

InterweaveWorld

Vibrant Threads from Unitarian Universalists for Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Concerns

▼ Winter 2008

Interweave's Mission/Vision

Interweave Continental is a membership organization **actively working to end oppression** based on sexual orientation and gender identity, recognizing that we will not be free until all oppression is a thing of the past. We are an affiliate organization of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, and our work is guided by Unitarian Universalist principles. We **value and affirm the lives and experience of Queer people of faith** of all ages, races, ethnicities, income levels, and abilities. By providing and supporting leadership, and working in collaboration with other organizations of similar vision, we strive to **connect and nurture all Queer individuals, communities, groups, and their allies.**

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Convocation 2008 in Denver

Registration now open—see page 4!

Registration is now open for Convocation 2008! For those who have never been to a Convo, here's what it's like: Convo is Interweave's annual conference for BGLTQ and allied folks, a weekend of workshops, worship, small group connections, chapter leaders' training, Interweave business, making friends, learning, growing, deepening, having fun, networking, and enjoying some superb hospitality.

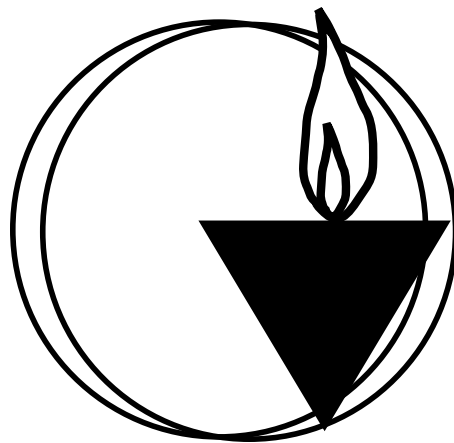
Convocation will take place this year February 22–24, 2008, in Denver, Colorado, at the First Unitarian Church of Denver. The word is that several area congregations are collaborating with First Unitarian on hospitality and planning. Registration is only \$90 for Interweave members if paid before January 26, a price that includes all programming and Friday dinner, all meals Saturday, and Sunday breakfast. Home hospitality and scholarships are available. The church is wheelchair accessible. A registration form appears on page 4.

This year's Convo will feature a repeat performance of last year's highly successful Small Group Ministry element. Attendees at Convo 2007 were randomly assigned small groups for the weekend, providing an opportunity for deeper reflection and relationship building with other folks.

Just a few of the workshops scheduled for this year's Convo include: being bi-inclusive, hate crimes, the new OWL for young adults, how our age affects how we see BGLTQ issues in our community, and what we and our congregations can do next to move our faith into the world. There will also be a panel discussion on marriage and family.

Here's the tentative schedule for the weekend. There will be a leadership training for those involved in their local Interweave chapter on Friday afternoon, followed by registration, supper, opening worship, and small group time. Saturday promises to be full and exciting: breakfast in the morning, followed by worship, keynote speaker Matt Kailey speaking on transgender issues, small group time, and a large group presentation. After lunch, attendees will break out into affinity groups for discussion, then rejoin their small groups, after which will follow workshops, the Interweave business meeting, and dinner. Saturday evening's entertainment has yet to be announced. Sunday morning attendees are invited to worship with the congregation at large, then come together for a closing ceremony.

Interweave welcomes everyone to Convocation! We hope to see you there.



InterweaveWorld ...

...is a quarterly newsletter published by Interweave Continental, Unitarian Universalists for Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Concerns.

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- ▼ The editor welcomes contributions. Send submissions to either of the above addresses.
- ▼ We publish quarterly: Spring (February 1), Summer (May 1), Fall (August 1), and Winter (November 1). The deadline for submissions is two weeks prior to publication date.
- ▼ Please send changes of address to either of the above addresses. If you would like to receive *InterweaveWorld* as a PDF, please e-mail the editor.

Join the Conversation

Visit us online at our new website: www.interweavecontinental.org. From there you can get news and information, check out our list of chapters, sign up for our email lists, and link to other groups doing good work. You can also contact a **Board Member** listed on page 9. Check our portfolios to see who to direct your question to.

UUA contacts

The UUA website: www.uua.org
The Office of of BGLT Concerns
Website: www.uua.org/obgltc
Email: obgltc@uua.org

Buy our stuff

Interweave t-shirts and more!
www.cafepress.com/interweavec

Words from the President

Last Year's Successes and This Year's Goals

by the Rev. Jonalu Johnstone

The Board agreed that Boston was a great place for our annual retreat! Not only did we enjoy the hospitality of the Pickett and Elliott House Bed and Breakfast, we were able to have formal and informal conversations with Unitarian Universalist youth and young adult representatives, visit Boston churches, and save some money since we have Board members close to Boston.

A major issue in our discussions was, of course, our affiliate status with the Unitarian Universalist Association. Like most other affiliates, our status was denied this year, which has had some immediate impact in terms of advertising rates with the *UU World*, and may have more effects down the road. We are doing our best not to allow this change to hinder our work, while pursuing two efforts towards reinstatement: a reapplication this year and ongoing conversations about a possible umbrella group with other identity-based groups whose status was revoked.

We are pleased to report some major successes in the last year:

- ▼ an improved, updated, and more interactive website (interweavecontinental.org),
- ▼ a completed curriculum on bisexuality—free for your use: go to our website to download (all you have to do is tell us who you are),
- ▼ significant networking with other Unitarian Universalist groups, including DRUUMM (Diverse Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries) and youth and young adults,
- ▼ and a resolution at General Assembly addressing transgender issues.

We set up four working groups to address our goals this year:

- ▼ Youth and Young Adult Outreach
- ▼ Coalition-Building
- ▼ Chapter Support
- ▼ and Web Support

We will also be working on a fundraising plan and, of course, independent affiliate status. Finally, we want to expand our ministry to queer prisoners through cooperation with the Church of the Larger Fellowship.

If you're interested in being part of the Board, now's the time to be thinking about it. Contact a member of our Nominating Committee: Jane Dwinell, A.J. Galazen, or Deb Hillgartner.

Hope to see you in February in Denver for Convocation!

Jonalu Johnstone is president of Interweave Continental. She lives in Oklahoma City.

We are doing our best not to allow this independent affiliate change to hinder our work.

News from the Office of BGLT Concerns

Thinking About Children and Youth

by *The Rev. Keith Kron*

I had an interesting conversation with a dear friend who is a psychologist in private practice a couple of weeks ago. She asked me if I had noticed something she had noticed with her clients. (She practices in Ohio, not the most liberal or conservative state).

What she had noticed were a lot of gay men and lesbians asking, "Okay, what next with my life?" Most were people in their thirties and forties, out, partnered, established in their careers, and trying to figure out what life had to offer. Did they want to be parents? What else could they do?

Working toward marriage equality felt like a long ways away, but adoption wasn't. Being out at work was fine and they hadn't experienced discrimination.

A week later, I had my second conversation with a parent about her child

(the first one had happened two days before). They suspected their child was trans. What children's books were out there (there's a growing list for teens, but still spotty for younger kids.) Her child was six and clearly didn't follow gender norms. He was asking for books about weird kids.

Almost 20 years ago, when I was teaching elementary school in Kentucky, and not out, I had parents who suspected I was gay and worried how I might influence their children. Would I make them gay? (In most cases, I suspected the children in question already were and the parents had picked up on something).

There is still a reticence for many to talk to kids about bgl't issues, particularly trans issues, though hardly exclusively. I know many of us have gone and talked in OWL classes and been greatly appreciated.

But there is a clearly a need for all

kids, regardless of gender identity and sexual orientation, for more information. It seemed to be one of the answers for "what's next" is about helping kids. While youth are more likely to be comfortable about bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender issues, there is also the paradox that most hate crimes are committed by male youth.

I share all this, since this is what I am thinking about, and wondering who else is thinking about it and has ideas.

I'd love to converse with those of you who are as well as knowing what questions you all are thinking about. Please drop me an email and let me know.

In faith,

*Rev. Keith Kron,
Director of the Office of BGLT Concerns
kkron@uua.org*

Bi Curriculum Now Available!

Funded by a generous grant from the UU Funding Program, a hardworking team of bisexuals sponsored by Interweave has just finished a new four-session curriculum on bisexuality, creatively titled *The Bisexuality Curriculum*. The curriculum is available as a free online PDF download for congregations and Interweave chapters. Go to www.interweavecontinental.org and click on "Bisexuality Curriculum" for downloading instructions.

As part of our grant proposal, we have challenged ourselves and all of you with a goal of having 50 congregations use the curriculum in five years. We gathered over 90 names of interested folks at this past General Assembly, and an additional 40 people have downloaded the curriculum since its release in November. Add your voice of support for bisexuality to theirs—download *The Bisexuality Curriculum*!

Candidates Sought For Interweave Board

As we get ready for Convo in Denver and our annual business meeting, the Nominating Committee is seeking good folks for open Board slots. If you, or anyone you know, is committed to BGLT rights in society and in our congregations, has good leadership skills, and can commit to monthly conference calls plus in-person meetings at Convo and GA (there is a small amount of money to help with travel expenses), let us know.

We are looking in particular for people with good communication skills, the ability to edit and lay out a newsletter, and experience in organizing events.

Send a brief resumé and letter of interest by email to Jane Dwinell, Nominating Committee chair, at sky@vtlink.net. Recommendations of persons other than yourself are also most welcome. Thanks!

*The Nominating Committee:
Jane Dwinell, AJ Galazan, and Deb Hillgartner*

Convo 2008 Registration Form

Instructions

- * Fill out this form, and mail to: Interweave Convo 2008, c/o Jeannie Owen, Interweave Treasurer, 1420 Raymond St., Joliet, IL 60431-8718. Visit www.interweavecontinental.org for a PDF version of this form. Web registration will not be available this year—our apologies for any inconvenience.
- * Please include full payment by check or money order, payable to Interweave Continental, with this form. (Canadian Registration must be paid in US dollars by money order only. We are unable to process checks payable on Canadian banks.)
- * Each registration will be confirmed by mail or e-mail as soon as it is processed. Registrations received after February 9, 2008 will be confirmed on site.
- * Lodging: There is a Ramada a block and a half from the church with rates starting at \$90/night. To book a room, call 303-831-7700 or visit ramadadenverdowntown.com. If you would like home hospitality, please request it directly from the onsite folks by January 26. Email Eddy Carroll at eddycarroll@hotmail.com to request home hospitality.

Personal Information

Name(s)_____ Address_____

City_____ State/Prov_____ Zip/Post Code_____

E-mail_____ Home Phone_____ Work Phone_____

My Church or Fellowship_____

☐ Vegetarian ☐ Vegan ☐ Omnivore ☐ Other food needs_____

☐ I need childcare (please request by Jan. 26 and include \$20 per child). # of children_____ Ages_____

☐ I need scholarship assistance (please attach a letter of explanation).

☐ I am seeking home hospitality. I will email onsite folks directly at eddycarroll@hotmail.com with my needs.

Registration Fees

Registration includes programs, entertainment, Friday dinner, all meals Saturday, Sunday breakfast, and snacks. This is a non-smoking venue.

	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Enclosed</i>
☐ Early bird Interweave member (before January 26, 2008)	\$90	\$_____
I am ☐ an individual member ☐ a member of a chapter (which one?_____)		
☐ Early bird nonmember (before January 26, 2008)	\$120	\$_____
☐ Regular Interweave member (after January 26, 2008)	\$120	\$_____
I am ☐ an individual member ☐ a member of a chapter (which one?_____)		
☐ Regular nonmember (after January 26, 2008)	\$150	\$_____
I want to ☐ join or ☐ renew my membership with Interweave!	\$35 individual, \$55 family	\$_____
☐ I would like to donate to the scholarship fund.		\$_____
<i>Total Enclosed</i>		\$_____

See you in Denver!

Tragedy in Clearwater, Florida, Takes Lives of Same-Gender Couple, Children, Ex-Husband

Editor's note: On Friday, December 14, on the west coast of Florida, Oliver Bernsdorff shot his ex-wife, their children, her partner, and then himself. All five were Unitarian Universalists and members of the Clearwater, Florida, congregation. You can read the full story at www.uuworld.org/news/articles/61384.shtml. Below, Interweave president Jonalu Johnstone offers a few words of condolence in the wake of this tragedy.

Our hearts go out to the Unitarian Universalists of Clearwater, Florida, where members Andrea Pisanello and Jennifer Bernsdorff, living together as a couple, and Jennifer's two children, Magnus and Olivia, were shot by

Jennifer's ex-husband Oliver Bernsdorff. We can never know exactly what happens in the complex context of any personal relationship, and in this situation, cannot discern what impact it may have had that the new relationship was a same-sex one. What we can know is the heartache and sorrow that has been created in a situation that many of us can identify with in one way or another.

Clearwater hosted an Interweave Convo two years ago, so it is a familiar place for some Interweave members. We trust they will find some way towards healing from this tragedy.

—The Rev. Jonalu Johnstone

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CONVOCAATION 2008!

Interweave Continental's annual gathering

February 22–24, 2008 ▼ First Unitarian Church of Denver

TENATIVE SCHEDULE:

Friday

Chapter leadership training
Registration
Light supper
Opening worship
Introduction to Convo
Whole group presentation: *Where We've Been and What Lies Ahead*
Small group time
Reception

Saturday

Breakfast
Opening worship

Keynote: Matt Kailey

Small group time
Large group presentation
Lunch
Affinity discussion groups
Small group time
Workshops
Small group time
Interweave business meeting
Dinner
Entertainment

Sunday

Breakfast
Worship
Closing

LEARN ▼ WORSHIP ▼ PLAY ▼ NETWORK ▼ RELAX ▼ BUILD COMMUNITY ▼

CREATE JUSTICE ▼ GROW ▼ LEARN ▼ WORSHIP ▼ PLAY ▼

LEARN ▼ WORSHIP ▼ PLAY ▼ NETWORK ▼ RELAX ▼ BUILD COMMUNITY ▼ CREATE JUSTICE ▼ GROW ▼

New Rainbow Café Opens in Park Forest, Illinois

Editor's note: The UU Community Church of the South Suburbs does not currently have a chapter affiliated with Interweave Continental. However, I felt that their good work should be acknowledged and information about the café printed for those Interweave members in the Chicago area who may be interested in attending. —D.D.Y.

The new café provides an opportunity for gays, lesbians, bisexuals and their allies to meet one another and socialize in a safe and supportive atmosphere. On the third Saturday evening of each month, the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of the South Suburbs will sponsor and host the café.

Adults (over 18) who identify as gay, bisexual, lesbian or other sexual minorities, or who are exploring their sexual identity, or those who are supportive of such, are welcome to attend. The purpose of the café is to provide a friendly setting here in the south suburbs, other than the bars, where les-bi-gays can meet others without having to drive to the north side of Chicago. The event will be informal, with no planned program—just a chance to meet and enjoy interacting with like-minded individuals. Those attending are encouraged to bring some nonalcoholic drinks and a dessert or snack to pass, or to bring a financial donation, but neither is mandatory.

Those who wish to can participate in a small discussion group. At present we don't envision any regular entertainment though an occasional "open mike" might develop. Some board games and cards will be available. The plan is to meet monthly at the start, but as the group grows and as members begin to share responsibility for the hosting tasks, it may be possible to meet more often.

The church is located on the southeast corner of Western Avenue and Sycamore in Park Forest, at 70 Sycamore Lane, just south of Steger Road. The café will meet in the first room on the left as you enter the front of the church. We will meet from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. beginning Saturday October 20th, 2007. If you have questions or want further information call 708-481-5339, follow instructions, and leave a message for the Rainbow Café.

Dave Matteson

Mark DeWolfe Award Nominees Sought

Interweave gives the Mark Dewolfe Award every year to a Unitarian Universalist who has demonstrated exceptional commitment to making life better for bisexual, gay, intersex, lesbian, queer, and transgender people.

Do you know a Unitarian Universalist whose work has advanced the cause of BGILQT people? Someone who needs recognition? Please send your nominations for the Mark DeWolfe Award to Jonalu Johnstone (jjohnstone@uuma.org) before January 31, 2008.

A Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

I found the article about affiliation (*Interweave Loses Independent Affiliate Status*, Fall 2007) interesting. Coincidentally, I am the former treasurer and current member of the Continental Unitarian Universalist Women & Religion former affiliate. We received the same close to form letter from Paul Rickter.

I believe that all of the former affiliates need to band together to deal with this issue. If the Unitarian Universalist Association is so interested in diversity, it was the affiliates who brought that to General Assembly. I understand the concern of the UUA that, in some cases, affiliates were using their precious GA space for annual meetings. That said, and coming from a probably not former GA junkie, most of the best sessions were brought to us by the affiliates.

To diminish General Assembly by having programs selected by a few folks on a panel will be sad.

In addition, the UUA purports to want the affiliates to show their continental wide membership interest. How better can those members come together than at General Assembly where we are surrounded by all of the other wonderful and diverse UUs?

This decision will be a great loss for the UUA. Most of the affiliate groups do not have a huge funding base and really needed the discounts for both GA presence in the "vendor" hall and to advertise in the UU World.

I was glad to see the note that the affiliates will still be listed on the website. I hope that is the case, although then the UUA gets the glory of showing all the wonderful options folks have without any of the support.

A very frustrated UU,

Geri Kennedy

UU Fellowship of Redwood City, CA

Interweave Membership Form

Personal Information

Name(s) _____ ☐ New ☐ Renew

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov. _____ Zip/Post Code _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Congregation _____

I/we want to receive *InterweaveWorld* as: ☐ PDF, via e-mail ☐ Paper copy

For Chapters: Contact person _____

Their e-mail _____ Phone _____

Chapter size: ☐ less than 10 people ☐ 10-25 people ☐ over 25 people

Membership Levels*

☐ Basic Membership \$35 US

☐ Family Membership \$55 US

☐ Sustaining Membership \$75 US

☐ Low Income/Student/Senior Membership \$20 US

☐ Chapter Membership \$100 US

☐ Other Gift/Contribution _____

Total _____

**Thank you
for your
support!**

Office Use Only

c. date _____

chk # _____

exp _____

entered ☐

notified ☐

Fill out, enclose payment, and mail to:

Interweave, 45 State Street #380, Montpelier, VT 05602.

***Canadian residents** – Send equivalent in Canadian funds to: Interweave, c/o Canadian Unitarian Council, Box 1179 King Street West, Toronto ON, M6K 3C5. Please send only US funds to the Montpelier address.

The fine print: Membership indicates that you are in sympathy with the Principles and Purposes of the Unitarian Universalist Association, as stated in *Interweave Continental's* bylaws. *Interweave Continental* is a United States 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, therefore, dues and contributions are tax deductible, as allowed by US and Canadian codes!

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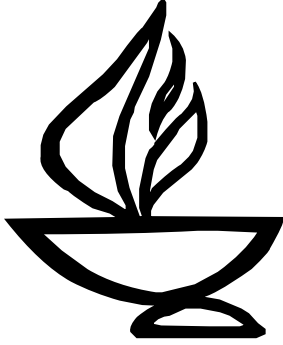
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brendajmyers@comcast.net

Keith Kron, ex officio liaison

UUA – OBGLTC
508.740.1917
kkron@uua.org

Last Word



*What shall we do with this great gift of Time, this year?
Let us begin by remembering that whatever justice, what-
ever peace and wholeness might bloom in our world this
year, we are the hearts and minds, the hands and feet,
the embodiment of all the best visions of our people.*

—The Rev. Kathleen McTigue, Unitarian Universalist minister

Thanks to our contributors who made this issue possible!

Jane Dwinell, Jonalu Johnstone,
Geri Kennedy, Keith Kron, and Dave Matheson.

**InterweaveWorld wouldn't be
the same without you.**

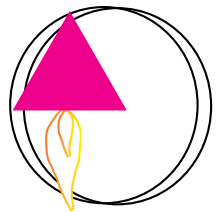
About Your Membership Expiration Date

In order to make life less chaotic for everyone, your membership renewal date (noted on your address label) may have been shifted to align with our new quarterly publication schedule. Please make a note of it. Thanks!

Important Membership Information... Please check the date on your address label! If it's dated this month... or last month... or – hopefully not – the month before that... that means it's time to renew your membership in Interweave Continental, using the form on page 9! Thank you for your membership and your support.

Return Service Requested

45 State Street, #380
Montpelier, VT
05602



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