

## Update on the UU Legislative Ministry in New Jersey

An outcome of the first UULMNJ conference in January is a statewide UULMNJ Steering Committee which met in East Brunswick in February and March and will continue on a monthly basis. Lynne Quinto of Washington Crossing and Rohn Hein of Cherry Hill were approved as Co-chairs and organizational decisions about the network have begun.

### **Congregational Involvement and Issues Determination**

An issues determination survey process will be implemented for participation of all 21 NJ congregations this spring. This process will be a tool to emphasize relationship building between congregations and UULMNJ. Ministers will be encouraged to be supportive and involved.

Three issues will be chosen from the top five on the survey. It is expected that the categories of issues chosen will be: 1) A uniquely UU issue; 2) An issue conducive to partnering with others; 3) A horizon or emerging issue. These three issues will be the focus of the UULMNJ's advocacy work for the first year or two years.

Reevaluation of priority issues will occur about every two years.

In communicating to congregations, we will emphasize that UUs have recently had impact on major state legislative issues including the death penalty repeal and gay marriage.

### **Organization Structure**

There was a first reading and some discussion of how the organization will make decisions and how the network will speak effectively.

The Steering Committee decided to affiliate congregations; individuals will be encouraged to be "friends." All New Jersey UU congregations are assumed to be participants.

### **Other**

A motion was passed to request the UU Congregation of Princeton to establish a restricted account in the name of the Legislative Ministry, New Jersey for the Ministry's future activities; to receive funds, and to disburse funds as needed by an authorized designated member(s) of the Steering Committee.

Lynne Quinto announced that she will be attending the monthly conference calls of the national UU legislative ministries sponsored by UUSC.

A workshop on UULMNJ start up will be presented at the May Metro NY District annual meeting by Doug Rhodes and Elaine Nigam.

-In addition to more work on the above points, issues of web site updating and use, financial support, affiliation agreements, governance, and By Laws will be taken up at the coming meetings.