



POLITICS AND LIBERAL RELIGIOUS VALUES IN THE WAKE OF KNOXVILLE

Sponsored by the
SLUUD Social Justice Council
October 4, 2008 – 9:00 am to 4 pm
First Unitarian Society, Schenectady
1221 Wendell Ave. Schenectady, NY
12308-2417 – 518-374-4446



Theme Speaker: **BLAIR HORNER**,
Legislative Director – New York
Public Interest Research Group
(NYPIRG)

POLITICS AND UU VALUES

This third annual conference features Blair Horner, a driving force behind NYPIRG's successful campaigns to protect consumers, preserve the environment, reduce tobacco use, reform and make government more accountable, improve healthcare quality and provide the public with information on how state government works.

CONFERENCE THEME

In view of the tragedy at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, we have used that lens to reshape our conference. In bearing public witness, in speaking truth to power, we run risks. The moral of Knoxville is not only the need to create safe congregations, not only to re-learn the practice and virtue of non-violence, not only to test our belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every person, but also to know that the work of building the Beloved Community of Peace and Justice may well have its costs. For most of us that cost is measured in time and energy. For some it is a matter of life and death.

In addition to the theme talk there will be a reactor panel, a question and answer period and topical workshops (listed below). Organize a car pool and come.

This will be an opportunity for social justice people to consider the implications of their faith in a critical election year. A registration form is included in this brochure. See our social action section on the new district website at www.sld.uua.org.

Tentative Schedule

9:00: Registration and Continental Breakfast

9:30: Welcome and Greetings

10:00: Ingathering Worship: Priscilla Richter, Minister, First Unitarian Society of Schenectady

10:15: *Theme Lecture: Blair Horner
Politics and Religious Values
in New York State*

11:00: Responder Panel: *How can UUs respond in a politically and religiously charged climate on the eve of election 2008?*

*Robb Smith, Executive Director, Interfaith Impact of New York State

*Dick Gilbert, Social Justice Coordinator, St. Lawrence District

*Louise Wu, UU seminarian and activist

*Kevin O'Connor, Social Action Committee, First Unitarian Society of Schenectady

11:15: Questions and Answers

12:00: Lunch

12:45: Workshops A

A1: *The Sunshine Project and NYS Government:* How to learn about and effect state government. Blair Horner

A2: *Politics in Pew and Pulpit – 2008:* What can and should churches do? What are the “Real Rules”? – Dick Gilbert, Social Justice Coordinator

A3: *Violence in Sacred Spaces:* How Do We Respond to Violence in our congregations? Can we – or do we even want to become truly churches of peace? Deane Perkins, Minister UU Congregation of Glens Falls

A4: *Poverty and Class in NYS –* Are we a “class church”? Kevin O’ Connor

A5: *Conscience in Public Life:* How do we apply our religious values to the world? Robb Smith, Executive Director, Interfaith Impact of NYS and board member SLUUD SJC.

2:00: Break

2:15: Workshops B

B1: *Criminal Justice and Prison Reform –* What can churches do? A Case Study. Donna Doran, First UU Society of Albany

B2: *Violence in Sacred Spaces –* Dean Perkins (repeat)

B3: *Dealing with the Death Penalty –* Is it still a “live” issue? Marie Verzalli, NYers Against the Death Penalty

B4: *Youth and Social Action –* youth and their leaders sharing their social justice programs (tentative)

B5: *How Do We Impact State Government?* A primer on “how to advocate”? - Blair Horner

3:30: Wrap-up and Closing Worship: Rev. Priscilla Richter

4:00: Finis

The building is accessible.

REGISTRATION FORM

To facilitate conference planning, please pre-register by October 1.

**Pre-registration fee (includes lunch): \$30
(Child care and Friday night hospitality only with pre-registration)**

Registration fee at door \$35

Lecture only \$10; Students \$10

Make checks payable to "St. Lawrence District" and mark for "SJC Conference"

Mail registration form and check to: St. Lawrence UU District, 695 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14222-1697, Att. Sue Tabone

Name: _____

Congregation : _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Request for display table _____

Please provide details for special dietary concerns, accessibility concerns, or if child care (only available with pre-registration) is needed.

_____ Child Care Needed (ages) _____

_____ Friday Night Home Hospitality needed

Workshop Preferences

First choice

12:45 – 2:00 pm _____ 2:15 – 3:30 pm _____

Second choice

12:45 – 2:00 pm _____ 2:15 – 3:30 pm _____