



February 13, 2017 CONFERENCE CALL

Present: Susan Goekler, Chair, Richard Bock, Caitlin Cotter,
Jyaphia Christos-Rodgers and Christina Sillari

Present via telephone: Bob Hatfield, UU Congregation, Fairfax, VA

Call to Order:

Susan called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm

Chalice lighting/Opening Words:

Richard read opening words from Fred Roger's *The World According to Mr. Rogers*.

Selection of Process Observer and Note Taker:

Christina volunteered to be process observer; Richard volunteered to take notes.

Update on 2017 GA CSW Programs:

- a. Mini Assembly on SOC: Accepted
- b. Sermon Contest: Christina reported that several ministers have responded to the invitation to submit sermons. We will review them at our March 2017 conference-call meeting.
- c. The Corruption of Our Democracy update: Susan reported that a panel is scheduled with the study guide author, the CSAI proposer, and a young adult voting rights activist.
- d. Social Witness re-vision as an AIW alternative: Accepted. Caitlin and Jyaphia will work on planning this.
- e. The Implementation Workshop for the Escalating Inequality SOC was not accepted.

Board Check-in:

Susan referred the group to a document she sent earlier summarizing her meeting with the UUA Board of Trustees [see below]. She asked commissioners to look over her brainstormed ideas and do their own brainstorming. At our March 2017 conference-call meeting we will discuss this more.

Bob Hatfield left after confirming that the CSW would be considering comments submitted by congregations.

Reviewing the Escalating Inequality SOC document:

After a brief discussion on the Strengths and Weakness submissions, the group opted to go directly to the line-by-line comments on the SOC. Susan volunteered to be the scribe for the potential changes so we could view the document as it was being edited.

- a. Caitlin presented suggested changes to lines 1 – 26. The group reviewed, accepted and rejected several items.
- b. Richard presented suggested changes to lines 27 – 55. The group reviewed, accepted and rejected several items.
- c. Jyaphia presented suggested changes to lines 56 – 74. The group reviewed, accepted and rejected several items.
- d. Christina presented suggested changes to lines 75 – 97. The group reviewed, accepted and rejected several items.

- e. Susan presented suggested changes to lines 98 – the end of the document. The group again reviewed, accepted and rejected several items.

Susan will clean up the revised document and send it to CSW members for our review and any additional comments.

Next meeting:

Susan will send us a poll to find a date for a March 2017 call.

Closing:

Phia read closing words and the meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Richard Bock

Approved March 13, 2017

Report of CSW report to UUA Board
January 27, 2017

I was invited by the UUA Board to have 15 minutes on the UUA's Board agenda to give an update from CSW. I reminded the board of our conversation last year and the subsequent presentation at the 2016 GA on a New Vision for Social Witness jointly by Denise Rimes (representing the Board), Susan Leslie (representing the staff) and me (representing CSW). I explained that the notes from the work shop were lost but that we have subsequently created a discussion forum on the UUA website – with 0 responses.

The board was supportive of rethinking how we do social witness. Peter Morales commented that we have enough statements already for the staff and him to witness in the public forum. My take away was we don't need more statements.

One board member commented on how few people knew of the existing statements, which is part of why the same topics keep reappearing.

The discussion ended with Jim Key charging the CSW to bring back a written proposal for the board's consideration.

My ideas for such:

- 1) We propose what happens at General Assembly. One idea is that CSW have responsibility for coordinating all social witness activities at GA, taking that responsibility off the shoulders of the GA Planning Committee. We would work with the local committee social witness contact and would keep GAPC informed. Standing on the Side of Love and other staff would also consult with CSW on any ideas – not just inform us after decisions are made. We would also send a notice to social-justice-related groups that are exhibiting at a given GA asking them to coordinate any actions with us.
- 2) The development of statements process would change completely. Staff or congregations would submit ideas for needed statements to CSW. They would have to include a list of related statements that already exist and explain why those are not sufficient. We would say – yes draft a statement for consideration or No – not needed or not appropriate. They would then be responsible for drafting a statement using a format and guidelines that the CSW would establish. They would submit to CSW, which would review for uniqueness,

consistency with other statements and positions, need, appropriateness, etc. Those we accept would go to delegates for consideration for adoption. No need to limit number or have them in competition with one another. Also no need for both SOCs and AIWs. This would mean no longer creating a study guide and no longer encouraging congregations to provide comments on CSAIs – there would be no CSAIs.

- 3) CSW would create and publicize a 1-2 page summary of issues on which the UUA has taken a position – referring people to the website for the position statement itself. This would be a quick and easy reference guide for use by UUA staff, GA delegates, and interested people anywhere.

Let's add this to our agenda – although our next meeting will be very full. Please give this some thought before then and perhaps reply to all with your thoughts and ideas.

Susan Goekler