**MEETING SUMMARY - 10 Jan 2015**

**UU Green Regional Meeting on Climate Justice and Environmental**

**held at River Road UUC, Bethesda, MD**

**The Jan 10th, 2015 quarterly meeting was attended by 50 UUs from 12 regional UU congregations and from Sacred Heart. The group meets under the umbrella of UUSJ to collaborate and build our relationships to be more effective advocates regarding climate justice and the environmental. Meeting location rotates between the regional UU Churches.**

**(Be sure to go to the links page for more details, announcements and information)**

**OPENING: Reflective Readings (available from links page)**

What is Climate Justice? from UUA Commit2Respond website
 The World we Create (excerpt) Frances Beinecke

**SHARING:** Congregations introduced themselves and shared their recent accomplishments and upcoming plans. See the consolidated events calendar to find upcoming events.

**COMMIT2RESPOND:** (Updated PowerPoint available in one to two weeks)
This multi-faith collaborative initiative is a new UU climate justice campaign. Its main launch will be on World Water Day March 22, 2015, with initial emphasis through Earth Day in April. Commit2Respond's leadership is provided by Unitarian Universalists from across our movement. The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, the Unitarian Universalist Association, UU Ministry for Earth, the UU Ministers Association, and the UU College of Social Justice.

How to take action for C2R?

Individuals, congregations, and organizations will all be committing to actions in each of three ways:

1. Growing the climate justice movement
2. Advancing the human rights of effected communities
3. Shifting to clean, renewable energy

Pam Sparr with UUSC will be in the DC area in mid-March and we are planning to schedule to meet with her and learn more about how we can all participate. In the meantime, view the power point when available, visit the web page, and take initiatives within your congregations.

NOTE: UU General Assembly 2015, focus will be environmental justice with many workshops. Portland, OR - June 24-28, 2015.

**BROADENING AND DEEPENING INTERFAITH VOICES IN CLIMATE SOLUTIONS AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE: Eric Goplerud, UUCF, FACS**

Eric emphasized several items (and stated far more eloquently than I am able to summarize below):

 The need to collaborate humbly with the other faiths in our neighborhoods. We collectively have to come together as faith groups to build the movement and work on Climate Justice together.

 That Hispanic Catholics showed the greatest support for climate change issues out of all faith groups surveyed.

 UUs can't be the center of a faith-based environmental movement, our population is too small to lead on climate justice, our best bet is to collaborate with multi-faith groups, especially Catholics to advance the movement. With Pope Francis being Latin, and so outspoken on Climate Justice, an opportunity to really raise awareness and shift public opinion is ripe right now.

 UUs need to humbly engage with our faith neighbors, speak in the language of religion that others understand (creation, God, Jesus, Mohammed) share our various denomination statements on climate change (see links), and find common ground for advocacy.

 People of color relate more to "Climate justice," than to "Climate Change."

Rich discussion followed.

**CLIMATE MITIGATION ACTION LOCALLY - MONTGOMERY COUNTY - INTERNATIONAL GREEN CONSTRUCTION CODE (IGCC)** - Molly Hauck - Cedar Lane UU

A very high percent of greenhouse gases are released due to inefficient, older building systems and operations, (approx over 66%?). Green construction codes for new buildings can reduce emissions significantly, and contribute greatly to overall emission reduction. That's why Molly's group (Montgomery Co. Green Future Coalition) is promoting IGCC in Montgomery Co., (and recommends similar actions everywhere). Hearings took place in Fall 2014, Council voting on the action is likely coming in the next few months. Voluntary actions which are currently the norm (LEED) is not resulting in enough change, although LEED efforts have been commendable. See links for the petition and to find the IGCC.

**CLIMATE MITIGATION NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY: STRATEGIES FOR ELIMINATING FOSSIL FUELS BY 2050-** Jack Lebowitz, RRUUC (see power point in links for all the details).

Overview and insight into:

* the power of the fossil fuel industry, how communities are being sued if they move to ban fracking
* review of 2 degree Celsius target for UN Global Climate Treaty
* Light weight electric cars
* Solar and renewable energy movement

**BREAKOUT GROUPS: (Breakout session reports will be sent when available.)**

* Fostering energy efficiency and renewable energy, plus UU congregational divestment strategies
* Growing interfaith climate activists
* Advancing the welfare of vulnerable communities affected by climate change.

**WRAP-UP / FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

\*Recommended Film: Cowspiracy - Revelations on how the beef and agricultural industry contribute to climate change and related issues

 \*Recommended Book: This Changes Everything - Naomi Klein

 \*Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN) Polar Bear Plunge to Keep Winter Cold - 24 January 2015, National Harbor - Join or donate to the UU Team -

https://www.firstgiving.com/team/282961

 \* Energy and Climate Change Conference: 15th National Conference and Global Forum on Science, Policy and the Environment, Jan 27 - 29, 2015

http://www.energyandclimatechange.org/

 \* Climate Justice Lobby Training for Young Adults (18 - 35):

Saturday, March 14 – Tuesday, March 17, Washington, DC, Young Adult Training and Advocacy on Climate with the UU Service Committee, the UU College of Social Justice, the Friends Committee on National Legislation and the Franciscan Network. [More details here.](http://uusj.net/wp/skill-based-training-and-advocacy-opportunity-for-young-adults-march-14-17-washington-dc/)

**NEXT MEETING: TBD** Expect an opportunity to learn more about Commit2Respond in mid-March. Date and location, TBA.

 Tentatively, April 11, 2015, Saturday morning at UUC Mount Vernon. However, since this meeting was announced several conflicts have been identified, and a suggestion has been made to combine with the Commit2Respond opportunity.

 When resolved you will get a "Save the Date" notice.

**In the meantime, be sure to sign up on the UUSJ list serve to receive all the announcements.**