The capacity to revitalize

this movement, to make it dangerous, to make it powerful, to make it include a broad spectrum of people . . . the capacity to do that is in our hands.

-Peter Morales, candidate for UUA president

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his is an important year for Unitarian Universalists—we get to elect our next president. Although not as contentious or as complicated as electing a United States president, it is no less

'Small Talk' Endorses Peter Morales for President

complicated as electing a United States president, it is no less exciting. Our president provides leadership and vision for our faith, is a spokesperson in the larger world, and helps prioritize where the money is spent, on what services, and for what programs. All this is done in collaboration with the board and staff of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Our next president needs to be able to carry on our public witness the way Bill Sinkford has done so eloquently and so persistently. Our next president has to be able to understand congregational life, and congregational needs. Our next president needs to understand how our world is changing, and how our faith needs to grow and change with the evolving needs of every generation, while remaining grounded in our history.

I believe that Peter Morales is the right person to lead us in this direction. I worked with Peter when he was head of District Services and I was hired as the first Small Church Consultant working with the Northeast District. Peter understood that our future lay in the health and wholeness of *all* congregations—no matter their size. After Peter and I both left District Services, we maintained a collegial relationship, sharing ideas, and working for the health and vitality of our faith.

But never mind all I might say about Peter's good qualities. I have invited Peter to tell you himself, and I also invite you to visit Peter's website at www.moralesforuuapresident.org. Don't take my word for it! Exercise your right to participate in the democratic process. All congregations are entitled to at least two delegates who may vote—absentee or in person—for the next president. Don't miss your opportunity! Full instructions for voting are on page 3.

About Small Talk

Small Talk is published monthly by The Rev. Jane Dwinell, small church consultant. Small Talk is devoted to strengthening the small Unitarian Universalist congregation through informative articles, resources, and good ideas.

the Rev. Jane Dwinell Editor

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Jane is also available to consult with your small congregation.

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And now, Peter Morales' thoughts on small Unitarian Universalist congregations, in his own words.

"I feel as though the UUA does not know we exist. I feel as if they just take our dues and then ignore us when we need help." I hear this comment over and over as I travel around the country, and I find it deeply disturbing. Our small congregations typically feel unappreciated and neglected. Small congregations too often feel as though they are struggling alone and that the UUA does not care about them.

This troubles me deeply because I care about the future of our movement. I realize that most of our congregations are small. If our small congregations are not healthy and vital, Unitarian Universalism cannot be healthy and vital.

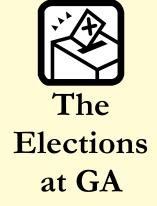
Hundreds of thousands of people come to our churches seeking religious community and a spiritual home. If we are to make Unitarian Universalism available to people where we have never had a presence, it will be by means of our small congregations. Hundreds of our small congregations do heroic, important work in small communities from Maine to California. Our small congregations are simply too important to ignore. They are an essential, irreplaceable part of our future.

We must nurture excellent small congregations that touch lives and are moral beacons in their communities. How shall we do this? The current economic crisis means that the UUA is entering a period where it will have less money. A large part of the UUA's budget comes from endowment income. Because of the value of our investments has dropped, and because the income each year is based on average value of the endowment over the past 13 quarters (three years and three months), we simply must do more with less.

However, most of what we need to do costs little or nothing. When I served as the UUA's director of district services, we hired the first small church consultant. We can make staff resources more targeted and more available to small congregations. We can be a lot more effective at using the resources we already have. For example, we could do a lot more to encourage and support networking among our small congregations.

We could also do much more to build relationships between congregations of different sizes. The large congregation I serve (780 members) regularly makes programs available to small churches in our area. We share many things. We share music and preaching for worship. We make our OWL and coming of age programs available. We help with pastoral care coverage. We even help in fundraising by allowing participation in our annual auction. And, of course, we host regional workshops on such topics as pastoral care and social action.

I am gratified to be endorsed by my good colleagues Jane Dwinell and Ellen Germann-Melosh. Small congregations are critical to our future. My commitment to small congregations is steadfast and will remain so if I am elected UUA president.



To see if your congregation is certified, click here.

http://dyn.uua.org/congregation/certlist.php

The UUA will mail delegate credentials to your congregation by May 8. If you are selected to be a delegate, make sure you bring this card with you to GA registration!

In **2008** there were a total of **4,915** potential delegates across our Association's nearly 1,000 certified congregations.

Vote at GA: the election will take place on Saturday, June 27th between Noon and 5:30 PM in the Exhibit Hall.

Vote Absentee: Absentee ballots will be mailed to congregations with the delegate credentials in early May. They must be mailed back and received by June 17, 2009 in order to be counted.

Mail your Absentee Ballot and Ballot Stub to: Secretary, UUA 25 Beacon Street Boston, MA 02108

Who is running for Election?

Two people are in the race for UUA President: **The Rev. Peter Morales** www.moralesforuuapresident.org and **The Rev. Laurel Hallman** www.hallmanforuuapresident.com.

There are also quite a few uncontested elections: **Gini Courter** for UUA Moderator and **Dan Brody** for UUA Financial Advisor are at the top of the list. There are also atlarge and youth candidates for the **UUA Board of Trustees** and nominees for the **Commission on Appraisal**, the **Commission on Social Witness**, the **Nominating Committee**, and **the General Assembly Planning Committee** – all running unopposed.

Who gets to vote in these elections?

If you want to vote in this election you need to be a **delegate** from a certified congregation.

How do you get to be a delegate?

This is something handled differently in each congregation. In some congregations, members who want to go to General Assembly submit their names to the Board – in others to the minister, and in others they are elected by the congregation. You need to find out how your congregation selects its delegates.

How many delegates are there?

Every congregation gets at least two delegates. Congregations with between 1 to 100 members receive two delegates, but for each additional 1 to 50 members after 100 the congregation gets an additional delegate. For example, a congregation with 101 certified members would have 3 delegates.

There are **clergy** and others who are **automatic delegates**. For more information, please go to http://www.uua.org/aboutus/bylaws/articleiv/6927.shtml

So, I'm a delegate – how and when do I vote?

Delegates can either vote at GA or by absentee ballot – in either case your vote is secret – your choices are confidential.

In some congregations delegates are free to vote their conscience; in others, delegates' votes may be split to reflect the congregation's decisions on the candidates. Again, check with your Board of Trustees to determine the process in your own congregation.

Since only two candidates are running for the position of president of the UUA, the winner is determined by simple majority. The new officers and other election results will be announced at a Worship Service in Plenary Hall on Saturday evening at 8:00 PM just prior to the start of this year's Ware Lecture.

Prepared bu the campaian to elect Peter Morales for UUA President

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Great Book for Sale!

Give your congregational leaders the best hands-on guide to the small congregation: Big Ideas for Small Congregations: a friendly guide for leaders, by Jane Dwinell and Ellen Germann-Melosh.

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