

MEETING NOTES
Annual Program Fund Continental Committee
March 17-20, 2005

ACTION ITEMS:

- Jim King will compile evaluations and get back to Judy within 4 weeks
- Judy will contact Gini Courter requesting that the sermon award be presented during the regular award time at GA
- Judy will send a letter to the UUMA, with copies to Gini Courter and Bill Sinkford, requesting they continue their liaison relationship with the APF Committee. The letter will include the individual names of the District Chairs and will be copied to all UUMA chapters.
- Joan was asked to take back to the Board the concern that there be stewardship education for ministers. She was also asked to express the Committee's concern that the bylaws no longer require that a congregation have at least 10 members

Thursday, March 17

Executive Committee

Attending: Barb Brown, Kathy Silver, Pete Fontneau, Joan Lund, Jim King, Jane Fogg, Dave Leonard, Bruce Clary, Judy Pickett (late). Staff: Mary Miles, Betty Cummings

NOTE: Mary filled in for Judy Pickett (whose flight was delayed) until she arrived.

Welcome and Introductions

- Mary announced that Barb Brown will be the APF Committee General Chair beginning July 1.
- Judy wants to announce to full Committee on Friday morning.

Appointments Reviewed

- New Committee members:
 - Jim Staton (MBD)
 - Kriss Gang (HTLD)
 - Gerry Blomgren (OMD)
 - Angela Matthews (NH/VT)
- Kathy will become LREDA treasurer, but will continue to serve as liaison until a new appointment is made.
- Dave Leonard's DPA term ends in October. A successor will be named by the DPA in June.
- The UUMA may or may not continue to have a liaison. Bruce is awaiting word.
- The Board of Trustees liaison has yet to be determined.

Committee Agenda Reviewed

Friday, March 18

Kay Montgomery, Executive VP of the UUA, reported on current UUA issues and activities:

- We continue our anti-oppression work. JUUST Change consultants train individual congregations or groups of congregations to work on anti-oppression issues. Only three districts are involved right now, but that number will grow.
- Public witness - We are more visible than ever, thanks to our marriage equality work.
- The UUA is doing more consulting with congregations on difficult ethical issues. We now have online documents on responsible staffing issues; on people working with youth; and on how to deal with convicted pedophiles in the congregation.
- The UUA has shifted the way we support growth to a metropolitan marketing strategy, with a current focus on Houston. Conversations are also taking place in the Philadelphia area with involvement from local congregations and area donors. Kay will provide the Committee with figures on the success of the Kansas City project.
- Youth work. We're re-examining the way we work with youth. Young adult work is going well, with about 150 campus ministries now active. The Young Adult Network is very active.
- *UU WORLD* will become a quarterly publication this summer. Simultaneously, there will be a web based weekly version that will be more up-to-date.
- How to get information on the work of the Washington Office? Sign up for Advocacy News. Subscribe at <http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/advocacy-news>.
- What are we doing for older UUs? A few things are being done but it is difficult to galvanize support in this area. Suggestions from the Committee:
 - CLF could create a Church of Elders Fellowship
 - UUA could provide materials on how to involve elders who can no longer attend church
 - Satellite groups in local nursing homes

Mike Durall, Stewardship Consultant/Author, engaged the Committee in a conversation about church membership, expectations and the motivations for giving. Some of his points:

- A small number of people are giving more, mostly elders; a large number are giving less. Will there be another generation of institutionalists?
- The greatest obstacle to charitable giving is the desire to live the good life. The challenge is to redefine what the good life is. Being a generous person is one of life's greatest privileges.
- UUism's greatest liability is low expectations, although we are one of the few denominations that have been able to increase giving from churches.
- Is the UUA really necessary? Our district services are not meeting the needs of our congregations and congregants. What do you yearn for in the life of your congregation? People come to church because they are hurting; they are seeking a deeper spiritual life; and they want a community of meaning and purpose. A different model of service delivery might help us meet congregational needs.
- Book and web site recommendations:
 - Reallivepreacher.com by Gordon Atkinson (yes, it's a book)
 - Emptytomb.org, for giving statistics across denominations
 - Transforming Congregational Culture* by Anthony B Robinson (Alban Institute)

Terry Sweetser, VP of Stewardship and Development, described APF as the "lifeblood of the Association." APF, Friends of the UUA and a 5% yearly draw from endowments support the basic services of the Association. All extras are paid for by capital campaigns. The recently concluded Campaign for Unitarian Universalism raised its goal of \$30 million, but only \$10 million is in cash, with the remainder maturing over the next 40 years. A new capital campaign is needed and is being

called Campaign 2010. A key factor re congregational participation is that the UUA will try to stimulate congregations to do one collection yearly for a specific purpose.

- An attempt is being made to increase income from Friends to \$4 million over the next few years with an enrollment of 25,000 persons. Only 10% of adult UUs currently contribute to Friends. An outside firm has been hired to help us meet this goal. There has been a good response to the last appeal, which followed their guidelines. Another idea is to develop a “Best Friends” concept. Would also like to get contributions from sympathetic groups, such as gay rights groups. The next Friends appeal will be for specific purposes. A future conversation is how the UUA and the districts can best partner for fundraising. APF Committee members can request Friends brochures for district meetings.

Ralph Mero, Director, Office of Church Staff Finances, discussed the perceived Fair Share/Fair Compensation competition and the work of the Compensation, Benefits and Pension Committee. (See handouts Ralph distributed for more details.)

Saturday, March 23

Stefan Jonasson, Coordinator of Services to Large Congregations, discussed his role and that of the Large Congregation Staff Team, which was established to address the increasing resentment and disaffection of large congregations in their relationship to the Association. Some of Stefan’s points:

- The UUA’s perceived shift in emphasis to large congregations is actually very small as reflected in the budget.
- Large congregations don’t really believe they receive their money’s worth, although this attitude is less now than before the UUA began to intentionally address their concerns. Stefan tries to focus them on the mission of the Association and asks them to model generosity for smaller congregations.
- The measure of a successful congregation is how it lives up to its potential. That does not depend on size.
- Congregations who give away their plate offerings to institutions, causes and agencies beyond their own walls (up to 20% of budget) find that their pledges increase.

Liaison Reports

Bruce Clary, UUMA Liaison

The UUMA Executive Committee is considering eliminating liaisons, of which they have more than 30 to various groups. Bruce recommended, and the Committee agreed, that a letter be sent to the UUMA with copies to Gini Courter and Bill Sinkford asking that they continue a liaison to the APF Committee. The letter will include the individual names of the District Chairs and will be copied to all UUMA chapters.

Other ways for APF to interact with ministers:

- Stewardship education is needed in districts and theological schools
- Ministers should be asked to serve on the APF Committee as District Chairs
- Stewardship should be part of GA Center Day and UUMA chapter retreats
- Sponsor an APF Sunday (Association Stewardship Sunday)
- Sponsor an RE Stewardship Day

Kathy Silver, LREDA Liaison

LREDA has 421 members consisting of ministers, religious educators and others interested in religious education. A mentoring program is successfully facilitating the new credentialing program. LREDA is now a sponsor of our Stewardship Sermon Award and are advertising it. They also have a statement regarding stewardship in their professional guidelines. Kathy has added a stewardship class to her own Coming of Age program. It was suggested that the details be on the LREDA and REACH web sites.

Larry Ladd, Financial Advisor

This is Larry's last year in this position. Positive points during his 8 years as Financial Advisor:

- UUA successfully completed 2 capital campaigns
- Sale of 53 Beacon and purchase of 41 Mt. Vernon Place
- Quality of appointments to business committees, especially investment committee, improved
- Now have a preferred vendor for church insurance (Church Mutual)
- Pension plan for ministers and partners now bundled into a consolidated plan with Fidelity
- More focus on numbers and analysis
- Uua.org now has more financial information available
- Endowment is in very good shape
- Created an audit committee
- Improved socially responsible investing activity through shareholder action. Very effective. UU ministers make statements at shareholder meetings
- Strengthened Fair Compensation program
- Youth trustee on the Board
- Beacon Press 3-year plan is working and will probably be extended
- UUA finances are in very good shape with good processes and people in place

Five Ps/Right Relationship Projections

- Communicate and listen; don't chastise, but thank and offer assistance
- Be non-judgmental
- Keep up with leadership changes
- Use language such as "I'm calling to confirm your pledge..."
- Pay attention to the other Ps

Personal Contacts

- This is about relationship and sales.
- Keep contacts relevant to individual congregations
- Get congregational newsletters and use them to familiarize yourself with issues and leaders
- Have a current district directory
- Praise and build relationships
- Understand their concerns
- Get information into their newsletters

Pledge

- Make sure you contact the appropriate person (minister, president, treasurer) for that congregation

- Be flexible and understanding
- Make your follow-up polite
- Thank them for the pledge and follow up with a thank you for payment
- Let them know the UUA is doing budgeting, just as congregations do
- Be in line with their budgeting process

Push

- Takes persistence, perseverance and patience
- Ask, “What can we learn from your experience?”
- Maintain sense of humility and openness, not trying to meet a district goal—just going to where they are able
- Each congregation will have its own best contact for APF. May work better with denominational affairs than with canvass people. Also contacts from district meetings of GA. Also talk to DE about best contacts. Or ask congregational administrator/secretary
- Push is not just seasonal
- Show gratitude for gifts received
- Respect congregation’s pledge
- Establish relationships
- Pushing ourselves vs. pushing congregations

Praise

- Emails answered immediately. Standard paragraph acknowledging congregation’s support, generosity, stewardship. Copy appropriate people, i.e., Julie, Mary, DE
- Attend district meeting, with beads. Personally meet with as many people as possible
- Create and use special note cards for thank you notes
- Talk at district meetings; highlight length of time FS
- Send thank you full of praise to appear in congregation’s newsletter
- Maintain database of congregational meeting dates. Two months before contact finance chair with praise for what previously done. Remind of covenant with UUA and other congregations
- Deep stewardship involves learning more about money given away to worthy beneficiaries in addition to supporting ourselves
- Work with DE on congregations in trouble or conflict. Handle and praise with kid gloves. Ask, “Even in troubled times, what do you need of me?”
- Talk about right relationship and our covenant with one another
- Acts of faith, i.e., giving beads to those who will be FS next year
- Certificates, plaques, trinkets
- UUA 101 workshop or an APF workshop

Joan Lund, Board of Trustees Liaison

- Referred committee to her report at <http://www.floridadistrict.org/trustee.htm>
- Joan was asked to take back to the Board the concern that there be stewardship education for ministers
- Concern was also expressed that the bylaws no longer require that a congregation have at least 10 members

Dave Leonard, District Presidents' Association

- DPA meets twice/year, in the fall and right before GA. Dave will report on this meeting.
- Two questions from DPs:
 - Do any APF chairs also handle district dues? (The primary purpose of the APF Committee is to raise money for the Association; if a district wants it to be the same person, they need to be clear about that during recruiting. District dues are not part of the APF Committee responsibility as currently structured.)
 - How do you plan for succession? (Hopefully, there is a committee from which a new chair will emerge. Helps if past chair is willing to stay on the committee. DE sometimes recruits chair.)

Mary, Betty, Julie

- Reviewed State of the Fund
- Mary will send cost/benefit information re UUA fundraising when updated
- District Chairs may request Friends brochures for district meetings
- Liz Weber thanked for being the first to submit projections
- UUA brochure also available. It is used primarily as part of mailings to new congregational boards
- There is a possibility that sermon award sermons may be published by Skinner House
- The Board's Living Our Faith Working Group has invited Mary to discuss the issue of youth membership and expectations of membership for youth
- The Committee's web pages have been updated at <http://www.uua.org/giving/apf/committee/>
- A new brochure tying the 2005-06 budget to mission/vision/ministry is being designed

Barb Brown presented a draft PowerPoint presentation about the UUA as well as a stewardship game she uses in her congregation in conjunction with the stewardship curriculum

Sunday, March 20

A New Structure for the Committee was discussed. The Executive Committee will finalize changes.

GA Planning

- A suite at the Park Central Hotel will be available for APF functions
- The Stewardship Sermon Award worship service will be Friday morning in a regular worship service time slot
- There will be a lunch for the Committee after the Sunday morning worship service
- The APF presentation will be during the Finance Committee report
- Judy will contact Gini Courter requesting that the sermon award be presented during the regular award time

Mission/Vision/Ministry

A new Committee mission statement was approved as follows:

VISION (Why we do our work)

An association of congregations fulfilling our covenant through generous stewardship.

MISSION (What is our work)

To promote generous congregational stewardship in support of our Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations)

MINISTRY (How we do our work)

Drawn together by our common calling to stewardship, we encourage UU congregations to envision abundance, embolden generosity, and enrich our larger faith community.

The above is the Vision, Mission and Ministry statement of the APF Committee. The following is a listing of our goals and objectives that will be informed by the statement and may be modified, added to, or deleted as necessary.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Increase financial support of our Association through the active on-going efforts of the District APF committees
2. Encourage all congregations to include their full financial support as a line item in their budgets
3. Be liaisons between our Association and member congregations.

Parking Lot

Betsy Spaulding stressed the importance of building lateral (inter-congregation) relationships. Betsy also suggested that we have process observers at the next meeting.

Executive Committee Meeting

Meeting Debriefing

- Use process observers next year
- Keynote was somewhat disappointing, but his interaction with the committee was good
- Outstanding worship service on Sunday morning
- Liked outgoing recognition during service
- The free Saturday night worked well
- Need to ask committee to adopt a district/UUA viewpoint, rather than just from their own congregational experience
- Bruce and Judy will draft a letter to the UUMA re a liaison to APF
- Decided not to invite DEs to have a liaison because they are paid staff, but will invite the Director of District Services to attend so we have the DE viewpoint represented
- Jim King will compile evaluations and get back to Judy within 4 weeks

Regional Changes

The current regional structure will be eliminated. There will be four at-large members on the Executive Committee, plus four liaisons and the General Chair. Terms of at-large members will be two years and the APF Committee General Chair and the APF Director will choose them. Two meetings will be held in the fall, one east of the Mississippi and one west. The full Committee will continue to meet in Boston in March.

Conference Call – May 26, noon – 1 p.m. EST

Submitted by Betty Cummings