

Inside this Issue

Letter to UU World	2
Congress 2010	2
Future of US Chapter	2
Religious Freedom	3
Two New Books	3

U.S. Chapter Board

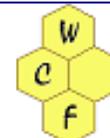
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Alexander Gibber
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Richard Kellaway
Gale Maynard
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Reconciliation with the Earth, Each Other and the Stranger



A Conference sponsored by the U.S. Chapter of the International Association for Religious Freedom & The World Congress of Faiths

**Clearwater, Florida
January 14-17, 2010**

Explore the challenge and complexity of reconciliation in this world of diverse religious beliefs and interfaith encounters.

Guest speakers include: Dr. Hal French, Dr. Paul Rasor, & Dr. William Schulz.

See attached flyer and registration form for more details. You may also go to the US IARF website www.iarfus.org for the latest updates or contact Joe Myers at 727-391-5798, hjmyers@alum.mit.edu.

UUA Holds 2009 General Assembly in Salt Lake City

The U. S. Chapter, IARF, had a positive and energizing presence at the UUA General Assembly. The reception for members, friends, and foreign guests was well attended. It was a delightful opportunity for conversation and to renew old and forge new connections. Many foreign guests were introduced and again we experi-

enced the unique relationship between IARF members and friends that extends beyond the United States and Unitarian Universalism to Europe, India, Japan, Africa, and Asia. This is the gift of IARF – to promote and sustain interfaith-based personal relationships.

In addition to the reception, the U. S. Chapter table

displayed membership information, details about the January 14-17, 2010, Conference in Clearwater, Florida, and the upcoming Congress scheduled for Sept.



IARF Reception at 2009 GA

Future of the U. S. Chapter

Please note that we will be holding our annual meeting of the U. S. Chapter of IARF at the 2010 Congress. This meeting will include the election of officers and Board members for the next term which carries through to the 2014 Congress. We reach out to you for ideas about the composition of the Board and its future location. It is important for us to have this slate in hand when we meet in 2010 in Kochi, India.

Temples & Treasures of South India

Some the world's most magnificent temples are in South India. Centuries old, the temples continue to be sacred centers for the celebration traditional Hindu rituals. The U. S. Chapter is sponsoring a week-long tour prior to the September, 2010 international Congress in Kochi. Tentative plans call for the group to meet in Chennai (Madras) and in an air-conditioned coach to visit such temples as Maballapuram, Tanjore, and Madurai, the New Age community at Aurobindo, as well as other outstanding sites. An opportunity to experience traditional India. Rev. Richard Kellaway will lead the group. Details at rosedale10@comcast.net.

Letter of Protest Sent to UU World

Members and Friends!

I submitted the following letter to the *UU World* magazine in response to the article, "UUA Charts New International Course," which appeared in its Summer 2009 issue.

September 7, 2009

To the Editor of the *UU World*:

It is sad and discouraging to read "UUA Charts New International Course" in the recent UU World and to know that the new international course will include only \$500 for the work of the International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF). The decision to cut funding from \$30,000 to \$500 was not news to me since I have seen the continual decrease in support for the IARF beginning with the time I served as the UUA Board Trustee from the Mass Bay District. Beginning with the former UUA President John Buehrens and continuing with the presidency of Bill Sinkford, the UUA opinion has been that the IARF does not serve our congregations, it is "less oriented to Unitarian Universalists," and therefore money should be directed to the work of the Partner Church and the International Council of Unitarian Universalism (ICUU). There is no doubt about the value of these organizations but I cannot understand the reason to cut off financial support to this unique and historical international and inter-religious connection we have as Unitarian Universalists.

Certainly there are local interfaith groups but the IARF is rooted in the motivation of and was founded by Unitarians over 100 years ago to establish ongoing relationships with other religious groups around the world. At this time when there continues to be misunderstanding among the world's religions, it is not the time for the UUA to chart a "new international course" without including the IARF. The unique relationships of IARF members and friends extend beyond the United States and Unitarian Universalism to Europe, India, Japan, Africa and Asia. This is the gift of IARF, to promote and sustain interfaith personal relationships. I hope that President Morales with his challenge to us about religious diversity and the UUA Board of Trustees will consider charting a new international course with renewed support of IARF as an equal partner.

Rev. Dr. Doris Hunter
14 Concord Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

Congress 2010

The 33rd Congress of the IARF will be held Sept. 4-7, 2010, in Kochi, India; its theme, "Beyond Conflict to Reconciliation: The Challenge of the 21st Century." More information will be available soon, including details about pre- and post- Congress tours. (See sidebar, this page.)

Meanwhile, check out the Congress 2010 blog at larf2010.blog126.fc2.com for the latest updates and view videos of IARF Council members welcoming you to the Congress. You may see Doris Hunter!

Religious Freedom Status in the U.S.

by Alex Gibber [agibber1@juno.com]

Despite many hopes to the contrary, after almost a year into the Obama administration, the "enmeshment" of religion and politics or religion and government continues with explicit or implicit support and approval of the new administration.

The Faith-Based Initiatives are continued and the government funding of them is expanded. The Offices or Centers of Faith-Based Initiatives have been established in the White House and numerous federal offices and departments. Even if we gloss over the fact that the majority of the funding is awarded to evangelical Christian churches and organizations, which openly discriminate and proselytize, the entire faith-based enterprise clearly creates an impression that the government makes a preference of religious belief over non-belief.

Another recent example of how firmly Christianity is "entrenched" in the US Armed Forces and taken for granted as the "national religion," is the address delivered by U.S. Army Chaplain (Col.) Thomas MacGregor, on D-Day, June 6, 2009, concluding his invocation with reference to the second coming of the Lord when all wars would cease. Imposition of a religious and overtly Christian ritual upon a diverse audience in the name of and on behalf of our entire country, and in the presence of the President of the United States, who publicly joined in this prayer, speaks poorly of our commitment to uphold the principles of separation of church and state.

On the bright side, a Federal District judge has refused to dismiss a Court case challenging the legality of the National Day of Prayer proclamations. Denied were motions to dismiss filed by defendants Pres. Barack Obama, press secretary Robert Gibbs, Shirley Dobson, of the National Day of Prayer Taskforce, and Pat Robertson's legal arm, the American Center for Law and Justice.

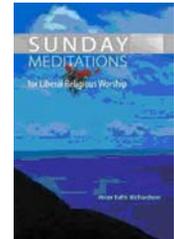
There is still much to be done in the United States to promote and protect freedom of religion.

Two New Books

by Peter T. Richardson

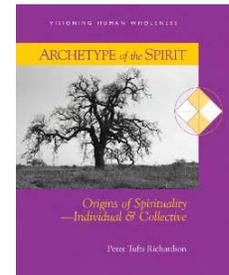
Sunday Meditations for Liberal Religious Worship

These 65 meditations, written for public worship, assume a global context for worship in the 21st century. Deriving from Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian/Taoist influences, these meditations celebrate the seasons with festivals, joys, and sorrows of our shared humanity. Richardson has journeyed in pilgrimage to 20 countries and enriched his poems with 102 photographs. 164 pages, \$19.95 + 3.50 p & h. Order from the author at ptemr@aol.com or 22 Mechanic St., Rockland, ME 04841.



Archetype of the Spirit

Exploring four parallel spiritualities within the major religions, this book documents their archetypal origins in man's earliest history, showing their power in a model for individual spiritual growth. This book builds on the author's popular Four Spiritualities, correlating them with Jung's psychological types. 172 pages, 108 illustrations; \$24.95 + 3.50 p & h. Order at ptemr@aol.com or 22 Mechanic St., Rockland, ME 04841. The author will be leading a workshop based on this text at the U.S. Chapter Conference in Clearwater, FL, in January 2010.



Announcing

The IARF Mannheim Conference
October 22-25, 2009

Registration is now open at
wytokedijkstra@casema.nl

Cost: Euro 75, paid on arrival.

Please register ASAP to allow for making
the necessary arrangements

Remember to regularly check the official IARF World Congress 2010 blog site at <https://iarf2010.blog126.fc2.com>, where you'll find Congress updates. Program details on RFTN Youth & International Young Adult activities, and can research the Kerala region, or post your own comments on the blog



Read the latest news from the International IARF office at www.iarf.net

* * * *

Visit the U.S. Chapter Website at www.iarfus.org

Where you will find past issues of the newsletter, photos from recent activities, and much more.



**Nyla McCulloch & Gale Maynard
at IARF table**

Continued from Page 1

4-7, 2010, in Kochi, India. Our display table was clustered with other Unitarian Universalist international programs, including the Partner Church, International Council of Unitarians and Universalists, and the United Nations Office. This common space was also the scene of presentations by each of the groups. Our Chapter showed

a PowerPoint presentation entitled "IARF: 2009."

It was a successful first venture of having all the international groups together where we not only shared equipment and common space, but also promoted conversations about our common goals. We plan to be part of this international group next year at the 2010 General Assembly.

*Thank You!
Thank You!*

Your generous responses to our July 2009 letter resulted in gifts and membership renewals that will help the Chapter carry on with its programs, including our upcoming Clearwater Conference and the 2010 Congress in Kochi, India.

**U.S. CHAPTER
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

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STREET ADDRESS
ADDRESS 2
CITY, ST ZIP CODE

Reconciliation with the Earth, Each Other and the Stranger

A conference sponsored by the
U.S. Chapter of the International Association for Religious Freedom
and The World Congress of Faiths

Clearwater, Florida
January 14-17th, 2010

Please join us in exploring the challenge and complexity of reconciliation in this world of diverse religious beliefs and interfaith encounters.

Guest speakers:

Dr. Hal French ~ Preston Emeritus Professor at the University of South Carolina, teaching courses in the Department of Religious Studies and for the Honors College. He serves on the advisory board of the International Center in Oxford, England, the U.S. Chapter of IARF, and on the board of NAIN, the North American Interfaith Network. His latest book is Zen and the Art of Anything.

Dr. Paul Rasmussen ~ Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies and Director of the Study of Religious Freedom at Virginia Wesleyan College, Norfolk, VA; author of Faith Without Certainty: Liberal Theology In The 21st Century.

Dr. William Schulz ~ Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress in Washington, D.C., former Executive Director of Amnesty International USA; author of In Our Own Best Interest: How Defining Human Rights Benefits All of Us and Tainted Legacy: 9/11 and the Ruin of Human Rights.

Workshop Leaders:

Rev. Jopie Boeke from the U.K. and Kathy Matsui from Japan, to present the work of the IALRW, the International Association of Liberal Religious Women.

Rev. Eric Cherry, Director of International Resources at the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Rev. Peter T. Richardson, author of Archetype of the Spirit, The Four Spiritualities: Expressions of Self, Expression of Spirit.

And Others...

Experience Circle Groups and Interfaith Worship

Registration information, visit: www.iarfus.org or contact Joe Myers @ 727-391-5798 hjmyers@alum.mit.edu

**U.S. Chapter of the International Association for Religious Freedom
and the World Congress of Faiths - 2010 Conference**
'Reconciliation with the Earth, Each Other and the Stranger'

Dates: **January 14 – 17, 2010**

Location: **Clearwater, Florida** (Unitarian Universalists of Clearwater, 2470 Nursery Road, 33763)

Fees: Full Conference Fee: Paid by December 14th \$____ \$125
Paid after December 14th \$____ \$150
One day fee: Saturday \$____ \$65

Conference Registration

Name: _____ Current Member of IARF? Yes No

Mailing Address: _____

Phone number where you can be reached if registration staff needs to contact you (_____) _____ - _____

Email: _____ Religious Affiliation: (optional) _____

Conference Dates *(Please note registration fees listed above)*

Please register me for the entire conference **OR** Please register me for Saturday only

Paying Registration Fees: Registrants can pay by check or credit card

- Checks should be made payable to Unitarian Universalists of Clearwater (with 'IARF' on memo line)
- Credit cards may be used by completing the following information or calling the office at 727 531-7704 during the regular business hours of Monday – Friday from 9am – noon, Eastern time.

(Please note: all credit card information will be destroyed after the registration charge is processed.)

Credit Card Information: Type: VISA Mastercard Discover American Express

Credit card number _____

Name on card _____ Expiration month & year ____/____ (mo/yr)

Zipcode of billing address on credit card account _____

Hotels: The following hotels will provide rooms at reduced rates. You must make your own reservation and indicate that you are with the conference to get the discounted rate. For reservations for either hotel, call Linda Gower at 727-797-6300 ext. 516 or email Linda@hiexclearwater.com. (See attached flyer for more information.) Please note: hotels in Florida book January reservations very early; you may want to make your reservations as soon as possible.

- Holiday Inn Express, 2580 Gulf to Bay Blvd, Clearwater, FL 33765 (from \$99 per night)
- Economy Inn, 20788 U.S. Hwy 19 N., Clearwater, FL 33765 (\$48.99 per night)

Home Hospitality: A limited number of home hosts are available at \$40 per person per night. If you would like to request home hospitality, please indicate which nights you plan to stay and include the additional fees with your conference fees: Thursday night (\$40) Friday night (40) Saturday night (\$40)

Transportation: Limited transportation may be available to and from the conference and your hotel or host home. Please indicate if you will be renting/driving your own car or would like to request this transportation.

I will be responsible for my own transportation

I would like to request transportation to and from the conference. (Please indicate which days you will need transportation and also the name of the hotel where you will be staying if you are not requesting home hospitality.)

Hotel - _____
 Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday (Service at host church)

Mail Correspondence should be sent to:

Unitarian Universalists of Clearwater (UUC) 2470 Nursery Road, Clearwater, FL 33764 (Attention: IARF)

Conference Registration Questions should be directed to Joe Myers at 727 391-5798 hjmyers@alum.mit.edu