



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST MINISTRY FOR EARTH

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Invitation to apply for UU Ministry for Earth Support for Districts

Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth has received a \$6,000 challenge grant from the UU Funding Program to provide support for UUA Districts furthering the work of building a just and sustainable future for life on our planet. The grant provides for direct work with four Districts, but will provide a template for other Districts or regions to use in strengthening their Earth ministry. It also gives UUMFE the opportunity to build organizational capacity by identifying potential new members and donors.

The first component of this work is available to all Districts and offers a survey tool that has been developed and piloted in collaboration with Rev. Karen Brammer, a staff member of the Northern New England District (NNED), and coordinator of its Sustainability Task Force. The survey was developed to provide Districts with information about the level of interest in the intersection of justice and environmental work, sustainability, and Earth care. It is also designed to identify the kinds of activities taking place within congregations. This tool can help Districts to identify some of the existing needs and to create a base for a directory of congregants willing to offer information and support to others.

UUMFE is willing to work with Districts to administer the survey and cooperatively analyze the results regardless of whether Districts intend to create follow-up programming with UUMFE in response to the survey findings. This collaboration will provide Districts with guidance for administering and analyzing the survey and will assist UUMFE in with outreach within the District.

For four UUA Districts wishing to act upon the results of their survey, UUMFE is offering \$1000, \$500 of which to be raised within the District. This money will enable the District to create programs or tools in response to the survey findings.

UUMFE is prepared to co-create programming with Districts who wish to participate in this funded portion of the project. Our proposed programming centerpiece is a gathering within the participating District of those who have worked or hope to work in some way on environmental ministry or activism.

The gathering is intended to:

1. **SHARE STORIES** by creating opportunities to share stories of success and challenge. UUMFE will provide a template and facilitation for these gatherings using support from the UU Funding Program. The District will be responsible for identifying a person or team at the District level to organize the event.
2. **PROVIDE SPIRITUAL GROUNDING** by helping participants work through despair around environmental crises, particularly climate change, through worship, theological discussion, and by identifying where despair can encourage the transition to productive action.
3. **BUILD A LAY AND MINISTERIAL NETWORK** within the District and provide support for congregations needing direction and assistance.
4. **IDENTIFY ACTIVISTS AND MINISTERS AND CONNECT THEM** with UUMFE and other UU resources such as UU action networks, UUA Washington Office for Advocacy and Witness, UU Service Committee, UU United Nations Office.



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match of \$500 and make \$1000 available to the District to use as they think it can best be used to facilitate a District gathering, i.e. for transportation, food, consultants or resources. Because one intention of the Funding Program challenge grants is to help build fund-raising capacity, UUMFE will take the lead on soliciting individuals and congregations within the District to contribute toward the match, but it is expected that the District will assist as is appropriate and congruent with District policy.

In addition to this funding for the District, the UU Funding Program grant provides \$1,000 to cover UUMFE's expenses for the four District programs. This portion of the challenge grant requires that UUMFE raise a total additional \$1000 through new memberships and donations.

If a District determines that a facilitated in-person gathering is not the best means of addressing the needs identified by their survey assessment of congregations, UUMFE will consider proposals for other means of assisting congregations, including working regionally, in developing their Earth ministry that might take advantage of the matching grant opportunity. Alternate proposals must be congruent with District/UUMFE outcomes outlined below and must fulfill the organizational outcomes UU Ministry for Earth has established.

UUMFE will offer:

- A \$1,000 matching grant* (\$500 grant, \$500 to be raised within District)
- facilitation for the gathering,
- template for worship and process
- information about resources,
- open-space sharing of stories,
- other resource needs as identified by the survey in that particular district, in accordance with UUMFE's capacity.

UUMFE will work with two to four lay and ministerial leaders, identified by the District, to plan the event.

The overall District/UUMFE outcomes are expected to be:

- A stronger network of Unitarian Universalists in the District able to educate, support and lead congregations in their responses to environmental concerns
- Shared stories of success and challenge, which will serve to build morale and capacity among participants
- Support for the District in responding to the identified needs of their congregations.
- Affirmation of environmental justice and sustainable living among Unitarian Universalists and their congregations, including, but not exclusive to those congregations engaged in Green Sanctuary work.
- Increased visibility for UUMFE and other UUA groups working on environmental justice within the District.

The expected organizational outcomes for UUMFE are:

- To identify (including contact information) UUs whose interest and activity are congruent with our mission
- To identify one or more UUs to serve as liaisons between UUMFE, District Staff, and congregations
- To identify one or more District staff as contact persons for UUMFE/District communication and ongoing cooperation
- To increase visibility for UUMFE within District structure, i.e.: Link to UUMFE on District website

