

Information Concerning a General Assembly 2009 Responsive Resolution on Power, Privilege and Oppression

A letter to UUA congregational leaders from the Secretary of the Association

To Our UU Congregational Leaders:

In my role as a member of the Board of Trustees and Secretary of the UUA, I am writing to notify congregational ministers and leadership of a resolution passed on June 28, 2009, by the delegates at the General Assembly in Salt Lake City. The text of this resolution is the following:

2009 Responsive Resolution

The Commission on Appraisal report on Article II of the UUA Bylaws includes section C-2.4 entitled "Inclusion." This section calls us to do all we can to replace barriers for persons and groups with particular identities, ages, abilities, and histories with ever-widening circles of solidarity and mutual respect. This section also expresses a covenant among our congregations to strive to truly welcome all persons and commit to structuring congregational and associational life in ways that empower and enhance everyone's participation.

In response to this section of the Commission's report, be it resolved that:

1. The delegates at this General Assembly are urged to act upon the pledge and covenant expressed in proposed Section C-2.4; and further that
2. The congregations represented here report to the UUA Board of Trustees before the 2010 General Assembly on their actions in response to this charge.

The bylaws of the UUA provide for responsive resolutions in response to a substantive portion of a report delivered at the GA either by an officer of the Association or a committee. The resolution above was moved and passed in response to the report of The Commission on Appraisal and the proposed by-laws change to *Section C-2.4 Inclusion* as follows:

Systems of power, privilege, and oppression have traditionally created barriers for persons and groups with particular identities, ages, abilities, and histories. We pledge to do all we can to replace such barriers with ever widening circles of solidarity and mutual respect. We strive to be an association of congregations that truly welcome all persons and commit to structuring congregational and associational life in ways that empower and enhance everyone's participation.

Article II, Section C-2.4 (new) did not pass at GA yet many delegates were moved to acknowledge the importance of the statement and as a result offered the responsive resolution cited above.

It was overwhelmingly supported by the delegates from over 500 UU congregations. I urge you to use this resolution as an opportunity to reflect on how your congregation is engaging with the issues of power, privilege and oppression and the barriers that creates for some. When delegates representing our congregations gather at 2010 General Assembly in Minneapolis, MN, we will have an opportunity to share our experiences in congregationally-based programs on issues of power, privilege and oppression.

As people of faith we were moved in Salt Lake City to not allow these issues to be dropped as the mere failure of a bylaw amendment but rather, to challenge ourselves to a new engagement in the work that remains to be done. Our experiences together in community show that we have much work to do to live our UU principles more fully. We look forward to hearing from your congregation on how you are responding to this.

In Faith,

*Tom Loughrey
UUA Secretary*

Write to us at responsiveresolutionC24@uua.org to share with us what your congregation is doing.