



# UUJEC Spring Newsletter 2016

## Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community

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### Climate Change Concerns Growing Rapidly What Can We Do?

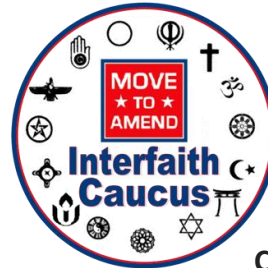
#### UUJEC-sponsored workshop at GA proposes one real possibility!

Friday, June 24 at GA 3:00-4:15

We've all seen them: articles in newspapers, magazines, blogs, etc. announcing increasing evidence of accelerating climate change. Just recently new information reveals that the melting of the West Antarctic Ice Sheet is accelerating and could result in a 3-foot rise in sea levels by the end of the century. It has long been estimated that its melting would be capable of raising the sea level by 12 feet or more should it break up. But researchers assumed the worst effects would take hundreds — if not thousands — of years

This is just one example. (New York Times, 3/31/16, Justin Gillis: "West Antarctic Ice Sheet Could Melt Rapidly - Report Says".)

What can we do? There is a path forward - not an easy one - but a real one; and UUJEC has been supporting this path for years: The passage of the amendment to the constitution proposed by Move to Amend, and endorsed by us, to eliminate corporate constitutional rights and money as speech will allow the reversal process to begin! With its passage, regulation of the emission of greenhouse gases by the fossil fuel and meat-agribusiness industries becomes possible!



On Friday, June 24th, 2016 at the UU General Assembly in Columbus, Ohio, (3:00 to 4:15) a workshop: "Faith

#### Communities Can Work Together

to Reverse Climate Change" will highlight the progress being made by the Interfaith Caucus of Move to Amend to unite communities of faith and ethical convictions on this path! Denominations differ in many ways, but on one value there is close to universal agreement: we are "Stewards of Creation (or "of the planet and all its beings") with a "Duty to Act" - this according to Pope Francis' Encyclical, "Laudato Si" published last year.

Leaders of several faith communities will discuss their efforts in support of the amendment, and UUs (adults and youth) from all around our nation will share their success in "spreading the word" - and the mission. You'll learn about the many tools available to help! A number of denominations are proposing supporting resolutions to their national assemblies! ... And the movement is growing.

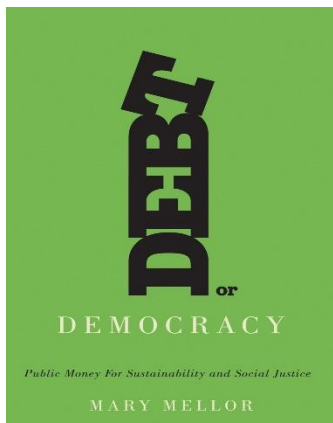
#### Join us to become a part of the solution!

The workshop is co-sponsored by the UUJEC and the First UU Church of Columbus, Ohio - the GA's host congregation. For additional information and to help with the planning, contact me, Michael Greenman, UUJEC Congregational Representative and former Board Member, at 614-898-5825 or [mgreenmanoh@gmail.com](mailto:mgreenmanoh@gmail.com).

**Book Reviews:** Have you read a book on economic justice you'd like to review and share with UUJEC membership? Contact [uujec@uujec.com](mailto:uujec@uujec.com) for more information.

### **“Debt or Democracy?”**

Mary Mellor, a recently retired activist professor



out of the UK, says that we need to take back control of our public currency from private banks. Every time banks make a loan, they “print money”, leaving the public with trillions in debt to bail them out.

**First**, Mellor says, only the government should be able to create new money, with private banks drawing on government loans guided by democratic policy to meet the basic needs of a sustainable economy, not speculation or luxuries for the rich.

**Second**, the government should be able to spend money into existence, without incurring debt (like Treasury bonds) but with taxes and fees designed to return money to the government so as to prevent inflation or deflation. An independent Monetary Authority would determine the corresponding budget deficit or surplus. Mellor calls for a guaranteed minimum income as the top priority

Other authors, like Ellen Brown (“Web of Debt”), are also issuing provocative challenges to our out-of-control money system. Mary Mellor’s book is a good starting point to prepare us for real financial reform when the next crisis hits. [Dick Burkhart, UUJEC Co-Chair]

### **Call for Applicants:**

#### **Economic Justice Leadership Award**

UUJEC, in its commitment to celebrate and support economic justice, is seeking activist Congregations or Justice Committees to apply for its’ first annual “Economic Justice Leadership Award.” The award will be presented to one UU congregation active in the fight for economic justice. We’d like to hear about your work however big or small, complex or focused.

The application contains 4 questions to be answered in 300 words or less. **Deadline to apply is May 25th** at midnight. To enter your congregation for the “Economic Justice Leadership Award,” please apply here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/66NVB27> click the link or copy and paste it into your browser.

#### **Get to Know Your Board: Carl McCargo**

Carl McCargo has been a member of UUJEC since



2006, as its Treasurer and a member of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Greater Springfield, Mass. since 1985, when he became a UU. He received his BA in

Psychology from the University of New Mexico in 1973 and his Masters of Science in Clinical Psychology from the University of Massachusetts in 1981. Carl worked as a civil service psychologist for the state of Massachusetts for twenty years and retired in 2005. In 1992, he was in the first group of UU’s trained as Social Justice Empowerment Trainers and has conducted many workshops *nationwide*. *When his term as Chair of the Ward Committee expires this year, Carl will devote himself more fully to Media Reform, from the point of view that our media – movies and TV – teaches our culture how to think about “the Other”, e.g., class, the poor, immigrants, race which is believed to perpetuate racism, sexism, homophobia, etc. Feel free to contact Carl at: [ilike2travel@comcast.net](mailto:ilike2travel@comcast.net)*

## UUJEC 2016 GA workshop on

### ***Connecting Across Faiths for Economic and Racial Justice***

Friday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 4:45 pm – 6:00 pm, Ballroom B

“Moral Mondays” leader Rev. William Barber is a well-known UU ally for justice in North Carolina, so it’s no accident that his excellent book on “The Third Reconstruction” is a good starting point for our 2016 GA workshop, **“Connecting Across Faiths for Economic and Racial Justice”**. In fact, Rev. Barber calls this “fusion politics”, or “black and white together”, originating in the First Reconstruction after the Civil War. For this workshop we are blending a United Church of Christ perspective (**Dr. Edith Rasell from Cleveland**) and a Baptist perspective (**Bishop Douglas Miles from Baltimore**) with UU perspectives on our Congregational Study Action Issue *Escalating Inequality*.

Many of us regard with awe the astounding feats of courage and of moral and strategic sagacity of leaders like Martin Luther King Jr and Mahatma Gandhi. But how can ordinary mortals like us follow in their footsteps instead of stumbling around half blind? One way is to climb out of our comfortable cubby holes of theology and class, to build common ground with our allies in justice, even with supposed antagonists. In this workshop we’ll model dialogue which explores where “they” are coming from, to set the stage for a powerful UU role in the political upheaval (revolution?) now being felt across the United States.

A careful analysis of both the Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump campaigns shows that they have become voices of revolt for half the US population -

– those left behind by the escalating economic inequality of the last 40 years. These voices include most of the working class, plus big slices of the old middle class, white and black and whatever, even as selected minority individuals like Obama have been welcomed into the meritocracy. So how can UUs participate in a fusion politics to extend the welcome mat to this fed-up “struggling class”, a broad-based class that could include our own children?

Interfaith networks and projects are a good place to begin. As Rev. Barber says, “Use moral language to frame and critique public policy, regardless of who is in power”. Bishop Miles has been preaching and building a fusion coalition for decades in the inner city neighborhoods of Baltimore. Dr. Rasell has been guiding the UCC as national minister of economic justice, after a long stint at the progressive Economic Policy Institute in DC. Perhaps our biggest challenge is the cultural divide between the Trump and Sanders supporters. But this is a divide that can be bridged by a willingness to work around divide and conquer politics and economics. [Dick Burkhardt UUJEC Co-Chair]

### **Legislative Brief: Massachusetts S.1048**

" An Act to Promote Transparency and Cost Control of Pharmaceutical Drug Prices " had a hearing before the MA Joint Committee On Health Care Financing on Monday, April 11. Among other good measures, this bill, if enacted and implemented, will require that for each drug placed on the critical prescription drug list, the manufacturer of the drug shall be required to report: the total cost of production; research and development costs of the drug; research and development costs paid for by public funds; marketing and advertising costs. [Judy Deutsch, UUJEC Health Care Task Force]

## Ventura Stories Conference Shares Inequities, Offers Hope

Recently, the UUJEC worked in partnership with several local sponsors to host “Ventura Stories: Economic Justice in Ventura County” a workshop to address social injustice and economic inequity in Ventura County, California. Key organizers from the community, and leadership within my congregation, the Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, ensured that the dialogue between the very diverse group of participants, showed the human face of social injustice and inequity where we live. From social workers, teachers and retired people to farmworkers and students, the room was full of diversity and fellowship.



The workshop brought together individuals from various socio-economic levels, ethnicities and ages to share how they experience the economy. Particular emphasis was put on ensuring people from different backgrounds sat together to interact with one another. Participant feedback on the workshop stressed that having dialogue with people they did not already know and among people from different age groups, income levels and races was very meaningful and enlightening.

Advocates from various organizations discussed issues and policies to build awareness and motivate people to get involved in local actions where they could have an impact; from raising the minimum wage and encouraging affordable housing, to funding of early childhood education and improving the conditions in which farm workers live.

**What we do:** UUJEC strives to create a world of justice, equity, and compassion where the inherent worth and dignity of every person is recognized and affirmed as set forth in our Unitarian Universalist Principles.

Read my more detailed account of the event on the UUJEC site at [www.uujec.com](http://www.uujec.com)... If you're interested in organizing a similar workshop in your community and would like to hear how we planned out this event, please contact me at [michael.teasdale1@gmail.com](mailto:michael.teasdale1@gmail.com). [Michael Teasdale, Conference and GA Committee Chair]



### **UUJEC Is Headed to GA**

This year's General Assembly is June 22-26 in Columbus, OH. In addition to our sponsored workshops you're reading about in our newsletter, UUJEC will have an informational booth in the exhibit hall.

Please stop by **Booth #112** and meet members of the UUJEC board, tell us about your work on economic justice, and pick up some of our new material we'll have to share.

We will also have information about our **Annual Meeting** at our booth. While at GA, mark your calendars to join us:

**Saturday, June 25<sup>th</sup> from 12 to 1:30**

Come to our Annual Meeting and meet other UUs working for justice. The Economic Justice Leadership Award will also be presented during the event. Share your work. Hear from others. Stay and be inspired.

We'll see you in the heartland!