

Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108 • 617-742-2100 / FAX: 617-367-3237

President: The Rev. William G. Sinkford

Interim Moderator: Gini Courter

Executive Vice President: Kathleen C. Montgomery

History: The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), created in 1961 through a consolidation of the Universalist Church of America with the American Unitarian Association, combines two liberal religious traditions. The religion traces its roots back to Europe where in 1569, the Transylvanian king, John Sigismund (1540-1571), issued an edict for religious freedom. The religious philosophy led to the organization of the **Universalists** in this country in 1793, and the **Unitarians** (organized here in 1825).

Beliefs: Founders of Universalism believed in the universal salvation of all humans by God, while founders of Unitarianism believed in the unity of God (as opposed to the Trinity). Unitarian Universalism is a liberal, creedless religion with Judeo-Christian roots. It draws also from Eastern, humanist, and other religious traditions, and encourages its members to seek religious truth out of their own reflection and experience. The denomination teaches tolerance and respect for other religious viewpoints, and affirms the worth and dignity of every person.

Organization and Government: The Unitarian Universalist Association consists of over 1,010 congregations in the United States, with over 220,000 members, and is served by more than 1,100 ministers. The Association is the fastest-growing liberal religion in North America, and this year completed its twenty-first consecutive year of growth, at an average annual rate of nearly 2 percent. Each member congregation within the UUA is governed independently. In North America, the Association is made up of 20 Districts (served by a District Executive who is a member of the UUA staff), with each congregation having district affiliation. The Association is governed by an elected Board of Trustees, chaired by an elected Moderator. An elected President, three vice presidents, and directors of five departments form the Executive Staff that administers the daily activities of the Association.

The General Assembly, held each June in a different UUA District, serves as the Association's annual business meeting. The UUA includes Departments of Ministry and Professional Leadership; Lifespan Faith Development; Congregational Services; Identity Based Ministries; District Services; Advocacy and Witness; Financial Development; and Communications. The World, published bi-monthly, is the denominational journal. Beacon Press, an internationally honored publishing house, is wholly owned by the Unitarian Universalist Association.