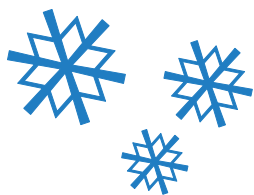




UUJEC News & Views: Winter 2021



| newsletter@uujec.org | Sally Jane Gellert, editor

Upcoming Web Seminars: *Hold the 2nd Thursday for us!*



Thursday, March 10

Maya van Rossum, author of *The Green Amendment, Securing Our Right to a Healthy Environment*, is the founder of Green Amendments For The Generations (forthe generations.org), a national non-profit organization dedicated to inspiring a movement to amend state constitutions to recognize and protect environmental rights on par with other inalienable civic and political freedoms. She is also the Delaware Riverkeeper, leading the regional advocacy organization, the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, for over 26 years.

GREEN AMENDMENTS are self-executing provisions added to the bill of rights section of a constitution, recognizing and protecting the rights of all people, including future generations, to pure water, clean air, a stable climate, and a healthy environment. They establish a constitutional mandate, recognizing a healthy environment as above the law, inherent, infeasible, generational, and belonging to all people. Once passed, the health of the environment and environmental impacts will be required to be considered first, at the start of planning, decision making, legislating and regulating.

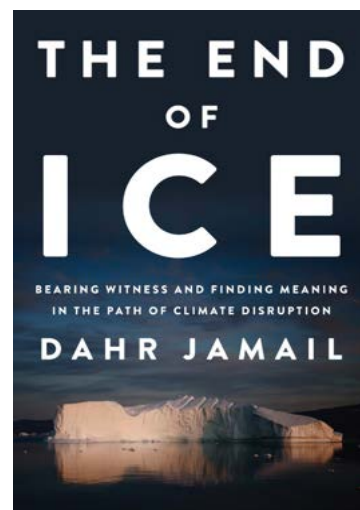
Only Pennsylvania and Montana have Green Amendments today, but since 2013 Maya has helped inspire Green Amendment proposals in New Jersey, New York, West Virginia and Maryland. In addition her movement is responding to

active interest in New Mexico, Arizona, Maine, Connecticut and Delaware, with other states such as Idaho, Florida, Oregon, Washington and Colorado expressing growing interest.

Thursday, April 10

The Earth is now experiencing human-caused climate disruption at an ever-accelerating pace. At present, even the best case mitigation strategies will not stave off catastrophic changes that are already heated into the biosphere. How, then, shall we live? The talk will give a brief overview of how far along we are with climate disruption, then shift into spending the majority of time addressing how we find meaning, and purpose, during such a time.

In late 2003, weary of the overall failure of the US media to accurately report on the realities of the war in Iraq for the Iraqi people, **Dahr Jamail** went to the Middle East to report on the war himself, where he has spent more than one year in Iraq as one of only a few independent US journalists in the country. Dahr has also reported from Syria, Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan. He has also reported extensively on veterans' resistance against US foreign policy, and is now focusing on anthropogenic climate disruption and the environment.



Dahr's stories have been published with Truthout, Inter Press Service, Tom Dispatch, The Sunday Herald in Scotland, The Guardian, Foreign Policy in Focus, Le Monde, Le Monde Diplomatique, The Huffington Post, The Nation, The Independent, and Al Jazeera, among others. Dahr is currently and has been a feature writer for Truthout.org for five years, and his climate feature page there is titled 'Climate Disruption Dispatches'.

What's Happening at Our Healthcare Task Force

We're currently exploring ways that we can get involved in RIP Medical Debt—a program that buys medical debt at a discount rate and forgives it, freeing people from crushing obligations and the spectre of bankruptcy. You'll hear more about it in the UUJEC April webinar, and we'll let you know when our plans have jelled.

Also, we've decided to ask the UUA to prepare a census of UUs who have died from COVID-19 and to have a moment of silence for those who have died at the GA. One of us has suggested that people present at GA be given a sheet of paper with their names, the dates of their deaths, and the churches to which they belong.

We'd like you to write (as we have done) to Speaker Pelosi asking her to

- ◆ schedule a vote on Representative Ro Khanna's bill empowering Health and Human Services to empower states to have their own Medicare for All programs;
- ◆ schedule a vote on Representative Jayapal's (and Senator Sander's) Emergency Legislation to Provide Health Care for All During the Pandemic.

We know that the above aren't Improved Medicare for All (which we're working for), but we believe that they'd be good steps in that direction.

After we had written a letter to our Senators that you'll find below, requesting that the Indian Health Service not curtail emergency services given by the Acoma Pueblo Hospital, we found in the February 4, 2021 *Albuquerque Journal* that Judge Beryl A. Howel of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia granted a temporary restraining order saying that the Indian Health Services should not reduce them.

Perhaps if enough of you write a similar letter, the restraining order will be made permanent.

Our letter is to the right; please consider writing something similar:

TO:
Indian Health Service
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Md. 20857

As an organization vitally interested in the health care of New Mexico inhabitants and the rights of Native Americans, we are extremely troubled by the Indian Health Service's recent suspension of most of the services offered at the Acoma-Cañoncito-Laguna (ACL) hospital. The suspended services include inpatient critical care and emergency room services, and the hospital was converted into an urgent care facility with limited hours.

This troubles us on two levels:

1. What Acoma Governor Pueblo Brian Vallo describes as the illegal action of the IHS who suspended services without conferring with pueblo leaders and the lack of a year's notice to Congress that is required before such closing of a hospital;

2. Although the facility will still be able to offer Covid-19 testing, it will not be able to accept patients who have Covid-19. These sick people will have to travel at least 60 miles to try to get care, if they have the needed transportation.

According to the Indian Health Services website, Acoma-Cañoncito-Laguna hospital serves around 9,100 tribal citizens from Acoma and Laguna pueblos, and it has had 126,000 patient visits each year.

Governor Vallo maintains that \$5 to \$6 million of the more than \$1 billion that the IHS received from the Cares Act could have been used to keep the ACL operating with full services.

It seems to us that it is very wrong for the IHS to have acted without consulting with Pueblo leaders, that it is in the bad tradition of the history of such U.S. governmental actions

And furthermore, it seems to us that it is horrendous to deprive a community of people the health services they desperately need at this time of our health care crisis.

We urge that you work to restore ACL's services.

Drawdown Eco-Challenge Customized for UUs—Join us!

Volunteers are putting together a “custom” Drawdown Eco Challenge for UUs that will be ready for sign-ups in mid-March, with detailed instructions, and will go through June 2021. (Note: There is also an Earth Month April 2021 EcoChallenge).

Participants in UU Drawdown 2021 (UU DD 21) can join as individuals, by congregations, and by locations. This allows for our non-UU friends to join and helps us build stronger community relationships.

Carbon footprint calculations will be captured by individual, Congregation, Location, State, and UU Region. You can already earn UU DD 2021 credit by joining, and having your congregation members join, the March 20th Spring Equinox Opening Celebration of Spring for Change—A Season of Sacred Activism—Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth (uumfe.org).

How do we win DD UU 2021?

All life on the planet wins with increased participation in anything that increases climate justice and builds relationship. Just get started and do what you can now. Every year, every month, every day, every minute, every second really does matter!

How do I find out more about UU DD 2021?

UU DD 2021: Updates will be posted on the UUMFE Web site (uumfe.org).

Project Drawdown: To learn specifically about Project Drawdown: <https://www.drawdown.org>

Get started!

Sign-up details for UU DD 2021 Custom Challenge will be coming soon. UU DD 2021 will be tailored for stronger UU relationship-building, strategies and programs—so start recording images and videos as you and your team get started and do your challenge. These will be compiled and edited for a UUA General Assembly 2021 showing at the end of June, and will be a motivator for other congregations when they see what we accomplished together.

All are welcome

Invite your friends, families, and fellow UUs to join an emerging DD UU 2021 initiative, being cooperatively organized between UUs and Elders Climate Action.

Sacred People, Sacred Earth with GreenFaith Int'l., March 11

UUs and others gathering at the Washington monument will carry the Sacred People, Sacred Earth coalition's Ten Demands (<https://bit.ly/2Pog3o9>) to our U.S. representatives. In particular, we will urge respect for indigenous rights (#4) by stopping the Line 3 pipeline, and support for just contributions to climate financing from wealthier countries (#9) through accelerated U.S. commitments to the Green Climate Fund. The U.N.'s Sustainable Development Goals will also be featured at the event, which is being held on the 10th anniversary of the start of the Fukushima disaster. Participants will Sound the Alarm at the eleventh hour, with bells, gongs, and horns at 11 A.M. COVID-19 safety practices will be strictly followed.

All In for Climate Justice: Food Equity & Sustainability

Are you passionate about food justice, global justice and climate justice?

The 2021 UUA conference builds off last year's climate-justice theme, focusing on the connections between food and climate justice. Programs will ground, connect, and equip participants to take action toward achieving climate justice through more equitable and sustainable food systems. Registration is open through March 18, 2021; the event will take place all online Fri., April 9, 2021 to Sun., April 11, 2021. To learn



more about the seminar and fees, and to register, go to <https://bit.ly/2NPmHd7>. The Inter-generational Spring Seminar aims to instill in Unitarian Universalist youth and adults a commitment to global engagement and the skills to take

action locally to address global issues. The 2021 virtual seminar is proudly co-hosted by the Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth. The inter-generational seminar is an opportunity to collaborate with others while learning how to be a global activist. Through workshops, peer-, and expert-led panel discussions, community-building activities, and worship services, you will undergo a transformative process of learning, reflection, and growth while exploring some of the most challenging issues facing humanity today.

Join us at Virtual GA 2021!

June 23–27, online where you choose!





~We~
members of congregations
of the Unitarian Universalist Association,
have covenanted to affirm and promote

The inherent worth and dignity of every person

Therefore, we recognize that the current economic order is unjust and does not accord full worth and dignity to all. We will stand with women, men and children of diverse class and race and orientation, particularly the exploited and dispossessed, in our common struggle for dignity and equality.

Justice, equity and compassion in human relations

Therefore, we recognize our fears and resistance to crossing the barriers that separate people, barriers which undermine justice, equity and compassion. We commit ourselves to the personal and communal work necessary to overcome our resistance.

Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations

Therefore, we recognize that growth and celebration of the spirit include political analysis, theological reflection and just action. We commit ourselves to that work.

A free and responsible search for truth and meaning

Therefore, we seek to move beyond unexamined assumptions and questionable policies, and to become educated about the increasing inequality, its causes and potential solutions, in this time of global economic crisis.

The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large

Therefore, we encourage inclusive dialogue and action which advance our quest for the common good. We will promote both the right of all persons to participate in decisions which affect their economic well-being, and the right to full and free access to all relevant information.

The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all

Therefore, we confess our complicity in, and the benefits we derive from, structures that create violence, oppression, and inequality. We will work to enlarge our worlds beyond family, workplace, congregation and nation: community is global, citizenship is universal.

Respect for the interdependent Web of all existence of which we are a part

Therefore, we pledge to shape our practice to protect, and not to destroy, the living system that is the earth. We understand that economic justice can be achieved only in the context of ecological integrity.

*In living these principles that form our covenant & govern our priorities,
we pledge ourselves to a more inclusive community of mutual trust & support.*

*We commit our resources, our energies, and our will
to the creation of a new, powerful coalition for economic justice.*

Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community