



Partner Church News

A publication of the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council

Connecting Unitarian and Universalist congregations around the globe

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Autumn 2002



UUA President Bill Sinkford spreads good will and receives a weaving of the symbol of the Transylvanian Unitarian church created by Ágnes Kovács, pictured here with her husband Istvan, president of the Transylvanian Unitarian Ministers Association. The presentation was made at the church in Sepsiszentgyörgy as part of the PCC-sponsored 'Presidential Pilgrimage'.

A REPORT ON THE "PRESIDENTIAL PILGRIMAGE"

With Bill Sinkford in Transylvania

BY DAVID KEYES

One of my most vivid memories from the PCC-sponsored 'Presidential Pilgrimage' is of arriving one afternoon at the parsonage in Abásfalva, one of the more remote villages in Transylvania, to find our UUA president seated in the barnyard, sipping (slowly) a glass of pálinka, while being serenaded by a three-piece Gypsy band that had just happened to drop by.

In planning the trip for Bill Sinkford and International Programs Director Olivia Holmes, John Gibbons and I insisted that they be sequestered without fanfare, pomp, or fuss in a typical and isolated Unitarian village—to get a true picture of Transylvanian life, and to discover what so many of us in the partner church movement had fallen in love with.

Even though John and I were rather tight-lipped about the location of our 'headquarters village,' like the Gypsy band, a steady stream of American and Transylvanian visitors seemed

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DEDICATION OF THE UNITARIAN CENTER FOR STUDENTS AND PILGRIMS

Eastern Horizons

BY OLIVIA HOLMES

The Unitarian Center for Students and Pilgrims is half finished today. It is August 4th, 2002, and some 100 of us have gathered for the dedication ceremonies of the North Wing. It is hot outside. The Unitarian Center has ingenious air conditioning units inside; clean ones. They work. It has toilets and sinks that sparkle; study rooms that are elegant in their simplicity; and bedrooms that are spare yet complete with a student's or a pilgrim's storage and sleeping needs. On the wall by each door are the names of so very many

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A Letter

The UU Congregation of Princeton (NJ) was one of those lucky congregations who raised enough money to name a room in the Center for Students and Pilgrims in Kolozsvár. Some of our friends in Fehéregyháza went to the dedication festivities and Jakab Benedek, our partner minister wrote us this wonderful letter.

Dear Friends!

Yesterday was a wonderful Sunday in Kolozsvár! We started from Fehéregyháza early in the morning at 7:00—seven people to Kolozsvár in my van. For the first 60 km, there was a lot of fog, but after that we traveled in fine time and the sun shone.

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Eastern Horizons

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people who have helped make this day happen, their memories will live on through this space.

And we are proud to be part of this moment. We carry in our hearts the good wishes of all those deeply committed individuals and partner churches, the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock, the Hungarian Society of Massachusetts, the Unitarians and Universalists of the Philippines, of North-east India, and of Australia, New Zealand, and Great Britain, who all helped make this day happen by their generosity of spirit.

We cut the ribbon. We take the tour. We are joyful with the superb design work and craftsmanship. And truthfully, we are a bit awed by the work yet to do on the South Wing. Refurbishing an old building to make new dreams live in its walls is complex, frustrating, and expensive. It is worth it to know that by our efforts we are creating opportunities for successful lives for young people who had no chance before these walls were transformed. As John Gibbons reminds us, often, no cost is too great for the future of our children.

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Visit the web site at: www.uaa.org/uupcc/

And so we celebrate, and plan, and begin the final year of fundraising to breathe life into the fullness of the dream.

It is August 11th, one month before the first anniversary of the toppling of the World Trade Towers, the slamming of a plane into the Pentagon, into a field in Pennsylvania. I stand in the grass at Bözödújfalu and stare in silence at what is left of the Unitarian Church there. Just the walls and the water stains now. The Catholic church spire rises beyond the little window with no glass in the Unitarian Church wall that still stands. They say that dictator Nicolae Ceausescu bulldozed this village and built a dam. They say that for years all you could see of the entire village was the church steeples.

The water has receded now. You can walk right up to the crumbling walls of the church. Inside it is filled with nettles that itch like crazy. And I can't help wondering whether that's a good thing. It's a nagging itch to remind me that I am needed; we are all needed, to create for our children a world in which this could not happen again. ●●

A Letter

(Continued from page 1)

We arrived in Kolozsvár at 10:00. We saw St. Michael's Catholic church, the Mátyás statue and Kolozsvár's center and main street.

The sermon in the Unitarian Church began at 11:00. The new president from the US, Rev. William Sinkford, preached. Bishop Árpád Szabó translated. He told about the importance of the Unitarian Faith, and he told a very interesting story about a family he met on the plane. The Muslim mother and Lebanon Christian father were wishing for a religion where the whole family could live in safe peace and in faith. He told them about Unitarianism, and the mother

NOTE FROM THE AIRLINE LINE IN VIENNA AIRPORT...

"Where have you been?"

"Romania."

"Imagine that, we've been there too, visiting an exchange student's family. And you?"

I explain the Unitarian connection.

"Wow... I've heard a lot about these partnerships from friends in Seattle. You guys really have a great thing going on over there!"

Barbara K. Beach

e-news

PARTNER CHURCH NEWS IS AVAILABLE ELECTRONICALLY!

Some of you have asked to receive your newsletter electronically. We are setting up a system to e-mail a PDF file to those who request it. Just send your e-mail address to uupcc.org and let us know that you want to receive future editions this way. Paper copies are easily printed from the PDF.

In order to read the PDF file we send, you will need to download Adobe's Acrobat Reader. You can get the reader for *free* at www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html

wept to think that her family could live in peace sharing a faith.

After the sermon, the visitors looked at the dormitory rooms. Nice, very beautiful, very comfortable. We took pictures of the plaque which read, "The Princeton Room honoring the builders of the Millennium Church in Fehéregyháza with love and respect from their partners in Princeton, New Jersey."

We were very happy that we were there, and thank you very much (Princeton) on this occasion. This was a beautiful donation for the the students who will learn in that school.

With love, Jakab

SUBMITTED BY ETHEL MAE THERIAULT

Unitaria Suffers Water Damage as Vlatava River Floods Prague

AUGUST 19, 2002. "There is a catastrophe in the Prague Unitaria," President Ladislav Pivec reported, "but it is a small one." The city constructed "engineering miracles"—barriers designed to protect the Old Town from the river's surface flooding; however, water coming up from "the bottom" (i.e. from the drainage and sewage systems) rose 2.5 meters in Čapek Hall and 20 centimeters in Haspl Hall in the ancient headquarters building on Karlovy Street.

"Life and spirit are the most important. We are all optimists," said Pivec. "We are cleaning up."

Anticipating the flood, the Unitaria staff worked feverishly to protect what they could. They were able to save the organ, moving it out of Haspl Hall to the first floor. They also moved the chairs in Haspl Hall.

One of the saddest losses is of their beautiful concert grand piano. It was impossible to have this instrument moved to higher ground, and it was completely destroyed. The computers, on the first floor and above, were not damaged. The building was completely flooded for two days, Dr. Pivec anticipated that the waters would continue to recede slowly over the next three to five days.

All staff members associated with Unitaria are safe. They worked to

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Unitarian Center Dedication

BY REV. JOHN E. GIBBONS

The following is excerpted from John Gibbons' remarks at the ceremony in Kolozsvár on August 4, 2002.

For better and for worse, American people sometimes have a bumper-sticker mentality: our thinking can be as simple, naive and as short as can fit on a small bumper sticker. Many of you have seen our cars: our bumpers tell what political candidates we support; they say what sports teams we love; some people even say what breed of dog they prefer.

Other bumper stickers preach religion. Last week I saw one that said, "My boss is a Jewish carpenter" (which probably means that person is a traditional Christian). On my car I have one that says, "Islam is not the enemy" (which means I am worried that nationalism may produce religious hatreds). Some of you know the bumper sticker my church has made: it says "The most radical thing we can do is to introduce people to one another"—which means, in part, that partnerships between people change lives; that partnerships between congregations change our churches; and we know that partnerships grow liberal religion.

Today, however, I am reminded of another popular bumper sticker. It says, "If you think the cost of education is too high, you should consider the cost of ignorance." Today in America, in Romania, in Transylvania and around the world the cost of education is very high but the cost of ignorance is dangerously and unacceptably higher.

I have heard it said that this dormitory cost too much. Compared to the cost of construction in some other place, some say, or to what my brother or my cousin or my friend might have charged, this dormitory could have been built much more cheaply. This comparison, however, is wrong. The cost of ignorance is even higher.

In America today, some people believe that guns and bombs and the



John Gibbons in front of the statue of Balázs Ferenc, in Mészkö.

imposition of an imperial Pax Americana will defeat terrorism. In fact, we risk the creation of more terrorists and a world whose economies are drained by war. How high is the cost of ignorance? Too high.

In the Middle East, some Israelis and Palestinians are convinced that endless violent retaliations can produce peace. As Gandhi once said, however, an eye for an eye leaves everyone blind. How high is the cost of ignorance? Too high.

In Romania and Transylvania—as in many other places in the world—some people are under the illusion that security and prosperity can be had if only one ethnicity or religion can successfully oppress the human rights of other ethnicities and religions. How high is the cost of ignorance? Too high.

And from time to time in Boston and in Budapest and in Kolozsvár and in the Khasi Hills of India, some people—Unitarians actually—are persuaded that unity and the City of God shall surely be advanced if only one's own faction can successfully defeat some other faction—when in truth, as another bumper sticker puts it, "We are all in this together." We are all in this one Unitarian faith together, or as was

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“Presidential Pilgrimage”

(Continued from page 1)

to find their way to Abásfalva, either to bend Bill’s ear about local and global issues, or to greet him and wish him well.

Of course, not all of the trip was spent in rural retreat. Despite our best efforts to give them down time, Bill and Olivia worked hard every day, meeting with a rich variety of folks and visiting a multitude of churches and church-related programs and projects. Here is some of what they did:

—August 3: A lavish welcome dinner at the Bishop’s Palace in Kolozsvár hosted by Bishop Szabó and featuring the incomparable cooking of his wife, Magda.

—August 4: Bill preached at the crowded morning service in the First Church in Kolozsvár, the oldest Unitarian church in the world (partnered with King’s Chapel in Boston). Olivia and John Gibbons spoke at the dedication ceremonies that afternoon for the Center for Students and Pilgrims. That evening, the PCC hosted a dinner for Bishop and Mrs. Szabó at his favorite

restaurant, in Tordaszentlászló. Members and friends of the PCC helping to host included Barbara Beach, Richard Boeke, Larry and Gabriella Coburn, Susan Levan, and Cecilia Kingman Miller.

—August 5: Our first stop was Gyulafehérvár where Bill and Bishop Szabó laid a wreath at the tomb of King John Sigismund. They then joined Cathy Cordes and her PCC Youth Pilgrimage for the hike up to the citadel at Déva for a worship service outside the cell where Francis David was martyred. Then, a long trip across Transylvania, arriving late that night in Abásfalva.

—August 6: Bill and Olivia received various visitors in Abásfalva, and learned about the foundation that partner Bedford, MA, has helped to start there to improve the local water system and encourage a bed and breakfast cottage industry.

—August 7: We joined Rob Ellers-Isaacs from Unity Church in St. Paul MN, president of Project Harvest Hope, and Levente Kelemen, minister in Oklánd and president of Harvest Hope’s Romanian foundation, for a

visit to the model dairy in Homoródkarácsonyfalva (partner of Northampton, MA) and to the mill and bakery in Oklánd (partner of Oakland, CA). Kinga-Réka Székely, minister in Homoródszentpéter (St. Paul, MN) made a special presentation about the importance of recognizing the special and urgent needs of women in partnership-related economic development. The day concluded with a visit with Árpád and Judit Ilkei in Homoródújfalva to see the church there that has been beautifully restored with the help of their partner, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, CA.

—August 8: Cathy Cordes and some members of her PCC Youth Pilgrimage arrived in Abásfalva, bringing tall tales and new energy.

—August 9: We spent the morning in Illyafalva, a model village supported by church-related foundations in Switzerland. We were fortunate to have a long and lively conversation with Reformed Church Deputy Bishop Béla Kato, who as the local parish minister inspired and guided the model village and its regional economic development projects

English Teacher’s Report

This piece comes from Maine where I am spending two months preparing for my second year in Kolozsvár, checking on my house and cat and doing what all people over a certain age find necessary (annual medical/dental inspections). In reflecting upon the past year, it occurs to me that most of my comments published in past newsletters have been rather serious. This one is different.

Let me tell you about one terrific fun event the theology students and I had in early May, several weeks before our 2001-2002 term ended. It was the first of what may become an annual chili party. Here’s the menu:

- * Mountains of chips, popcorn, etc.
- * Beer, wine and soda
- * Red-hot chili
- * Tossed salad
- * Southern cornbread
- * Grated cheddar cheese

* Sliced HOT chili peppers (to raise the temperature of everything)

* Apple crisp and ice cream

The students arranged First Unitarian’s meeting room (adjacent to my apartment) with white table cloths, fresh flowers, etc. But I prepared all the food in enormous pots and bowls (some borrowed from Peace Corps volunteer friends). Everything was made from local ingredients (all fresh), including the hottest chili peppers in that part of the world! (My fingers burned for two days after chopping the peppers.) After our feast, we listened to music, sang and danced for several hours. And then the students restored the place to its full and upright condition. But there is more. Since exactly half the beverage was consumed, we concluded the party in my apartment one night the following week. We talked about this continuing party for

several days. Whether the students or I had more fun is debatable.

But the chili party was not our only focus. We also had a productive semester, including special English exams (panel interviews) for the Third- and Fifth-Year groups. Most students progressed during the year, especially the few for whom English is a new language. These 31 young women and men have a serious commitment to their studies and to their future ministries. They inspire me to do the best I can to support their acquisition of proficient English skills.

We are all looking forward to studying English together next year. And to another Spring chili party.

Thank you again for all your support and encouragement. ●●

COLLEEN SANDERS
colleensanders@att.net

which now employ more than 7,000 people.

Then there was lunch with István Kovács, president of the Transylvanian Unitarian Ministers Association, and a visit to the church he serves in Sepsi-szentgyörgy, a huge, impressive new building. (Partners are Brooklyn, NY, Indianapolis, IN, and Memphis, TN.)

The last stop of the day was at another new church building—in Barót, (Summit, NJ) where we were greeted by the minister, Alpár Kiss, and his daughter Abigél, whose American college education is being supported by many PCC members.

—August 10: Bill preached at the worship service for the ‘World Gathering of Unitarians,’ with thousands of worshippers gathered on a hillside at Szejkefurdő, just outside Székelyudvarhely.

Olivia brought greetings. They then had lunch with the deans and dignitaries of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church.

—August 11: A most moving morning worship service led by Judit Gellérd above the waters that cover Bözödújfalú, the village that some believe was flooded because it was a model of religious and ethnic diversity and harmony. Over lunch, Bill and Olivia learned about the Aranyos Valley Development Corporation from Zsuzsa Bartha, minister in Mészkö (Boise, ID), the ‘Alabaster Village.’ Zsuzsa and American



Dr. Judit Gellérd, honorary president of the Partner Church Council, joins the PCC Presidential Pilgrimage in Mészkö, the Alabaster Village, where she poses in front of the statue of Balázs Ferenc with Olivia Holmes, UUA International Programs Director, Rev. Zsuzsa Bartha, and UUA President Bill Sinkford.

Only By Your Presence

THE REV. MS. BARBARA J. PESCAN

An excerpt from the sermon at The Service of the Living Tradition at General Assembly in Quebec City, Canada

Any clergy person will tell you that hospital visits give us as much as or more than we feel we give to those in the hospital. It is a sweet paradox that we come to comfort people and so often find courage ourselves and depart in awe of the human spirit, its will to survive and its knowing when to depart. In the clinches is where the holy so often appears, when we are up against it and facility with words will not serve to heal nor even name what is going on. We clergy, as well as those who are near death or near giving birth, ride waves of truth too great for naming and, when we remember, we allow ourselves the grace of silence.

At the other end of things, in the presence of immensities such as the consequences of evil, our presence is required and our voices are called for. How in the world are we to know what to say in the face of evil? Czech Unitarian minister Norbert Čapek told his congregation during the Nazi occupation to remember that even after the

worst winter, spring will come again and the flowers will bloom. Even when he was in Dachau, he wrote songs and sang them with others. The Universalists of the Philippines have kept faith with their murdered leader's faith and they struggle, still today, to carry forth Toribio Quimada's presence of freedom and joy. The Unitarians of Transylvania, who have been Unitarians since the time of Francis David, though the government of Romania would subsume them, continue to keep faith with David and, now, in partnerships with us.

In Prague, on the Island of Negros in the Philippines, in Hungary, Transylvania, the Czech Republic; in Nigeria and in South Africa. All over the world, in the face of fanaticism and dogmatic rigidity, and deep poverty, there also breathes the breath of freedom. Our religious story is not unique. Other ancient truths have spoken of the saving touch, the healing presence, and the wisdom of freedom.

Individuals and congregations of religious people have begun relationships of sustained engagement with others in the global village ... And, the giving does not go all one way. The

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friends from other Aranyos Valley partner church committees hope to rekindle the vision of economic justice first championed by Francis and Christine Balázs during their ministry in Mészkö in the 1930s. The trip drew to a close as Bill and Olivia sat in on a joint meeting in Kolozsvár of representatives of the partner church councils of North America and Transylvania, and concluded with a dinner again hosted by Bishop Szabó.

Some closing observations:

—Our driver, guide and minister, Dénes Farkas, performed his usual miracles. How fortunate Partner Church Tours is to have him! And, his son, Emöd, who is building a distinguished career in nonprofit management and international relations, was a splendid interpreter.

—Finally, Bill and Olivia deserve thanks and commendation from us all for the time they devoted to working (and it was, I assure you, work) on understanding and supporting our partnerships with Transylvania. (They also spent a week in Hungary, and arrived in Prague just in time to be with the congregation there as flood waters crested.) We now have a UUA president who understands the issues, opportunities and passions associated with our Transylvanian and Hungarian partnerships. ●●

Bell Ringers Update

We sent out our second Bell Ringers appeal this past May. This appeal is for support of the English Teacher Program at the Unitarian seminary in Kolozsvár. Thanks to letters in the appeal packet by former teachers Scott Prinster and Eric Cherry and current teacher Colleen Sanders, we are having

a good response. If you have not yet responded, please do so. This is a vital program and good example of an institutional need that can better be addressed in a manner other than the traditional church-to-church approach. As of late August, we have received over \$2,800.

Enroll in the Bell Ringers Program

If you somehow missed out on enrolling in the Bell Ringers Program, here is your chance. Copy or cut out the form below, complete it and mail it to Pat Rodgers. No need to send money with the form, we will include you in our next appeal. If you want to support the English Teacher Program, enclose a check with "English Teacher" on the memo line, and we will send you the packet with the neat information about the English Teacher Program and its importance to North American UUs as well as to the Transylvanian Unitarians.

As you may, or may not, know, the Bell Ringers Program was established so that individuals could help meet various needs that are outside the tradi-



tional church-to-church relationship. The program is simple. The PCC Board selects the specific needs and two or three times each year we send out an appeal for support. In the appeal packet is information about the program or need being supported and also some additional items of a religious or a spiritual nature. For example, the first appeal packet contained information about Norbet Čapek and about the Flower Communion. The second packet contained Transylvanian prayers and the words of Francis David.

Enroll today! Complete the form below and mail it to Pat Rodgers.

Our first appeal, for support of the Czech Unitarians, was quite successful, particularly for a first effort. All in all, we raised approximately \$3,600. Hopefully, that appeal raised our level of awareness of the importance of the Czech Unitarians and the great contributions made to our faith by Norbet Čapek. They will need our prayers and assistance in the future as they deal with the aftermath of the flooding of this summer.

If you have not yet enrolled in the Bell Ringers program, please do so!



DEFOREST RALPH
EMERSON UNITARIAN CHURCH, HOUSTON



Szilárd Deák, after his confirmation in Székelyudvarhely last June.

Yes, I want Religious Tolerance and Freedom of Belief to Ring Out across Transylvania and Central Europe. I will help Ring the Bells!

I AGREE TO RESPOND TO TWO OR THREE REQUESTS PER YEAR
WITH A CONTRIBUTION OF AT LEAST \$20 FOR EACH REQUEST.

NAME _____ DATE _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

PHONE: DAY _____ EVENING _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

CONGREGATION _____

DISTRICT _____

Please complete and mail this form to:
UUPCC Bell Ringers
c/o Pat Rodgers
3182 Isadora Drive
San Jose, CA 95132

To contact Pat Rodgers:
Phone: 408-926-3799
E-mail: patrodgers@sbcglobal.net

PARTNER CHURCH MEETING ON STAR ISLAND

At the IRAS week on Star, (Institute for Religion in an Age of Science) I was very pleased to meet Don Harrington, his wife Anikó, and their friend, Walter Willman, a newspaper editor from Sepsiszentgyörgy. We organized a time when people could come to learn about the Partner Church Program. Don told the history of the movement (his memory goes way back!), his wife, a minister, told of some personal experiences, and I told about the Princeton congregation and its partnership with Fehéregyháza. Eight people attended, some curious, some already partnered. Next year I will take the video, "Partners in Faith."

ETHEL MAE THERIAULT

Elie Wiesel in Transylvania

BY JUDIT GELLÉRD

The invitation from my professor at Boston University to escort him to Transylvania—our mutual homeland—came last year. We were supposed to fly to Romania on President Iliescu's private airplane. The beauty in this irony for me was as thrilling as the honor to visit the birthplace of this great Nobel Peace Prize laureate author, as his assistant. September 11 and the Jewish-Palestinian tragedies afterward halted our plan, until late July. Already in Europe, Wiesel flew from France, while George and I came by bus from Hungary to Sighet, at a very short notice.

The surprise and joy on Professor Wiesel's part to see his student there was genuine. "I came in the name of all your students at Boston University," I told him in his embrace. Then he proudly introduced me to Romania's President, Ion Iliescu. I wished my father had seen me! George's filming the event at least made it possible to share with my mother!

The invitation of Elie Wiesel for a state visit, inaugurating his birthplace

as a museum, and awarding him Romania's highest medal by Ion Iliescu, did not lack a clear agenda from the President. Elie Wiesel's prestige was paving the road toward Romania's entrance into the European Union. In exchange, Wiesel did not hide his agenda either. His open and harsh criticism of Romania's ultra-nationalism shook many. His passionate appeal that Romania recognize its responsibility in the Holocaust, brought the response that all the statues of Antonescu, the infamous Nazi leader of Romania, within 24 hours all over the country were removed!

In this fervent exchange of agendas, there was also an agenda of the Hungarian-American Coalition, wanting Elie Wiesel to pressure Romania for the return of the historic Hungarian church properties in Transylvania. Prof. Wiesel matter-of-factly reported to me that he had already spoken to the President about this matter. "Let's hope for the best!"

If ever there was a time for doing so, now we may truly hope for something better. ●●

Denny Davidoff Takes On Major Partnership Role

Denny Davidoff, moderator of the Unitarian Universalist Association from 1993 to 2001, has agreed to serve as chair of the Partner Church Council Task Force on Economic Fairness. Denny is a member of the Unitarian Church in Westport, CT, partnered with Alsóboldogfalva..

The task force has received a \$19,000 grant from the UU Social Responsibility Funding Panel for the first phase of its work, which will include gathering information and sponsoring an International Colloquium on Economic Development and Partnership. The mission of the group is to research and review the most effective and promising ways for partners to engage in charitable giving and economic development, and to effectively disseminate useful information and options to PCC member congregations.

PCC President David Keyes said in announcing the appointment, "Denny Davidoff is one of the most respected and experienced leaders in our movement. Her hand at the helm of this project will assure the highest level of integrity, impartiality, and ingenuity."

Other members of the task force are Richard Beal, Ellen Ceresuolo, Rob Eller-Isaacs, Tom Fox, Olivia Holmes, Patti Lawrence, Jill McAllister and Barbara Weber. PCC officers David Keyes, Fred Muir, Barbara Beach and Larry Coburn, as well as Executive Director Cathy Cordes, will serve as ex officio members. An important part of the process will be extensive consultation with international partners. ●●

THE LINKAGE PROJECT

We Want You!

BY SONYA SUKALSKI

In an attempt to ensure that the PCC executive committee does work that is relevant to all of your partnerships, we have initiated the linkage project. This work will be done in two phases.

Right now, executive committee (or PCC board) members are interviewing all the networkers to understand better their roles in supporting, developing and promoting partnerships. At the same time, we are attempting to identify areas needing more attention for the grassroots to thrive and become the best mutually beneficial connections they can be.

The second phase of this project is to have the board members be in con-

tact with partnerships of all shapes and sizes so we can keep our work and policies on track and in your best interests. In both phases we will be asking "Who should the executive committee listen to in order best to serve the needs of international partnerships," and "How can the executive committee best stay in touch with the grassroots?"

If you have answers to these questions, please feel free to contact me, Sonya Sukalski, or any of the linkage committee—Fred Cox, Fred Muir, and Carol Rosine. We will ensure that your input gets heard. ●●

THE PCC WEB PAGE

If you have a computer with internet access, you can check out the extensive collection of PCC files maintained by Doug Gage at www.uua.org/uupcc/.

BALÁZS SCHOLAR AT STARR KING

*FYI *The Balázs Scholars program is sponsored by Starr King (tuition is waived) and funded in part by the Partner Church Council, by donations from many individuals across the country, and in the past by grants from the UUA funding panels. Presently, we have only one small matching grant for travel. The program needs to raise between \$15-\$22,000 per year to support a scholar or scholar and spouse. New supporters and sponsors are always welcomed. We are also working on establishing an endowment which will help fund the program in the future, since a scholar cannot come unless the money is in hand in advance.*

2002-03 Balázs Scholars

Rev. Lajos Lörinczi, and wife Tünde, will be in Berkeley for the academic year at Starr King School, will attend General Assembly and return home next July. Lajos is the eighth scholar to come here. Many will remember the others: Sándor Léta, Sándor Kovács and Magdolna, Csaba Mezei, Lajos and Matilde Kiss, Kinga-Réka Zsigmond, Botond (Boti) Koppándi, Zsuzsanna and Károly Bartha. Three Bay-area congregations rotate as hosting congregations. This year the UU Church of Berkeley is hosting Lajos and Tünde. Last year San Francisco hosted Zsuzsa and Kari and next year Oakland will take its third turn.

Lajos graduated from the seminary in Kolozsvár in 1997, in the same class as Boti Koppandi, the Balázs scholar two years ago. The last three years he has been the minister in Csehétfalva (partnered with Kelowna, B.C.); Tarcsafalva (partnered with All Souls, Greenfield, MA); and Tordátfalva (partnered with Ames, IA). All together the three villages have about 500 people, all Unitarian. Csehétfalva was the home of Francis Balázs' grandparents. Francis Balázs frequently spent time there. The house still stands, and some of the older people remember him.

Before that Lajos was minister in Kolozs, near Kolozsvár. He also was a religious teacher for first graders through high school in Kolozsvár. He likes reading, working in the garden, playing sports, singing and working in the fields with the villagers so that he

can get to know them better. He wants to work for his people, to do something for the people, making them closer to God, to help them get through the effects of the years of Communism. He will be 28 years old on August 26th.

Tünde likes to read, cook, walk in fields and woods, do wood carving and sculpture, and work in the garden. She wants to see a real farm in the United States to learn how they do farming, how they raise their gardens. She attended the university in Kolozsvár for two years studying English and Hungarian grammar and literature. She had to leave because of illness. She and Lajos have been married for five years. They are interested in traditional folk dancing. ●●

ANNE GREENWOOD, PCD DISTRICT NETWORKER

JOIN PCC-CHAT!

Keep up to date with what's happening in the PCC world. Share recent news about PCC happenings, ask questions, and read answers. Be inspired and offer inspiration to others. All you need is a computer and an email address.

Anyone who's an individual PCC member can join. And so can anyone who belongs to a church that's an institutional member. Send your request to:

pat.rodgers@sbcglobal.net

Prague Unitaria Flooded

(Continued from page 3)

repair damage, to assess the costs, and to begin negotiations with insurers—which, said Dr. Pivec, would be “difficult,” because so many people will be making claims and the insurance companies are very concerned about their legal liability.

All activities at the Unitaria were to be stopped for at least one month while repairs and cleaning took place. The hope is that the flood did not cause basic structural damage to the building, such that the foundation and walls will require major renovation to ensure the building stability. An engineer will assess structural viability, as this is a major concern. The flooding caused a failure of the electricity for a period of a few days.

Dr. Pivec wants to express his profound appreciation to all North American and British Unitarians who telephoned their concern and desire to support the clean up and reconstruction. He is preparing a detailed report, which he will send to Barbara Beach and Joe Ben-David, who will then convey it to the PCC and the UUA. Dr. Pivec may be reached by email at ladislav.pivec@unitaria.cz. ●●

BARBARA K.BEACH,

LIAISON TO PRAGUE; SECRETARY, PCC

TYPHOONS AND FLOODS STRIKE UU COMMUNITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES AND IN PRAGUE

September 13, 2002 In the late summer, natural disasters in the form of typhoons and floods struck Unitarian Universalist communities in the Philippines and Prague (Czech Republic).

In response to inquiries from concerned UUs around the world, the UUA is accepting donations on behalf of the historic Prague Church and the UU Church of the Philippines. (See story on page 11 of this newsletter.) If you would like to contribute, please mail your donation to: Rev. Olivia Holmes, Unitarian Universalist Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108. Checks may be made out to *The Unitarian Universalist Association*. On the memo line, please include the words “disaster relief, Prague” or “disaster relief, Philippines.”

For more detailed information, please go to <http://www.uua.org/international/020915.html>.

Dedication Remarks

(Continued from page 3)

said long ago, *Egy az Isten*. How high is the cost of ignorance? Too high.

In English the word “education” derives from a Latin root meaning “to be called out of oneself,” out of one’s own prejudices and stereotypes and assumptions and certainties. To be educated means to be not so sure.

And so today, as we celebrate the revival—and really just the beginning of the revival—of Kolozsvár as an educational jewel and Unitarians as education’s champion, we rejoice not that others will be saved from their ignorance by our noble efforts but instead we rejoice that there is new hope that we ourselves may see more clearly and that we may redeem this time from our own prejudices and stereotypes and assumptions and excess certainties.

On behalf of the Partner Church Council and all the North American partners and predecessors, present and absent, known and unknown and not forgotten, we proclaim the ancient admonition and promise—still suitable for yet another bumper sticker—“We shall know the truth and the truth shall make us free.” For this good place and that saving truth, as for one another, we are thankful.

Amen. ●●

NOTE: *The second phase of this project is underway and will take two years to complete. It will provide space for seminary and university students. If you or your church would like to help contributions can be made through the UUA. For a contribution of \$10,000 or more a room can be dedicated. For details contact Olivia Holmes, Director of International Relations, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108, 617-948-6412, oholmes@uua.org, or John Gibbons, First Parish in Bedford, 75 the Great Road, Bedford, MA 01730 781-275-7994, jegibbons@rcn.com.*

Executive Director’s Report

BY CATHY CORDES

It has been a summer of renewal, reflection, and re-energizing for me, and I hope for all of you as well. I traveled this summer—first to General Assembly where we had productive executive committee meetings along with two informative sessions at GA. It was fun meeting many of you at our booth and hearing stories of partnerships’ successes and problems. Later in the summer I, along with my husband Ron, led a group of 22 fabulous UU teenagers from across America to Transylvania. I was inspired and energized by their joy and awe in the discovery of the roots of their Unitarian faith and in the connections they made with Unitarian youth and their partner churches. I spent the final two weeks after the youth returned home, meeting and visiting many, many churches and ministers. And I listened to their stories of partnership as well. The people of Transylvania want us to visit. Has anyone from your church been recently? Why not consider a trip next summer? Contact Linda Gabriel at gablin@tscnet.com to find out how easy it is to arrange a visit.

And so we enter this 10th year of the Partner Church Council program knowing there is much the Council needs to do to strengthen and expand its programs so that you are successful in your partnerships. We want to be able to help you with all your needs. We have been awarded two grants to help us in this work. The first will provide us with improved communications and organizational mechanisms.

Our database is being redesigned to provide convenient access and up-to-date information on partnerships. This effort will help Executive Committee members and networkers be more responsive to the needs of you, our members. We are developing resource guides and finding new ways to keep in touch with members. We are working on new ways to link partnered congregations at the district level to share ideas and support each other in partnership. Please don’t hesitate to contact us and let us know what you need. The networkers are all listed elsewhere in this issue and Executive Committee members’ contact information is on the back cover.

The second grant focuses on researching the impact of economic assistance. We will gather information from partners here and abroad, analyze what has been helpful and what has not, and share this information with all of you.

And finally, we are committed to finding partners for the international churches that have requested partnerships. There are churches overseas that have asked for partners, and we do not currently have enough North American churches ready to partner. Please talk to others about the benefits of partnership on your church and ask them to consider partnership. They can contact the office at uupcc@uua.org or call 781-275-1710 for more information.

Now more than ever North American churches need to be in partnership with Unitarians and Universalists around the world. Help us involve more churches. We all benefit. ●●

EAST SHORE VIDEO

Bellevue, Washington’s East Shore congregation offers a 20-minute video of their 2001 partner church visit to Torockószentgyörgy, Transylvania. Edited by church member Laurie Simons, this professional video chronicles daily activities, special events including a confirmation and wedding, and joint work project. \$25 includes shipping & handling. Send check to East Shore Unitarian Church, 12700 SE 32nd St, Bellevue, WA 98005.

BARBARA SHELTON

See also, on page 17, “Partners in Faith” a video available from the UUPCC.

“You Are Not Alone”

BY DAVID KEYES

(Adapted and condensed from a lecture given by PCC President David Keyes at the July, 2002 Congress of the International Association for Religious Freedom in Budapest)

There are hundreds, perhaps thousands of congregations around the world linked by partner church relationships. Many denominations, many models of partnerships are involved, but all have the potential to work together for human rights and religious freedom.

What I want to share with you today is a personal vision; I do not speak for the UU Partner Church Council, but only for myself. It is a vision grown out of my experience of the grassroots power and potential of the partner church movement.

In the United States alone, we have sister churches in half the congressional districts. Nearly every US senator has a partner church among constituents. The presence of members of Unitarian Universalist congregations in Washington DC and in circles of international influence is significant. This does not make us powerful, but it does point toward our potential. It suggests that key government leaders in the US, and the same is probably true of Canada, could be quickly and effectively made aware of threats to the rights and well being of our partners. And that is only a beginning. Of course, the sort of network I envision will be possible only if congregations can be informed, educated, motivated, linked and coordinated.

And why should they be? What would justify such a major effort? Why should we expand the activity of partnership beyond cultural exchange, spiritual enrichment, and charitable largesse? First and foremost, to answer the question, we have only to stop and reflect on the dangerous and unstable world in which we live. Who can doubt that the religious freedom of minorities is now and will be seriously threatened around the world for decades to come?

There are also specific examples of threats and fears about human rights violations among partners that

Unitarians know well:

—The right to travel to proclaim our faith and join in religious fellowship is severely limited in the world today. Our African, Indian and Filipino brothers and sisters are routinely denied visas to visit North American and European nations.

—The incursion into traditional ethnic Hungarian lands in Transylvania by state sponsored Romanian Orthodox churches and monasteries poses what some see as a major threat to the indigenous culture and religion of the region.

—Ultra-nationalism is rampant in Romania, with a major political victory last year going to a candidate who advocated expulsion and execution of ethnic Hungarians.

—Return of church property seized by communist governments is still a major issue in Hungary and Romania.

—In Pakistan, the leader of the Unitarian Christian Church urgently requests a North American partner in hopes that such a relationship will help protect his members from persecution. Protestants in Pakistan are now in constant danger of losing their property and their lives.

—In Prague, the historic building of the Unitarian church was recovered only after years of legal maneuvering. The assistance of North American partners was of great value in supporting this successful struggle for religious freedom.

—In the Philippines, home to the most recent martyrdom of a Unitarian or Universalist, political instability and terrorism loom as real concerns for our partners.

—In the Khasi hills of India, our Unitarian partners are isolated in a sea of increasingly fundamentalist Hinduism, and in a region that has long been considered volatile.

How then do we say to all these and so many others: “You are not alone”?

Only, I believe, by conscious, intentional engagement with them in their struggles for human rights and religious freedom.

First, I believe that every First

World partner congregation needs an education program and plan—a commitment to understand international political issues, and specific threats to partners.

Second, every partner congregation needs a monitoring plan, a sort of early warning system.

Third, every partner congregation needs an action plan, needs to be prepared to effectively contact legislators and to activate an action network.

Finally, every partner congregation needs to be connected to other congregations and to related organizations. My vision is that of a network that might reach out to include the UU Partner Church Council, the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists, the Public Witness Department and International Office of the UUA, the International Association for Religious Freedom, the World Congress for Religion and Peace, and the UU Service Committee. Beyond our Unitarian and Universalist connections, such a network could keep expanding, growing to include other denominations, as well as organizations like Amnesty International.

Of course, there are obstacles to such a plan, such a vision.

Congregations are all too often inwardly focused, and have a narrow understanding of the possibilities of partnership. Many lack experience and understanding of the realities of political action on a global scale. Many are resistant to accepting the reality of threats to religious freedom. (“Why can’t all those ethnic groups just get along together the way we do in America?”)

Yet, I think the greatest obstacle to implementation of an effective global network of partner church-based action for human rights and religious freedom is simply the lack of leadership to make it reality. It is leadership that I very much hope the UU Partner Church Council and its friends may soon provide. ●●

Philippine Devastation

The UUs in the Philippines faced devastations this year. Three houses were burned and typhoon "Milenyo" has brought enormous damage: human lives were lost, farm animals and livestock died, and properties were damaged. In addition, rice paddies, farm products, and the fishing equipment of other church members were also destroyed. Yet, another typhoon was forecast as coming.

A very painful incident took place in Santa Catalina. Renie Jimenez and his two children died because their place was hit by a tornado. Of six fam-

ily members, three were lost; their two-story house was buried deeply in mud, two carabao (their working animals) and livestock died and their farm with corn about to be harvested and other farm products were all damaged and completely covered with fallen trees and mud. They have nothing left, and the mother is in a state of shock. This family are active members of the UU Church of Nagbinlod.

In just this year, three houses were burned, owned by the following church members: Mrs. Emeberta Chavez, a member of the UU church of Tampaga, Siaton; Mr. Violeto Legaspi, a member

of San Rafael UU Church in Hinobaan; and Mr. Erwin Saldua, another member from Nagbinlod UU Church.

A Request for Help

This year's devastation has been overwhelming. It is beyond our recovery. In August, there was over a week of rain and strong winds. An emergency fund was created called the UUCP Calamity Fund to assist the church members in time of natural disaster. I'm calling UUs abroad to please help these UUs get back to their lives again.

REV. REBECCA QUIMADA-SIENES
(See page 8 for ways to contribute.)

NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHAT LIST

Our US Unitarian Universalist/Transylvanian Unitarian partner church community has a growing chat list specifically for conversation about economic development. The introduction to this chat list states:

"This list is for a discussion of strategies for economic development in Transylvania, Romania. Its purpose is to share ideas and resources to enable the villages and towns to survive. Topics might include how congregations in the US can help (or hurt), what projects are feasible, how funding can be obtained, sources of technical assistance. Project Harvest Hope is the sponsor."

The list is managed by Art Unger, Executive Director of Harvest Hope, Sherm Eagles and Fred Beckner. They are very interested in hearing your thoughts on the subject of economic development in Transylvanian partner church and neighboring communities. They believe there is much information to be shared and that we can all learn from each other.

If you would like to join in this discussion or merely see what is being said go to the following link and sign up: <http://www.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/econ-dev>

FRED BECKNER
UU CHURCH OF ROCKVILLE,
MARYLAND

A Perspective from The Netherlands

Prosperous people of the Netherlands who visited very sober-living Unitarians in Romania can say: *"We returned richer than we were before we went."*

That's an experience of some people of the liberal religious community "De Woudkapel" at Bilthoven after they visited our partner-community in Homoródszentpéter. This "Woudkapel," with more than 500 members and friends, has warm contacts with that Unitarian village in the Homoród valley; a village of fewer than 200 residents. Almost all of them are Unitarians. In that respect you find more of these small villages in this valley that are simply Unitarian Church-communities. They have been there for centuries.. Actually most of them even have young enthusiastic ministers like "ours" in Homoródszentpéter: Rev. Kinga-Réka Székely who received part of her theological education in the US.

The purpose of our partnership with Szentpéter is, first of all, to pay mutual attention to each other's living-situation; to mutual thoughts of faith; and to personal circumstances. Next, we try to give some modest material help to improve their living circumstances. We started this partnership four years ago. A working-group of eight persons with our minister Rev. Meindert Boersma as adviser runs this activity. We try to go twice a year to Szent-

péter with some people of the Woudkapel. People from Szentpéter have visited Bilthoven one time.

Why does each visit there enrich us? Why does it give us energy every time we meet these people? Well, being there makes one conscious of how people can live in difficult circumstances of poverty and of shortage of personal comfort, and how they, in spite of all that, can be happy and live in harmony. Then you hear and see how they have lived, under the burden of political and clerical oppression. and nevertheless carry on. How they persist and go on living their own lives, follow their original faith and keep their belief in themselves is inspiring. They have been set on that path for centuries.

We can learn very much about them when we have an open eye for their way of living and for their situation, without having pity on them. They are not in misery! We experience that they want to develop their feelings of belonging to Western Europe, to be "citizens of the world." Their enthusiastic and active membership in the International Association of Religious Freedom is an evidence of that intention. ●●

HANS BORLEFFS (member of the Woudkapel-working group "Unitarians in Romania" at Bilthoven)

Networkers & Representatives

North American District Networkers

BC (Ballou Channing)—9 partners

- Peg Carpenter, 58 Meadowbrook Road, Norwell MA 02061 (781-826-8553) margcarp58@attbi.com
- Eric Cherry, 13 Main Street, North Easton MA 02356 (508-238-6373) echerry@mail.com

CB (Clara Barton, formerly Central Mass plus Conn Valley)—9 partners

- Jeanne Kocsis, P.O. Box 128, Whately MA 01093 (413-665-7057) cjkocsis@aol.com

CMW (Central Midwest)—14 partners

- Clint Blandford, 12602 Bradford Woods Dr., St. Louis MO 63127 (314-681-2781) cpbland@aol.com

FL (Florida)—4 partners

- Abhi Janamanchi, UU Church, 2470 Nursery Road, Clearwater FL 33764 (727-531-7704) abhij@tampabay.rr.com
- Steve Urse, 1118 Waverly Road, Tallahassee FL 32312 (850-385-2864) stevur@mindspring.com

HRT (Heartland, formerly Michigan plus Ohio Valley)—9 partners

- Tom Darner, 8259 Spinnaker Lane, Maineville OH 45039 (513-683-5045) tdarner43@aol.com FAX: 513-683-5025

JP (Joseph Priestley)—11 partners

- Kathy Birnbaum, 12234 Westwood Hills Drive, Herndon, VA 20171 (703-620-6079) birnbaum@erols.com
- Liz Campbell, 429 South Fairfax Street, Alexandria VA 22314 (703-683-4579) campfair@comcast.net

MB (Massachusetts Bay)—19 partners

- Linda Lu Schulz, 145 St. Botolph St. #15, Boston MA 02115 W:781-246-1414, H:617-266-3438) LlsdaffodL@aol.com FAX: 781-246-1315
- Ellen Cerasulo, 28 Chester Road, Belmont MA 02478 (617-484-6804) eccerasuolo@earthlink.net

MD (Mountain Desert)—3 partners

- Rev. Ruth Gibson, 2512 S. University Blvd., Denver CO 80210 (608-231-1161) regibson@uuma.org
- Sonya Sukalski, 5 Loma Vista, Los Alamos NM 87544 (505-661-4282) sonya@cybermesa.com

MNY (Metro New York)—11 partners

- (North) Lois Ann Sepez, 8 Rocklyn Court, Huntington NY 11743 (516-271-9418) lasepez@aol.com
- (South) Ethel Mae Theriault, 97 Stony Brook Road, Hopewell NJ 08525 (609-466-1259) emtheria@aol.com

MS (Mid-South)—6 partners

- John Dale, 1131 Austin Avenue, Atlanta GA 30301 (404-588-1496) jdale28788@aol.com
- Wilma Jean Nipper, 12885 Ellison Road, Hampton GA 30228 (770-946-3046) nipperwj@mindspring.com

NE (Northeast)—6 partners

- Jodi Cohen, 169 Pleasant Street, Auburn ME 04210 (207-783-0461) jlc@megalink.net

NHV (New Hampshire-Vermont)—4 partners

- Rev. Sandra Whippie, 620 West Street, Keene NH 03431 (603-355-2286) sjwkne@cheshire.net

OM (Ohio Meadville)—11 partners

- Rev. Daniel Budd, 21600 Shaker Blvd., Shaker Heights OH 44122 (216-751-2320 x24) revdbudd@aol.com

PC (Pacific Central)—14 partners

- (North/East) Anne Greenwood (Berkeley), 21 Villa Dr., San Pablo CA 94806 (510-215-6620) annegt1@aol.com
- (South/West) Bill Kennedy, 263 Alameda de las Pulgas, Redwood City CA 94062 (650-361-8146) flea-st@ix.netcom.com
- Judy Belcher, 248 Mather Street, Oakland CA 94611 (510-655-8658) judanbel@aol.com

PNW (Pacific Northwest)—18 partners

- Fred Cox, 11300 First Avenue NE #221, Seattle WA 98125 (206-417-6861) fredmcox@hotmail.com
- Julie Jose, 2632 W. Everett, Spokane WA 99205 (509-325-8889) jijj@oo.net
- Susan Maclaren, RR#1 Q-15, Bowen Island BC V0N 1G0 Canada (604-947-9191) designit@pop3.axion.net

PS (Prairie Star)—11 partners

- Janne Eller-Isaacs, 732 Holly Avenue, St. Paul MN 55104 (651-228-1456) janne@unityunitarian.org
- Sherman Eagles, 980 Hampden Avenue, St. Paul MN 55113 (651-646-6667) sherman.eagles@medtronic.com

PSW (Pacific Southwest)—5 partners

- *currently vacant*

STL (St. Lawrence)—8 partners

- Sue McLeod, 80 Front Street #622, Toronto ON M5E 1T4 Canada (416-368-4014) suprsu@istar.ca FAX: 416-368-7107

SW (Southwest)—7 partners

- Rhonda Lindsey, 4611 S. Evanston Avenue, Tulsa OK 74105 (918-743-2859) rplindsey@hotmail.com
- deForest Ralph, 4307 Nenana Drive, Houston TX 77035 (713-721-3818) texasralphs@aol.com FAX: 713-721-3818

TJ (Thomas Jefferson)—12 partners

- Ben Horvay, 11 Linkside Court, Isle of Palms, SC 29451 (843-886-4961) benjaminhorvay@cs.com FAX: 843-886-5175

WCA (Western Canada)—2 partners

- Sue McLeod (*see STL*)

North American District Networkers as of August 22, 2002

If you are interested in supporting the partner church presence in your district, please contact Sonya Sukalski (sonya@cybermesa.com). She recruits, supports, and coordinates the PCC district networkers.

DISTRICT REP NEEDED FOR:

PSW (Pacific Southwest)—5 partners

ACTION ON THE CHAT! WHAT ARE YOU MISSING?

The hot topic on the PCC list serve (chat) in late summer and early fall was high school scholarship programs and how they relate to larger issues of giving money and support to partners. Several eloquent postings urged PCC members to consider the relationships we are building to be more important than raising and sending money. Other posts gave practical advice about how best to set up a scholarship program.

Don't miss out! If you are a PCC member, sign up today... (Turn to page 8 of this newsletter to find out how.)

Transylvanian District Representatives

Háromszék district

- Rev. Alpár Kiss / Parohia Unitariana Baraolt / Str. Libertatii Nr. 24 / 4023 Baraolt / Jud. Covasna / România
alpar@honoris.ro

Kolozs-Torda district

- Rev. János Kriza / Str. 21 Decembrie Nr. 9 / Jud. Cluj / 3400 Cluj / România
krizajan@freemail.hu

Küküllő district

- Rev. Jakab Benedek / Parohia Unitariana Sighisoara / 3050 Sighisoara / Jud. Mures / România
benjak@elsig.ro

Maros district

- Rev. Szilárd Sándor / Parohia Unitariana Troita / 4334 Troita / o.p. M. Nirajului / Jud. Mures / România
szilard1@hotmail.com

Székelykeresztúr district

- Rev. Lajos Dancs / Parohia Unitariana Inlaceni / 4188 Inlaceni / Jud. Harghita / România
email c/o József Szombatfalvi, Jr. at szombatfalvi@yahoo.com

Székelyudvarhely district

- Rev. Kinga-Réka Székely / Parohia Unitariana Petreni / 4161 Petreni / o.p. Sinpaul / Jud. Harghita / România
kinga@rworker.com

Transylvanian District Representatives as of July 6, 2002

Unitarian Church in Hungary Representative

- Rev. Sándor Léta / Béla Bartok Unitarius Egyhazy / H-1092 Budapest / Hogyes Endre U.3 Fsz. 7 / Hungary
36-1-217-6171
sandorunit@yahoo.com

Unitarian Church in Hungary Representative as of March 16, 2002

New UK Partner Church Network Formed

Eleven British Unitarians (and seven friends from Transylvania, Poland, Germany, Sweden and the United States) met in April 2002 to launch a UK Partner Church Network. At least ten British congregations already have close connections with programs in India, Transylvania, South Africa, and the Czech Republic. The new UKPCN will support these connections as they develop into more formal and mutual partnerships, as well as encourage new on-going partnerships to form.

The seven-member Steering Committee will meet twice a year and begin its work through presentations at every UK district meeting this spring. The Committee includes Judith Crompton,

Moderator; Annette Percy, Treasurer; Frances Teagle, Webmaster; Beverly Littlepage, Start-up Process; and Alan Williams, Database. For more information, contact Judith Crompton at cross@aol.com.

Two comments from the meeting: "Unless we learn to truly trust across borders, there will be nothing left in this world but ashes." "This partner church network is like a piece of music that existed first as a dream, and during these days we have created a score. Our work now is to go out and play it in many places." ●●

REV. GRETCHEN THOMAS

"THE RAINBOW CONNECTION"

(Sung to the tune of "The Rainbow Connection")

Places so far apart,
Language so different,
I start by learning your name.
Do you hear church bells
Ringing together
Oceans apart but the same?
Music and friendship
A faint band of color
Stretching out over the sea
I reach to find it
The "rainbow connection"
Between Transylvania
And me.

BY SHARON MACDONALD, BEDFORD MA

"This partner church network is like a piece of music that existed first as a dream, and ... we have created a score. Our work now is to go out and play it in many places."

NEW PARTNERSHIPS

THE UUPCC WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW PARTNERSHIPS:

Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lynn in Swampscott, Massachusetts with the Unitarian Church, Homoródkeményfalva, Romania.

Note: This is a second partnership for Swampscott. They are also partnered with Sepsiszentkirály, Romania.

First Parish Church UU of Duxbury, Massachusetts with the Unitarian Church, Nyárádszereda, Romania.

Rogue Valley UU Fellowship of Ashland, Oregon with Warsaw, Poland.

MELROSE, MA AND IKLAND

A Search for our Roots

This summer, I made my first pilgrimage to Transylvania. Transylvania had always been, to me, not just the birthplace of vampires but my forbidden homeland. My mother emigrated from Budapest to the United States in 1956 during the Hungarian Revolution. We had been back to visit several times, waiting months for visas, but could never get across the Romanian border to where her grandmother had been born. Today, the border crossing is tedious but possible. This August, the wait was a matter of hours, not weeks.

I spent a week leading 25 youth through our mutual heritage—the Unitarian historical sites. We hiked to the top of the ruins at Déva where Ferenc Dávid was martyred, and gave a heart-wrenching service where their bishop spoke before the memorial to the first Unitarian bishop. We stayed in Romanian towns where our Hungarian was frowned upon—and vice versa!

Then I set off for Melrose UU Church's new partner, the village of Ikland. Attila Molnár, the minister, and his wife Monika, met me in Marosvásárhely and took me back to the parsonage in Székelykál for pastries and pálinka (the ubiquitous plum brandy). The next day was the highlight; a welcoming service arranged for me—on a weekday yet! I was treated to bouquets of flowers, presents for our congregation, and the recitations by their children. Even the three-year-old granddaughter of the president had memorized a piece! We closed by singing "Spirit of Life," which the minister and his wife had learned in English.

The feasting continued at houses throughout the day, and on Saturday, we drove in a caravan to the World Gathering and picnicked on the grass. Every family had a bite they insisted I eat; fresh garden peppers, homemade cheeses and sausages—and yes,

pálinka. While the youth tour regrouped, I could not bear to leave these people I had just barely touched the lives of. I sat with them for hours, chatting in broken Hungarian and buying ice cream for the children who had come. In fact, I was the last one to get back to the bus, I was so captivated by their generosity and friendliness.

I asked Attila at the end of our time together what we could do for them, how we could help. I was imagining he would want money for them, but no. He said instead, "Come back! You bring money, it is good. You don't, it is good. But please, come back!!"

My heart was captured by the Transylvanians, these religious and ethnic parents of mine. I want not only to go back, but to take my family along when I do. I want my daughter to feel the same sense of coming home to a place she has never been. ●●

MANDY NEFF, DRE (AND CHAPERONE ON THE 2002 UUPCC YOUTH TRIP)

SHELTER ROCK, NY

It Happened In Kolozsvár

On August 4, nine members of our congregation attended the dedication of the newly constructed dormitory for "students and pilgrims" in Kolozsvár. Having voted to contribute \$245,000 over a two-year period toward this project, the congregation played an important role in moving this first phase of construction from the drawing board to completion. The completed wing, which was accomplished by creatively using wasted attic space, is being occupied by students who attend the Unitarian High School, and by summer visitors. The High School students come from all religious denominations from all over Transylvania. They are selected on merit. The second phase, which is in the early stages of construction, will house the University students. Our Shelter Rock group was the first group of "pilgrims" to be accommodated in

this new wing.

The dedication was very moving. The highlight of the event was when the high school choir sang a glorious a cappella rendition of "Spirit of Life" in English. It brought tears to our eyes and the audience to its feet in a standing ovation. It was a very emotional experience for me personally since I was asked to speak as a representative of Shelter Rock and to participate in the cutting of the ribbon. After the ribbon cutting ceremony, all were invited to view the dormitory and were able to see, among others, the two rooms named for Shelter Rock.

The following is a copy of my remarks delivered at the dedication:

I stand before you on behalf of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock. I feel very honored that we were invited to have representation at this dedication. We have long felt the pull of history, the call of *Egy az Isten*, the awareness of our commonalities in religious practice along with our differences. You generously give to us what you can. You hold us close to our roots. You model for us a deep spirituality, the steadfast courage that has sustained you over centuries of difficulties, and a love and respect for one's culture. We are grateful for these gifts and feel the need to reciprocate by being part of your revitalization of which this dormitory is a part. For these reasons, our congregation voted support for this project. We wanted to help in a concrete way. The congregation was caught up in the excitement of building something that would positively affect the educational opportunities for all youthful Unitarians. We feel privileged to be part of providing them with safe, affordable housing, and honored to be the first group of "pilgrims" to use this space. We thank you for this privilege and honor. ●●

ZED KESNER, PARTNER CHURCH CHAIR



Farkas László in his Schooner Adventure shirt, watching computer slide show with Margit and daughter Krisztina at the parsonage in Korond.

Korond Minister to Visit Partner Churches Next Summer

Rev. László Farkas of Korond has approval from his church to take a sabbatical next summer. The plan is for him and his wife Margit to visit his partner churches in Brookline, MA and Los Alamos, NM from mid-June to mid-September of 2003. A main goal is to learn English. László told me this while we had lunch in the parish room of the church in Fenyökút. I promised him that I would do what I could to make it happen and that I would stop using German with him and only use English (and a little Magyar).

The draft schedule is that they would be in Brookline at the beginning and end of that time, so they could attend retirement activities for David Johnson, General Assembly in Boston, and Fourth of July on the Esplanade. While there they would stay at the parsonage. In Los Alamos they would stay with Joyce Nickols, who is currently hosting their daughter Beáta. When they get back to Brookline László can wear his Schooner Adventure shirt (which I gave him on my visit this summer) on a schooner in the annual race during the Labor Day Weekend Schooner Festival in Gloucester, MA, and then be part of Ingathering Sunday at First Parish, the first service with our

interim minister, before heading home. Both churches are looking forward to making László's dream a reality.

PETER VAN DEMARK, PARTNER CHURCH CHAIR,
FIRST PARISH IN BROOKLINE, MA

The Korond Scholarship Fund Recipients

The Partner Church Committee of First Parish in Brookline, MA budgets \$600 a year for the Korond Scholarship Fund. The recipients are chosen by our partner minister, Rev László. Farkas. We are starting our fourth year of scholarships. I was able to visit with most of the recipients on my visit in August.



Two young women, Enikő Ravasz and Piroska Kovács, just graduated from the Unitarian high school in Székelykeresztúr. Enikő was a recipient for three years, and plans to work in the tourist industry and improve her English. Piroska had a one-year scholarship, and wants to be a bookkeeper.

Johanna Péter starts her scholarship this year. She is a student at the university in Kolozsvár, studying to be a religious education director and eager to take more English classes with the American teacher at the seminary.



Attila and Csaba Buzogány are twins who are sharing a scholarship. They attend the high school in Korond. I met with their mother, who is the widow of a Unitarian minister. Their older brother had a scholarship for two years. He graduated from Korond High School in 2001 and now drives for a dealer of Korond craft items.



First Parish in Brookline is proud to be helping these fine young people to get the education that they deserve.

PETER VAN DEMARK, PARTNER CHURCH CHAIR,
FIRST PARISH IN BROOKLINE, MA

(Reports continued on the next page)

"Only By Your Presence"

(Continued from page 5)

opportunity to know and to give a hand up to our hard working, faith-keeping counterparts in other countries is a gift beyond measure to North American congregations who may have grown complacent in our freedom.

...

We need to move toward what resonates and harmonizes among us. Lest our unitary and universal ideas become quaint anachronisms, it is time to relinquish our closely held and vaunted differences and look across religions and cultures for what unites us.

It is time to let our light shine, yea, to turn on the path and begin walking, up or down the mountain, all the while scanning the shadows for other lights that are shining back at us—in the valley, on the next mountain, a little further on, looking for us, looking to help us all get home. ●●

(Continued from the previous page)

ROGUE VALLEY'S NEW PARTNER

Report from Poland

The Rogue Valley UU Fellowship, Ashland, Oregon, has a new kind of partner Church—a lay-led fellowship. RVUUF felt this could be a very appropriate pairing because they are young enough a congregation to remember being a lay-led group and how that grew. The Oregon Partner Church Committee held one education/celebration event last spring and gathered gifts for the August meeting.

The Rev. Patt Herdklotz accompanied the post-IARF historical tour of Poland in which the Warsaw congregation shared a Chopin concert. Greetings were shared on behalf of the two partner congregations, with chalices given to one another, among several gifts exchanged. Rogue Valley offered a UU Service Committee chalice (the UUSC established an orthopedic hospital in Poland after WWII). Warsaw gave a chalice made of the famous salt from the ancient Polish salt mine in Wieliczka.

The Warsaw congregation includes adults ranging in age from young parents to elders including a woman who

belonged to the congregation when it was active in the 1930's (Maria stands in white, next to Patt). Czeslaw Glogowski (2nd man from left), past-president, facilitated the evening meeting, as well as assisted planning and hosting the post-IARF tour. Rev. Herdklotz was very inspired by the historical tour and can easily imagine other UUs enjoying an historical tour of Poland: the memorial to founder Faustus Socinus and where he last worshiped, Unitarian chapels founded in the 16th century, the egalitarian community of Rakov—founded by Unitarians and home of the liberal press 16th-17th century until Unitarianism was banned in Poland, and meeting with UUs in Poland today.

Congregation officers met with Rev. Herdklotz (with Fred Cox, PCC liaison, in attendance) the next day to discuss how the Warsaw congregation was faring and how Rogue Valley could be a supportive friend. It was easy for Herdklotz to compliment the historical and cultural elements with which Warsaw would enrich the Rogue Valley's UU and multicultural understandings. ●●

THE REV. PATT HERDKLOTZ

Joint Meetings in Budapest and Kolozsvár

The first joint meeting of representatives of the partner church councils of Hungary and North America was held in Budapest on August 1. There was a candid discussion of divisions in the Hungarian Unitarian Church, with UUPCC representatives asking how they could help support harmony and improved communications. Executive Committee members David Keyes, Leon Hopper and Fred Cox were joined in representing us by Doug Campbell of the Toronto partner church committee.

A joint meeting of council representatives from Transylvania and North America convened on August 11 in Kolozsvár, for wide ranging conversation that included discussion of the Economic Fairness project and strengthening of the travel program. Representing the UUPCC were Cathy Cordes, David Keyes, John Gibbons, and Leon Hopper. UUA President Bill Sinkford and International Programs Director Olivia Holmes sat in on the meeting. ●●

DAVID KEYES



The Rev. Patt Herdklotz (center) initiates the first visit with Rogue Valley's new partner church in Warsaw, Poland.

Welcome Nangroi

Nangroi Suting has arrived at the UUA to become the International Intern for the coming year.

Nangroi, like Darihun, is a Church Visitor of the Khasi Hills in Northeast India. They are good friends. Nangroi is responsible for three churches in three different villages in the Khasi Hills. He's 29 years old, and just a delightful human being.

On August 18th a great ceremony was held at the Unitarian Church in Smit, Darihun's home church, where Darihun was welcomed home and ordained, and Nangroi was blessed for a safe year with us. ●●

OLIVIA HOLMES

Partner Church Tours

PC Tours are organized and operated by the Unitarian Church of Romania, in cooperation with the UU Partner Church Council. From about April to October each year, Rev. Dénes Farkas of Kolozsvár is available for picking up small groups in Budapest or Bucharest with a van to take them to their partner church village or city and other places of interest in Transylvania.

For further information, please contact Linda Gabriel, the PC Tours North American contact, at gablin@tscnet.com, or 360-697-2378.

Harvest Hope Travel Service

In keeping with its mission of encouraging economic opportunity for areas of Transylvania served by Unitarian churches, Project Harvest Hope offers tours for groups of twelve or more visiting partner churches or making a pilgrimage.

For more information, visit their web site: www.harvesthope.uua.org or

contact in-country travel director Eva Kelemen at kelemens@udv.nextra.ro.

Harvest Hope Pilgrimages

For information about annual Transylvanian pilgrimages for individuals and small groups who come together from several North American partners, contact travel coordinator Jay Roller at jay@uuoakland.org.

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 24, 4023 Baraolt, Jud. Covasna, Romania (011-40-67-377-446).

Erdély Maps

The PCC has available two maps of Transylvania. Both give place names in

Romanian, Hungarian, and German:

- Erdély by Cartographia, 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 PCC.

"PARTNER'S IN FAITH" VIDEO

"Partners in Faith" is a UUPCC video that is getting good reviews everywhere. This short—17 minute—video provides an overview of how international partnerships affect congregations and individuals.

You can borrow the video from Executive Committee members or from your district networker (see lists) You can also order a copy of your own by sending a check made payable to UUPCC for \$20 (includes video and postage) to:

UUPCC, Cathy Cordes, P.O. Box 88, Bedford, MA 01730-0088

How to Send Money to Your Partner Church

The UU Partner Church Council, in cooperation with the Unitarian Headquarters in Kolozsvár, has developed a process for transfer of funds for PCC members.

Please use the Gift Transfer form on the next page of this newsletter.

When sending checks, it is important to include:

- The name and address of the donor church
- The name, address, and email of the contact person in your congregation who should receive the acknowledgment of delivery of the funds
- The name of the partner church in Romania

- The names of the minister and church president of the partner church
- The amount designated for the congregation (and the purpose, if designated)
- The amount for the minister's support (if any)
- The amount designated for other persons or purposes

You should also separately write your partner church to tell them the funds have been sent and how they are to be spent.

Funds received by the 20th of the month will be wired before the end of the month to a bank in Hungary where they are received in US dollars.

Congregations and individuals in Romania are notified by Unitarian Headquarters in Kolozsvár that funds have been received. Funds are distributed directly to the churches or individuals designated. Receipt of delivery is sent to the Partner Church Council treasurer who in turn sends them to the original donors.

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

The PCC is in the process of determining the most effective system for transfer of funds from North American congregations to Hungary and the Czech Republic. This information will be included in a forthcoming newsletter. ●●

Gift Transfer Form

PARTNER CHURCH GIFT FORM FOR TRANSMISSION OF FUNDS

Please enclose this form with each check for funds to be transferred to your Partner Church or an individual in ROMANIA.
Please type or print clearly.

NOTE: Funds transmission is a benefit of PCC membership. If your church is not a PCC member, dues will be deducted (\$50 for churches under 150 members, \$100 for churches over 150 members).

Mail to:

UUPCC / c/o University Unitarian Church
6556 35th Avenue NE / Seattle, WA 98115

Make check payable to:

UU Partner Church Council

(This form may be duplicated)

DONOR CHURCH

Name _____ Date mailed _____
Address _____
City/State or Prov./Country _____
Contact Person _____
Email Address _____ Phone Number (____) _____
U.S. Dollar Amount Enclosed _____ Check # _____

FOR

Partner Church Name _____
Address _____

Contact the Following: Minister: _____
and Church President: _____

(Note: You should also contact these people yourself to tell them what the money is to be used for.)

Delivery Instructions _____

Amount designated for congregation _____
(This will carry the instruction: "to be used at the discretion of the minister and president of the congregation.")

Purpose of contribution _____

Amount for minister's support _____

Amount for: _____

Amount for: _____

UUPCC Mission, Vision, Beliefs and Support

Mission: 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, 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.

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 all of these relationships will be of high quality, firmly based, mutually beneficial, responsibly sustained, and linked by a joint and mutual covenant.

Beliefs: We believe that partnering is effective because it is a grassroots effort, sensitive to and sustained by the local needs and interests of both partners.

- We believe that partnering and related international exchange opportunities are effective forces for expanding the awareness and appreciation of the historical roots and many flowerings of liberal religion.

- We believe that partnering can be a significant force for social justice and international understanding.

- We believe that partnering can be a central aspect of a reinvigorated North American Unitarian Universalism and a means of infusing congregational life with pragmatic global ethics and one-to-one commitments.

Support: The PCC will be bold and ambitious in the support we provide.

- We will encourage, embrace, and support a wide range of partnering models, including ones that go beyond today's approaches.

- We will encourage and support both church-to-

UU Partner Church Council

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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. Widen the circle! Pass this newsletter to friends and encourage them to join.

DATE: _____ ONE YEAR TWO YEARS New Membership Renewal
Individuals \$30 \$50
*Institutional under 150 members \$50 \$75
*Institutional over 150 members \$100 \$175
*An institutional subscription provides you with up to **four** newsletters mailed to separate addresses*

Name: _____ Telephone _____
Address _____ Fax _____
City _____ State/Province _____
Zip/Postal Code _____ E-Mail _____
UUA Church Name _____
Partner Church Name _____
This is a GIFT Membership from: _____

Make your check in US dollars payable to
UU Partner Church Council.
Mail your check and application to:
UUPCC c/o University Unitarian Church
6556 35th Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98115

OR

*Note: Canadian congregations may pay the same amount in Canadian dollars, made out to **Canadian Unitarian Council.***
Mail your check and application to:
Canadian Unitarian Council / 55 Eglinton Avenue E #705
Toronto ON M4P 1G8

*For Institutional Members, please list the four newsletter recipients:

1. Name _____ Telephone _____
Address _____
City _____ State/Province _____
Zip/Postal Code _____ Country _____ E-Mail _____
2. Name _____ Telephone _____
Address _____
City _____ State/Province _____
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3. Name _____ Telephone _____
Address _____
City _____ State/Province _____
Zip/Postal Code _____ Country _____ E-Mail _____
4. Name _____ Telephone _____
Address _____
City _____ State/Province _____
Zip/Postal Code _____ Country _____ E-Mail _____

church partnering relationships and meaningful participation opportunities for individuals and congregations that are not in a partnering relationship.

- We will support grassroots partnering activities by developing effective leadership, stewardship, fellowship, and logistical services.

- We will provide outreach and informational support so that partnering efforts are widely recognized and strongly supported by North American UUA congregations.

- We will work cooperatively with the international efforts of the UUA and other international religious organizations, and we will encourage

and support the UUA in developing and maintaining a strong international engagement.

- We will provide other support and services to ensure that partnering has a significant, increasing, and mutually beneficial impact worldwide.

Partner Church Council Executive Members

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Dr. Judit Gellérd, HONORARY PRESIDENT Boston, MA 617-536-5576 zizi315@yahoo.com	Ms. Sonya Sukalski, NETWORKER COORDINATOR Los Almos, NM 505-661-4282	sonya@cybermesa.com	
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Administration and general services, contact Executive Director, Cathy Cordes, at uupcc@uua.org

District networker services, contact networker coordinator Sonya Sukalski at sonya@cybermesa.com

Membership data base, contact Pat Rodgers at pat.rodgers@sbcglobal.net

Membership status, contact membership coordinator Barbara Mades at bjmades@sinclair.net

Money and budget, contact treasurer Larry Coburn at coburnlh@aol.com

Money—wiring safely and efficiently to Romania, contact Larry Coburn at coburnlh@aol.com

New partnership, or reviving or ending one that is not working, contact Gretchen Thomas at gthomas@attglobal.net

Newsletter, contact editor Nancy Daugherty at nancydaugh@aol.com

Partnerships in India, contact John Gibbons at jegibbons@rcn.com

Partnership in the Philippines, contact Norm Stewart at normster@interserve.com

Religious education materials, contact Ruth Gibson at gibson9@qwest.net

Travel services, contact Linda Gabriel at gablin@tscnet.com

Visa services for Romanian visitors, contact John Dale at jdale28788@aol.com



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