North American Regional News and Events

1. North American Regional News and Events
   1. North American Regional Summit 2005
   2. Trustee Nominations Close October 30
   3. Current Trustee Bios
      1. Elder Don Frew
      2. Reverend Heng Sure
      3. Reverend Kay Lindahl
   4. Update from NAINConnect 2004
   6. National Days of Interfaith Youth Service 2005

2. Cooperation Circle Activities
   1. Interfaith Family Getting Together
   2. Mentoring Together, Interfaith Council of Washington
   3. URI Participates in International Day of Peace 2004
   4. Volunteer in India with Global PeaceWorks

3. URI / International Interfaith
   1. Update on 2005 Global Summit
   2. Headlines from URI.org
   3. Headlines from InterfaithNews.Net

4. Resources for CCs and Affiliates
   1. URI Interfaith Peacebuilding Guide
   2. Spiritual and Interfaith Calendars for 2005
   3. URI News & Information on the Internet

5. URI Staff/Contacts
   1. Changes in San Francisco
   2. North American Regional Coordination Team

A Note on Newsletter Distribution

This newsletter is intended for everyone and anyone interested in URI Cooperation Circle activities in North America. Though it is initially sent only to CC contact persons, it is hoped that they will pass it along to other members in their organizations. Please also feel free to submit (short) articles on your organization's activities and events. Send these to sfuqua@uri.org.

North American Regional News and Events
North American Regional Summit 2005

In the last newsletter we told you the exciting news about the upcoming URI North American Regional Summit to be held in January, 2005 in Los Angeles... but now we have even more exciting news: the 2005 North American summit will be held in Las Vegas, NV in August 2005 in conjunction with the North American Interfaith Alliance (NAIN).

When various circumstances led the planning team to re-evaluate the timing and location of the 2005 Summit, fortune presented the idea of teaming with NAIN to deliver what promises to be an awesome conference. The conference dates are August 13-16; the location will be the University of Nevada in Las Vegas (UNLV).

NAIN has already found success in conference partnering in their recent Connect in New York, NY. That event was held in coordination with the National Association of Ecumenical and Interreligious Staff. Next year's NA Summit / NAIN Connect will be a tremendous opportunity for interfaith-newbies to learn about the interfaith movement, for interfaith-veterans to deepen their knowledge and skills, and for URI and NAIN members to learn more about the services and member organizations of the other group.

We are still in the earliest stages of planning. If you would like to join the planning team or make suggestions, please send an e-mail to sfuqua@uri.org.

Return to Table of Contents

Trustee Nominations Close October 30

During 2004-2005, the election of Trustees to URI's Global Council will take place. It is an extraordinary opportunity for the URI community to embrace the Preamble, Purpose and Principles and the spirit of the URI by applying them to the selection of URI Global Council Trustees.

All Cooperation Circles around the world should have received a packet of information about the Trustee selection process in August or September. If you are lacking a packet, please contact one of the North American Regional Coordinators or login at http://www.uriglobal.org and click on the Trustee Selection link for an electronic copy.

Voting for the Trustees will occur in the spring of 2005 and will proceed according to the rules laid out in the Charter. In order to be eligible to run for a Trustee position, an individual must be nominated by a CC on or before October 30.

When choosing nominees, please consider the talents, gifts, and diversity of candidates. We have included biographies of the current North American trustees below in order to give some idea of the work this position entails. In the interest of promoting geographic diversity in North American representation, Kay Lindahl (from Southern California) and Don Frew (Northern California) have decided not to run for the position of North
American Trustee. That does not rule them out for serving on the Global Council in other means; however, please do nominate those whom you believe will best represent your interests and best serve the Council as a whole.

**Trustee Election Timeline**

- **October 30, 2004**: Last day for URI Global Office to receive candidate nominations
- **Nov. - Dec. 2004**: Voting packet for each region is prepared. Includes: voting rules, a biography and a personal statement from each candidate, a proxy voting ballot.
- **January 10, 2005**: Voting packet mailed to all CCs and MCCs.
- **Jan. - April 4, 2005**: CCs vote for trustee candidates in their region. Proxy Vote is sent to The Rev. Charles Gibbs, Executive Director of URI. The proxy vote directs Rev. Gibbs how to cast the CC's votes for its candidate(s) of choice at the official Meeting of Members.
- **April 4, 2005**: Last day for global office to receive proxy ballots by mail, email or fax.
- **April 6, 2005**: The Meeting of Members will take place, during which time the proxy votes will be cast and counted. There will only be a recording of the votes from around the world; attendance is not required. The three candidates in each region who receive the most votes will be elected and notified.

*Return to Table of Contents*

**Current Trustee Bios**

Quite some time ago, We asked the current North American regional Trustees to submit short biographies telling us about themselves and the work they do. At long last these bios are published. These bios are posted to give thanks to these selfless individuals and to demonstrate what goes into being a trustee. **This is not an endorsement for nomination, candidacy, etc. Though they are currently Trustees, these individuals are not nominees at this time (unless and until someone nominates them through the process ending on the 30th of this month).**

**Elder Don Frew**

I am one of the three North American Trustees serving on the URI's first elected Global Council. Two years into our three-year term, we are still working out the process of facilitating communication between the North American CCs, the Support Team, the Hub Staff in San Francisco, and the Regional Trustees. As part of this effort, I thought it would be a good idea to introduce myself to the North American CCs, tell you how to get in touch with me, and (since elections are coming up soon) explain a little about the job of being a Trustee.
I am 44 years old, born and raised in California, and attended UC Berkeley, majoring first in Anthropology and then Religious Studies. I have been a Wiccan Priest for 20 years and lead a coven —Coven Trismegiston —in Berkeley with my wife Anna. I currently serve as National Interfaith Representative for the Covenant of the Goddess (CoG) and have been doing interfaith work on behalf of the Craft (Wicca) since joining the Berkeley Area Interfaith Council in 1985. In this capacity, I attended the 1993, 1999, and 2004 Parliaments of the World’s Religions in Chicago, Cape Town, and Barcelona. I was a part of the Parliament Assembly in 1999, and was again this year. I also attended the 1998 and 1999 Global Summits of the URI in Stanford CA, the 2000 URI Charter Signing in Pittsburgh PA, and the first URI Global Assembly in 2002 in Rio de Janeiro. It was a great honor to be elected to the Global Council in 2002. I serve as Assistant Secretary on the Global Council and work in its Organizational Development Committee. This fall, I will start my one-year term on the CC Approval Committee (explained later).

My work on the Global Council has tended to focus on five areas of personal interest:

1. My own organization, CoG, was founded in 1975 with the goal of creating a national organization that would allow member groups to network and collaborate for mutual benefit while maintaining the maximum amount of local group autonomy. Sound familiar? Similar goals produce similar administrative structures and so it is no coincidence that the Bylaws of the URI are very similar to CoG’s. Over the last 29 years, CoG has encountered and dealt with many and various complications of such a grassroots approach and the URI may benefit from some of CoG’s experience.

2. Like many people who attended the 1993 Parliament, I came home energized and enthused, wondering what to do next, and not wanting to wait another hundred years. Bishop Swing’s promise of a new organization that would provide the opportunity for “enduring, daily interfaith cooperation” was one I could not ignore. Over the last 11 years, the URI and the Parliament have developed a close partnership—a partnership that I encourage and support.

3. I am a practitioner of an indigenous tradition —Wicca —but not an indigenous person. Rather, I am a product of modern Western culture. As such, I have a foot in both worlds. I often find myself serving as a bridge or translator between the issues and concerns of the indigenous people in the URI and the administrative and organizing styles of the West. (Robert’s Rules of Order? Yikes!) To this end, I will be attending the Latin American Regional Assembly hosted by the indigenous CCs of South America in Peru in November.

4. Many years ago, I coordinated a series of dialogues between Witches and conservative Christians —two groups often opposed. In more recent years, I have brought that experience to bear on the issue of conservative Christians who are opposed to the interfaith process. I have developed relationships that have grown into friendships, increasing understanding on both sides. I hope to turn this into more formal dialogue in the near future.
If we are truly going to embrace all religions in the URI then we have to address the question of the absence in the URI of the more conservative branches of many of the faith traditions.

5. I am very interested in helping the Regions become self-sufficient. To this end, several of us at the GC meeting last May started working on the development of Regional funds to which local donors could contribute.

In addition to the Berkeley Area Interfaith Council, the Parliament Assembly, and the URI Global Council, I am active with the following URI CCs:

- Interfaith Center at the Presidio (ICP) - [http://www.interfaith-presidio.org/](http://www.interfaith-presidio.org/)
- Spiritual Alliance for Earth (SAFE) - [http://www.spiritualallianceforearth.org/](http://www.spiritualallianceforearth.org/)
- The Bridge - [http://www.uribridgecc.org/](http://www.uribridgecc.org/)
- Spirituality & the Earth CC (S&ECC)
- Expressing the URI in Music & the Arts (EURIMA) - [http://www.interfaithdesign.org/](http://www.interfaithdesign.org/)
- Gifts & Resources CC

North America has a wonderful and active Support Team (facilitated by Steve Fitzgerald) that tries to stay in regular contact with the many North American CCs. If you would like to contact me for any reason, please email me at DHF3URI@aol.com (Please include "Attn NA Trustee" in the subject line.) or call me at (510) 524-2078. If you leave a return phone number on my message machine, please speak clearly and slowly. Thanks!

I hope to continue to serve on the Global Council in some capacity in the next term, but I am not seeking nomination from North America. This term, all of the NA Trustees are from California. As the URI grows around North America, I believe that our Trustees should reflect that geographic diversity. If you feel moved to serve the URI in North America as a Trustee and have the support of a North American CC, consider nomination.

Thank you for your commitment to promoting enduring, daily interfaith cooperation, ending religiously motivated violence and creating cultures of peace, justice and healing for the Earth and all living beings.

**Return to Table of Contents**

**Reverend Heng Sure**

I first saw religions sharing a global community through the lens of the URI in 1997, during the first Global Summit at Stanford University. Over the years, the United Religions vision has become my accustomed way of seeing both the intra-Buddhist and the interfaith worlds. In the seven years since then, I have taken part in URI's Organizational Design Team, the Interim Global Council and its Publicity Committee, four Cooperation Circles and now the Global Council. I have introduced Buddhist young people to the practice of interfaith and brought the URI back to my Buddhist monastic
community by hosting the 2004 Global Council meeting at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

I recently completed my Doctoral program in religion at the Graduate Theological Union and in the process, I benefited from the support and encouragement of my URI colleagues. I am proud to call the idealistic and visionary activists of the URI my friends and mentors. Among them I share the duties of Buddhist Trustee with Ven. Jinwol, a fellow monastic and a Ph.D.; I feel connected and supported professionally, intellectually, and spiritually. The work of trustee, serving North American CCs is compelling, but the Buddhist aspect of my Global Council duties involves me in many levels of engagement. Mahayana Buddhists aspire to follow the way of the Bodhisattva, the unselfish enlightened being. The way of the Bodhisattva provides a mandate to engage with the world, so that we might all wake up to our fundamental religious and spiritual interdependence and to work to end suffering for all sentient creatures. URI offers many gateways onto that path of awakening.

I have always felt that the URI vision is ahead of its time. We humans most often react to crises; rarely do we look ahead and see problems or opportunities and catch them in advance. In the URI we have created a new way of being in harmony across religious boundaries, before large numbers of people are seeing this vision as a possibility. Those of us who are early adapters have built it and now the others are coming. I took my chance to join the interfaith activists who shared Bishop Swing’s initial vision; I witnessed the creation of the chaordic structure of the URI’s Purpose, Preamble and Principles and the CC organization. I was privileged to take part in the gestation and birth of those fundamental instruments.

With that privilege comes the knowledge that the URI participants, being pioneers are ahead of their time, and as a result, might be misunderstood by the mainstream, that interfaith means apocalypse to large numbers of evangelical or fundamental interpreters of certain texts in a variety of religions. I know that the pressing need to change "business as usual" among religions is anathema to many people, as it is a wake-up call to others. I find that many young people are thinking through their relationships with mainstream religions; they are grateful for the existence of an organization such as the URI to deepen their existing beliefs and spiritual practices. When the URI is well known, they won’t have to say, "Imagine if religions could get along. What would it be like?" They will have the URI’s innovative network waiting for their input, their energy and their commitment.

Further, I am anticipating the introduction of URI to East Asia. Once the vision of interfaith connections translates over into Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean and Tagalog, among other Asian languages, I expect it will bring enthusiastic participation among youth in Asia.

*Return to Table of Contents*

**Reverend Kay Lindahl**
In addition to attending the Global Assembly, Global Council Meetings and Global Council conference calls, I have participated in two committees. The first year I chaired the CC Approval Committee. Each of the three Global Council Members from each region rotates through this committee, serving a one year term. We met every other month via conference calls. Prior to the calls we were sent a list of all CC applicants with a summary of their circle and comments from an Appreciative Interview by Regional Trustees or Staff. That first year we also developed several policies for our work, which have been passed along.

The other committee I have served on is the Membership Support Committee. We have met in person at Global Council Meetings and communicate in between by email and conference calls. Since we were a new committee, we spent the first year exploring the scope of our work. The second year we found ourselves involved in some wonderful conversations about how one supports members and about policy re membership. This year we have just set forth a strategic plan for our work and will be meeting via email and conference calls to fulfill our objectives.

I represented the URI on the jury of the first Interfaith Sacred Space Competition. This involved a trip to San Francisco to judge the 159 entries. It was a challenging project! It made me reflect deeply on what is sacred space and what are the needs for sacred space that is interfaith.

The North American Regional Support Team also meets regularly by conference call. I participated in most calls and attended an in person meeting in January. I feel I represent the URI in all of my interfaith activities, including active participation in the Pre-Parliament retreat in So. CA, the North American Interfaith Network, our local Religious Diversity Forum, and many local CC events. I take URI brochures with me wherever I go. I encourage new CC’s.

It seems to me that a good part of the role of a Global Trustee is to take a step back to get a larger view of all that is going on within URI as well as our relationships with the entire interfaith community. How can we best serve these communities? What are our priorities? Listening to all points of view before making decisions is important and requires time and patience. It is a privilege to serve on the Global Council and a responsibility that I take very seriously and with deep humility.

Return to Table of Contents

Update from NAINConnect

Excerpts from a letter from new NAIN Chair Kay Lindahl

It is a joy and privilege to greet you as your newly elected Chair for NAIN. It was wonderful to see so many of you in New York last month at our annual Connect. We missed those of you who couldn't make it. The program was informative and inspiring and the venue was exciting and energizing. It was truly a 'Connecting' experience as we
had the opportunity to meet not only NAIN members but also NAEIS members. Hats off to Christy Lohr and Will Baker and all the NY Planning Committee.

You’ll read more details about the Connect in the Fall/Winter issue of NAINews. This note is to update you on the outcome of our Annual Meeting. The following Board Members were re-elected to a 4 year term: Paul Chaffee, Bettina Gray, Gard Jameson, Kay Lindahl and Christy Lohr. The following were elected for a 4 year term: Tarunjit Butalia, April Kunze and Jan Saeed. The following were elected as at large directors for a 2 year term: Barry Cooke, Aziz Eddebabrh, Bud Heckman, Stacy Smith and Barbara Trites.

The entire Board of Directors is listed on the general NAIN site, under Table of Contents, Board of Directors, where you can also link to the organization they represent. ([http://www.nain.org/info/board.htm](http://www.nain.org/info/board.htm))

The following officers were elected: Chair, Kay Lindahl; Chair- Elect, Ralph Singh; Secretary, Mike Goggins; Treasurer, Paul Chaffee.

The following were appointed as Chairs of their respective committees: Sam Muyskens, Administration and Finance; Bettina Gray, Communication; Barbara Trites, Membership; Don Mayne, Program; and April Kunze, Young Adults. If you would like to serve on one of the committees, please contact the chair. ...

In closing, please save the date for our next Connect - August 13 - 16 at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas, one of the fastest growing communities in the US including in religious diversity.

Return to Table of Contents

National Interfaith Dialogue Gathering, Nov. 12-14, 2004

URI CCs are invited to be part of a National Interfaith Dialogue Gathering November 12-14, 2004 at American University in Washington, DC. Sponsored by The Interfaith Alliance Foundation and Communities Working Together, the gathering aims to build and strengthen the interfaith movement across America by sharing ideas that national groups can work on together in 2005 to bring greater visibility to interfaith dialogue and action. Registration information is at: [http://www.interfaithalliance.org/ReligiousResources/ReligiousResources.cfm?ID=5440&c=103](http://www.interfaithalliance.org/ReligiousResources/ReligiousResources.cfm?ID=5440&c=103). For more detailed information, please contact Susanna McIlwaine (smcilwaine@uri.org; ilwaine@uri.org). Please also contact Susanna if you have materials on your CCs work you would like to have displayed at the gathering.

Return to Table of Contents

National Days of Youth Service, 2005
Greetings to all! United Religions Initiative is partnering again with the Interfaith Youth Core and other interfaith collaborators to organize the second annual National Days of Interfaith Youth Service, from April 9-10, 2005. In 2004, more than 1,000 religiously diverse young people took part in 30 service projects in 20 cities and 11 college campuses across the country. The goal of the project is to bring together religiously diverse young people in hometowns and academic campuses across the nation to serve their communities. These young people will explore and act upon the impulse of service in their religious traditions and work towards better inter-religious understanding.

Complete Announcement & Invitation at http://www.interfaithnews.net/uri-na/youth.html

Return to Table of Contents

Cooperation Circle Activities

Please submit your CC's activities and reports to sfuqua@uri.org.

Interfaith Family Getting Together

The Interfaith Center at the Presidio has found a new and powerful means of bringing peoples of different religions together. Paul Chaffee describes it thus:

If prayer, potluck, and rousing good conversation is the answer, what is the question?

For years people visiting the Main Post Chapel and hearing the mission of the Interfaith Center at the Presidio have asked, "Do you have 'services' or regular meetings, or anything?" No, we've always answered. We have programs and interfaith celebrations. But worshiping communities typically gather people from a particular tradition, whereas the Interfaith Center's constituency comes from all traditions. The question persists, "Isn't there something I can come to and attend?!"

So the Interfaith Center is scheduling two Monday evenings a month this fall for "An Interfaith Circle," where we'll get a chance to know each other. Twice a month we will share prayer and meditation from one or more traditions, have a potluck, and spend an hour or two talking about our different religious backgrounds with each other.


Return to Table of Contents

Mentoring Together, Interfaith Council of Washington

Mentoring Together is a new interfaith-in-action program to support Seattle at-risk youth. The program is offered by The Interfaith Council of Washington Uncommon Bonds
Youth Programs in cooperation with Community for Youth. We are recruiting adult volunteers from different religious and spiritual traditions to make a difference in the life of an at-risk youth during the upcoming 2004-2005 school year.

The Mentoring Together program is a youth mentoring project aimed at teenage students who are "at risk." This project also has an interfaith intention. Specifically, it is our intention that mentors will become role models for promoting and engaging in dialogue that fosters respect and understanding for religious, spiritual, and cultural differences.

In addition to training and support from Community for Youth, mentor volunteers will receive support via gatherings facilitated by the Interfaith Council of Washington. These gatherings will offer support for the mentoring experience from a spiritual and interfaith perspective. Spiritual leaders from different faith traditions will share insights for working with diverse, multicultural, at-risk youth. Mentors will have time to review and discuss how different faith traditions approach day-to-day issues, as well as the following types of topics:

- Being present and listening
- Healing through forgiveness and atonement
- Healthy anger
- The hidden blessings of life’s challenges
- Choosing abundance or limitation
- Human life in separation and the oneness we all share

Inspiration for this program grew out of the 2004 Interfaith Leadership Summit at Camp Brotherhood.


Return to Table of Contents

**URI Participates in International Day of Peace 2004**

From prayer vigils and youth-led workshops, to making music and climbing mountains, Cooperation Circle (CC) members around the world marked International Day of Peace 2004 on Sept. 21. To find out more about this special day and the events that took place around the world, visit the International Day of Peace website. URI events in North America included:

**Everest Peace Project CC, USA**
**From Lance Trumbull, San Francisco Bay Area**

The Everest Peace Project CC accomplished a Peace Climb of Mt. Shasta, a 14,162 ft. mountain in California. The climbed this peak on The International Day of Peace. On the
team were climbers from Israel, Palestine, Nepal, Vietnam, India, and in the United States from San Jose, California and Boulder, Colorado.

In line with the United Nations goals, the climbers paid special tribute on Mt. Shasta to this important day in which all nations and people of the earth are encouraged to observe a 24 hour period of global ceasefire and non-violence and to recognize the importance of peace and cooperation. The meaning was in the climb itself, as the climbers overcame personal and cultural differences to work together as a team. The message is clear: in an atmosphere of international peace - cultural, religious and political barriers can be surmounted; and through friendship and teamwork even the tallest mountain in the world can be climbed. On the summit of Mt. Shasta the "Peace Climbers" from various faiths and cultures joined together and faced the direction of Mt. Everest (the mountain they will together climb next year) as they planted the United Nations' flag.

United Nations CC, USA
From Deborah Moldow, New York City

This year, the United Religions Initiative joined the World Peace Prayer Society and Pathways to Peace as NGO hosts of the Dept. of Public Information annual observance of the International Day of Peace for school children, held on Friday, Sept. 17 at United Nations headquarters. This year's theme was Peace Through Sport, highlighting the Olympics and the upcoming 2005 International Year for Sport and Physical Education. Young people in New York were linked via satellite to youth and athletes hosted by the UN Peacekeeping Missions in Afghanistan, Kosovo and Sierra Leone. The event continued the tradition of a World Peace Flag Ceremony in which the youth at all the sites presented each nation's flag and all together sent to every UN Member State the message "May Peace Prevail on Earth."

The Charlotte CC, USA
From Pat Moore, Charlotte, North Carolina

The Charlotte CC observed UN International Peace Day again this year. The event was covered by the local public radio station on its one-hour morning talk show, Charlotte Talks, aired Sept. 17 and hosted by Mike Collins. An excellent interfaith program was held.

Christian Science Prayers for Peace Update, USA
From Sarah Talcott, San Francisco Bay Area

Berkeley, California Christian Science congregations reached out to other faith communities and congregations for the International Day of Peace. They held a prayer service at both First and Second Churches of Christ, Scientist in Berkeley on Sept. 22. Berkeley congregations and other faith communities were invited to join in the service.

Volunteer in India with Global PeaceWorks

Global PeaceWorks, a CC based out of New York, is once again coordinating a group of interfaith volunteers to serve in India at the turn of the year. The first such event was held last year in New Delhi, the site of the upcoming activities. The organization's mission is to "...create opportunities for people of diverse faiths and spiritual traditions to live together, perform charitable service and explore spirituality. Living as an international, interfaith family, we perform service, focus on interfaith dialogue and visit sacred sites."

This year's project includes:

- shared living (participants will share a room with someone of a different cultural/religious tradition)
- group activities (learning cooperative processes among different cultures)
- cultural programs (song, poetry, art and dance)
- religious practices (experiential learning of each other's religious traditions through visits to sacred sites and prayer and meditation exercises)
- charitable service work (this will involve physically work for a community in need)

For more information or to apply to join the program, please visit http://www.globalpeaceworks.org/.

URI / International Interfaith

Update on the 2005 Global Summit

August 18, 2004

Dear Members of the URI Community and Friends,

Greetings of love and peace.

It is with sadness, but also hope for the future that URI’s Global Council has concluded that financial challenges make it necessary to postpone URI’s next Global Assembly, which had been scheduled to take place in Seoul, Korea, June 26 - July 1, 2005.

As you can imagine, a major global gathering represents a major financial investment and an enormous amount of advance planning. Less than a year from the scheduled assembly, we had reached a point where planning needed to be translated into a significant investment of money and time.
Unfortunately, our fundraising efforts to date had raised only a small fraction of the amount needed to pay for the assembly. So, rather than move forward and put URI’s financial future at risk, the Global Council has elected to postpone the global assembly. As one GC member expressed, “The most important thing about URI is our daily work of interfaith cooperation. We cannot jeopardize that for a global gathering.”

In place of this larger global assembly, URI will hold an important assembly of its outgoing and incoming Global Councils in Seoul, June 26 – July 1, 2005.

Also, the Global Council will establish a special committee to do an in-depth study of its entire global assembly process, seeking to schedule a viable assembly as soon as possible, with a target date of 2008. The date, time and site of the next global assembly will be finalized based on the Global Council’s review of findings of this committee.

Finally, the Global Council hopes to see an energetic round of regional assemblies between now and the Global Council meeting in Seoul.

We are confident that this difficult decision is the right one, and that the steps that are put in place will lead to a stronger and more financially stable URI.

In Peace,

Rita Semel                                                  Charles Gibbs
Global Council Chair                                  Executive Director

Headlines from URI.org

- Support URI - Join as a Peacebuilder Member
- URI Participates in International Day of Peace 2004
- URI's Powerful Presence at the Parliament of the World's Religions

Headlines from InterfaithNews.Net

- Responding to the Genocide in Darfur
- Collected Articles on Religious Responses to Conflict in Sudan
- Impressions from the Parliament
- The Parliament of the World's Religions Results in Thousands of Commitments to Address Religious Violence and Other Urgent Issues Facing the World
- College of Preachers' Abrahamic Fellows Confront Religious Violence
Resources for CCs and Affiliates

URI Interfaith Peacebuilding Guide

This guide was conceived as a resource for interfaith groups — those "everyday gandhis" who are making a difference one meeting at a time in their local communities. It is for people of diverse faiths who have been strangers (or worse, enemies) who become friends and allies dedicated to peace, justice, and healing. The guide has been designed for groups that are just starting out in their life together, as well as those that are more established and yet seek to strengthen their planning and sharpen their skills for building interfaith understanding and taking action.

With some adaptation, the activities in this guide can also be used by single-faith groups that want to reach out to other faith groups or would like to bridge differences within their own religious or spiritual community. Any group interested in learning more about other traditions and participating in interfaith activities will find something of use in these pages. Even interested individuals can deepen their own understanding by working with those parts of the activities that begin with individual, particularly, for example, in Section Three, "Understanding Other Faiths."

For a longer description, please visit http://www.uri.org/peacebuilding/guide/guidepreview.asp. URI Cooperation Circles can download the guide for free from http://www.uriglobal.org/. Once you login, look for the "Peacebuilding" box on the right side for instructions on downloading the book.

Spiritual and Interfaith Calendars for 2005

Many organizations have found that various spiritual, religious, and interreligous calendars make excellent fundraisers. Most organizations producing such calendars are willing to negotiate a bulk discount price for your group; when you charge the full standard price, your initial savings becomes your profit.

Prayer and Meditation Calendar

http://truthconsciousness.org/prayermeditationcalendar/PMC_HomePage.htm
URI-DC sold these beautiful calendars last year, and this year's is even more beautiful, filled with stunning photographs of people in prayer, from many traditions throughout the world. "Taken together, the superb photos of the many ways people around the world pray and/or meditate offer a sort of collective meditation on the many ways humans connect to the sacred as well as a reflection on the profound human drive for a meaningful connection to the numinous." – Interreligious Insight

**Multifaith Calendar 2005**

[http://www.unityarts.com/calendarsplanners.html](http://www.unityarts.com/calendarsplanners.html)

The *Multifaith Calendar* is another popular calendar with beautiful artwork and showing holy days from 13 different faiths. Each year features a different theme; this year's is "Seasons of the Soul": With whatever source one would use, the Soul holds in its essence an abundance of "Seasons", each one revealing various values and virtues of religious and spiritual living. The visual images found throughout this 19th edition of The Multifaith Calendar offer a variety of depictions of "The Seasons of the Soul" that the world, and ourselves, might be kept healthy, holy and wholesome.

*Return to Table of Contents*

**URI News & Discussion on the Internet**

Confused by the profusion of e-mail lists and sources of news and information about the URI? Don't worry, you're not alone—even the tech-geeks amongst us get confused sometimes. Communication is essential to creating meaningful networks, be they local, regional, or global. Effort is constantly put forth to create the most effective and efficient communication channels, so let us all strive to use them well and use them wisely.

*Revisit the last issue’s descriptions of news venues and discussion lists*

*Return to Table of Contents*

**URI Staff/Contacts**

**Changes in San Francisco**

Sadly the San Francisco office will soon be losing two of its founding members: Jennifer Kirk and Kristin Lee-Swensson. Jennifer is leaving to complete her Ph.D., while Kristin will be joining her husband in Los Angeles where he has taken a new job. Undoubtedly we will often see their names again in the future, albeit in an individual capacity or as members of local organizations. Thank you Jennifer and Kristin for the hard work, dedication, and low pay over the years! Your work has been instrumental in both the establishment and continuing growth of the most important new international organization in decades.
Unfortunately, Jennifer and Kristin will not be replaced at this time due to budget consideration. Thus, with personnel and dollars stretched thin, now is a great time to offer up a donation — large or small, they all help!

Return to Table of Contents

North American Regional Coordination Team

Speaking of staff spread thin... one way to help alleviate stress in San Francisco is by spreading the love out to the Regional Coordinators and the Regional Trustees. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any URI-related questions. If we don't know, we'll confer to find the best response for your needs.

If you prefer to reach someone by phone number, then we're going to ask you to jump through a small hoop (so that we don't have to publish phone numbers in a global medium): log into http://www.uriglobal.org/; click on "Member Directory"; and use the search utility to lookup someone by their first or last name. The query will run and you will get a list of people matching your term. Click on the row of the person you want; then a small window with their personal information (as much as they've filled in) will popup. Not everyone has completed or updated this information, but if you lookup fuqua, for instance, you'll find a full list of Stephen Fuqua's contact information, interests, and URI activities. If you would like others to be able to reach you as well, then please click on the "My Profile" link and update your profile as well.

- Coordinators
  - Steve Fitzgerald sfitzgerald@uri.org
  - Stephen Fuqua sfuqua@uri.org
  - Caroline Knaus cknaus@uri.org
  - Susanna McIlwaine smcilwaine@uri.org
  - Patricia Morningstar pmorningstar@uri.org
  - Barbara Trites btrites@uri.org

- Trustees
  - Don Frew DHF3URI@aol.com
  - Kay Lindahl mailto:kaylind@aol.com
  - Heng Sure paramita@drba.org

Return to Table of Contents

Copyright © 2004, United Religions Initiative and InterfaithNews.Net. All rights reserved.

Published by InterfaithNews.Net from contributions of the regional support team and various URI Cooperation Circles. For more information on the URI in North America, contact Dr. Stephen Fitzgerald at sfitzgerald@uri.org. Questions about this newsletter can be directed to Stephen Fuqua at sfuqua@uri.org.