



*from the virtual desk of Gini Courter*

December 21, 2009

I'm taking a break from writing new words to all the Christmas carols to orient you to the agenda for January.

It has taken a lot more effort to put this meeting together. We owe many thanks to Jan Sneegas and Donna Harrison for logistics and site selection. Peter Morales went to San Antonio to construct our program on Friday; he's still working on details for our time with community leaders. Linda Laskowski and the Linkage Working Group have been hard at the task of best practices in linkage for Saturday. Donna's been helping her congregation prepare for our visit. Thank you all.

When you look at this agenda, you'll find lots of open time, which we will assign to various topics and tasks at the beginning of our time together. Come to the Wednesday night session prepared to recraft the agenda so it includes all of the work we need to do together. A note to new trustees and reminder to all: if we want an item to appear on the Tentative Agenda for General Assembly (so that congregations can discuss it before GA) we need to vote it onto the agenda at this meeting. Last year, we put a draft resolution on the process for electing officers (including a change of term length) for the 2010 GA into the final agenda. If you or your working group is responsible for next steps on this suggested bylaw change, please email me and Jackie Shanti and let us know. If it's not yours but you are willing to take the lead on it for this meeting, do the same.

Here's how we are dedicating our time in San Antonio:

**Wednesday:** No committee meetings – dinner, Vespers, and an overview of our meeting, including agenda recreation

**Thursday:** A traditional Saturday – reports and some discussion. Thursday evening is vespers, followed by the session you requested on Youth Leadership.

**Friday:** Engagement and learning in the San Antonio community and a free evening to hang out in San Antonio with your colleagues.

**Saturday:** A traditional Sunday board meeting – discussion and motions – in the morning. In the afternoon, we'll practice linkage with one of our Sources of Authority at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio. Saturday evening we'll party there. Most excellent!

**Sunday:** if we need it, we'll have a short session to clean up any unfinished business between 9:30 and 10:45. We'll also travel to the church during that time. Church service begins at 11:00. After social hour, we're done. No CoCo. No leftovers in the fridge. If you want to watch football, you'll need to go home to do it.

I have dress rehearsal for Messiah tomorrow. Last year was my first choral foray in decades. They didn't throw me out, so I'm back at Community Church of New York to damage Handel again this year. My blessing and hope for each of you is the same as last year's: May each of us do at least one thing that simultaneously scares and thrills us this holiday season.

Please hold Jeanne and her partner, Gina, in your thoughts and prayers. I will see you all very soon.

In faith,

Gini