

Partner Church News

A publication of the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council

Connecting Unitarian and Universalist congregations around the globe

Volume 21 Number 3

Winter 2014–2015

NEW INITIATIVES REPORT

UUPCC Start-up Weekend Launched

Our team of Rev. Jennifer Emrich, Eileen Higgins, Cathy Cordes and John Dale launched the first Weekend in December with the church in Sarasota, Florida. Sarasota recently partnered with Korond in Transylvania. A variety of events were held for the leaders and members of the church including a Friday night dinner with the Board and Partner Church Committee, a Saturday morning workshop focusing on travel and general questions and answers, a

potluck with the families of the congregation that focused on talking about partnership with the youth, a discussion session on history and culture, and a general potluck lunch on Sunday. The highlight of the weekend was an appearance via Skype technology of their partner ministers, the Revs. Levente Lázár and Erika Demeter and their family, during the worship service. It was wonderful to have them there “live” on the big screen at the beginning of the service.

Our assessment after the event was that it really gave a boost to the whole congregation—making partnership and its value better understood by all. And Sarasota’s minister Rev. Roger Fritts gave it a “10 out of 10.”

We are planning our second weekend event in Savannah, Georgia in April—recently partnered with Pestszentlőrinc, just outside of Budapest. Once this is complete the team will be “trained” and available to schedule more of these weekend events.

If your church has recently been

(Continued on page 2)



What the Skype session at UUCS with their partner ministers in Korond might have looked like.

The idea of a Skype session with the ministers and their family, during their new partners’ Sunday worship service has absolutely captured your editor’s imagination! Rev. Fritts, minister of the UU Church of Sarasota wrote that no photos were taken during that service—but sent one taken more recently. *PCNews* files had a photo of the Korond ministers and family from 2010, when they were in the Balázs Scholar program; photo-editing software helped produce this picture.

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The Mission of the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council is to foster and support partner church relationships between North American congregations and congregations in all other countries where partnering is sought and welcomed. This includes countries where partners are already active.

"Start-Up Weekend" Launched

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partnered and would like to consider a weekend start-up please write to the Council office at office@uupcc.org. If you would like to see the support documents we have developed for churches, they are available on our website for download at www.uupcc.org/partnerships/resources-partners. ••



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If you have a Facebook account, simply search on "Partner Church Council" to find us (and *Like* us!)

**Next
PCNews Deadline:
April 3, 2015**

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PARTNER CHURCH NEWS is the newsletter of the UU Partner Church Council, an independent affiliate organization of the Unitarian Universalist Association, started in 1993.

This newsletter supports the mission and goals of the Partner Church Council.

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Articles for the next newsletter may be mailed to the editor at PO Box 88, Bedford, MA 01730; or emailed to nancydaugh@aol.com.

The UU Partner Church Council is a 501(c)(3) charitable tax-exempt organization.

For information about membership, contact Cathy Cordes in the UUPCC office, PO Box 88, Bedford, MA 01730.

For any other information, contact the UUPCC office at 781-275-1710, or office@uupcc.org, or PO Box 88, Bedford, MA 01730
Visit the web site at: www.uupcc.org



Rev. Jennifer Emrich makes Christmas crafts with Sarasota children, during the Start-Up weekend at the Unitarian church in December.

Keep up to date on the latest partner church news without leaving home!

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE CALLS

Thursday, February 26 8:00 PM Eastern

Youth Pilgrimage Report

Planning a youth pilgrimage or mission trip to your Partner congregation? Want to speak to and hear from like minds in UU Youth Ministry? Then join us for a call with Jennifer Emrich, minister at the First Universalist Church of Yarmouth, Maine to exchange ideas about the ins and outs of traveling with teens, and how to get the most from your international experience. (*Postponed from October.*)

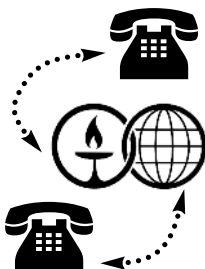
Thursday, March 19 8:00 PM Eastern

International Update

A call with Cathy Cordes and Eric Cherry from the UUA's International Office—plus one or two Ambassadors (to be announced). Look for details on PCC-Chat and on our Facebook page.

Recordings of most previous conference calls are available. We routinely record our Virtual Conferences and post them on the website about one week after the call. You can go to the UUPCC conference call page ("MEDIA" tab, then "Virtual Conference Calls")—www.uupcc.org/media/virtual-conferences—and listen to them on your computer.

Topic suggestions from UUPCC members are always welcome!



TO REGISTER FOR A CALL, send an email to office@uupcc.org or call the office 9–5 Eastern Time weekdays at 781-275-1710.

Include * your name * city/state * the topic/date of the call you will attend. You will be sent an email with the call-in information 2–3 days before the call (*please let the office know if you don't have access to email*).

Feel free to submit questions to the speakers ahead of time by email: office@uupcc.org.

Letter from the Board Chair

Dear Friends of the UUPCC,

This is a letter of thanks, thanks for your generous response to our request for help. As Chair of the UUPCC Board, volunteers all, I am grateful for your tangible response to this Board's creativity and energy. We had new ideas this fall in the areas of partnership start-up, communications between our young people, community capacity building, and financial aid for travelers. We laid them out for you. And your response has told us that you like them and want to see them come true. We have been so overwhelmed by your response. It will give us fresh energy as we head to our winter meetings in Bellevue, Washington, late in January. This is how non-profits should work: a dynamic energy between the membership and its elected Board. We need each other to further the work of Partnership. *Thank you!*

Gary E. Smith

NEW INITIATIVES REPORT: Youth Engagement Program

Rev. Sara Ascher, minister of the UU Wellesley, MA Church, is chairing the Youth Engagement Task Force. The group includes Rev. Kelly Crocker, Madison, WI, Rev. Jennifer Emrich, Yarmouth, ME, Melody Moberg, University UU Seattle, WA, and Cathy Cordes, UUPCC Executive Director. We are all excited about the possibilities of connecting youth via Virtual Youth Groups; that is, the groups will "meet" with the help of the technology of online meeting tools. These sessions will be facilitated and have a structured format and topic for each session. Pilot tests will be run between various U.S.-based congregations over the next few months to test the model and work out technical issues.

We are enthusiastic about working with Julia Fülöp, President of the youth association OFDIE, and with Rev. Norbert Rácz, the minister of Kolozsvár I church to pilot test the format with youth from the Kolozsvár church. Julia and Norbert are helping to develop the format, topics, and

design, as well as the training for facilitators. We hope to have the first test groups in the Spring.

Once the design has been tested and refined, UUPCC will make this available to all partner churches to use. We know that the most difficult part will be to solve the technology problems in the more rural areas of Transylvania, India, and the Philippines. Our fundraising efforts are focused on providing some of the financial resources that will be needed for these solutions. In some places, the language barrier is also going to be a huge hurdle to overcome. That too will require careful consideration. We will keep you informed about our progress as plans and pilots proceed.

One of the longer-range goals of this group is to provide additional opportunities on a regular basis for face-to-face connections as well. While the task force has many ideas and several models that have already been tested, it will take longer to develop these. We hope to be able to add much more in future updates. ●●

NEW INITIATIVES REPORT: Travel Grants Program

The UUPCC has had a travel grant program for a good while—providing much appreciated extra support for partnership travel. We would like to ramp this up to make more funds available to more people. We are making a purposeful effort to ask for more donations to increase the pool of money available.

Where have the funds come from up to now?

Mostly they come from returning UUPCC travelers. We ask for contributions upon their return so that more people can have the experiences they have had.

How does it work now?

We ask for essay applications to establish need and desire, and then award up to \$500 per trip to approximately five applicants, twice a year. We support travel from here to there as well as travel from there to here. One does not have to take a UUPCC-organized trip to apply.

How are we hoping it could work even better?

We would like to increase the number of grants and grant amounts to provide ready resources to all who wish to travel. We have two areas of emphasis. One is to support congregations that are bringing multiple people from

***Travel is key.
Face-to-Face
is the best way to
do Partnership.***

**Help us to ramp up our UUPCC
Travel Grant Program to bring
more people together.**

overseas to visit us in North America and expose partnership to a large group here. Two is to expand the opportunity for more of us here—not just those who can easily afford it—to travel there and broaden our worlds.

(Continued on page 4)

NEW INITIATIVES: Travel Grants Program *(Continued from page 3)*

We are hoping to increase the pool of travel grant funds by \$20,000. *Do you think that travel is key? Can you help us to make that happen?*

You can find our travel grant application along with a description of the program and evaluation criteria at: www.uupcc.org/pilgrimages/travel-grants.

We also urge congregational groups to discuss how to “spread the wealth” to allow those in your congregation who cannot afford a trip the opportunity to take one. Opening up travel can have a great impact on ongoing connections with partnership overseas. Here are some ideas we urge you to consider setting up:

- Establishing a “travel pool” fund
- Setting up a subsidization system

- Running a funded “essay application process”
- Securing a budgeted allotment
- Running fundraisers

These can help reduce the costs for everyone—or for those who need it most.

Face-to-face connections are a vital part of strong partnerships. Visiting our partners in their homes, sharing worship in their churches and getting to know one another should not be something that only a few can do. We hope that you will all discuss this and share your strategies for addressing this need through this newsletter and on PCC-Chat. We want to hear from you. ●●

NOTE: The Travel Grants application deadline is March 15. (See page 17 for details.)



International Women's Coalition
Executive Director Zsófia Sztranyiczki (left) and former IWC vice-president Dr. Creamlimon Nongbri (right) attended the annual meeting of Seng Kynthei—the Women's Wing of the Unitarian Union of North East India. See the story on page 10.

BUILD

BY LEE BOEKE BURKE, BUILD COMMITTEE MEMBER

For many years, the UU Church of the Philippines has had a dream of creating a dormitory in Dumaguete that would provide safe and affordable housing for young women attending universities in the city. This project was also envisioned as a way to provide employment to UUs in Dumaguete who work on the project as well as becoming a source of income to support the health and growth of Unitarian Universalism in the Philippines.

Although fundraising had been ongoing for almost eight years, the amount needed to bring the original dream of a 180-bed dormitory into reality was still far off, and the BUILD Committee determined last year that we needed to consider a less ambitious project that could be realized soon... a “Plan B.” It was strongly felt that this redesigned project must fully embrace the vision of the original BUILD and honor the spirit and the generosity of donors over the years.

This November, the UUCP came up with a new plan for a dormitory to be built on the UUCP grounds which would house 40 young women in nine

air-conditioned rooms, most of which would have attached bathrooms. The building complex would also include four 2-room guest rooms complete with kitchens, and a third floor all-purpose room. The cost of this new project is equal to the amount of the funds which have been raised to this date. At the end of December, the BUILD Committee voted to approve this new plan and now construction is underway.

Plans are for the construction to be finished in April, and for Rev. Fred Muir to dedicate the building on April 24th, during the Annual Meeting.

The UU Church of the Philippines and the BUILD Committee express deeply felt gratitude to all who have contributed to help this dream come true... and there are many of you who have helped in myriad ways!!! Although the scope of the project has been altered, the vision remains unchanged. Please plan to come to Dumaguete and visit. There will be guest rooms! ●●

LATEST UPDATE FROM REBECCA SEINES ON THE BUILD PROJECT:

Rebecca writes that a standard ceremonial ritual for new building was held on Thursday January 15, including placing bronze coins in each foundation. The workers are ready to pour the foundations. The building is on schedule to be completed by April. Thanks to all who contributed to the success of this project. Women students in Dumaguete will have a safe place to live, and the UU Church of the Philippines will have a reliable income to support the church.



A Question-and-Answer session with Travel Coordinator John Dale at the first "Start-Up" weekend, at the UU Church of Sarasota, Florida.



BUILD



Construction progresses on the BUILD project in Dumaguete.

Report from the Executive Director

BY CATHY CORDES

What a productive fall/winter we are having. We held our first New Partnership weekend and, along the way developed a whole notebook full of resources for partnership. The notebook is now available online on our website www.uupcc.org/partnerships/resources-partners. You can download the whole document or just read through the parts in which you are interested.

There are sermons for inspiration, practical ideas for committees, and resource lists. My favorites are the stories of partnership and the quotes we have compiled. Here is a sample:

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

—Helen Keller

"Perhaps travel cannot prevent bigotry, but by demonstrating that all peoples cry, laugh, eat, worry and die, it can introduce the idea that if we try and understand each other, we may even become friends."

—Maya Angelou

We are making good progress on developing new ways to bring youth together around the world. Rev. Sara Ascher of Wellseley Hills, MA, is chairing a dynamic team. See the report on page 3 in this newsletter.

UUPCC has a new office administrator—Nancy Hickey. She has jumped right in and is eager to get to know you.

We want to provide you with the resources and support that you need to do the hard work of partnership. And I know that we could not do what we do without your support. Thank you—all of you who contributed to the annual appeal this year. Special thanks go to deForest Ralph and Larry Coburn who generously offered to match contributions. We are grateful and humbled by the response from all of you.

Together, the work we all do for partnership makes a difference in our world and is a blessing for us all. ●●

WELCOME TO NANCY HICKEY

UUPCC is happy to welcome Nancy Hickey as our new half-time programs and office administrator. She started at the beginning of January and is already becoming a valued member of the team.



Nancy has a diverse background in the fields of non-profit administration, finance and development and library science. Prior to working at the UUPCC, she worked as Office Manager at Beacon Hill Village, a membership-driven organization devoted to providing programs and services for people over the age of 50. She has also worked extensively at several Boston-area non-profit organizations in the fields of office management, fundraising, and accounting.

She received a MSLIS from Simmons College in 2009 and served as Reference Librarian at the Watertown Free Public Library where she enjoyed working with people of all ages. She currently lives in Lincoln and is very enthusiastic to join the staff at UUPCC.

You will have the opportunity to meet her in person at General Assembly in June or by phone or email if you contact the office. Please join us in welcoming her!

2014 Annual Appeal Donors

Commemorative Gifts

Cathy Cordes, in honor of Margot Fleischman
UU Congregation of Northern Chautauqua,
in honor of Rev. Theresa A. Kime
Kenneth Herman, in honor of Rev. Sandor Mathé
Henry deForest Ralph, in honor of Martha Ralph, and 20 years of
service to UUPCC
Deborah Raible, in memory of Kolcsár Csilla & Madga's mother
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Thank you to all of you who so generously responded to our Annual Appeal. Your continued support helps UUPCC to strengthen and grow international partnerships and sustain our global vision. This list of Donors covers donations as of January 21, 2015.



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Sustaining Stewards of Partnership from East Shore

BY JULIE GERRARD

As one of the earliest post-1989 partnerships, East Shore Unitarian Church in Bellevue, Washington is the home of several winners of the Steward of Partnership award (established in 2010.) Winners from East Shore and its U.S. partner, Westside Unitarian Universalist Congregation, received the awards for their work on behalf of partnerships in both Transylvania and the Khasi Hills.

East Shore's most recent award winner, **Bill Lauman** (2014), first became involved with Partner Church ministry as a pilgrim to East Shore's Transylvanian partner church in Torockószentgyörgy (TSG) in 2003.

In 2005 Leon Hopper, Minister Emeritus at East Shore, returned from a trip to the Khasi Hills and spoke to East Shore about the Unitarians in North East India. Bill became chair of a committee formed to assess possibilities for East Shore to enter into a Khasi Hills partnership. Thanks to his guidance and encouragement, committee members contacted other churches with multiple partnerships, and six

members of the group went on an exploratory trip to India in 2006. On their return, Bill and the committee presented their findings to the East Shore congregation, which voted to establish partnerships with churches in Smit and Kharang.

Fran and Roger Corn (awardees, 2011) first visited a partner church in 2001, when they traveled to Transylvania. They made a subsequent trip in 2003, when Roger and others used donated laptops sent from the U.S. to set up a computer room in Torockószentgyörgy. After returning in 2005, he helped bring the group's village directory project to completion.

Fran and Roger later became members of the Khasi Hills partnership group; they are veterans of at least three pilgrimages to Smit and Kharang. On one of their visits, Roger presented the sermon at the church in Smit.

Their activities on behalf of partnership include the colorful posters and informational materials Fran creates for Partner Church events, and Roger's efforts to establish and maintain reliable Internet and phone contact

with the partner minister in the Khasi Hills. Last summer Roger helped organize our Khasi minister Darihun Khriam's first visit to East Shore, following her UUA International Relations-sponsored participation at the 2014 GA and Global Leadership training at Meadville-Lombard in Chicago.

Barbara Shelton and Gerry Schott (award winners, 2012) both joined the Partner Church group at East Shore in the early 1990s, soon after East Shore and Torockószentgyörgy established a relationship. Gerry, who already spoke several European languages, learned Hungarian well enough to preach a sermon in the Torockószentgyörgy church, an event that is still remembered in the village. He made trips to Transylvania in 1997, 1999 and 2001, and was a dedicated member of the Partner Church ministry for many years.

Barbara made her first trip to TSG in 1999, and was the leader or co-leader of pilgrimage groups in 2001, 2003 and 2005. She led the Partner Church ministry at East Shore for a number of years, and often hosted visiting Balázs Scholars and their families as well as other visitors from

(Continued on page 8)

Stewards from East Shore

(Continued from page 7)

Transylvania. She remains a dedicated supporter of the Partner Church ministry, and looks forward to visiting the Khasi Hills partner churches.

Ginger Brewer (2010) was a

member of East Shore Unitarian Church for many years before moving to the Westside Unitarian Universalist Congregation. At East Shore she was a long-time member of the Partner Church ministry, and she continued her commitment by encouraging the West-

side congregation to become a partner with East Shore in its Transylvanian partnership. She led pilgrimages to Torockószentgyörgy in 2008 and 2014, and has hosted many Partner Church gatherings (and visitors) in her West Seattle home. ••

Celebrating Sustaining Stewards of Partnership Awards—Your Help is Needed

Nominations are due **February 28, 2015** for the Annual UUPCC Sustaining Steward Awards. Someone in your congregation probably deserves to be recognized nationally for the loving care they have provided to keep your partnership thriving. We want to help you celebrate all they do—but we cannot do that unless you nominate them.

So who are good candidates? They are the ones who keep communication going, organize worship services, keep their congregations engaged, make friends, share stories—and their lives—with their partners in other countries. They cook and serve and clean up at countless events. They visit their partners and help their partners come here. Many have organized major programs

that have forever affected their lives and the lives of their partners.

Please let us know who they are. At this upcoming General Assembly we will again recognize a minimum of five recipients. We will accept nominations for more than one person per congregation. All nominations of individuals from U.S. and Canadian churches will be considered by a selection committee chaired by the Rev. Kelly Crocker. If your nominee is not recognized this year, you can nominate them again next year.

Please fill out the application form below and have it signed by the chair of the church governing board or church minister. We want to make sure that the church knows about this nomination and can also make recognition of the special contributions this individual has made.

Mail the completed form to UUPCC, PO Box 88, Bedford, MA 01730-0088. The form is also available at www.uupcc.org/awards where you can click through to find the form itself, and to see the list of previous award winners. The form must be postmarked by February 28 to be considered for 2015. ••

NOMINATION FORM FOR SUSTAINING STEWARDS AWARD

UUPCC would like to honor the hard-working volunteers in your congregation who have given dedicated service to your partnership over the years. We know there are many of these folks out there who deserve to be recognized. We will recognize at least five such people this year at the UUPCC Annual Meeting. Their names will be listed in the Annual Report to UUPCC Members and in the newsletter. They do not have to be present at General Assembly to be recognized.

•• ENTRY DEADLINE: February 28, 2015 ••

Date: _____

Name of Nominee: _____

Address: _____

City / ST/ Province / ZIP (Post code) _____

US/Canadian Church name: _____

Partner Church City and Country: _____

Please provide a narrative of the service provided by the nominee (use additional pages if necessary):

Signature of minister or governing board chair: _____

Please return this nomination form to

UUPCC Stewards Award, PO Box 88, Bedford, MA 01730-0088.

If your nominee is not selected this year, you can nominate them again next year.

This form is also available at www.uupcc.org/awards/steward.



Patricia Leiby, Sustaining Steward 2014, received her award at First Parish in Bedford, Mass., at a service in September.

Hungarian Unitarian Church Elections

KOLOZSVÁR, DECEMBER 8, 2014

The highest legislative body of the Hungarian Unitarian Church, the Synod held its triennial meeting in Székelyduvarhely on December 6, 2014. The agenda focused on the ordination of new ministers, the election of the bishop and the officers of the Supreme Disciplinary Court. There were two candidates to the highest ministerial office in the Church: Bálint Benczédi Ferenc and

Tódor Csaba, who presented their biographies and church governance programs to the 250 delegates. At the end, the Synod voted confidence to the previous bishop, Bálint Benczédi Ferenc, for another term of six years.

On December 5, the General Assembly of the denomination held an extraordinary session. The highest decisional and supervisory body elected the other high officers of the Church for the 2014–2020 term: lay presidents Farkas Emőd and Boros János, deputy bishop Gyerő Dávid and public affairs director Kovács István.

The Synod also ordained 12 young ministers to the service of our congregations: Varró-Bodoczi Barna (Szentgerice), Vagyas Attila (Kolozsvár), Bodor Lidia Emese (Kolozsvár), Csécs Márton Lőrinc (Torockó), Fülöp Júlia (Kolozsvár), Márkos Hunor Elemér (Medgyes), Tófalvi Tamás (Székelyszentmihály), Vass Károly (Aranyosrákos), Lőrinczi Levente (Kissolymos), Major László (Datk), Nagy-Mátéfi Tímea (Énlaka), Molnár Imola (Nagyvárad).

PRESS OFFICE OF THE H.U.C. HEADQUARTERS
KOLOZSVÁR, TRANSYLVANIA, ROMANIA

Balázs Scholar's Report

BY CZIRE SZABOLCS—EXCERPTED

Traveling around and meeting several [American] congregations, I came to understand that UU congregations are aware of their own inner diversity, and they celebrate it. But when it comes to “Transylvania,” it is assumed that they all are the same, and represent only one tradition: the Christian one (the least popular one among UUs). Thus the Transylvanian visitor basically works only with the few people who belong to the “Partnership Committee,” and has limited access to the varied spiritualities in the congregation. I wonder what would have happened if someone from Transylvania said that he or she is, for example, a “pagan,” or “humanist”? It remains a challenge of these preaching assignments to let the Balázs Scholars have a deeper understanding about UU congregational reality. Along this line I was surprised many times by the confusion around basic vocabulary: the usage of “church,” “congregation,” “institution,” “movement,” and so on; the advice to not talk about the “God-

language.” I was further surprised to see how this most idea-welcoming and tolerant “movement” can be really intolerant with “Christianity.” When I lectured about the social radicalism of the Historical Jesus, I had the sense that the social justice potential of the Bible—and especially of the human Jesus—is not something this “movement” already left behind, but something that has not yet been discovered.

I hope that we will be able to really move forward from a patronizing partnership toward a real reciprocal relationship. We’ve heard for too long that we Transylvanians are the *roots*, and UUs are the *wings*; also that we are the past and you’re the present. This overromanticized imagery has turned many partner church visits and contacts into something that could be described as visiting the grandparents: they are cute, we proceed from them in a mysterious way, but they have little or nothing to



Rev. Dr. Szabolcs (Szabi) Czire.

do with our present life.

Please don’t get me wrong: history is important, looking back to our own religious past might help us discover a map for the future. But our Transylvanian religious past is just as much in the past for us, as it is for American UUs. Let me remind you that in the part of the world where we live, we live in a 21st century society, along with all the challenges and beauties of it. Our seminary is an accredited institution, part of the Bologna System, the core faculty are approved by the Government of Romania and so on. I am deeply convinced that each of us has much to offer to the greater common good. Our institutions are relatively small, we cannot afford the luxury of neglecting each other. We should go further on the road that started 20 years ago with this Scholarship, sharing resources, knowledge, and space. It is time for us to build together online courses, to find new ways to share faculty and students. The commitment of the Starr King faculty makes me most hopeful. ●●

Read the entire text of Szabi's Report, “Just As I Am” on our website—at www.uupcc.org/media/news/winter14articles

Puriang Women Take the Lead in Creating Income-Generating Projects

BY ZSÓFIA SZTRANYICZKI

In February 2014, Seng Kynthei, the Women's League of the Unitarian Union of North East India, organized a Community Capacity Building workshop in Puriang. It identified the need for trainings to empower women as well as the local women's organization. The trainings were also envisioned to address the issue of unemployment in Puriang—a predominantly agricultural village of about 1,400 people. Action plans were drawn up for the training center, and for strengthening the women's society. Subsequent preparatory meetings were held to involve existing active groups in the village: self help groups, church groups, and youth groups.

On December 18, 2014, IWC Executive Director Zsófia Sztranyiczki took part in a meeting following up on the Community Capacity Building effort, which took place in the Secondary School of the Unitarian School. The meeting was skillfully presided over by Seng Kynthei president Battinora Rani and Seng Kynthei secretary and former IWC vice-president Dr. Creamlimon Nongbri—they took over in the absence of Global Sisters co-ordinator Elgiva Shullai, who had organized the event but was called away by a family health crisis. After the formal addresses of the local leadership and the Seng Kynthei (Bantei Mukhim, the village headman or *sor-dar*; Mishein Marboh, the chairman of the Unitarian Church; Battinora Rani; Juhhi Sohtun, president of the local Seng Kynthei; and Dr. Creamlimon Nongbri), the gathered villagers took turns reporting on the accomplishments and progress made since the February assessment.

Having established the training center, Puriang women applied for a small grant from the government of Meghalaya, which enabled them to purchase two sewing machines and hire a trainer to come every month to teach the young adults in making clothing.

Juhhi Sohtun proudly showed us the results of the sewing and tailoring program: various blouses, children's dresses, and a skirt for young girls. The success of the program is encouraging, and the desire was expressed by all to extend the training. However, as the women currently have only two sewing machines at their disposal, the number of women receiving the training is lower than it could be.

The women also started a food processing project that utilizes produce readily available in the village: pineapples and oranges. We took the opportunity of tasting pineapple juice, which was delicious! I was even given presents from the women—a traditional Khasi bag and a jar of pineapple jam. As I couldn't take the jam back to the United States with me, I had to "compromise" and eat it for breakfast in the following days.

The projects are enabling women to sew clothes and make jams and juices—for themselves and their families. Their hope is to get additional training to learn how to market, pack-

age, and sell the goods they produce. Specialized food processing training will make their products more marketable and help them gain control of their livelihoods, which will eventually increase their household income and improve the living conditions of their families.

Mr. Mukhim, the village headman—who was not aware of the projects the women had undertaken—was very impressed by their accomplishments. He thanked the women and extended his help to popularize and ease access to further training. He finished his speech, paraphrasing from Dr. Nongbri's translation, *"let our women be role models to other communities... let us show our actions! Let us show to the world that we are doing something that will ultimately benefit the entire the village... this is just the beginning!"*

Indeed, this is just the beginning. The availability of a sewing machine and the training to use it, and the exploitation of the readily available crops—combined with sales and marketing training—can have a profound effect on a Khasi woman's life. But, in the long run, it's not just her life that is changed—it's also the lives of her children and the entire community. ●●

Over the past year, IWC and UUPCC have joined together to provide training and support to Seng Kynthei in organizing women in four villages of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. They used the Community Capacity Building tools and process to develop a list of needs and to create action plans. This report is by Zsófia Sztranyiczki, the Executive Director of the International Women's Convocation (IWC). Zsófia was there to visit Puriang as a follow-up to the CCB workshop.

In addition to her visit to Puriang, she also attended the annual meeting of Seng Kynthei—the Women's Wing of the Unitarian Union of North East India—in Shillong, India. Over 5,000 women gathered from Unitarian villages of the Khasi



and Jaintia Hills for the day-long meeting hosted by the Nongthymai Congregation. This photo from the event shows women displaying their homemade wares. You can see more on the IWC Facebook page: International Convocation of Unitarian Universalist Women.

SUMMIT, NJ/BARÓT

Barót now has an active youth group with youngish adult advisors. For the first time, they took their own trip to Déva for the Francis Dávid celebration, stayed overnight and then went on to Sibiu where they spent a day in the newly restored medieval area.

Andrea Bardocz, a journalist and member of the church and Youth Group, wrote the following report of their trip (for a local newspaper and it also appeared in a Unitarian publication in Transylvania).

—Jean Crichton

Pilgrimage to Déva

This year, on the second weekend of November, a group of thirty Unitarians from Barót went to Déva, to remember the founder of our religion.

On Saturday we arrived at Déva around 1 pm. We admired the castle of Déva, which towers among the clouds, and we began our way up the stairs with great excitement. That excitement disappeared after we got to the top of the stairs, because the remainder of the road was a muddy trail. At the end of this path, we were surprised by some more stairs, this time made of wood, rising high near the walls of the castle. This was not really enjoyable for those who are afraid of heights. But the view at the top of the steps compensated us for every fatigue and fear.

We didn't see many people on our way up, but when we arrived in the castle more than a thousand Unitarians began to sing a Unitarian hymn. We had arrived just in time for the beginning of the event. I was happy to see so many Unitarian youth, adults and elder people answering the call of Francis Dávid. We discovered a lot of familiar faces in the crowd, members of different youth groups and ministers. I felt like I arrived home, even though I was hundreds of miles away from my house. It was the best feeling to be Unitarian.

After singing together, four young ministers preached, Levente Lőrincz, László Major, Imola Molnár and

Tímea Nagy-Mátéfi. We were praying loud, unlike our usual custom. This connected us in a way that cannot be broken. The bishop of the Hungarian Unitarian Church and other invitees greeted the pilgrims. After the speeches, the students of the Protestant Faculty of the Unitarian Theology Institute made their presentation. Candles and torches were lighted, and garlands, flowers and candles were placed in the former prison cell of Francis Dávid. At the end of the pilgrimage, we were invited to drink hot tea in the chapel of the Unitarian congregation of Déva.

That night, our group slept in the dorms of a middle school at Déva. The next morning, we went to the city of Sibiu. There we visited the renovated main square, the Liars Bridge and the Lutheran Cathedral. The most adventurous of us climbed to the top of the Council Tower, where the view was spectacular. We got home on Sunday night, all of us tired, but many precious experiences.

—BARDO CZ ANDREA

Memories of Barót

BY HAZEL BESS

In late July, a crew of my fellow Unitarian Church in Summit (UCS) youth group and I, along with a handful of parents and advisors, traveled

thousands of miles to connect with our Transylvanian counterparts. The UCS has been partnered with the Unitarian Church of Barót, Romania, for 22 years. Our youth group has been in constant contact with the Transylvanian youth since the church's most recent trip to Barót two years ago. Between Sunday Skype calls and the Transylvanians' trip to Summit last summer, the youth had all grown very close and increasingly excited for the next visit.

This summer not only justified that excitement, but increased it. After nearly twenty-four hours of travel, we arrived safely in Barót: exhausted, disoriented, and awed by the expanse of rolling green hills dotted with sheep, cows, and horses.

From then on, the two weeks in Romania were a whirlwind of activity. As the gang breezed from one adventure to another, there was never once a lull in the chatter (a graceful hybrid of Hungarian and English), the song, or the laughter.

The first Sunday, we followed the sound of church bells to the Unitarian Church of Barót. A Unitarian service in Romania is, on the surface, the furthest thing I can imagine from a UU service in Summit. I found myself startled by the slow pace of the music and the dark clothes worn by nearly

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Summit UCS and Barót youth visit the citadel in Déva together during last summer's visit.



Pilgrims from Summit and from Barót visit the beautiful city of Brassó

everyone in the sanctuary. I began to question my choice of a light sundress.

Yet it was only a few minutes into the service that my nerves began to calm—I would recognize *Spirit of Life* anywhere, even in Hungarian. We sang it once through in Hungarian, then in English, the translations printed out for each group. Never has Hymn 123 sounded more beautiful than in the dim light of the church in Barót, the friendship of our partner churches made audible in a gesture of union.

The memories of the trip continue to amaze me. Every minute that passed, even the tearful morning we spent saying our goodbyes, seemed so much brighter in the presence of our warm-hearted friends, old and young, American and Transylvanian. ••

Hazel Bess is Speaker of the House (vice president) of the Youth Group at UCS, and a graduate of UU Goldmine Leadership School.

LEWES, DE/TORDATÚR

UUSD Pilgrimage to Transylvania

BY TOM TOTH

The UUSD Congregation (Unitarian Universalists of Southern Delaware) of Lewes, Delaware went on its first Pilgrimage to Transylvania, to visit our Partner Church in Tordatúr, Romania last May. After our Partnership was first established, UUSD

invited Rev. Piroska Bodor and her husband Márton to visit us for five weeks during the summer of 2012. When leaving to return to Romania, Rev. Bodor and Márton asked that members of UUSD visit them in the near future. We graciously accepted.

There were eight people in our group led by our minister Rev. Michael Smith and his wife Peggy. Our trip began in Budapest, Hungary. Our next stop was another very attractive city, Szeged, located in the South of Hungary as we were heading in the direction of Déva in Romania, where our Unitarian Pilgrimage really began.

Upon arrival in Déva we were taken up to the Citadel where Rev. Zoltán Koppándi gave us a tour and showed us the area in which Dávid Ferenc was imprisoned for his Unitarian beliefs. It was here that we held a very moving ceremony led by Rev. Koppándi.

We spent four days visiting other Unitarian Churches, the town of Bier-tan, a World Heritage town, the German-Saxon fortress towns of Sibiu and Segesvár, and the historic town of Marosvásárhely.

May 16th was our arrival day in Tordatúr! We were greeted at the Parsonage with a welcome banner, a beaming Rev. Bodor and her husband Márton. The welcome banner is now part of our sanctuary. We were then introduced to our host families and took a walking tour of Tordatúr. We stayed in the village for four days and were treated royally by our host families. Among the highlights of our stay was a memorable picnic for the entire congregation at which the women cooked a large pot of *gulyás* and baked a donut-like dessert on an open fire prepared by the men; someone else baked us a large loaf of bread over an open fire. We talked, ate, enjoyed each other's company, developed friendships, and drank plum and cherry *pálinka*. That same day we were taken to the village center where we were treated to Hungarian and Romanian folk dancing by children and young adults. Márton teaches

Hungarian folk dancing to this group.

On Sunday, we participated in a service with the Tordatúr congregation with both Rev. Bodor and Rev. Smith officiating. Rev. Smith did the sermon in English, and Rev. Bodor translated it into Hungarian. One of the highlights of the service was a rendition of *Country Roads*, sung by a group of young ladies, accompanied by a guitar. After the service we were greeted by the congregation with *Isten Hozott*, God is Welcome.

During our stay, several members of the Tordatúr congregation took time off from work, driving us to many interesting sights in the area—the Torda and Tordatúr Gorges; Torockó, a quaint mountain village; the “Alabaster Church” with Rev. Robert Bálint; a visit to Márton's bee hives; and a visit to the Salt Mine Museum, used for the treatment of asthmatic children. We also visited the city of Cluj-Napoca/Kolozsvár.

Before our stay in Tordatúr was over, we were presented with ten beautifully embroidered linens, handmade by the women of the congregation. They were a gift to us, meant to sell to UUSD members—with the proceeds to be given to our Capital Campaign Building Fund.

Saying good bye to our friends was not easy! There were plenty of tears leaving the people we had grown to love, so grateful for their kindness, generosity, and hospitality. ••

Next summer Tom and Ceil Toth will be returning to Tordatúr to rekindle friendships, meet more friends, and plan with Tordatúr for the future. They are excited already and can't wait!

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When we visit our partners we see life as the people live it, not as tourists. We come face-to-face with the realities of ... their lives. And yet invariably, the people we meet share their lives, their stories, their food, and their joy in living.

ANN ARBOR, MI/KÉZDIVÁSÁRHELY,

Three Stories; Three Perspectives

In June 2014 a small group traveled to visit our Partner Church families in Kézdivásárhely, Romania. Individual travelers provided personal recollections of the trip.

BY NANCY SCHEWE

While I loved seeing all the sights—beautiful Budapest, the frescoed Unitarian Church in Székelyderzs, the site where the Edict of Torda was signed, and Francis David's handwriting in the Unitarian archives—what was most thrilling to me was meeting real people who shared my religion.

It was the taking of communion with Unitarians in Budapest and the afternoon our partner church hosts in Kézdivásárhely sang for us in their church and we sang back; (*Kumbaya* was the best we could do on short notice). It was the day we traveled by bus through fenceless countryside, drank healing spring water (some of us), and ate ice cream cones together. Most especially, I was moved by the Sunday service in Szentivánlaborfalva when nearly the entire village attended the Unitarian Church so that they could sing in men's and women's choirs. István Buzogány-Csoma preached, Csilla translated for us, and Phyllis, from Ann Arbor, read a passage from the Bible. We shared the service; we



Rev. István Buzogány-Csoma (on the right) with his guitar and some local musicians, leading a rollicking song. This was during his visit to Ann Arbor, Michigan.

shared our religion. I felt so honored to be there that morning. It is a service I will never forget.

The men and women of our partner church opened their hearts, their homes, and their religious practice to us. It was then that I realized that we Unitarians are not alone stranded here in the U.S. We are part of a bigger human movement.

BY STEVE SCHEWE

For years, we Ann Arbor UUs have been aware of our partner church in Transylvania as various pilgrims have described their visits. Sadly, whenever I heard "Transylvania," my mind would conjure up Count Dracula. I'm not proud of that fact. All that changed when István Buzogány-Csoma stayed at our house when he visited Ann Arbor. He totally won me over with his love of ministering, especially by using music as a way to allow his congregants to enjoy their worship service.

My wife and I traveled to visit István in June 2014, along with a small group of UUAAs. We had a marvelous time. A high point for me was to see István and his wife Csilla co-minister in their village church. Music was a

major part of the service.

I am so glad that we visited our Transylvanian partner church. We now know them in a very personal way, and the Count Dracula image is completely replaced by images of warm-hearted Unitarians who opened their homes to us UUAA pilgrims.

BY CATHY MUHA

Six years ago, my husband Mike and I joined others from UUAA on a pilgrimage to visit the birthplace of Unitarianism and our Partner Church. We stayed with the Miklós family in Kézdivásárhely: father Zsolt, mother Emilia, daughter Ágnes, and son Áron. They were warm and welcoming, and we had a fabulous stay with them. They spoke English well enough that we could have philosophical and religious discussions—something Zsolt loves to do!

We went for our second trip this past June, and it was one of the most wonderful vacations we've ever taken. We learned a lot about the history of Unitarianism, saw beautiful vistas, and met many wonderful people. The part that will stay with me most is connecting with the same host family. Though Áron was away at school, Zsolt, Emilia, and Agnes were excited to see us again and welcome us to their modest Communist-era apartment. Once again we sat around their kitchen table discussing many things.

We went with the family to a Transylvanian youth dance festival. After the band packed up, a small impromptu band played and the people in the audience began dancing in circles, and we joined in, feeling like a part of their culture. After that the young people kept dancing two-by-two. Zsolt went up to one of the

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Sharing communion during a service in Szentivánlaborfalva.

Reports, News & Travel Stories

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couples and told them to keep it up and never forget their traditions. He explained to us how ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania have had to fight to keep their culture alive as the Romanian government has tried to drum it out. Zsolt's passion about his culture is one of the many things that made the trip so very meaningful to us. ♦♦

DEVON, PA/VÁRFALVA

Experience the Partnership: Planning a Visit from Our Partners

BY BARBARA WEBER,
MAIN LINE UNITARIAN CHURCH

The 400th anniversary celebration of the first use of "Unitarian" in Várfalva/ Moldovenesti, Romania, was a wonderful, inspirational event (*PCC News*, Spring 2014) for a group of pilgrims from Main Line Unitarian Church (MLUC) in Devon, Pennsylvania. Our leaders, Associate Minister Rev. Morgan McLean and Partner Church Committee chair Jon Bass, took this opportunity to talk with Rev. Zsolt Barabás and lay president Ernő Kolozsi about the possibility of a visit from Várfalva. Like previous pilgrims, we were enthusiastic and motivated to strengthen the MLUC partnership when we returned home. We had always dreamed of sharing the excitement with all those in our congregation who could not make the trip. But since 1992 when our partnership started, no one from Várfalva had ever visited MLUC.

Rev. McLean mentioned a possible visit in her September Transylvanian Thanksgiving service. The congregation was intrigued and the first donation was received. Monthly Skype calls with Rev. Barabás established a real interest in Várfalva. Tentative dates were checked on the church calendar and reviewed with our ministers and the board, all of whom gave their enthusiastic support. Over



Running up the steps and jumping for joy. (*Rocky* was the first western movie our visitors saw after Communism ended—and were thrilled to be like Rocky on the steps of the Philadelphia Art Museum!)

the winter we clarified our goals. The Várfalva delegation should experience our church, our daily life, our faith, and our families. Our large suburban congregation, with over 620 members spread over many communities, should experience the friendship, the historical religious connection, and the power of our international partnership as they got to know our guests.

The UUPC website and John Dale, travel coordinator, provided helpful information. Cathy Cordes and others who had hosted visitors from Transylvania were consulted. This event would mean extensive contributions of time and money. By March we had decided to make a donation request to the congregation with information about the project rather than create a fundraising event. We now had a better idea of airfare (Kolozsvár to Newark, NJ) and other costs. Our committee chair applied for and received a UUPCC travel grant. Homestays, potluck suppers, and a large force of volunteers would help minimize costs.

Later that month, we put a large cartoon airplane on the church lobby bulletin board with pictures of our friends from Várfalva peering out the windows and added a thermometer to document the growing contributions.

At her April installation service, Rev. McLean designated the offering for our guests' travel expenses, and Rev. Carol Taylor, retired Minister of Religious Education, who started the partnership 22 years ago, reviewed our joint history.

When the October 20–28 dates were confirmed, we had five months to prepare. Our previous committee chair became the visit treasurer, and worked closely with our current chair to communicate with Rev. Barabás about travel logistics, required documents, and letters of support.

The planning team set to work using their diverse computer skills, organizational abilities, and networking talents. They scrambled to touch base with the musicians, ushers, greeters, photographers, decorators, cooks, and potluck meal organizers before summer vacations made contact difficult. We confirmed the home hosts, and they started communicating with their guests by e-mail and Facebook.

By the middle of July, airplane tickets had been purchased. We discussed plans with the music director for a joint choir to sing Hungarian hymns and invited members and youth who sing or play in bands to partici-

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Reports, News & Travel Stories

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pate in a music program. We started work on a banner to hang across the driveway, welcoming our visitors in English and Hungarian. We created guest lists for meals and invited ministers, current and past committee members, and those who had traveled to Várfalva to a large welcome dinner. We invited a shorter list of church leaders, large donors, and those active in the partnership to the Thanksgiving dinner. For a farewell dinner on the

last evening, we invited the hosts and their guests.

The author of our Small Group Ministry (SGM) sessions agreed to prepare a related curriculum. With material from the website of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists, she created two excellent sessions that would be used in October to engage our 135 SGM participants in thoughtful conversations about our guests' theology and history. A member of the planning team created a 20-page illustrated booklet, "We

Are Partners," describing the culture, religion, and history of our partners to give to every family with elementary-age children.

While most of our guests spoke excellent English, two were very limited. Since we had encouraged them to come, we sought additional translators. Besides our 93-year-old Hungarian translator who has been working with us since the start of our partnership, we located a Hungarian nursing graduate student and her father, and, through contact with a local Hungarian group, an American who learned Hungarian during his studies in Budapest. These three people were new to our church and eager to participate.

The Várfalva church designated the path from their parsonage to the church as the "Main Line Walkway"; we wanted to return the honor with the "Várfalva Walkway" to our front door. The wooden sign was constructed by a church member, and we found another who does calligraphy and was willing to use a wood burning kit to complete the lettering.

In the beginning of October Rev. McLean gathered home and meal hosts to discuss questions, expectations, and schedules. We had the daily schedule translated and emailed it to the travelers.

The congregation was as excited as the travelers when they finally arrived late on the evening of October 20. It was the start of a very busy week. ...



The Várfalva Walkway sign is unveiled (the sign is in the middle).

COMMUNICATION IN 2014

Most UUAA congregants can't read, write, or speak Hungarian, forcing our partners in Kézdivásárhely to communicate with us in English. In the past we shared our thoughts fairly formally via letter, then email, but always in English...and almost entirely with the Partner Church minister. We do have wonderful face-to-face conversations when we visit, but that's only every three years. Last year we all realized that Facebook offered possibilities for communication through photos and with fewer words...and that many in our Partner Church congregation, as well as in the village where Rev. Istvan lives, use Facebook. Suddenly we can have near daily communication about ordinary as well as extraordinary things, learning more about each other's lives. And this connection is multi-generational. My life has been enriched by this much broader relationship.

This year's scholarship recipient, Attila Lestyán, has just begun his studies in theatre at the university in Budapest. (I stayed with his parents when visiting last June.) We keep in touch with this wonderful young man through Facebook.

—Phyllis Valentine, UU Ann Arbor

This is a wonderfully detailed report about the meticulous planning process employed by the Main Line church. For the entire report—and to read how the visit turned out—please go online for a PDF of the complete story:
www.uupcc.org/media/news/winter14articles



International Travel—2016



UU Transylvania Pilgrimage (On a Budget) Spring 2016

Two Life-Changing weeks in Transylvania for under \$1,150—plus pre- and post-trip extensions

Unitarian Heritage and Partner Pilgrimage

May 7–19, 2016

13 days/12 nights from \$1,140/person

This tour visits all of the major Unitarian heritage sites in Transylvania as well as a number of tourist destinations and UNESCO World Heritage sites. A perfect itinerary for first time visitors! This is the same quality Unitarian pilgrimage experience the UUPCC has been facilitating for almost 20 years, but at 60% of the price. We have simply replaced hotels with B&Bs and guest houses, substituted village meals for restaurants, eliminated the long van ride from Budapest, and taken advantage of shoulder-season rates. There is an accommodation upgrade option for travelers who would like the creature comforts of 3&4 star hotels.

Budapest Extension *4 days/3 nights — \$500 doubles, \$595 singles*

In addition to the base pilgrimage there are also available pre-trip extensions (May 4–7) to Budapest, one of Europe's most captivating capital cities.

The Chain Bridge in Budapest.



Wooden Churches & Painted Monasteries

6 days/5 nights — \$950 doubles, \$1100 singles

This post-tour extension to the famous wooden churches of Maramures and the painted monasteries of Bucovina (May 19–24).

If you participate in the base pilgrimage there is no additional registration fee to sign up for one or both of the extensions. To register for the extensions simply indicate your preference in the notes section of your registration. For more information and registration materials, visit the UUPCC website at www.uupcc.org and click on "Pilgrimages".

For registration and complete itinerary visit our website, www.uupcc.org/pilgrimages/pilgrimage-opportunities or call (781) 275-1710.

UUPCC Pilgrimages: Bringing People Together

For almost two decades the UUPCC Pilgrimage Service has helped to cement the bonds between North American UUs and their partners overseas. We provide multiple and varied pilgrimage opportunities for Unitarian Universalists of all ages. For more details on any of the following services or to begin planning your pilgrimage opportunities contact our travel coordinator, John Dale, at jdaleuupcc@yahoo.com or visit our website at www.uupcc.org/pilgrimages.

Congregational Pilgrimages—Travel with us on a life-changing visit to your partner church in Eastern Europe, India, Africa, or the Philippines. Low-cost all-inclusive land packages include ground transportation, meals, lodging, guide(s), interpreter(s), and entry fees. Our in-country experts will work with groups of 4-50 to develop a customized itinerary that fits your interests, budget and time frame.

Concert Tours for Choirs and Musical Groups—Looking to expand the horizons of your music program? The UUPCC Pilgrimage Service has 10 years of experience facilitating international concert tours for UU choirs and a variety of other musical groups. Buses, performance venues, advertizing, musical instruments, hotel

arrangements and side tours are all part of our large-group portfolio.

Youth Service Trips—Bring your youth group on a low-cost/high-return pilgrimage to Transylvania. They can follow in Francis David's footsteps in Torda, Kolozsvár and Déva, perform a service project in your partner village, cement your partnership for years, and come back better people.

Group Tours for Individuals and "Space Available" Travel—We know that not every UU congregation is capable of organizing their own travel group. For small churches, churches without partners, and interested individuals we offer each year several public trips to Eastern and Central Europe, India, and the Philippines.

The itineraries for these are posted on the main travel page of the UUPCC website at www.uupcc.org/pilgrimages/pilgrimage-opportunities. If the dates or destinations of these public trips do not fit your needs we often place individuals with one of the many congregational pilgrimages that has space available. Contact John Dale for a list and short description of the current opportunities.

À la Carte Services for Individuals and Independent Travelers include:

Guides & Interpreters, Car rentals or Car & Driver, Airport—village—airport van/car transfer (Budapest BUD, Bucharest OTP & BAN, Kolozsvár CLJ, Marosvásárhely TGM) Hotels, B&Bs, Unitarian Guest Houses and home stay accommodations.

Thank You for UUPCC Travel Grants

FROM: LILY O'BRIEN, FIRST UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH OF YARMOUTH

Receiving a UUPCC travel grant this year made it possible for me to travel to Transylvania with the First Universalist Church of Yarmouth, Maine to help facilitate a youth camp and meet with the women of our partner village, Gyepes, to organize a textile and sewing collaborative.

For many years, my church has partnered with fellow U.S.-based partners and Transylvanian villages to run summer camps for youth, and I have been lucky enough to participate in facilitating this camp a number of times. The 2014 camp was our largest camp since we started this project and it was a huge success. As a theme, we focused on artistic representation of the human body and we also incorporated age-appropriate elements of the *Our Whole Lives* curriculum. We added two more villages to the camp and we separated into two three-day camps: one camp for younger children and another for older children. It was exciting to see the youth engage in

artistic activities, games, and team-building projects.

Also during this visit to Transylvania, we were able to meet with the women of Gyepes to organize a textile and sewing exchange. The goal of this project is to unite Yarmouth and Gyepes women through this collaboration and the common goal of keeping hand-made crafts alive. Each time we return from Gyepes, we bring textiles and other crafts to sell at our church. This year, the Gyepes women sent us home with woven cloth. In the weeks to come, women in our church will sew the cloth into pillows, bags, and laptop cases, among many other designs. Having the chance to meet with the women jump-started this project and we hope to sell our first products at our holiday fair in December.

Thank you for making my involvement in both these projects a reality. As the Gyepes-Yarmouth partnership deepens, we keep saying how we wish we could move Maine closer to Transylvania, but since that cannot become a reality, the UUPCC travel grants really are the next best thing! ••

CALL FOR TRAVEL GRANT APPLICATIONS

MARCH 15 DEADLINE

The UU Partner Church Council is pleased to solicit applications for the UUPCC Travel Grant Program. Grants of up to \$500 are available for travel that benefits partnership.

The purpose of these grants is to serve as a catalyst for travel and programs that would otherwise not occur but would make a difference in the lives of individuals and their congregational partnerships. Priority is given to overseas individuals who would like to travel to visit their partners in the U.S. and Canada. Recipients are encouraged to write, preach or otherwise broadcast to the wider community the benefits and value of the UU Partner Church movement.

Examples of past applications include: youth leadership travel, ministerial sabbatical travel to visit partners, travel to support Community Capacity Building programs, visits from overseas travelers to enhance partner communication, and youth/adult travel to volunteer in schools, camps, or orphanages associated with overseas UUs.

The application process is open to all qualified individuals and congregations, both overseas and in North America. Applicants must be affiliated with a partnered congregation and receive the endorsement of their minister or Partner Church Committee Chair.

Deadlines for the two funding rounds are October 15 and March 15 every year.

The Travel Grant Application is available at www.uupcc.org/pilgrimages/travel-grants

Questions? Call (781) 287-1710 or email office@uupcc.org.



Thinking about a trip this Summer or Fall?

**There is still time
to arrange a congregational trip overseas for 2015.**

Contact the UUPCC office at 781-275-1710
or email John Dale directly at jdaleuupcc@yahoo.com

PARTNER CHURCH TRANSFER FORM

FOR TRANSFER OF FUNDS THROUGH THE UU PARTNER CHURCH COUNCIL

Please fill out and enclose a form with each check for funds to be transferred. Please type or print clearly.

Note: Funds transmission is a benefit of institutional membership in the UU Partner Church Council

Make check payable to: UUPCC Mail to: UU Partner Church Council, PO Box 88, Bedford, MA 01730

Donor Information:

Date _____

Name of Church _____ Phone (____) _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Contact Person _____ E-Mail _____

Transfer Amount Enclosed: US\$ _____ Check # _____

Recipient Information: Country (*Please check one*) ☐ Transylvania ☐ India ☐ Philippines

Name of Church _____

City/Town/Village _____

Contact Person at Church _____

Purposes: *Specify amount and purpose of contribution (required)*

Amount(s) designated for congregation: _____

Purpose(s) of contribution to congregation: _____

Transfer Process: How to Send Money

The UUPCC offers a transfer service to churches wishing to send funds to their overseas partners. Please use a commercial service if you are an *individual* transferring money overseas. More information is on our website at www.uupcc.org/transfer-funds-other-countries.

- Checks, payable in US dollars, must arrive at the office at least one week before the transfer date.
- Please round off amounts to whole dollars. We do not transfer cents.
- Please include the Transfer Form, along with the check—made payable to “UUPCC”—and send to UUPCC, PO Box 88, Bedford MA 01730-0088.

INDIA • UUPCC will process checks as they come in; the actual transfers will be done every three months. The schedule in 2014 is for the ends of January, April, July and October.

THE PHILIPPINES • The regular schedule for transfers is February, May, August and November. Please make sure checks and forms are mailed by the first of the month so that we can transfer on the 10th of the month.

TRANSYLVANIA • Transfers are done monthly from the UUPCC office between the 26th and 30th of each month. Transferred funds are wired

from Headquarters directly into the local church bank account.

NOTE: The above form is for use by the office staff in preparing information for headquarters in the various countries. The bank transfer is done electronically; paper copies of the forms are *not* sent. Therefore, *please make sure that you contact someone in your partner village to let them know that the money is coming.* Transfers take as long as 5–7 business days for the transfer to arrive at church headquarters in Transylvania, sometimes as long as two weeks in other countries.

Invitation to Membership

If you or a friend wish to receive this newsletter three times a year and to support and participate in Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council programs and goals, please fill out this form to join us.

DATE: _____ — ONE YEAR MEMBERSHIPS — ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

☐ \$30* Individual Membership ☐ \$50* Family** Membership ☐ \$_____ Individual or Family Membership PLUS gift for UUPCC program support

Name: _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City/State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

E-Mail _____ Church Affiliation _____

☐ Please add my email address to the PCC-Chat list so I can keep up to date on the latest UUPCC news! ****

☐ Please send my/our newsletter to the above email address.

☐ \$50 Congregational*** (under 100 members) ☐ \$150 Congregational*** (over 100 members)

UUA Church Name/City _____
ENTER ADDRESS ABOVE, WITH MINISTER'S NAME OR PCC CONTACT'S NAME

* Canadian members please send \$28 for an individual membership or \$47 for a family membership in U.S. funds by check or USD money order to the UUPCC address below.

** A family membership consists of two adults residing at the same address (receiving one newsletter).

*** A "congregational subscription" provides you with up to four newsletters mailed to the church.

**** Your contact information will be used solely by the UUPCC and will not be shared with other organizations.

Make your tax-deductible check payable to
UU Partner Church Council

Mail your invitation and check to:
UU Partner Church Council / P.O. Box 88 / Bedford, MA 01730-0088



UU Partner Church Council

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Partner Church News

PUBLISHED 3 TIMES A YEAR

P.O. Box 88
Bedford, MA 01730-0088 USA

UU Partner Church Council Vision & Mission Statement

Vision:

We envision a worldwide Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist community that promotes peace, justice, and liberty for all, supported by partnerships that are integral to congregational life.

Mission:

The mission of the Unitarian Universalist Partner Council is to foster and support partner relationships between UU congregations and individuals in the United States and Canada with Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist congregations, orphanages, schools and students in all other countries where partnering is sought and welcomed. These will be mutually beneficial, responsibly sustained, and linked by joint and mutual covenants.

We will:

- BE a bridge that connects congregations around the world;
- REACH across boundaries to collaborate with old and new partners;
- CREATE transformational opportunities for pilgrimage and hospitality, for learning and for service;
- CHALLENGE ourselves theologically and open ourselves to changed values and behaviors;
- INITIATE partnerships that promote global friendships, international awareness, human rights, and a better world; and
- SUSTAIN this global vision, enlarging and renewing it as new occasions teach new duties.



ADOPTED AT THE
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE UUPCC
JUNE 26, 2010