

News – February 2017

Not a Moment, A Movement



Rev. Marti Keller

The cover on next week's issue of Time magazine will be single pink pussy hat and the headline: "The Resistance Rises: How a March Become a Movement."

Which is what I hoped would happen as a result of both the conscientious organization and overflowing spontaneity that went into the DC gathering (not really a march it turned out, due to the massive crowd) and the other marches all over the country and the world, big and small on January 21, the day after the Presidential Inauguration.

My perhaps overly optimistic expectation was that we would not just march for a few hours but mobilize for as long as it is going to take to overcome: the 60,000 people, including my husband, who turned out for the one in Atlanta, which started, appropriately, at the entrance of the Civil and Human Rights Center; the 150,000 people, including my daughter-in-law and three-year-old granddaughter in Boston; the

25,000 people, including my daughter, in San Jose, one of three in the San Francisco Bay Area. The small but courageous coterie of ex-pats in Singapore, including my oldest son. The several million who showed up in small towns and large cities all over the world, on every continent.

My experience of the 500,000 plus people DC March began at the Atlanta airport on the Friday morning before the march, when I reached my Southwest airline gate and saw a dozen or more women — and one male ally — wearing THE hats. Smart phones came out and there were introductions made, story of why we chose to go shared, and smartphone pictures taken all around.

That evening I had been invited by my colleague Rev. Debrah Haffner to attend a potluck dinner and training session at the Unitarian congregation in Reston, Virginia. Over soup and lasagna (prepared by the men in the church) we continued to exchange names and snippets of life passages, and to pick out the bright rose, pale pink, and even glitter yarn purple knit caps that had been collected from all over the country by Reston women. We practiced songs; we were given logistical instructions and otherwise readied ourselves for the early morning bus ride into DC.

Despite efforts to keep more than 100 people together for the beginning of the march, I and two friends soon got separated from the group, finding ourselves caught up in the waves and waves of marchers.

As Rev. Haffner says, "I have been in many marches in DC but never one as big or heart-filled." It was that, and it was also at moments overwhelming, chaotic, and even thoughtless — which is the reality of what happens when so many people want to be at

such a massive event and see the speakers and hear the songs and the speeches.

I was at times trapped by decisions made to push ahead, to find better vantage points, including finding ourselves in the garden planted by the Museum of the American Indian, trampling lettuces and other greens, being non-intersectional in a very visible way.

In other words, the March was all about humanness.

The Women's March has quickly evolved from being just a single January Saturday event. The evidence is mounting. I saw it in the actual physical signs of continuing activism: the pussy hat wearing protesters at airports, in front of the White House, and other public places in response to the ban on Muslims entering this country and the welcoming of Syrian refugees. In the many specific calls every day on social media in the name of the march to call, write, and in other ways resist the seemingly endless list of assaults on human rights in this infant administration. It can be seen in the loud and persistent objections to the ludicrous, reactionary cabinet nominations being rushed through with minimum vetting.

And now a Supreme Court justice nominee with a poor record on reproductive rights.

The UUWF will be discerning how we might best live out the guiding vision and principles that accompanied us as we congregated and marched that Saturday.

As we step and roll into this human rights movement.

With the nomination of a new deeply conservative Supreme Court Justice and fears about an executive order allowing

sweeping federal religious exemptions for companies opposing birth control and other women's reproductive health services, we will be discerning — along with other groups — the best strategies for responding to these threats as well.

UUWF Acts for Justice and Equity for Women and Girls

Rev. Marti Keller

Since our beginnings, UUWF, grounded in our Unitarian Universalist purposes and principles, has regularly acted for justice and equity for women — and girls. We have passed resolutions, written letters, signed on to petitions, participated in public witness, including marches, and in other ways let our voice be heard.

We are grateful for our partnership with other organizations, faith based and secular, with whom we work to amplify support for (or opposition to) laws and court rulings that either benefit or weaken the human rights of those who identify as women. We have increasingly recognized and lifted up the intersectional nature of oppressions: believing that gender justice is racial justice is economic justice. We are seeking out new ways to be allies and partners in this work.



Mrs. Lionel J. French, UUWF board member from Cleveland, O., center, discussed poverty needs and helped to lead discussion groups at a meeting of UU Women of the Ohio-Meadville District in Akron, O. Shown with her are, left, Mrs. Gordon McKeeman, former board member, and Mrs. James Olds, Jr., both of Akron.

The election of Donald Trump in November and the results of the Congressional races in 2016 have challenged us more than ever. As one public radio commentator recently observed: “Our plates have gotten heavy.” We depend on networks like the Religious Advocates Working Group, with a particular grateful shout out to the National Council for Jewish Women and Catholics for Choice, for tracking the fast moving developments in the arena of reproductive justice and drafting many of the letters to House and Senate leadership. We have also worked with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

Just in the past few weeks we have been a signee on a letter protesting the potential defunding of Planned Parenthood; and interfaith letters opposing the cabinet appointments of Senator Jeff Sessions as Attorney General, and Rep. Tom Price as the Secretary of the Health and Human Services Department.

In the case of Senator Sessions, we objected to his record on opposing the constitutional right to abortion, in particular his lack of support for protecting abortion providers from violence. He has opposed the Roe V.

Wade court decision legalizing abortion nationwide, and has voted to eliminate the Title X federal family planning program, among other votes to restrict access to contraception.

Our objection to the nomination of Rep. Price for DHHS head is based, in part, on his efforts to dismantle the ACA; to institute deep cuts to Medicaid, and his supposition that there are no women who are facing barriers to contraception.



Sermon Contest Deadline Approaching

Are you preaching about the Women’s March, or other timely issues related to justice for women and girls? Submit your sermon for the UU Women’s Federation Sermon Award! The deadline is February 15 – more info on our [website](#).

We Appreciate Your Support!

Many thanks to our [2016 and 2017 donors](#). If you do not see your name listed and believe it should be, please [contact us](#).

IRS Rules for Non-Profits

Gretchen Ohmann

What an uprising! More often lately I find myself singing the words to “[Bread and](#)

[Roses,](#)” (#109 As We Come Marching, Marching) in the gray hymnal, “the rising of the women is the rising of us all.” Or “the rising of the race” in some versions.

People who had not yet heard the call to social justice activism are rising up and learning how. Some of us, like Rev. Keller, have been in the fray for years, while others like me have done some things but not on such a huge scale before. So the basics are new to some of us. In congregations and our UU women’s groups, I am hearing questions about the limits to advocacy work for churches. Where do we find the answers??

The UUA has gathered [resources](#) for congregations (and groups) taking action. Specifically the IRS Guidelines are described and linked [here](#).

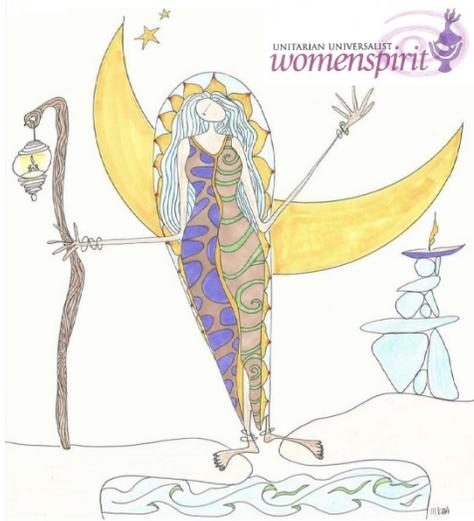
UUWF board members will be involved in leading workshops at two upcoming events: [SW UU Women’s Conference](#) in Dallas February 10-12, and [International Women’s Convo](#) the following weekend.

From the Archives

We’ve added two booklets to our [Herstory](#) page:

- A Brief History of the Work of Universalist Women 1869-1955 (edited 1993)
- 25 Years of Transforming the Ministry – A Sunday Service to Celebrate the Passage of the 1977 Women and Religion Resolution

February 7, 2017 / [G C Ohmann](#)



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UU Women Speak

Does your UU women’s group communicate regularly with its members? Here are two examples:

- UU Womenspirit (North Carolina) [newsletter](#) “She Speaks”
- UU Women’s Connection (Midwest) [newsletter](#) “Voices of Women”