

One Congregation's Response to a Call to Accountability

The Rev. Hope Johnson, Minister of the UU Congregation of Central Nassau (Garden City NY) represented her congregation on an exciting visit to the Gulf Coast that included visits to Gulfport MS and New Orleans. This visit was inspired by the Metro NY District Fall 2006 Chalice Lighters Call.

The UU Congregation of Central Nassau (UCCN) has been supportive of First Unitarian Universalist New Orleans (FUUNO) as a partner congregation since Hurricane Katrina hit. The District Chalice Lighters Call gave UCCN an opportunity to reflect deeply on its accountability to the region, not just to one congregation. UCCN then decided to broaden its horizons in terms of how to work on supporting the rebuilding of Unitarian Universalism not only at FUUNO, but in the region in general. UCCN is hosting an intergenerational New Orleans-themed Gulf Coast Campaign Kickoff Dinner on December 8. This event will highlight the stories, music, and food of the region and will offer an opportunity to learn about what is happening now so that the Congregation can better support the work of rebuilding. Special Guests Jyaphia Christos-Rodgers and family will represent not only FUUNO, but the entire region. UCCN is pleased to have found new ways to widen the circle as it works with others congregation-to-congregation and District-to-District. The hope is that there will be many ways in which congregations in the Metro NY District can work together. One example would be in forming joint work crews for the rebuilding. Another is to support already existing efforts in collaboration with each other.

There is much to be done. There is work for everyone. It will be wonderful to see what might be possible after the completion of our Fall Chalice Lighters Call. If we can dream it, we can do it. This is also meeting the challenge of what a congregation can do in fulfilling the mandate to "do something" against racism and classism.

UCCN will be hosting an ARDC-sponsored facilitated film showing and discussion of Spike Lee's film: "When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Parts" in response to the mandate to "do something" against racism and classism.

For other ideas, support and information on what your congregation can do, please contact ARDC, the Metro NY District Anti-Racism and Diversity Committee Co-Chairs Carl Heath at CEHeath@verizon.net and Rev. Hope Johnson at YoursHOPE@aol.com . Please visit our website: <http://www.antiracism.net>.