



Mission: The International Women's Convocation works through concerted action and in partnerships with Unitarian*Universalists and progressive women of faith around the world to achieve tangible advances in the lives of women.

Background

The International Women's Convocation is the leading UU organization focused on global women's rights and empowerment. It is a 501 (c)(3) organization that grew out of the First International UU Women's Convocation held in Houston, Texas in February 2009, at which 600 women and men gathered to affirm the need for UU women and other progressive women of faith to weave global partnerships to enrich women's lives.

The International Women's Convocation's Priority Action Areas

- Leadership Development
- Economic livelihood
- Health care including reproductive health services
- Violence prevention
- Political expression
- Family and community values

The International Women's Convocation's Strategic Process

1. Convocations and gatherings: connecting women worldwide

Global Sisters Process: a democratic group decision-making process establishing priorities for IWC programs

- ✓ Provides women with leadership tools and skills
- ✓ Identifies and prioritizes issues
- ✓ Addresses issues through action-planning

2. Project initiatives: action to improve women's lives

- ✓ Supported by an online database and social network
- ✓ Facilitates global partnerships
- ✓ Works with individuals, women's groups, and congregations

3. Service learning opportunities: broadening multi-cultural understanding

- ✓ Engage seminarians
- ✓ Volunteer opportunities for congregation members

More about International Women's Convocation

- 1,000 online community members from around the world;
- Board members from India, the Philippines, Germany, Transylvania, and USA;
- Executive Director Dr. Zsofia Sztranyiczki, U*U from Romania, speaks six languages;
- The International Women's Convocation is a member of the Coalition of UU international organizations, together with UUPCC, ICUU, UUGAC, UUSC, UUHIP, and UU-UNO;
- Through International Resources Office, Faith Without Borders Program we generate opportunities to involve UUs in international work;
- The International Women's Convocation moves with tools in hand to help women act for justice, build stronger faith communities, inspire congregations, and provide opportunities and actions that enhance women's lives.

Communications with Our Members

- Global Sisters Worldwide Webinars/Conference Calls concerning projects that the International Women's Convocation is involved in.

All calls take place at 10 AM Eastern/ 9 AM Central. The schedule of the 2014/2015 calls:

- IALRW and IARF Conferences, Birmingham, UK. Sat., September 13, 2014.
 - Leadership Development and Global Sisters projects in Transylvania. Sat., October 11, 2014.
 - Unitarians in Bolivia. Olga Flores, Sat., November 22, 2014.
 - Micro Finance in Uganda: Lending Circles. Sat., January 17, 2015.
 - Philippine Livelihood Projects. Sat., April 11, 2015.
 - Leadership Development in India. Sat., June 6, 2015.
- Ongoing website with major upgrades in process;
 - Quarterly Newsletter available online at www.icuuw.com/UU-News.html;
 - Presence on social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter);
 - Online Community Membership increased to 1,000 in three years;
 - Online database of projects in priority areas.

Plate Collection for International Women's Day, March 8, 2015



Annually on March 8, thousands of events are held throughout the world to inspire women and celebrate their achievements. Congregations in the UUA have long observed Women's History Month in March as a time to honor the strong women in US history. The time has come to broaden our vision and to honor what women around the world are accomplishing individually and in community.

Since women are the majority of active members and volunteers in many of our congregations worldwide, **we invite your support to honor International Women's Day on a Sunday near March 8, 2015.** We hope that you will:

- Talk about women's issues from the pulpit, including the opportunity for women to lead or take part in worship;
- Raise awareness to women's issues through adult and youth education materials;
- Work for women's human rights;
- Join a network through our global faith community;
- Learn about the International Women's Convocation's work worldwide;
- Support the International Women's Convocation and women's projects through a plate collection.

Proceeds will support International Women's Convocation's work internationally:

1. Microfinance in Africa

The International Women's Convocation, in partnership with the African Rural Schools Foundation in Kampala, Uganda (founded by The Rev. Dr. Renee Waun, minister of East Suburban UU Church near Pittsburg, PA) is currently providing entrepreneurial training and soon will be granting business loans to women in Mutundwe Village, near Kampala, Uganda. 54 women from Mutundwe Village have completed the training phase of their micro-business program and are now meeting in community lending circles to refine their business plans. The International Women's Convocation hopes that this pilot project will be replicated in the future by other microfinance programs in Africa.

2. Global Sisters initiatives and leadership development worldwide

Leadership development is a core part of International Women's Convocation's global empowerment efforts. In March 2014, UNOSZ (Unitarian Women's Association of Romania) and the IWC launched a Leadership School for Unitarian women in Transylvania, offering complex leadership training to Unitarian women for the first time in Hungarian Unitarian history. The pilot program's success was overwhelming and interest surpassed expectation. Donated funds will increase broad participation and help sustain the project.

Inspired by the Second Convocation, women from Seng Kynthei, the Women's Wing of the Northeast India Unitarian Union, are learning and using community capacity building skills to address issues of healthcare, education, violence prevention, and economic empowerment. Funds are needed to help implement action plans and to strengthen our empowerment work in India, as well as to expand IWC's leadership development program to include the Philippines.

3. Future Convocation in USA (Monterey, CA, 2017)

In the effort to build a global network of Unitarian*Universalist Women ("weaving global partnerships to enrich women's lives"), we will hold our Third International Convocation in Monterey, California, U. S, in February 2017. This gathering will establish convocation projects through the Global Sisters process. Donated funds will be needed so that women from around the world can attend through scholarships and travel stipends.

Plate Collection Packets for International Women's Day 2015

Collection packets are available for download at <http://www.icuuw.com/IWD2015.html>

- ✓ Sermon ideas and topics
- ✓ Adult and youth education discussion materials
- ✓ Ways to connect with projects worldwide

5-minute Second Convocation Video for possible use: <http://vimeo.com/58021658>

UUA President Rev. Peter Morales's message on International Women's Day: <http://vimeo.com/88081141>

Please email us at admin@icuuw.com with your questions or go to our website to download the resources.

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