


Interweave World

Vibrant Threads from Unitarian Universalists for Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Concerns ▼ December/January 2006-07

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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Come to Convocation 2007: Interweaving Generations!

by Jonalu Johnstone

Convo 2007 is all about connections. As a part of *Interweaving Generations*, we're working with the Youth Office of the Unitarian Universalist Association to encourage and support youth attendance and participation. Workshops will include youth concerns and outreach.

That's not all. Our keynote speaker has made connection across race, class, gender and sexual identities her lifework. Mandy Carter, activist for women's and queer rights and peace, helped found SONG (Southerners On New Ground) to build allies across various forms of oppression. Mandy has devoted most of her life to the social justice movement. A member of the national steering committee of the Freedom To Marry project, former board member of the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum and of the International Federation of Black Prides, Mandy was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize as part of the 1000 Women for Peace nominations! She lives in Durham, North Carolina.

Other workshop topics will include Living the Welcoming Congregation, Language and Oppression, and input from our Bisexuality Curriculum Team. For early birds on Friday afternoon, we'll feature a Chapter Leaders workshop.

There will be lively entertainment, things to do in Atlanta Saturday night, and Sunday worship at the Unitarian Congregation of Atlanta with Charlie Clements of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

February 9-11, 2007, in Atlanta. Be there!

Join us in Atlanta!

Convo registration form—page 4

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InterweaveWorld ...

...is a newsletter published six times a year by the organization Interweave Continental, Unitarian Universalists for Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Concerns.

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The Editor welcomes contributions to future issues. Please send submissions to either of the above addresses.

The Editor will be out of the country until March 1. Therefore, the next issue will be April/May. The deadline is March 15. Please send submissions earlier rather than later. Thanks!

Please send changes of address to either of the above addresses.

If you would like to receive *InterweaveWorld* electronically, in a PDF format, please e-mail the Editor at mountaingirl@vtlink.net.

Get in Touch...

...with Interweave

Our website: www.uua.org/interweave

Our e-mail list: go to <http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/interweave-d>

Our e-mail list for chapters: go to <http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/interweave-chapterleaders>

Contact a Board Member: listed on page 9. Check out our portfolios to see who to direct your question to.

...with the UUA

The UUA website: www.uua.org

The Office of of BGLT Concerns' website: www.uua.org/obgltc

Words from the President

Hope Beyond the Constitutional Amendments

by the Rev. Jonalu Johnstone

Many of you, I'm sure, are disappointed—if not angry—about passage of constitutional actions banning same-sex marriage in seven more US states. Colorado, Idaho, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin joined the parade of states to decree marriage for opposite-sex couples only. Many of you worked hard against the imposition of this legalized discrimination.

In Unitarian Universalist (UU) churches, we may find queer people overlooked or misunderstood, but we don't find ourselves hated and feared. Few UUs vote for "Marriage = One Man and One Woman."

We did not get here overnight.

Unitarian Universalists are more accepting than most of the American population for a number of reasons. First, we do not proclaim the merit of traditional ideas, but "trust the dawning future more." We believe that reason and love must be applied, even in matters of religion. What's more, UUs have gradually educated themselves about bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender (BGLT) people and issues. With more than half of our churches and fellowships officially Welcoming (with many having experienced training in Beyond Categorical Thinking), having thought about issues of oppression and their impact—no wonder UUs are supportive of BGLT rights, including, but not limited to, marriage.

The good news in the larger world is that Arizona was the first state where voters turned down a limited view of marriage. Yes, there was concern about the impact on unmarried opposite-sex couples, so Arizonans weren't simply rallying for the rights of BGLT people. But to have such a defeat may mean the tide is turning.

Many people who have voted for limiting marriage to heterosexuals have never really thought that much about the implications. They haven't considered the queer parents trying to protect their children, the elders who can't visit their beloved in the ICU, or the transgender person whose marriage becomes questionable once surgery has happened. Change in attitudes and beliefs won't happen overnight. Laws certainly won't change overnight. It took decades even for the education of Unitarian Universalists. If we've done it in our churches, we can do it beyond as well, particularly if we can work with others—religious and secular—who share our values and point of view.

Know that whatever work you have done in educating voters is not wasted.

President, *continued on pg. 3*

President, *continued from page 2*

Know that whatever work you have done in educating voters is not wasted, even if the measure didn't go our way this time. In the long run, every bit of education we have done will make a difference.

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

A Note from the Treasurer (it's not about money!)

11/30/06: As I looked at the checks for dues to Interweave last week, I saw addresses from Texas, Minnesota, Montana, and Ohio. Each month brings more renewals that cause my mind to dance over the map of our country. It is affirming to me as the treasurer from Illinois, but born in Missouri, to know that as members of Interweave Continental we seek to connect with other open-minded people across our country and hemisphere. We celebrate all of us and welcome the participation, contributions, and gifts we have to bring to the table of life.

I look forward to meeting and networking with many of you at Convo in Atlanta in February and/or at General Assembly in Portland in June. After all, in spite of its dimensions, through communications, media, and travel, it is a small world after all. And, we are, indeed, family.

*Jeannie Owen,
Interweave Continental Treasurer*

From the Office Goings-on at the UUA's Office of BGLT Concerns

by the Rev. Keith Kron

As many of you know, the Office of Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Concerns is part of the Unitarian Universalist Association's staff team called Identity Based Ministries. Also in our staff team is the Office of Racial and Cultural Diversity and the Office of Accessibilities. The offices all work together to help Unitarian Universalism be more welcoming to all people. It is a good arrangement and our staff team has some wonderful conversations. We talk about our work, the intersection of oppressions, and ways to help move our congregations along the path to being more welcoming.

One of the new things about our work is that we have realized that we want to take some of our thinking and create a blog for our staff team. We wanted to create more dialogue, and with so much going on in the world, this seemed like a good way to make that happen. There will be four of us writing about these topics and comments will be invited. It will be a chance to think about our world from our perspectives and allow for reflection and deeper thinking.

You can find our blog at www.uua.org/programs/idbm. We should start the blog just after January 1. This is an exciting venture and something new for us. I hope you stop by and take the time to read, comment, and suggest topics.

And come to Interweave Convo!

In faith,

*Rev. Keith Kron
Director, OBGLTC/UUA
Boston, Massachusetts*



Convo 2007 Registration Form

- * This form is for participants aged 18 and older. There is a separate form for youth participants at www.uua.org/interweave.
- * Fill out this form, and mail to: Interweave Convo 2006, c/o Amanda Schuber, 18 Forest Drive East, Tuscaloosa, AL 35404. Visit www.uua.org/interweave for a PDF version of this form. Web registration will be available soon.
- * Please include full payment by check or money order, payable to Interweave Continental, with this form. (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 2, 2007 will be confirmed on site.
- * Please request home hospitality and childcare by January 12 in order for on-site folks to make necessary preparations.

Personal Information *(Youth under the age of 18, use separate form at www.uua.org/interweave)*

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. 12 and include \$20 per child). # of children _____ Ages _____

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

I am seeking home hospitality (please request by Jan. 12). Needs/preferences: _____

Registration Fees include Programs, Entertainment, Friday dinner, and Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner, and light snacks. This is a non-smoking venue.

	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Enclosed</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Interweave Member, postmarked before January 26, 2007	\$90	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-member, postmarked before January 26, 2007	\$120	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Interweave Member, postmarked after January 26, 2007	\$120	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-member, postmarked after January 26, 2007	\$150	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> I want to join Interweave! For only \$35 per year, I will be able to pay the reduced price for Convo 2006, and receive <i>InterweaveWorld</i> 6 times per year, among other benefits. Please find my \$35 membership fee enclosed with my registration.		\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to donate to the scholarship fund.		\$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

See you in Atlanta!

More Convo Information

Schedule

Friday, February 9

10 am–2 pm	<i>Board Mtg</i>
3–6 pm	<i>Chapter Leader Training</i>
4–7 pm	<i>Registration</i>
5–6 pm	<i>Social hour reception</i>
6–7 pm	<i>Light dinner</i>
7–7:30 pm	<i>Worship</i>
7:30–8:15 pm	<i>Get acquainted activities/small groups</i>
8:30–10 pm	<i>Entertainment</i>

Saturday, February 10

8–8:30 am	<i>Breakfast</i>
8:45–9 am	<i>Worship</i>
9–10 am	<i>Keynote</i>
10:15–11:30 am	<i>Workshop I</i>
11:40 am–12:10 pm	<i>Small group session</i>
12:15–1 pm	<i>Lunch</i>
1:15–2:30 pm	<i>Workshop II</i>
2:45–4 pm	<i>Workshop III</i>
4:15–5:15 pm	<i>Business meeting</i>
5:30–6 pm	<i>Small group session</i>
6:30–7:30 pm	<i>Dinner</i>
7:30–8 pm	<i>Worship</i>
after 8 pm	<i>Night on the town</i>

Sunday, February 11

10 am	<i>Convo closing ceremony</i>
11 am	<i>Sunday morning worship with Charlie Clements preaching</i>

Workshops and Keynote

Mandy Carter of Southerners on New Group will give a rousing keynote on issues of intersecting and shared oppressions.

The theme of Interweaving Generations will be reflected in workshops about outreach to youth and young adults. We'll have a presence from the UUA Youth Office and folks out there working with queer youth. This Convocation will be truly intergenerational—youth and adult participants will learn, grow, and work together this weekend.

Last year's wildly successful Chapter Leadership Training will be repeated on Friday afternoon. Want to know how to start a new chapter or strengthen your current chapter? Don't miss it!

Workshops will also be offered on:

- * Living the Welcoming Congregation
- * P-FLAG
- * Language (remember the controversy around the word "queer"?)
- * and much more!

Hotel Information

We have a block of rooms reserved at the Holiday Inn, 2061 N. Druid Hills Road, 404-321-4174 (or 1-800-HOLIDAY), for \$79 per night plus tax. The Holiday Inn will help with transportation to and from the church for Convo participants.



Interweave Board Nominations 2007!

Current board members Jonalu Johnstone (president) Jeannie Keene (secretary), Neil Gunderson, and Allyson Diane Hamm will be running again for their second terms. We have two nominees for open slots on the Board.

Brenda Myers was a founding member and first chair of the Interweave North Parish chapter in North Andover, MA, and has been deeply involved in the chapter's social, outreach, and political activities. Brenda is also actively involved in the North Parish UU congregation where she has served as co-chair of the Membership Committee for two years.

Brenda currently works in the field of adult learning and education as an instructional designer for IBM, and as an adjunct faculty member in the M.Ed. in Instructional Design program at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

When not working or teaching or volunteering at North Parish, Brenda enjoys being outdoors, reading history, listening to live music, and playing the banjo.



Brenda is relatively new to Unitarian Universalism (member 2003) and to Interweave Continental (member 2004). She would like to serve on the board of Interweave Continental in order to connect personally with the larger Interweave group, and to help build a stronger connection between her local chapter and Interweave Continental.

Amanda Schuber served on the Interweave Continental board for several years until she had to step down while she held a post at the Unitarian Universalist Association's Boston office in Congregational Fundraising Services. Since she has left the UUA and returned to her home state of Alabama, she is happy to run for the board again.

Amanda has been active in continental UU young adult activities, and served as a Director of Religious Education. She has helped coordinate Interweave Continental's General Assembly and Convocation activities for several years.

*The Nominating Committee
Jane Dwinell (chair), AJ Galazen,
and Betty Jeanne Rueters-Ward*

So you want to start a Interweave Chapter?

- ▼ Ask for a free copy of our brochure and handbook on starting a Chapter.
- ▼ Contact a Chapter in your state or region for advice (see page 7 for a complete list of current chapters).
- ▼ Come to the Friday Chapter Leaders Training at Convocation in February!

Join the discussion...check out these e-mail lists!

- ▼ **Interweave-sponsored general BGLT discussion**
<http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/interweave-d>
- ▼ **Interweave-sponsored Interweave Chapter leader list**
<http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/interweave-chapterleaders>
- ▼ **Interweave-sponsored UU bisexual list**
<http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/interweave-bi>
- ▼ **BGILT news list**
<http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/bgilt-news>
- ▼ **BGLTQQ youth list**
<http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/bgltqq-youth>
- ▼ **Welcoming Congregation discussion list**
<http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/wc-d>

Interweave Chapters

Affiliated groups across the continent



Arkansas

Fayetteville
UU Fellowship of Fayetteville

California

Kensington
UU Church of Berkeley

Los Angeles
First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles

Montclair
Monte Vista UU Congregation

Ranchos Palos Verdes
Pacific Unitarian Church

Sacramento
UU Society of Sacramento

Santa Barbara
Live Oak UU Congregation

Santa Monica
UU Comm. Church of Santa Monica

Colorado

Denver
First Unitarian Society of Denver

Fort Collins
Foothills Unitarian Church

Florida

Clearwater
Unitarian Universalist Church

Gainesville
UU Church of Gainesville

Tampa
UU Church of Tampa

Venice
UU Congregation of Venice

Indiana

Indianapolis
UU Church of Indianapolis

Iowa

Des Moines
First Unitarian Church

Iowa City
UU Society of Iowa City

Kentucky

Louisville
First Unitarian Church

Massachusetts

North Andover
North Parish

Minnesota

Saint Paul
Unity Church – Unitarian

Missouri

Columbia
UU Church of Columbia

Kansas City
All Souls Unitarian Church

New Jersey

East Brunswick
Unitarian Society of East Brunswick

Summit
The Unitarian Society in Summit

New York

Bellport Village
UU Fellowship of Bellport

Brooklyn
First Unitarian Congregational Society

Manhasset
UU Congregation at Shelter Rock

New York
Unitarian Church of All Souls

North Carolina

Winston-Salem
UU Fellowship of Winston-Salem

Ohio

Cleveland/Rocky River
West Shore UU Church

Oklahoma

Oklahoma City
First Unitarian Church

Pennsylvania

Bethlehem
UU Church of the Lehigh Valley

Pittsburgh
First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh

Warrington
Bux-Mont UU Fellowship

Rhode Island

East Greenwich
Westminster Unitarian Church

South Carolina

Greenville
UU Fellowship

Spartanburg
UU Church of Spartanburg

Texas

Houston
Bay Area UU Church

Virginia

Arlington
UU Church of Arlington

Blacksburg
UU Congregation of Blacksburg

Wisconsin

Milwaukee
First Unitarian Society

District-wide chapters

Joseph Priestly District
JPD Interweave

★ indicates a Chapter featured in this issue's Chapter Chatter.

Only Chapters currently affiliated with Interweave Continental appear in this listing.

Is your Chapter missing? Time to renew your membership!

Questions? E-mail mountaingirl@vtlink.net.

Bi Space

The Bi/Trans Nexus

by Steve Hollingsworth

Recently I worked a little on the “Vote No on #1” campaign here in Tennessee. Standing for marriage equality is an uphill battle in our state: the amendment passed by almost a 4–1 margin. I’ll share with you my letter that was published in the *Chattanooga Times-Free Press*. It raises some issues around marriage equality that have received comparatively little coverage. But for readers of *InterweaveWorld* I focus in addition on issues that intersex raises for bi and trans.

To the editor:

If Amendment 1 becomes the law of Tennessee, prepare for unintended consequences. A small number of individuals have seemingly unambiguous sexual characteristics whose chromosomes belie their appearance. There are XX males, XY females, and still others who are neither XX or XY.

A law similar to Amendment 1 is already creating mischief in Texas. The Fourth Court of Appeals in San

Antonio (a state court) in its Littleton decision struggled with defining man and woman and decided that XX means woman and XY means man. They struggled for precision but ended up confounded by real people with real lives. Their efforts have put some people into legal limbo and caused a rush of atypical-looking couples into Bexar County seeking marriage licenses.

Based on centuries-old tradition, we demand, “Speak now or forever hold your peace.” If Amendment 1 passes, unrecognized genetic traits will surely lead to litigation and unasked-for annulments long after a marriage is consummated, and possibly even after death.

While these are low-frequency situations, if you found your marriage annulled against your will would its rarity matter to you? What kind of people are we to demand a gross injustice against even one person? What kind of Christians are we if we write laws that presume, for example, XXY individuals are God’s mistakes and may not marry?

Protect all marriages. Vote No on Amendment 1.

What I implicitly invoked to strengthen the impact on the readers was the “no choice” aspect of intersex (without using the term) persons who might be caught up in these misguided laws. Gay men and lesbians also frequently argue, or allow to be argued on their

behalf, that same-sex marriage is needed because they do not have a real choice.

What I left out is an important nexus between bi and trans: Both groups are oppressed when the question as to whether one has a choice enters the debate. Transgender people may have it worse. When someone looking male, for example, in all physical

characteristics claims to be really female, well, just consider society’s poor record when it comes to treatment of mental illness or use of the insanity defense in law: too many people cannot accept what others report as their reality if it contradicts evidence they believe they can see with their own eyes. They would ask, “How are we supposed to believe you aren’t just making a mixed-up choice?”

Bisexuals contradict the majority view that about half the human race don’t have the right equipment to look at as marriage material. Some monosexuals conflate a choice of more theoretical partners with promiscuity or inconsistency. In that light to them, choice itself is a bad thing.

In Unitarian Universalism we say we stand on the side of love. Many crave love; some never find it. Whoever should be lucky enough to find love and whomever they love, we say amen!

Steve Hollingsworth is Vice President of Interweave Continental. He lives in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Bisexuals contradict the majority view that about half the human race don’t have the right equipment to look at as marriage material.



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, B018-1179 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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Last Word



Most individuals have found God most clearly in and through others. The love of others is the love of God experienced in this life.

—Wendy Wright

Many thanks to our contributors who made this issue possible:

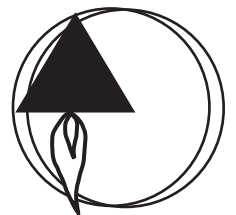
Jane Dwinell, Steve Hollingsworth, Keith Kron, Jonalu Johnstone, and Jeannie Owen.

InterweaveWorld just wouldn't be the same without you.

Important Subscription 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
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05602



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