
SPEAK OUT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE • CHARLOTTE 2011
Friday, June 24, 2011

Today's Plenary schedule includes:

the Debate and Vote on the Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice Statement of Conscience (SOC).

Just arrived and glazing over about how to navigate the social witness process? An overview of the entire process is available at the Commission on Social Witness (CSW) booth #313. Remember that this daily CSW Alert is organized according to what's happening most immediately for the draft Statement of Conscience (SOC), the current Congregational Study Action Issues (CSAI), and Actions of Immediate Witness (AIW). All related events are described below.

Draft SOC on Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice – 2008-2012

Draft Statement of Conscience (SOC) – Ethical Eating – TODAY

Plenary III - Debate and Vote on SOC – ca. 9:00a.m.-10:00a.m.– Friday, June 24 - Hall C

Attached are the revised draft SOC, the list of unincorporated amendments, and the reasons the CSW chose not to incorporate those amendments.

Learn, Participate, Organize, and Energize! CSW-related Programs

Ethical Eating & Environmental Justice – 2008-2012

SOC: Implementing the Newly Adopted Ethical Eating SOC

Friday, June 24, 1:00-2:15pm, CC 217A

SOC: The Welcome Table: Finding Common Ground on Ethical Eating

Friday, June 24, 2:45-4:00pm, CC 208 B. Rev. Michael Schuler of Madison, Wisconsin will speak on reconciling the ethics of eating with our hunger for community.

2010 Adopted SOC on Creating Peace

Event—Implementation Year for Creating Peace SOC, Friday, June 24, 2:45-4:00pm

Our Bylaws call for a focused year of implementation after an SOC is adopted. Come hear what our congregations and Peace Ministry Network have done this past year, and what we can do in the future! Peace, at all levels, is too important a subject to let it fade away in our congregations.

Speakers—Rev. Dr. Frank W. Carpenter, Mac Goekler, and Dr. Sharon Welch.

CSAI—Immigration as a Moral Issue—2010-2014

Event—CSAI: Immigration as a Moral Issue—Speaker David Bacon

Friday, June 24, 1:00-2:15pm, CC Hall B. David Bacon is the author of *Illegal People: How Globalization Creates Migration and Criminalizes Immigrants*.

Proposed Actions of Immediate Witness (AIWs)

Deadline for Action of Immediate Witness Signature Petitions – 5pm TODAY!

As of 5 PM Thursday, text for each of the proposed Actions of Immediate Witness (AIWs) was posted at the CSW Booth. To be considered for placement on the Final Agenda, each requires 150 signatures (from at least 25 congregations in at least five districts). You can sign petitions at the CSW Booth (#313) on petition forms accompanying the text of each AIW or on the petition form of individuals circulating through the convention center. Only delegates may sign petitions. As a delegate, you may support as many AIWs as you choose. The signature petitions must be submitted as instructed by 5 PM TODAY to the GA Office – CC 105 – in the Charlotte Convention Center.

Plan ahead for tomorrow!

Saturday, June 25

Plenary IV – c.a. 9:54 a.m. – 10:09 a.m. – Hall C

We'll debate and vote on whether to admit up to six proposed Actions of Immediate Witness to the Final Agenda.

Mini-Assemblies on proposed Actions of Immediate Witness – 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Rooms 201 AB, 202 AB, 207 A, 207 BC, 207 D, 209 AB

These mini-assemblies will be your only opportunity to suggest amendments to the text of all proposed AIWs admitted to the Final Agenda during the morning plenary. Debate on each AIW as initially amended, debate on prioritized unincorporated amendments, and voting on each AIW as finally amended will occur during the Sunday afternoon plenary.

*Questions? Visit the CSW at Booth #313 in the Exhibit Hall
UUA Commission on Social Witness – www.uua.org/csw*

Draft Statement of Conscience Ethical Eating: Food & Environmental Justice

- 1 ~~We share with the living things we eat the miracle of life. Yet all animals must take the lives of~~
- 2 ~~plants or other animals to live. Eating ethically requires us to respect the organisms we eat and to~~
- 3 ~~choose foods produced in humane ways. Aware of our interdependence, eating ethically requires~~
- 4 ~~us to be mindful of the miracle of life we share with all beings. With gratitude for the food we~~
- 5 ~~have received, we strive to choose foods that minimize harm and are protective of the~~
- 6 ~~environment, consumers, farmers, and all those involved in food production and distribution.~~

- 7 Environmental justice includes the equitable distribution of both environmental burdens and
- 8 benefits on populations of residents and workers. Marginalized people have often been able to
- 9 find housing or work only in areas exposed to environmental pollutants with consequent negative
- 10 health and quality of life effects.

- 11 As Unitarian Universalists, we are called to address our relationship with food. ~~All of our seven~~
- 12 ~~principles call for recognition of and respect for the other—other people and other life forms.~~
- 13 ~~Ethical eating is the application of these principles to food. Our principles call for recognition of~~

14 and respect for the other. As we search freely and responsibly for truth, meaning, and spiritual
15 wholeness, we will make a variety of individual choices about food. Ethical eating is the
16 application of our principles to our food choices. What and how we eat has broad implications
17 for our planet and society. Our values, principles, and integrity call us to seek compassion, health
18 and sustainability in the production of food we raise or purchase.

19 Food production involving growing, processing, packaging, transporting and distributing food
20 has become a vast worldwide industry. The mass production of food often maximizes
21 production while minimizing price. This mass production has greatly increased food supply, but
22 has resulted in the overuse of fertilizers and pesticides with crops and the mistreatment of
23 animals and workers in food production. Both this overuse and the large waste streams from
24 concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), result in pollution of water ~~and~~, land and air.

25 Access to an adequate supply of healthy food and clean water is a basic human need and right.
26 Many people do not have adequate food supplies, while others have a surplus. In many locations,
27 poor distribution of food is a ~~major cause of hunger~~ major contributor to hunger and
28 malnutrition. The effects of climate change, weather conditions and armed conflicts can also
29 expose many people to starvation. Paradoxically, an abundance of food does not guarantee
30 access to healthy food.

31 We acknowledge that ~~steps need~~ aggressive action needs to be taken that will ensure an adequate
32 food supply for the ~~fast-growing~~ world population; reduce the use of energy, water, fertilizer,
33 pesticides and hormones in food production; mitigate climate change and ~~reduce~~ end the
34 inhumane treatment of animals. These steps point toward an eating pattern that emphasizes plant-
35 based foods over animal-based foods.

36 Minimally-processed plant-based diets are healthier diets. Some of us believe that it is ethical
37 only to eat plants while others of us believe that it is ethical to eat both plants and animals. We
38 do not call here for a single dietary approach. We encourage a knowledgeable choice of food
39 based on understanding the demands of feeding a growing world population, the health effects of
40 particular foods and the consequences of production, worker treatment, and transportation
41 methods. We commit to applying this knowledge to both personal and public actions,
42 recognizing that many of us might embark on a dramatic change in eating choices and some
43 might pay more for food that is ethically produced. For congregations, helping congregants gain
44 this understanding and supporting their choices will require a long-term collective process of
45 engagement, education, ~~and discernment,~~ and advocacy.

46 As individuals and as congregations, we recognize the need to examine the impact of our food
47 choices and our practices and make changes that will ~~lessen our burden on the rest of the world~~
48 lighten the burden we place on the world. We also recognize that many food decisions will
49 require us to make trade-offs between competing priorities. These priorities include: taste,
50 selection, price, human health, environmental protection, sustainability, adequate food supply,
51 humane treatment of animals used for food, and fair treatment of farm and food workers.

52 **Environmental** concerns include the use of fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and hormones and
53 high volumes of animal wastes produced by CAFOs, all of which can contaminate ~~land~~ soil, air
54 and water. Contributors to global warming include the overreliance on fossil fuels for food
55 production, the methane produced by animals including but not limited to cattle, sheep and pigs,
56 ~~cattle~~, and the long distance transport of food. Expanding agriculture and animal farming often
57 removes natural habitats and reduces natural biodiversity. An additional environmental concern
58 includes the deterioration of the oceans and its life forms due to overfishing and pollution.

59 **Human Health** concerns include producers' use of growth-promoters, pesticides and antibiotics
60 that can affect child development, antibiotic resistance, and other health conditions. Advertising
61 and marketing can encourage overeating, poor food choices, ~~and~~ a focus on body image that can
62 ~~lead~~ contribute to eating disorders, and the use of infant formula in preference to breast feeding.

63 Concerns about the **Humane Treatment of Animals** include ~~crowding animals inhumanely in~~
64 ~~CAFOs and serious mistreatment of many animals used for food during slaughter~~ intensive
65 confinement and abuse in CAFOs, and inhumane conditions during production, transport, and
66 slaughter.

67 Concerns about the **Fair Treatment of Food and Farm Workers** include low pay, poor and
68 unsafe working conditions, exploitation of undocumented workers and enslavement of others.

69 **Policy** concerns include agricultural subsidies that reward the production of certain crops and
70 animal products that are less healthful and environmentally-friendly than unsubsidized ones and
71 that penalize small to moderate sized farming operations. Agricultural subsidies of exported
72 grains crops have driven small farmers in developing countries off their land because they are
73 unable to compete on price.

74 ~~We affirm that to work for environmental and economic justice is to work against many forms of~~
75 ~~oppression. All of us can contribute to a healthier, more equitable world by applying our UU~~
76 ~~principles to our actions related to food. Ethical eating requires us to approach these concerns~~
77 ~~with a recognition that they are interconnected and an understanding that learning to eat ethically~~
78 ~~will require creativity, patience and resolve.~~

79 Classism, racism, sexism and other forms of oppression are deeply connected to economic
80 justice which is a prime determinant of access to food. Some of us will not be able to pay more
81 for ethical food. Others of us will. Yet, all of us can have a role in improving the ethics of food.

82 We affirm that to fight for environmental and economic justice is inherently a fight against all
83 forms of oppression. As a result, ethical eating requires different ways of thinking about these
84 issues that reflect their interconnected nature, and understand that this work will require
85 creativity, patience and resolve.

86 **CALLS TO ACTION**

87 **Individual Actions**

88 ~~We covenant~~ Recognizing that individual circumstances vary, we aspire to buy, raise and
89 consume food for ourselves and our families that:

- 90 • increases our proportionate consumption of plant-based foods, which increases the global
- 91 access to calories, provides health benefits, and prevents injuring animals;
- 92 • minimizes the pain and suffering of animals by purchasing meat or seafood produced
- 93 under humane conditions, for those who choose to eat meat or seafood;
- 94 • minimizes the negative environmental effects of raising animals or plants by purchasing
- 95 organically-produced food, and seafood certified responsibly farmed or harvested;
- 96 • minimizes transportation-related carbon dioxide emissions by obtaining foods locally
- 97 produced through home or community gardens, farmers markets, or community
- 98 supported agriculture (CSA);
- 99 • provides farm workers with living wages by purchasing fair trade certified products;
- 100 • contributes to social harmony by eating communally with others; and
- 101 • promotes health, consuming food in quantities that do not lead to obesity.

102 We ~~covenant~~ to advocate for the benefit of ~~food organisms~~ animals, plants, food workers, the
103 environment and humanity by:

- 104 • asking food sellers and producers to label where their products come from to determine
105 distance of transport and whether the products were irradiated or contain Genetically
106 Modified Organisms (GMOs);
- 107 • telling food sellers that we will buy and pay more for food produced by treating animals
108 humanely, treating workers fairly, and protecting the environment;
- 109 • pressing food sellers to require that their suppliers certify the humane treatment of
110 animals;
- 111 • advocating for federal and state legislation that supports the distribution of adequate
112 ethical food supplies, effective safety inspection of food production, and realignment of
113 agricultural subsidies to support growing more produce and the viability of small
114 farmers; and
- 115 • protecting and encouraging organic food production and its producers.

116 **Congregational Actions**

117 As congregations, we ~~covenant~~ aspire to:

- 118 • provide and sell more plant-based, organic, locally produced, and fair trade foods at
119 congregational events;
- 120 • ~~organize members to work for food justice by~~ promote economic accessibility to safe,
121 ethically produced food by organizing members to work for food justice through
122 activities such as: urging grocery chains to locate stores in low income neighborhoods,
123 supporting local food co-ops, helping people obtain food stamps, advocating for
124 increased funding to alleviate hunger, and assisting local meals on wheels and food bank
125 programs;
- 126 • support the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, Unitarian Universalist United
127 Nations Office and other relevant UU organizations in their efforts to ensure that
128 everyone has adequate nutritious food, produced sustainably;
- 129 • provide educational programs for all ages that address the issues of environmental justice,
130 world hunger, gardening, food preparation and nutrition;
- 131 • become Green Sanctuary ~~certified~~ certified accredited and include ethical eating in programs;
- 132 • advocate for healthful food for school ~~lunches~~ and other institutional meals; and
- 133 • engage in direct action and in solidarity with workers and labor advocacy groups to
134 support agricultural and food workers.

135 **With gratitude and reverence for all life, we savor food mindful of all that has contributed**
136 **to it. We commit ourselves to a more equitable sharing of the earth's bounty.**

Unincorporated Amendments

A: Line 34-35: Delete sentence and replace with 'These steps call for an evolution of our eating habits to include more locally grown, minimally processed whole foods. We acknowledge that this evolution must respect diversity in cultures, nutritional requirements, and religious practices.' **CSW Rationale: Obscures the recommendation to increase consumption of plants and reduce the consumption of animals.**

B: Line 36: Delete first sentence. **CSW Rationale: Existing sentence is correct.**

C: Line 73: Add 'The consequences of agricultural subsidies and mono-cropping include increased gender disparity when women have been the traditional agricultural producers.' **CSW Rationale: Sentence includes non-policy elements in the policy section.**

D: Line 24: Add “We believe transformation must take place in our food production system as profound as the changes that gave rise to industrial agriculture.” after ‘land’. **CSW Rationale: The term ‘industrial agriculture’ is undefined and not in common usage.**

E: Line 49: Reorder list of priorities to: ‘fair treatment of farm and food workers, human health, adequate food supply, environmental protection, the humane treatment of animals, sustainability, selection, price and taste.’ **CSW Rationale: Insufficient rationale for changing the order.**

F: Line 60: Add after ‘health conditions’, ‘Some current scientific findings recognize that there can be harmful effects from the use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) on human health and ecosystems.’ **CSW Rationale: This sentence is unsubstantiated and addressed elsewhere in the document.**

G: Line 6: Add “and promotes humane treatment of animals.” after ‘distribution’. **CSW Rationale: redundant with ‘minimize harm” in prior line.**

H: Line 11: Add “and food systems” after ‘food’. **CSW Rationale: ‘Food systems’ would require further definition; ‘food production’ is defined in Line 14.**

I: Line 24: Add “Agricultural subsidies and trade practices also negatively affect small farmers in the U.S. and developing countries.” after ‘land’. **CSW Rationale: Covered in lines 60-63; addresses policy while this is a definitional paragraph.**

J: Line 28: Change ‘expose’ to ‘lead’. **CSW Rationale: ‘Expose’ is a more appropriate term here.**

K: After Line 45: Insert: ‘Unitarian Universalists aspire to radical hospitality and developing the beloved community. Therefore we affirm that the natural world exists not for the sole benefit of one nation, one race, one gender, one religion, or even one species, but for all. Working in defense of mutual interests, Unitarian Universalists acknowledge and accept the challenge of enlarging our circle of moral concern to include all living creatures.’ **CSW Rationale: Concepts addressed elsewhere.**

L: Line 51: Insert ‘fair trade practices,’ after ‘food’ and before ‘and fair’. **CSW Rationale: Covered by existing language.**

M: Line 57-58: Delete final sentence. Replace with ‘Animals raised sustainably on pasture fulfill a beneficial role in the natural cycle of life. But the expansion of mono-crop and GMO agriculture and industrial animal farming removes natural habitats, reduces biodiversity, and threatens the capacity of the Earth to sustainably support life.’ **CSW Rationale: Mono-crop and GMOs are not the only agricultural and animal farming practices that remove natural habitats and reduce biodiversity.**

N: Line 56: Add after ‘food’, ‘Animals raised sustainably on pasture fulfill a beneficial role in the natural cycle of life.’ **CSW Rationale: Implies that ‘natural cycle of life’ requires domesticated animals.**

O: Line 58: Add after ‘pollution’, ‘This results in deterioration of all ocean based life.’ **CSW Rationale: Redundant to prior sentence.**

P: Line 62: Add ‘Advertising and marketing also encourages the use of infant formula in preference to breastfeeding which can result in harmful consequences.’ **CSW Rationale: This issue now addressed by an incorporated amendment.**

Q: Line 63-64: Delete. Replace with ‘Interests of animals include intensive confinement and abuse in CAFOs and inhumane conditions during production, transport and slaughter.’ **CSW Rationale: Redundant to an incorporated amendment.**

R: Line 73: Delete. Replace with ‘We recognize replicating corporate agricultural modes in our aid to developing countries is not in the best interest of humanity. We support the development of farming models that safeguard the environment, produce safe foods, provide economic benefits to all economic levels, and create environmentally and economically sustainable models.’ **CSW Rationale: First sentence unclear and too broad. Second sentence does not fit in this section on policy.**

S: Line 87: Add ‘As individuals and congregations, we affirm our commitment to practice responsibly the ancient ethic of stewardship and the modern principle of sustainability.’ **CSW Rationale: Introduces a new concept of ‘ancient ethic of stewardship’ that is not appropriate in the Call to Action section.**

T: Line 88-89: Delete. Replace with, ‘Recognizing that individual circumstances vary, we aspire to:’ **CSW Rationale: Redundant to a previously accepted amendment.**

U: Line 91: Delete, ‘and prevents injuring animals;’. **CSW Rationale: Important consequence of eating a proportionate plant-based diet.**

V: Line 92-93: Delete. Replace with, ‘causes the least harm to living creatures;’. **CSW Rationale: Current language is a clear Call to Action.**

W: Line 95: Delete ‘organically’. Replace with, ‘responsibly’. **CSW Rationale: Organic has a clearer definition.**

X: Line 99: Delete. Replace with, ‘provides farm workers with living wages and safe working environments;’ **CSW Rationale: Does not provide a clear method of implementing the action.**

Y: Line 101: Delete. Replace with, ‘promotes all aspects of good health.’ **CSW Rationale: Too vague and does not offer method to implement Call to Action.**

Z: Line 101: Add, ‘including breast milk for infants.’ **CSW Rationale: Breastfeeding addressed earlier in document.**

AA: Line 101: Add as new bullet, ‘purchases fair trade certified products as available.’ **CSW Rationale: Addressed earlier in document.**

AB: Line 107-108: Delete. **CSW Rationale: Important method for influencing food sellers.**

AC: Line 110: Add, ‘and the humane slaughter of all animals;’ **CSW Rationale: Included within the humane treatment of animals; redundant.**

AD: Line 111: Delete, ‘Advocating...supports’. Replace with, ‘supporting legislation that requires the labeling of products that are irradiated or contain Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)’. **CSW Rationale: Too specific within context of bullet; subject addressed in first bullet.**

AE: Line 114: Add as new bullet, ‘promoting global recognition of the principle of food sovereignty, which holds that people and communities have the right to define their own agricultural, labor, fishing, food, and land policies.’ **CSW Rationale: Introduces new concept, which is inappropriate in Calls to Action section.**

AF: Line 126-128: Delete. Replace with, ‘support Unitarian Universalist (UU) organizations working for environmental justice and/or working to ensure that all people have adequate, nutritious, sustainably-produced food.’ **CSW Rationale: Does not name specific globally-oriented, long-standing organizations.**

AG: Line 128: Add, ‘and that infants are breastfed in the early months of life.’ **CSW Rationale: Too specific within context of this sentence.**

AH: Line 128: Add as new bullet, ‘advocate government support and funding for research, development, and education for more just and sustainable agriculture, especially the restoration of soils, water supplies, and viable plant and animal communities.’ **CSW Rationale: Extends discussion beyond food and environmental justice.**

AI: Line 130: Add as new bullet, ‘support community gardens and community supported agriculture (CSAs).’ **CSW Rationale: Addressed in Individual Actions section.**

AJ: Line 134: Add new bullet, ‘build on our Creating Peace Statement of Conscience and extend grace and goodwill to ourselves and others, practicing compassionate communication and generosity of spirit.’ **CSW Rationale: Expands discussion beyond Food and Environmental Justice.**

AK: Line 134: Add new heading ‘Association Actions’ and new bullet, ‘our Association and affiliated organizations will advocate for U.S. and international policies that further the principles embodied in this Statement of Conscience.’ **CSW Rationale: By its nature, it is already the responsibility of the Association to implement the SOC.**

AL: Line 134: New bullet, ‘endeavor to practice the aspirations embodied in this statement in all their activities.’ **CSW Rationale: Already the responsibility of the Association to implement the SOC.**

AM: Line 135: Delete ‘of...it’. Replace with, ‘of all who contribute to this vital, universally essential and profoundly personal gift.’ **CSW Rationale: Does not reflect the non-human contributions to our food.**