

Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council



Louis C. Cornish “Living the Mission” Award – 2013

for Outstanding Contributions to International Partnership

PRESENTED BY THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST PARTNER CHURCH COUNCIL TO

The Reverend Dr. David Keyes

Persistently and consistently, David has articulated a comprehensive and ever-expanding vision of international partnership that is personal, theological, political, and systemic.

With a focus wider than most others can imagine, with depth of conviction and power of persuasion, David singularly set the PCC on the vast, expansive, imaginative and exciting course that enlivens our partnership movement today.

Much as he loves Transylvania, even as he was one of the ambitious founders of Project Harvest Hope, David foresaw the vast potential of international partnerships that could engage not only our historic Unitarian friends but new friends in Asia and Africa, not only Unitarians but, potentially, other kindred religious movements, such as the Dutch Remonstrants and the Japanese Rissho-Kosei-Kai. When most others could only imagine congregational partnerships, David imagined partnerships within and among social change agents that could engage with entities beyond congregations, such as the partners of the Holdeen India Program.

David thinks, dreams and advocates outside of every conventional box.

Not always have David's visions been realized but consistently he has been ahead of our pack, calling and challenging us to opportunities by others unseen.

David first described his vision in his prophetic 1999 book, *Most Like An Arch*, and ever since he has been the inspired polemicist, prod, prickling conscience

and plaintiff for a beloved international community, human rights, and religious freedom.

Unafraid to challenge the UUA, the Hungarian Unitarian Church, his best friends and every other power and principality, David challenges all to fulfill our institutional and God-given potential.

The sharpest knife in our drawer, David is sharp with intellect, wit and wisdom, edgy, exacting, dangerous, entirely purposeful.

An upender of the *status quo*, David is also our historian, scholar and theologian-in-residence. It is David who persuaded us to name this award for the pioneering Louis Cornish. It is David who called us to recall our heritage in the Radical Reformation and the legacy of its academic chronicler George Huntston Williams. It is David who, time and again calls us to honor the legacies of contemporary forbears, among them Leon Hopper, Peter Raible, Judit Gellérd and all who made for us a path to follow.

David walks the talk: In every church that he serves, he makes international partnership a priority. In the service our movement, David is always generous of perspective, self, and purse.

For David's inflammatory incitations, his pastoral persuasions, his rapier mind and his kind heart, this award is given with abounding respect and affection.

Rev. Gary Smith, Board Chair • June 2013