

Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance

2012 MUUSJA ANNUAL REPORT

March 2013



Our Mission:

MUUSJA unleashes the courageous leadership and collective power of Minnesota UUs to realize a just and loving world.

Guided by our Unitarian Universalist Principles, we value:

- Acting through Love for Justice
- Inclusive, Multi-generational Community
- Courageous Leadership
- Collective Power
- Systemic Change



www.muusja.org



Board Chair Biannual Report: 2011 and 2012

Jennifer Jewell Thomas

The first two years of MUUSJA's second decade, 2011 and 2012, were marked by tremendously successful campaigns to defeat two harmful constitutional amendments in Minnesota.

UUs Out for Marriage Equality

played a key role partnering with faith groups statewide to make Minnesota the first of 31 states, facing such a measure, to stop an amendment to prevent marriage equality. Staff, interns and leaders trained and coordinated hundreds of volunteers who had thousands of conversations on why marriage matters. This work defeated the anti-marriage amendment and laid the groundwork for the 2013 effort to legalize same-sex marriage. Congratulations to this team, including leaders Jane Bacon of White Bear UU and D'Ann Prior of Michael Servetus, winners of MUUSJA's 2012 Volunteer Award, with community partner award recipient, Minnesotans United for all Families' Faith Department.

Our **voting rights** working group collaborated with other non-partisan organizations to defeat the voter restriction amendment. MUUSJA volunteers helped promote a seminal report they produced in 2010 that

documented the lack of fraud in MN and helped shape the debate. We participated in numerous efforts across the state to help communicate that the proposed ID amendment was costly, confusing and had serious negative consequences. We continue to work with the Voting Rights Coalition to promote progressive election reform for Minnesota.

On **racial equity**, critical grants support the work of MUUSJA Director/Organizer, Ralph Wyman, as a key partner in the HIRE Minnesota coalition working for equitable employment in government contracts. We've seen real progress in light rail and stadium contracts thanks to community demands for ac-



Jenny Jewell Thomas with our 2012 award-winners for volunteerism & partnership!

countability and transparency. MUUSJA volunteers in Northern Minnesota have organized to bring new awareness and understanding to their community and Prairie Star District on the Doc-

trine of Discovery.

Our semi-annual member meetings have included speakers on the **environmental justice** of solar power and **reproductive justice**. MUUSJA staff and volunteers have presented programs annually at Prairie Star District meetings and at the 2012 General Assembly in Phoenix on racial justice and voting rights.

As an organization, we've had two strong years financially thanks to grants, Sunday collections, and your generous support. We're partnering with more congregations across the state. We have grown the board and are eager to add even more geographic and congregational diversity. Many of you engaged with the board in **strategic planning** to set our direction and build capacity for the future. Our vision is to expand staff capacity through increased membership, and to support stronger partnerships and congregational connections. Join us to help realize MUUSJA's mission to *unleash the courageous leadership and collective power of Minnesota Unitarian Universalists to realize a just and loving world!*

Jenny Thomas, Board Chair
jjt@jjthomas.net

Growing into Our Faith

Message from the Director/Organizer

Ralph Wyman

It has been a very dynamic and powerful time for UUs in Minnesota! We did what had not yet been done in over 30 tries: defeating a marriage-prohibition amendment!

We defeated a second constitutional amendment, at the same time, that initially polled even more likely to pass than the marriage vote!

Our UU contributions really mattered to these broad-based citizen campaigns, helping keep Minnesota a state that Stands on the Side of Love.

Meanwhile, we here at MUUSJA undertook a significant, statewide in-reach and strategic planning process over the past 18 months.

We grew our budget and capacity. We launched video-conferencing for board meetings, issue work, and semi-annual membership meetings.

And we've continued to support capacity-building through workshops and training at the Prairie Star District conferences and UUA G. A.

I could not be more excited for UU justice work in Minnesota as we continue the momentum created in these amazing couple of years.

Much of the grounding for this success, I believe, came when we asked all of you to our three strategic conversations in late 2011. Our Appreciative Inquiry process, facilitated by Laura Park of Unity Consulting, really asked some juicy questions:

- How will Minnesota UUs bring justice?
- What makes collective action for social justice effective and rewarding?
- How might we build on our strengths to create an exciting, dynamic future for collective UU social justice work in Minnesota?

Your thoughtful engagement with us led to a board process that has launched a bold new Mission for

MUUSJA, one that I find so energizing and that can guide us for years to come:

MUUSJA unleashes the courageous leadership and collective power of Minnesota UUs to realize a just and loving world.

Wow! And we did that, we—our UU community of justice-seekers and justice-makers—courageously led us to work with amazing partners including MN United for All Families, OutFront MN, the League of Women Voters MN, and Citizens for Election Integrity MN to be powerful actors for justice in 2011-12.

We also partnered with HIRE to bring the Central Corridor Light Rail line construction up to and beyond their employment equity goals, and continue to make slow but steady progress in opening up MnDOT and their contractors to greater workforce equity. One major highlight was presenting on our HIRE-MN partnership to over 200 justice advocates at General Assembly in Phoenix last June!

We continue to support the work of the Prairie Star District and the District's Social Justice Network. 2012's conference was in Bloomington, so it was an excellent time to showcase MUUSJA and to share our justice work and tools with UUs from the eight states of our District.

UU *Regionalization* is underway, so we look forward to connecting more with MUUSJN—that's the Michigan UU justice network—and supporting new state justice start-ups in nearby states as we in the P.S.D. merge into the Mid-America region.

As we look to 2013 and beyond, we do need your help and involvement to keep our justice network strong.

Each of our issue areas relies on volunteer leadership and participation in events, actions, workshops as well as planning. As a grassroots movement, all of us together become the power we are unleashing for justice!

We also are recruiting for up to three open board seats. Increasing our geographic diversity across Minnesota is a goal for the board and for me. Technology has made integrating Greater Minnesota board members into our work much easier (and much less carbon-intensive).

Please be in touch with me or Jenny Thomas if you would like to find out about a path to board membership. Serving on a committee—fundraising, nominating, intergenerational connections—can be an excellent entrée into future board participation. Our "Join" page at muusja.org also has information about board roles and a nomination application.

Our social network has grown, too. If you haven't already been following us on Facebook, I urge you to "like" us and join the conversation. Many of the issues we follow have fast-developing information, particularly during the legislative session. We value efficient communications, so in striving to keep our informative e-news (*The Connection*, *sign up* at muusja.org) to 1-2 issues per month, we use Facebook to alert hundreds of followers of breaking news, immediate actions, and links to deeper resources.

Finally, I just want to offer many thanks to everyone who supports MUUSJA in our faith and our action!

Feel free to be in touch. May we be about the work!

- Ralph

Ralph Wyman, Director/Organizer
612-998-6624
ralph@muusja.org



Ralph Wyman speaking at the UU Fellowship of Mankato, summer 2012

Action Highlights

Marriage equality: MUUSJA staff and volunteers helped train and coordinate hundreds of UUs across the state who had thousands of conversations on why marriage matters. We phone banked, door-knocked, held house parties and proudly displayed our yard signs, bumper stickers and tee-shirts. Everyone pulled together to tell our stories of why marriage matters, and that groundswell helped defeat the hurtful anti-marriage amendment—and has built understanding that will help promote true marriage equality in Minnesota. For 2013, we're supporting the legislative effort to enact a Minnesota Freedom to Marry bill. We strongly believe that the voters heard our stories of why marriage matters, and that the state is ready for elected officials to lead on this equity issue.



Voting rights: the report MUUSJA volunteers co-authored in late 2010 was cited numerous times at the legislature, in the media and in conversations throughout the state in 2012 because it documented that there was no fraud in MN that a photo ID could prevent. We hosted numerous educational events across the state to help educate voters who ultimately defeated the voter restriction amendment! For 2013 our partners in the Voting Rights Coalition (VRC) are working with state legislators to promote early voting and/or no-excuse absentee voting, to reduce the long lines at the polls. In addition, we are collaborating with the VRC and Second Chance Coalition to promote an improved system for the restoration of civil rights for citizens convicted of a felony. We strongly prefer the North Dakota Model: unless you're incarcerated, you can vote. This would make election administration simple, lower the costs for taxpayers, and be more fair. Faith groups like ours can play an instrumental role in helping build bi-partisan support to promote fair solutions for civil rights restoration.

Reproductive justice: MUUSJA supports the annual Good Friday prochoice faith rally for Planned Parenthood. In our best turnout for this annual sacred choices event, in 2012 UUs and allies from across the metro were inspired by UU ministers speaking powerfully for reproductive justice from our faith perspective. Prochoice Lobby day is also a key moment for mobilizing UUs to let legislators know that comprehensive sex ed, access to contraception, and reproductive healthcare matter to people of faith. For 2013, state implementation of Affordable Care Act insurance exchanges are a major policy moment: will contraception and abortion be included in plan options? UU minister Kelli clement is now directing the MN Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, and MUUSJA will continue our connection to this work.



Climate change: MUUSJA's fall 2012 general meeting featured progress and opportunities in solar energy used in Minnesota. We are excited by the growing connections between MN UUs and the 350.org movement and Bill McKibben's project to push for corporate accountability for climate change. The youth and inter-generational emphasis of 350.org as well as Will Steger's climate work (we've worked with Will on early green jobs efforts of HIRE, too) have the potential to be UU focus areas for climate work in 2013 and beyond.

Racial equity: our staff work continues in a powerful partnership with HIRE MN to improve equitable employment in government contracts, including light rail, MnDOT, and two new metro area stadiums. We've seen real progress thanks to community demands for accountability and transparency. Our 2013 Spring MUUSJA meeting will focus on HIRE MN as well as Unity Unitarian's congregational work on employment equity. Contact us for more info on how congregations can adopt an equity framework for the goods and services they purchase.



MUUSJA volunteers in northern MN are busy organizing, and were featured in a workshop at the PSD conference last April, bringing new awareness and understanding to issues of Native American rights and the Doctrine of Discovery. Concurrently, the UUA passed a G.A. resolution in Phoenix that states "*BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates of the 2012 General Assembly of the UUA, repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery as a relic of colonialism, feudalism, and religious, cultural, and racial biases having no place in the modern day treatment of indigenous peoples.*" We urge MN congregations to study and act on this call! uua.org/multiculturalism/dod/

Mission, Values, Goals

2011 Appreciative Inquiry lays foundation for 2012 work & successes!

After months of planning, over 65 MUUSJA members and friends participated in three Appreciative Inquiry sessions in late 2011. The sessions were led by the board with Laura Park of Unity Consulting and generously funded by a grant from the settled ministers of the metro area.

We had participants from eleven congregations including Duluth, Willmar, Fargo/Moorhead and eight metro area (Unity, White Bear Lake, UUC Minnetonka, Minnesota Valley UUF, Groveland, Pilgrim House, First Unitarian Society and First Universalist). Thanks to enthusiastic, energized crowds, the Appreciative Inquiry process was a valuable way for the board to get input from our MUUSJA members, with ages ranging from 14 to 85, plus UU activists, community justice workers, UU social justice staff and ministers.

In January, 2012 the board had an all-day retreat with Laura to translate this passionate input into a Nested Bowl® statement of our mission, goals, values and moral owners. A committee from around the state helped refine this

statement of our new mission and the board presented it to the members for approval at our general meeting in April, 2012.

After a break to focus on defeating the constitutional amendments, the board renewed its effort in December, 2012 to flesh out the mission, values and goals into a detailed three-year strategic plan. The work is nearly complete and the final plan will be posted on our website by June. Below are some of the highlights to be shared at the March 2013 Spring General Meeting.

Our vision for 2013-2015 is to support stronger UU congregational connections and community partnerships, by expanding staff capacity to one FTE (from current 0.6-time), through more focus on fundraising, including membership and congregational donations, and volunteer support. Specifically, our goal is to double our membership to 6% (300) of the 4,650 Minnesota UU congregational members—with stronger efforts at member growth and retention.

We'll work to partner more deliberately with the five largest congregations over

300 members accounting for over 2/3rds of Minnesota UUs; watch for our general meetings to be held on a rotating basis at these congregations. In addition, we hope to partner more effectively with the six congregations with 75-299 members and the fifteen smaller congregations throughout the state that are so critical for effective, truly state-wide advocacy work.

Our 10 goals cluster in three overall objectives:

- Intensify internally
- Strengthen spiritually
- Engage externally.

We hope you'll join our expanded opportunities to volunteer to help realize our mission, vision and goals.

Specifically, we have several committees you can join (watch for details in our e-newsletter). We're also looking for people to co-host parties for one or several nearby congregations this summer to create awareness of MUUSJA, promote membership and socialize! Please contact Ralph or Jenny if you're interested. We can help you make it easy and fun.

☞ See back cover for the full list of our MUUSJA organizational goals!

Finance Highlights

Calendar/fiscal year	2011	2012
Income		
Memberships & Gifts	\$12,355	\$10,888
Special Events	2,417	500
Congregations & Organizations	5,620	5,970
Grants	11,700	20,270
In-kind contributions	1,155	6,310
Total Income	\$33,247	\$43,938
Expenses		
Personnel & Prof. (incl. in-kind)	\$23,827	\$33,833
Office/Admin (incl. in-kind)	1,308	1,702
Programs	1,158	5,417
Fundraising	245	287
Travel/GA & PSD Conferences	604	1,718
Total Expenses	\$27,142	\$42,957

Sustainability is key for the fundraising committee. Building a solid financial footing has been a decade-long project, and relies—as always—on generous donors and members. Thank you!

Expense control, congregational generosity, and our very successful Give to the Max Day, plus grant support from the UU Funding Program and the UUA's President's Freedom to Marry Fund allowed us to modestly replenish reserves in 2011, after a couple of years below break-even.

For 2012, we saw significant budgetary growth due to extensive work on the two ballot questions and increased funding for our racial equity work, offsetting a likely temporary decline in individual giving. We expect 2013 to fall in between the past two years in total income & expense.

Thank you to all our 2011 and 2012 donors & supporters for building a solid base for our work! Thanks also to PSD for their fiscal sponsorship.

Thank you!

Our 2011 and 2012 donors sustain our work together!

Our work is strengthened by the financial support of our donors.

Thank you!

If your name should be included in our recognition, please contact Ralph Wyman at 612-998-6624 so that we may correct our records and acknowledge your gift.

Bob Adderhold
Ruth Agar
Kathy Ahlers
Adrienne Alexander
Judith Alexander
Betsy Allis & Bill Elwood
Cathy Apostle
Nancy & Tom Atchison
Roberta & Ken Avidor
Jane Bacon
Cathleen Barczys Simons
Bob Barnes
Bob Benjamin & Cathy Coult
Barb Benner
Jody Beresford
Lisa & Eric Berglund
Hal Bertilson
Besser family
Anne Black-Sinak
Dave Blegstad
Jill Braithwaite
Rev. David Breeden
& Theresa Zingery
Chris Bremer
Estelle Brouwer
Maura Brown
Nancy Browne
Chris Burda
Kathy Burek
Terri Burnor
Rev. Lyn Burton
Colin Campbell
Judie Carlson
Keith Christiansen
Bob & Suzannah Ciernia
Madeline Cioci
Rev. Kelli Clement
Carol Coffey
Laura Cooper

Eric Cooperstein
Glenn & Nan Corliss
Nancy Cramblit
Christy Dachelet
Kay Dawson
Merle DeNuccio
Mary DeYoung
Connie Diercks
Phil Duran
Alison Edgerton
Susan Engberg
George Fairman
Benjamin Ford
Lisa Forslund
Jim Foti
Rita Franchette
Bob Friedman
Barb Gilliland
Judy & Ray Goebel
Todd Graham
Julie Gottesleben
Sarah Greene
Judith Grittner
Jo Haberman
John & JoAnn Haluska
Lois Hamilton
Adele Hansen
Hansone family
Sharon Harris
Nancy Heege
Andrea Heier
Lisa Herschberger
Stewart Hoagland
Paul Hogrefe
Andrea Hokeness
Kathleen Hollinger
& Tina Nelson
Laura Jensen
Rev. Wendy Jerome
Barry Johnson
Carol Johnson
Emily Kampa
Barbara Kaufman
Janet Keysser
Kingstrom family
Carol Koepf
Janice Leafer
Carol LeBourveau
Alice Lesney
Marci & David Leussler

Mary Levin
Betty Lia-Hoaberg
Jennifer & Tim
Livingston
Mary Ann Lundquist
Jim Lynskey
Gene & Anita Martinez
Robin Mavis
Robert Mayer
Ginni McAninch
Betsy & Preston McMillan
LaDonna Meinecke
Gary Melom
Nancy Miller
Jo Montie
Julie Morgan
Cecelia Newton
Dick Niemiec
Jeanne Olson
Fred Olson & Elizabeth
Brackett
Laura Park
Kirk Payne
Mibs Pearson
Bruce Peck
Cathryn Pernu
Duane Peterson
Polly Jo Peterson
D'Ann Prior
Lynn Rabinovitch
Segwald Reckdahl
Rev. Dana Reynolds
Terry Richmond
Rev. Meg Riley
Deb Rodgers
Jon Roeder
Roberta Rott
Roger & Carole Rydberg
Susan Schonfeld & Doug
Hicks

Rev. Justin Schroeder
Patricia Scott
Shelley Shreffler
Madeline Simon
Kay Slama
Dane Smith
Tom Starkey
Caren Stelson
Lisa Stock
Jim Sutherland
Leslie Swenson
Robert Tapp
Jenny & Dave Thomas
Lindsey Thomas
Joy Throm
Greg Toltzman
Bill Turek
Willis Unke
Victor Urbanowicz
Pamela Vincent
Gloria Walters
Nancy Wangler &
Dick Kern
Rev. Suzanne Wasilczuk
Barb Weatherhead
Eve Webster
Bill Wier
Jean Wiley
Karen Wills
Suzann Willhite &
Kristen Siegesmund
Ralph Wyman
Winthrop Wyman

**DID YOU KNOW
giveMN OFFERS A
WEEKLY, MONTHLY,
OR QUARTERLY
SUSTAINER GIVING
OPTION? ASK US!**

Support MUUSJA

Your memberships and contributions build our public moral voice for UU values.

Suggested Membership levels:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25/Student & limited income | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50/Individual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100/Household | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250/Justice Builder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500/Leadership Circle | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000/Patron |

You may mail your check payable to "PSD-MUUSJA" to:

Prairie Star District/MUUSJA
122 W. Franklin Ave., Suite 303
Minneapolis MN 55404

Thank you!!

Join/Donate online at muusja.org

giveMN.org
Click. Contribute. Change Your World.

Wish list!

Items & skills you can contribute to our UU justice movement!

- Technology assistance:
 - ✓ PC maintenance
 - ✓ Webcasting events & meetings
- Technology tools:
 - ✓ PC-based laptop (new or late-model)
 - ✓ Pro-quality web cam & mic
- Office space for MUUSJA to accommodate interns, staff, house volunteer help, & hold small meetings
- Administrative support
 - ✓ Data entry
 - ✓ Fold & stamp mailings
 - ✓ Publication layout (MS Publisher)
- Event photographer

- Committees:
- Nominating committee—for board and committee recruitment
 - Fundraising committee—experience in development preferred
 - Intergenerational committee—to engage youth and young adults



MUUSJA Mission:

Unleashing the courageous leadership and collective power of Minnesota Unitarian Universalists to realize a just and loving world

www.muusja.org

612-998-6624

Our Goals:

Through MUUSJA, Minnesota Unitarian Universalist individuals, working groups, congregations and ministers:

- Connect with each other to extend and enhance our efforts for systemic change.
- Communicate reliably to coordinate our social justice efforts and inform our understanding.
- Build and utilize our talents to broaden our social justice reach and effectiveness.
- Engage in spiritual reflection and theological grounding for social justice work.
- Articulate a public UU moral voice.
- Leverage our UU voice in legislative affairs.
- Create, identify and connect to effective opportunities for public witness.
- Engage with national and regional UU organizations.
- Bring UU leadership and collective power to collaborative partnerships and projects.
- Enjoy and celebrate our journey and accomplishments, support one another and build lasting friendships.

MUUSJA—MN UU Social Justice Alliance
 % Prairie Star District
 122 W. Franklin Ave, Suite 303
 Minneapolis, MN 55403

