

**Summary of Telephone Meeting**  
**February 27, 2006**  
**7:00 pm – 8:20 pm**

**New Orleans Strategic Planning Group  
Advisory Board**

**Our charge:** The strategic planning group shall envision and design a plan for a vibrant, robust Unitarian Universalist congregational presence in a rebuilt New Orleans. The plan should encompass the vision and needs of particular congregations but be focused holistically and systemically, rather than atomistically, on how Unitarian Universalism might be strongest and most vital in the greater New Orleans area.

**Phone participants:** Burton Carley, Wayne Clark, Becky Cureau, Mary An Godshall, Dick Harris, Marilyn Malone, Jim VanderWeele and Mark Westergard.

[Notes: Marta had recently indicated that she would be unable to participate. Jyaphia also missed the phone meeting. Unfortunately, that meant that there were no representatives from First Church participating in the conversation.]

**Highlights of the Check-in:**

Burton spoke about his recent visit to the Shreveport congregation.

Dick reported that his health is much improved! He and Marilyn indicated that their partner church (Reverend Phyllis O'Connell at the UU Society of Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts) will be providing pulpit support. Marta and Jim have also agreed to provide occasional pulpit support. The North Shore religious education program is going strong. Greeters are now welcoming congregants again. Neither Dick or Marilyn received Wayne's previous e-mail so he will resend it.

Jim has recently met with several Community Church partner churches. He just returned from visiting with Pacific Unitarian Church; the Universalist Church of West Hartford, CT; Community Church of NY; and the Unitarian Church of Montclair, NJ. They asked many questions, are sending supplemental hymnals, and are discussing longer range needs of Community Church. He has been using *before* and *after* photographs to show the immensity of the destruction. Mary An indicated that some of the partner churches will soon be visiting. She expects representatives from Pacific Unitarian; West Hartford; Community Church of NY; Montclair, NJ; Appleton, WI; and Naples, FL.

First and Community are sharing an administrator, who works from her home. Jim indicated that it will not be possible to shorten the lease on Community's office space (at the World Trade Center building) so the lease will continue through June. Jim has begun an adult religious education program that meets in the office space. The check for \$40,390 to rent office space and purchase office equipment, and furniture was wired from the UUA and has been received by Jim. (Previous action Item #1). They are continuing to negotiate with Church Mutual regarding their insurance settlement and they expect a resolution within a couple of weeks.

Mark mentioned that the search for a new district executive is continuing . He also indicated that, since his first visit to New Orleans, his perspective on our work has changed.

Becky shared an update of the Funding Panel's work.

Wayne reported on his recent work in Mississippi (Jackson, Gulf Port, Biloxi, and Hattiesburg). Twenty-one Mississippi Planning team members met for the first time on February 26<sup>th</sup>. Wayne will share the meeting summary and his reflections when both pieces are available.

**New Action Item #1:** **Becky** will provide Marta with the appropriate form to submit the request for \$1,500 for NPR advertising. (The request has already been approved by our group and the Funding Panel).

**New Action Item #2:** **Wayne** will resend his previous e-mail, with attachments, that Dick and Marilyn did not receive.

**New Action Item #3:** **Each congregation** will send its completed cash flow projection spreadsheet to Wayne by March 14<sup>th</sup>. Group members are encouraged to contact him with any questions.

Burton affirmed that large contributions specifically designated to one particular New Orleans congregation will be kept by that congregation. (From previous Action Item #3)

Burton indicated that the \$10,000 allocated to Rev. David Ord has been distributed. Because the money is discretionary, no specific accounting is required. Burton also affirmed that the congregation does not need to report that amount to the IRS for tax purposes. (From previous Action Item #4)

Wayne has shared (by e-mail) information about a book titled *Taking Care of the Caregiver* to the group members. (From previous Action Item # 5)

Burton confirmed that Kay Montgomery will provide a monthly update of Gulf Coast Relief contributions and allocations. (From previous action Item #6)

**New Action Item #4:** Before our next meeting, **Wayne** will provide more information about helpful congregational infrastructures. He will also share more information about the components of strategic planning, including specific questions to ask in any strategic planning process. (From previous Action Items #7 and #8)

**New Action Item #5:** **Burton** will create a written document first draft including background information and a summary of our work for distribution to our three congregations. He and **Wayne** will share the completed document at our next meeting. (From previous Action Item #9)

**New Action Item #6:** **Wayne** will continue to submit meeting summaries to Erik Kesting for placement on the UUA Web site. (From previous Action Item #10)

**New Action Item #7:** **Wayne** will distribute the grant authorization form (see attachment) for the three New Orleans congregations to use when requesting money from the Funding Panel. Each request will be reviewed by our group and, if approved, will be forwarded to the Funding Panel for approval.

**New Action Item #8:** **Jim** will reserve space for our next meeting on Friday and Saturday March 17<sup>th</sup> and 18th.

The following items have been put on the agenda for our next meeting:

- Check-in
- Review of Action Items
- Discussion about 1) the resource sheet on which each congregation has recorded their most recent membership, pledge units, and budget information, 2) a list of all significant donations received since the storm, 3) each congregation's completed cash flow projection spreadsheet
- Begin work on a strategic plan for a vibrant, robust Unitarian Universalist congregational presence in a rebuilt New Orleans

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne