

## **Leadership Conference, Khasi Hills, India, January 2006**

The ICUU/UUA sponsored Leadership Training on Building Our Spirituality Together was an awesome experience for the organizers, trainers and trainees.

The training, first ever with residential facility was attended by 35 young leaders drawn from different congregations of the Unitarian Union, and was held in the serene premises of the NEHU Guest House in Shillong. The faculty led by Rev. Abhi Janamanchi, Rev. Richard A. Kellaway and David Shaw also included Rev. Pearl Greene Marbaniang, Rev. Helpme H. Mohrmen, Rev. Derrick P. Pariat and Bah Khlur Mukhim.

The topics taken up at the training were the ones the Ministers Association of the Unitarian Union in consultation with Rev. Olivia Holmes and Rev. Abhi had surveyed and carefully considered (also discussed by e-mail) to be the need of our young potential leaders to deliberate upon.

The questions raised at the Workshop through lectures and Group discussions included:

- Presentations on The Art of Worship by Revs. Abhi Janamanchi, Richard A. Kellaway and David Shaw.
- Presentations on the History of Khasi Unitarianism by Revs. P.G. Marbaniang and Helpme H. Mohrmen.
- Presentations on American Unitarian Universalism by Revs. Abhi and Richard
- Presentation on British Unitarianism by David Shaw Presentations on Jesus Personal and UU views by Rev. Abhi and Rev. Richard
- Presentation on Leadership Development by David Shaw and followed by group discussion and group activities Credo Development by Rev. Richard A. Kellaway this helped every participant develop a personal credo Guided Meditation-Theory and Practice by Bah Khlur Mukhim and Rev. Abhi Janamanchi
- Positive Statement of Faith by Rev. Derrick P. Pariat and what ensued was a brainstorming session on our Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. This till date is an ongoing exercise as the Ministers' Association in its monthly Leadership Training programmes is still working on how to turn some of the weaknesses and threats to our strengths and opportunities. A special workshop on SWOT was also conducted by Rev. Derrick P. Pariat at the Annual Youth conference held on the 4th & 5th April in Jowai.
- Lecture cum Demonstration on the Importance of Music in Congregational Worship was presented by Mangkynsai Pariat and Pliebok Myllemngap and was followed by singing of songs and hymns.

The Training as a whole was a grand success as we were able to convene almost all of our young English speaking potential leaders at one venue and for the first time made them realize what they would be missing if they failed to attend such workshops. Most of them have stressed the need for more of such programmes in the future. They all went back to their congregations recharged with confidence, passion and enthusiasm to design meaningful worship services, to

share their newly acquired leadership skills, and to look at their faith more positively. This training has enabled them to articulate the faith which they hold very dearly.