary that fits your interest, budget and timeframe.

Concert Tours for Choirs & Musical Groups—Looking to expand the horizons of your music program? The UUPCC can facilitate your choir's international concert tour. Buses, performance venues, hotel arrangements, and side tours are all part of our large group service portfolio.

Youth & Service Trips—Bring your youth group on a low-cost/high-return pilgrimage to Transylvania. They can follow in Francis David's footsteps in Torda, Kolozsvár and Déva, perform a service project in your partner village, make the world a better place, and come back better people.

Group Tours for Individuals & "Space Available" travel on UU congregational pilgrimages. We know that not every UU congregation is capable of organizing their own travel group. For small churches, churches without partners, or just interested individuals we offer Spring and Fall Group Tours at Pentecost and Transylvanian Thanksgiving. If you wish to travel during the summer months we have numerous congregational groups with extra space and a variety of itineraries and dates.

À la Carte Services for Individuals and Independent Travelers include:

- Guides & Interpreters • Car rentals or • Car & driver
- Airport – village – airport van/car transfer
- (Budapest BUD, Bucharest OTP, Kolozsvár CLJ, Marosvásárhely TGM)
- Hotel, B&B, Guest house and home stay accommodations.

www.uupcc.org/tripplan.html

UU Transylvanian Pilgrimage (On a Budget)

REGISTRATION CLOSES
FEBRUARY 17

April 17–29 and June 5–17, 2010

Two life-changing weeks in Transylvania for under \$1,150! This is the same quality Unitarian pilgrimage that the UUPCC has been facilitating for a decade—but at 60% of the price. We have just replaced hotels with dorms and guest-houses, substituted village meals for restaurants, and eliminated the long van ride from Budapest. (You could easily add days in Budapest onto either end of the pilgrimage).

Beginning and ending in Kolozsvár/Cluj, this tour will visit the most significant of the Unitarian holy places including Torda, Mészkö, Gyulafehérvár and Déva. You will also visit the frescoed Unitarian churches of Székelyderzs (a UNESCO World Heritage site) and Karácsonyfalva, the spectacular 13th century castle at Vajdahunyad, the medieval walled city of Sighisoara/Segesvár, and the Saxon fortress church at Biertan (Segesvár and Biertan are both UNESCO World Heritage sites). You will spend a weekend with your partner congregation—make new friends and revitalize your partnership. If you do not have a partner in Transylvania, the UUPCC will arrange for you to stay in one of the many beautiful Unitarian villages with

other pilgrims. For more details please review the tentative daily itinerary.

13 days/12 nights \$990 per person (standard accommodations) + \$150 registration fee. Standard accommodations are a combination of B&B, guest-house & dormitory style facilities—some with shared bathroom). You should be able to climb stairs and handle your own luggage. Travelers with mobility issues or who simply prefer 3-star hotel accommodations should select the "deluxe" option which is an additional \$210 double occupancy or \$300 single accommodations. Single rooms cannot be guaranteed in standard accommodation facilities. Includes ground transportation, meals (as detailed on itinerary at www.uupcc.org/trips.html), lodging, guides, interpreters, and fees. Cost does not include international airfare and other travel to/from Cluj/Kolozsvár, Romania.

Spring/Pentecost Pilgrimage to Transylvania and Budapest

REGISTRATION CLOSES
MARCH 1

May 14–24, 2010

(Bucharest arrival option begins May 12).

During the spring of 2010 we are again planning to organize a group pilgrimage to Eastern Europe to experience the historic roots of Unitarianism. We will share in the lives of our co-religionists in Eastern Europe, discuss the origins of our denomination with Unitarian ministers, and visit a number of significant Unitarian sites as well as attractions of general interest.

Beginning in Kolozsvár (Cluj), Romania and

ending in the lovely Hungarian capital city of Budapest, the trip will also include a stay in a Unitarian village, and visits to numerous historic village and town churches. Travelers will discover the warmth and loving hospitality of Transylvanian Unitarian families during a home stay in a Unitarian village and experience rural village life.

By popular demand we have altered the itinerary to celebrate Pentecost Sunday in Budapest. Tours of Déva, Marosvásárhely, and Gyulafehérvár (where John Sigismund is entombed in the 1000-year-old church) have also been added. You have a choice of two start dates/cities. May 22 in Kolozsvár/Cluj, and May 20 in Bucharest. Itinerary details and costs are posted on the UUPCC travel web page.

You are invited to join A Transylvania Quilting Retreat!

September 20–October 1, 2010

Lou McKee of Spokane, WA is working with the UUPCC Pilgrimage Service to organize a Quilting Retreat this September in Felsőrâkos, Romania. Jean Vanbockel, a noted quilt making teacher and author from Idaho, will be leading the quilt project and providing guidance and instruction. Beginning in Bucharest, Romania

(Continued on next page)

Notices

LANGUAGE TOURISM

Anyone interested in studying Hungarian or Romanian, in Kolozsvár, might look into the programs offered by Bridge Language House. The following link will take you to their website. www.study.trans-ed.ro.

I've enjoyed my studies with them, very much, and find them both effective and accommodating—very willing to design a program that meets individual needs.

Ruth Gibson
(on pcc-chat)

Erdély Map: This map of Transylvania, published in Budapest by Dimap, is somewhat more detailed (1:400,000) than the one printed by Cartographia (1:500,000). In addition, it features street maps of 12 cities and towns in Transylvania. All place names are shown in Romanian and Hungarian, and some also in German. \$15, including postage. *All profits go to the UUPCC.*

Send your check to: Emery Lazar, 18 Mountain Laurel Lane, Castleton, VA 22716.

Travel Services & Resources

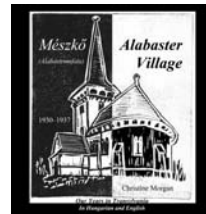
(Continued from page 20)

and ending with 3 nights in Budapest, Hungary the trip will visit tourist destinations along the way including a number of UNESCO World Heritage sites. During the 5-day village stay, participants will work together to hone their skills and create quilts that will be donated to a local orphanage. In recent years The Westminster Congregational UCC and the UU Church of Spokane have worked to assist their partners with the restoration of a 5-bedroom guest house that will house the participants and serve as the common area for meals and quilting. This village is located near the small town of Barót in a beautiful rural area surrounded by the Carpathian Mountains and noted for its local artisans. For more information including a detailed itinerary, trip costs, and registration materials please visit the UUPCC travel webpage at www.uupcc.org/trips.

Alabaster Village: Our Years in Transylvania

In a timeless story of courage, Christine Morgan recounts the years she and her husband, Hungarian Unitarian minister Ferenc Balázs, battled political oppression, social upheaval, poverty, and religious opposition in post-World War I Transylvania. This amazing story is presented in both English and Hungarian.

Order online at www.uupcc.org/online
OR send a check —\$25 per copy + \$5 shipping to:
UUPCC / PO Box 88 / Bedford, MA 01730
Church bookstores—call the UUPCC office for quantity discounts (781-275-1710)



Flaming Chalice Art Glass

Art glass ornaments of stained glass panels of flaming chalices. For gifts, recognition to members, ministers, volunteers. 70% of

revenue to Transylvania partner church. www.flaming-chalice.com. Al Wambach, 1-610-613-1390.

NEW RESOURCE AVAILABLE FOR CONGREGATIONAL PILGRIMAGES

Is your congregation planning a trip to Transylvania? There are lots and lots of details to consider, and now you have help! UUPCC is happy to announce new resources for church trip planning, pre-trip prep sessions, sample itineraries and other resources.

UUPCC Travel Program can help with ground arrangements as well. All of these materials are now available on our website to make your planning easier! Go to www.uupcc.org. Click on TRAVEL on the mail page and then select HOW TO PLAN A TRIP. Or, just click on this link if you are reading this online: <http://www.uupcc.org/tripplan.html>.

For more information about UUPCC's Travel Program that helps with all ground arrangements from airport pick-up to airport drop off and everything in-between, write to John Dale at travel@uupcc.org.

TRAVEL GRANT APPLICATION DEADLINE MARCH 15

The UUPCC Travel Program maintains a grant program, awarding up to three \$500 grants per cycle. The deadline for the next cycle is March 15. These grants are intended to be used to stimulate and strengthen partnerships.

Here are samples of previous grants that have been awarded: a minister from overseas traveled here to meet the congregation; a youth group came to visit the youth in their partner church; and a volunteer traveled to the Khasi Hills to work at the AMB Children's Village.

To apply for a grant please visit the website www.uupcc.org and click on Travel Grant under the TRAVEL section. You can read the full description of the program and download the form. Complete the form and mail it to UUPCC, PO 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 _____

Church, City/Town, Country Name _____

Contact Person _____ Title _____

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

Transfer Process: How to Send Money

INDIA

UUPCC is now processing transfers for churches partnered with UUNEI churches in the Khasi Hills in India. We will process checks as they come in, and will do the actual transfers every 3 months. The schedule in 2010 is the end of January, April, July and October.

THE PHILIPPINES

We do not have a regular schedule for transfers yet, as there has not been demand for this. If you wish to transfer money to your partner in the Philippines, please contact the office first at 781-275-1710 to discuss.

TRANSYLVANIA

Transfers are done monthly from the UUPCC office between the 26th and 30th of each month. Transferred funds are wired from Headquarters directly into the local church bank account.

Please make sure that you contact someone in your partner village/town/church to let them know that the money is coming.

ALL TRANSFERS

Checks must arrive at the UUPCC office at least one week before the transfer date. Please use the above Transfer Form or download one from www.uupcc.org/. Click on Programs &

Services, then Fund Transfer. Then select the Fund Transfer Form. Please include this form along with the check. Please send whole dollars only—no cents. Make checks payable in U.S. dollars.

PLEASE NOTE: *This Transfer Form is for use by the office staff in preparing the bank transfer, which is done electronically. Paper copies of the forms are not sent to India or Transylvania. Therefore, please make sure that you contact someone in your partner village to let them know that the money is coming. It takes as long as 5–7 business days for the transfer to arrive there.*

UU Partner Church Council

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Pat Rodgers, *Membership Database, Matching, and PCC-Chat*
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Lisa Gillispie, *Website*
lisagillispie@earthlink.net

Please contact Ann Gary to join the ranks of networkers!

To find the UUPCC networker assigned to your church, go to www.uupcc.org/networkers.html.

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. At present, active partnerships exist between North American UU congregations and the Czech Republic, Hungary, India, the Philippines, Poland, and Romania.

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*)

Name: _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City/State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

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 \$28 for an individual membership or \$47 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.*



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