

**Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Committee
Spring Meeting 2012, Eliot & Pickett Houses, Boston, MA
May 14 – 15, 2012**

Monday May 14, 9am – 5pm

Present Members: Wendy von Zirpolo, *Co-chair*; Walter LeFlore; Carrie Stewart; Scott McNeil; Jonipher Kwong; Benjamin Gabel; David Slavin; Taquiena Boston, *President's Representative*; Alex Kapitan, *Staff Support*; Tracey Robinson-Harris (arrived half an hour late)

Not Present: none

Topic	Discussion	Decisions/Actions
Chalice lighting – Ben and Wendy	Wendy shared a reading.	
Check-in: Introductions	Committee members introduced themselves.	
Housekeeping – Wendy	Wendy checked in about the physical space, staying at E&P, Tuesday dinner, etc., and invited committee members to check out the books provided by the committee.	
Budget information – Wendy	Wendy offered an overview of the last budget cycle and the decisions that got made for this budget cycle, and shared that there is money in the budget to assist committee members in attending GA. Wendy asked that all committee members let her know by tomorrow whether they are going to GA and what their financial situation around that is.	All committee members to let Wendy know by tomorrow whether they are going to GA and what their financial situation around that is.
Process observation sign-up	Scott offered to take process observations today, and Walter offered to take process observations tomorrow.	
Other logistics	Conversation about reimbursement process and other small logistical questions were answered.	
Who Are We? – debriefing the exercise from the last 3 conference calls	Wendy asked that Scott , Taquiena , and Jonipher share snippets of their stories over lunch with Tracey and Carrie , who weren't present on that first call. Wendy shared some history over the last time folks entered into the committee and were thrown in mid-stream – what emerged was a commitment to ongoing team-building, which led to this story-sharing process that came from the book <i>The Art of Convening</i> . Taquiena : build community and the movement will follow – how we even relate shifts culture and power. Scott : it helped to frame the (theological) work that we do, and having an authentic relationship helps a group follow a covenant. Jonipher shared that hearing stories helped dispel assumptions and shed a product-oriented approach in favor of some process.	Wendy asked that Scott , Taquiena , and Jonipher share snippets of their stories over lunch with Tracey and Carrie , who weren't present on that first call.

	<p>Ben: it felt uncomfortable at first – it took a lot of opening up to people I don’t know – it was a spiritual stretch. But it was beneficial and helped to prepare for today once I got into. Walter: I don’t feel grounded in what we’re doing because I don’t know our mission and task. I tried to leave that aside but still struggled around not having pictures of people. It did feel like a wonderful way to say this is how we’re going to be together and share. Carrie: appreciated the process in terms of walking the talk. Tracey: Found it to be a way to reconnect to others and to the work. David felt the need to hear other stories before sharing his own. Jonipher: Appreciate having a deeper theological reflection and spiritual practice as part of what we do and would like that to continue.</p>	
Covenanting	<p>Wendy: We did this story-sharing process without having yet covenanted together. Let’s revisit the covenant now.</p> <p>Jonipher: “speak directly with persons with whom we have a concern or question”: what if someone didn’t feel safe speaking directly with someone who has triggered them in some way? Conversation about who one would go to in a committee where power is meant to be shared. UUA ombudsperson? Talk with another JTWTTC member? Taquienna suggested incorporating options into the statement, and offered Eric Law’s guidance around “I noticed” and “I wondered.”</p> <p>Jonipher worried that adding language around talking to another member might lead to triangulation.</p> <p>Wendy: What if we identified two people on the committee to serve as a right relations pair?</p> <p>Walter shared a hope that conflict and/or not getting along is not acceptable in subverting the work of the committee. Scott: right relations work in my experience deals with layers of identity and privilege and oppression, rather than personality conflict.</p> <p>Wendy: The act of modeling behaviors and practices that are useful for the larger association is important to this committee.</p> <p>Walter and Carrie offered additional points.</p> <p>Walter asked to return to the ombudsperson question. Wendy: one possibility would be just as we ask for a process observer, we could ask for two right relationship people at the beginning of each meeting that would serve through to the next physical meeting, or they could serve for a year. David: re-relationship peer counseling practices taking a break from the group to do peer counseling one-on-one sessioning, active listening – could be another tool in the toolbox. Scott feels like this suggestion would be great for team-building but not perfect for right relationship stuff.</p> <p>Jonipher: what makes this covenant unique to us as a religious/spiritual group? Can we add a point about our shared values/principles as liberal religious people? Added a new opening.</p>	<p>Edited fifth point: “When possible, speak directly... if not able to do so, speak with one of the right relationship persons”</p> <p>Added points: “share equally proactive responsibility for the quality of the work and the quality of the relationships”</p> <p>“enter the work in a spirit of humility and forgiveness and a willingness to make and accept mistakes”</p> <p>Revised the opening to the following: “We, the members of the JTWTTC, enter into the spiritual work of anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multiculturalism grounded in the principles and values of our Unitarian Universalist faith, and covenant to:”</p> <p>Alex will edit the covenant in all the places it appears.</p> <p>Commitment to having two right relationship people starting at the beginning of a meeting and serving until the next meeting. Ben and Carrie volunteered to serve first.</p>

Reading and break	Scott offered a reading.	
Reading – Walter	Walter offered a reading.	
History of JTWTC (in context)	<p>Wendy drew attention to the charge of the committee and the notes from GA and fall meeting around where the committee might be going. Invited a group sharing of the story of the JTWTC. Taquierna shared most of what follows, Tracey and Alex also pitched in.</p> <p>(1990): Welcoming Congregation Program starts.</p> <p>(1991ish): Creating a Jubilee World starts.</p> <p>(1992): Calgary GA resolution. Relationship with Crossroads began to develop.</p> <p>(1996-1998ish): Power analysis trainings were being delivered to UU leaders by Crossroads-trained folks who adapted the Crossroads analysis to a UU context.</p> <p>1997: GA resolution called for the creation of the JTW Transformation Committee.</p> <p>1998ish: First committee was formed, made up of volunteers and staff. Single chair – white minister. Each committee member had several stakeholder groups that they were tasked with accountability towards. That piece constantly fell by the wayside.</p> <p>Leadership team did more than just the JTWTC. Therefore there was vulnerability – was it volunteer or staff-driven? Multiple roles, multiple hats. ARAOMC power analysis was offered to the board, leaders, and was controversial – it had come out of a Christian context and resistance got created. JTWTC was delivering these power analyses/Jubilees. We weren't yet at the point of being able to address intersecting identities. This struggle was projected onto the committee as the committee's problem instead of being seen as a UU cultural issue.</p> <p>1999ish: Jubilee 2 starts.</p> <p>1999: Why Anti-Racism Will Fail – workshop by Thandeka at GA and UUWorld wrote an article on it. JTWTC coordinated a response to Thandeka. Very polarizing.</p> <p>2002: Became a committee with a staff liaison, board liaison, and staff support. Convened listening sessions (east and west coasts, Chicago and Dallas) – invited congregations to send leaders to talk about the ARAOMC work they had done. JTWTC listened and compiled that information and gave it to the UUA, which created the concept of many paths, one journey. That was how the JUUST Change Consultancy came into being.</p> <p>2002: First assessment of UUA staff.</p> <p>2003: The committee was no longer delivering resources, but monitoring and assessing. Program development and delivery went back to being UUA staff responsibility.</p> <p>2004: Movement was made toward what became Allies for Racial Equity.</p> <p>2004-2006: Tension developed between those who had been part of UUA ARAOMC work for a long</p>	

	<p>time and those of a new generation. With each wave of new leaders there were more perspectives on oppression at the table, accessibility, LGBT, etc. Move was made to have self-selected co-chairs.</p> <p>2005ish: Groundwork (youth anti-racism) founded. Fort Worth GA happened with much race-related awfulness. Consultation on Ministry to and with Young began.</p> <p>2006: Cultural Misappropriation Task Force founded (now Council on Cross-Cultural Engagement). Diversity of Ministry Initiative begins.</p> <p>2007: First formal report from the JTWTC: Snapshots of Five Districts on the Journey. Raised awareness in the association and led staff to commit to re-involving districts in ARAOMC.</p> <p>2008: Accessibility Committee is no more; their charge is shifted to JTWTC. Equal Access is founded.</p> <p>2008: Second report: Assessing Cultural Competence in Ministerial Formation. Came out of a conversation with Bill Sinkford (who tried to visit at least one of the committee's meetings per year).</p> <p>2009: Mosaic Report published. YRUU disbanded (and Groundwork). Standing on the Side of Love launched. Arc of the Universe is published.</p> <p>During this time the question of how identity figures into peoples' ability to serve started to be more present. Leaders with some marginalized identities were spread thin. How other factors such as age, financial situation, job situation play into ability to serve. Who is at the table influences the culture of the committee.</p> <p>2010: Third report: Assessing Leadership Development. Took 2 years to produce. Focused on volunteer and elected leaders at the associational level. Hoped that it might also be useful / impactful on the congregational level.</p> <p>2010: Building the World We Dream About launched.</p> <p>2011: Conversation with the board and committee on committees regarding what the JTWTC's role is and how our charge fits into the changing structure of the board and governance. JTWTC identified some areas/ideas and the board gave those a stamp of approval. They want to be in relationship with us.</p> <p>2011: Move from having a board liaison to relationship with right relationship group (via Michael Tino). Committee on Committee has asked Wendy to serve as a single chair.</p> <p>2012: Justice General Assembly. Accountability Group.</p>	
Lunch and re-sharing	Taquiena re-shared her story for Tracey and Carrie, who weren't present on the first call.	
Checking in about committee leadership – Wendy	Wendy went over the history of the chair/co-chair of the committee (see fall minutes), and shared that the Committee on Committee has asked Wendy to serve as a single chair after she went to them with the question of whether they were planning to appoint a new co-chair and/or two new co-chairs. Were the committee to decide to revisit the question of chairship/co-chairship or if a committee member	

	<p>wanted to have a conversation with Nancy Bartlett, that would be welcome.</p> <p>Jonipher noted that last fall the committee agreed on expectations of committee members, which the JTWTC asked the Committee on Committees to share with people who applied to be members.</p> <p>David wondered whether the committee has ever considered having regional teams. Taquienna shared that many districts have anti-racism teams, but it's not something the association takes charge of.</p> <p>David wonders whether it might make sense for members to formally commit to being a presence in their own district. Wendy shared that for her, that's not our charge (monitoring and assessing).</p>	
<p>Where are we going?</p>	<p>Wendy quickly went through Appendix A to the fall meeting minutes (Where Are We Going?) and shared that the committee had discussed going back to the 1997 resolution and revisit our charge; go back to GA and ask: is this the right charge? It's been 15 years.</p> <p>Walter: The charge presupposes that the resolution continues to have veracity. Where are we as a denomination relative to this commitment? Maybe we don't go to GA and ask for a new resolution, but we do data gathering as to what's real out there – I would like the focus to be on the congregational level. If we don't have ministers and/or people with marginalized identities driving this in congregations it doesn't happen. David affirmed Walter's observation. Carrie: Seems like congregations aren't doing a whole lot, and where does that leave us? With this Justice GA, there's a huge opportunity to move social justice work to the center of our faith, and that seems like the key. (How) can we leverage that opportunity?</p> <p>Scott: What Walter said is resonant of what we said last summer. It seems like we're at a great point in time (15 years) to have that larger conversation about where we are collectively at.</p> <p>Taquienna: Yes, if we don't affect this as congregational culture/identity, it means that the culture shift the resolution calls for isn't happening. Yes, you can put out opportunities and congregations don't go for them. But 2 years ago, UUs were asking why we were doing immigration stuff, period. Now, we've done an immense amount of work and resource development on the subject, and it has gotten some of the most intense pushback. There's something systemic about UUism that makes it hard to mobilize us, yet at the same time we get a lot of credit for where we are mobilized. When A&W and IDBM came together, Taquienna said I'm tired of all of the work of ARAOMC being cleaning up the mess after the parade—I want us to be the parade. Let's stop finding the congregations that aren't engaged and rather lift up the stories of those who are. UUs are competitive. If I were to assess congregations, I would talk to the folks who are engaged, energized, and doing it well. Per Paula Cole Jones, if enough of your culture engages you'll have a critical mass. Let's give those folks more support and visibility.</p> <p>Jonipher agrees wholeheartedly. The first report looked at 5 districts—what if we looked at 5 all-star congregations? And out of that getting best practices. Kind of like breakthrough congregations but ARAOMC-focused. Taquienna: We're calling them energy centers. Tracey: Affirms what Taquienna shared 100%. Scott: I wonder if this might come across as ignoring some of the realities of what's happened in our churches and in the association. On a gut level I want to do it but on another level there's usefulness in naming all that is out there, including the negative. Taquienna: All of our leading texts (<i>Arc</i>, Mark Morrison Reed, etc.) say over and over how we are failing and not yet there. And All</p>	

Souls Tulsa's journey has not been a cakewalk, and that's where the truth telling comes in. I want us to off the big vision.

Walter: I would like to have success stories to tell too, but I would like to wrestle with this question before committing to holding up the good news. I believe the people who design programs etc. need the good news. People in the pews in my congregations have no appreciation for UU cultural history or understanding of our cultural legacy. We pat ourselves on the back and I don't see any group at the institutional level holding that up in order to drive change. I'm concerned with the 90% where change is not happening.

Wendy: If we look back at the where are we as a denomination, I wonder what it would be like to tell both stories. Name the truths of the larger picture and then tell some celebration stories. **Taquiena:** I don't see these as success stories, but as commitment stories – I'm looking at where there is commitment and energy. What's the hard work you're doing to make the vision real? **Walter:** I don't perceive myself as talking about lack – I see us as being in a position to monitor/assess and education based on the questions that we ask. So our surveying serves as an opportunity for education and awareness-raising. **Taquiena:** I wonder how much of this data-collection already exists elsewhere. **Jonipher:** That speaks to number 3 on the Where are We Going document. **Ben** asked about how we could get data. **Taquiena** isn't sure. **Ben:** How do we define UUA? **Scott** and **Alex** offered up the direct text from the 1997, which defines UUA as UUs collectively and as a denomination, not UUA headquarters staff/institution.

Walter: I'm trying to look at 17 levels simultaneously. We have the responsibility to monitor and assess, and yet I see this committee as having a phenomenal amount of knowledge and experience and we don't seem to be in a position to lead and communicate what we know and have learned. I want us to help move the institution. Can we point people to how *they* should be monitoring and assessing? Can we use our process to educate and hold up what we believe to be important?

Wendy: An approach could be doing an assessment of our own cultural competence as an association. **Carrie:** I agree with Walter and I think the answer is yes. We have to give congregations a reason to do it. For me, a piece of this is a faith development piece. **Scott:** I'd like to lift up the usefulness of lifting up the places where intersectionality plays in. This gets back to #3 (Beyond the JTWTC).

Tracey: A question that has emerged for me is the extent to which our congregations have developed the capacity for retooling. We have tools for governance, worship, religious education, but we need to re-tool. I'd like to know how are the tools being used? Maybe a part of monitoring and assessing doesn't look like the listening sessions done in the early 2000s.

Taquiena: There are things we do know, and there are things that our congregations continue to not do. Ask what the barriers are. That guides what do you do to help them remove that barrier. **Walter:** I believe it's an assumption that congregations want to be multicultural – I believe they actually want to be comfortable. Living out our faith beliefs may be the barrier, and that might be where we are needed. **Tracey:** Our own theology forms a barrier to the transformation we seek? **Wendy:** I think it's our fear, not our theology. Fear of engaging the diversity of our theologies.

David: I want to make sure we don't lose the piece about where our hidden assumptions might be

	<p>around privilege and power. Who will educate the educators.</p> <p>Taquiena: The nagging question for me around monitoring and assessment is when I think of monitoring/assessing I feel like there's something I'm looking for, and I don't know if we've articulated what the end is that we are going for.</p>	
Process observation – Scott	Scott offered process observations.	
Closing reading – Carrie	Carrie offered a closing reading.	
Dinner and re-sharing	Scott re-shared his story for Tracey and Carrie, who weren't present on the first call.	

Tuesday May 15, 9am – 5pm

Present Members: Wendy von Zirpolo, *Co-chair*; Walter LeFlore; Carrie Stewart; Scott McNeil; Jonipher Kwong; Benjamin Gabel; David Slavin; Taquiena Boston, *President's Representative*; Alex Kapitan, *Staff Support*; Tracey Robinson-Harris

Not Present: none

Opening reading – Tracey	Tracey shared an opening reading.	
Check-ins	Committee members checked in.	
Needs and questions from yesterday	<p>Tracey asked a question about strategy – what has the committee's strategy for monitoring and assessing? Also, the list of items in the report: were those the sum total of things the committee thought should be prioritized?</p> <p>Walter: How were receivers expected to act on the report?</p> <p>Carrie: There's some history of the "core team" in <i>Arc</i> that we didn't talk about yesterday in our timeline, and I wondered if that was important/relevant.</p> <p>David: What are the assumptions about UU class identity and how does that inform the work of the committee?</p> <p>Walter: What do we all need in order to feel like we are all at the station and can move forward?</p> <p>Walter: I'm curious to what extent this group historically has looked at/discussed faith/spirituality/religion as being central to this group?</p> <p>Carrie: When is our next report due? It says somewhere that we are to report at every GA.</p>	<p>Jonipher and Wendy to talk about what it might look like to have an exercise around theological reflection at the fall meeting (with input from others in early fall and the hope that folks would do reflection ahead of time).</p>

Wendy: Report deadlines: There is no set process for reports and how often they are brought out. The committee makes decisions about that itself. We initiate an ask about bringing a report to GA and are usually given 5 minutes or so. **Alex:** The few big research-based reports are different from the short announcement-style reports made at GA, and there have also been 3-page reports made to the board in the past. **Wendy:** We aren't obligated to do reports.

Wendy: Strategy: My experience is that we are in our discernment, and the guiding question we've been using is how can we best serve our charge. This is the current strategy it feels like we've been using. **Taquiena:** I don't remember how the district focus was chosen specifically, except that we had previously looked at national staff, so now let's look at districts, and then there was a conversation with Bill Sinkford that led to looking at ministry, and finally looking at leadership was a natural next step after that.

Wendy: Expectations: We put in more recommendations than we expected would be acted on.

Tracey: I took the report seriously and read through it and talked with others about how to make a difference in the context of Congregational Services staff group. **Wendy:** It wasn't an expectation that groups/leaders would work directly with the JTWTC to implement the recommendations. Maybe one of the things we should discern is whether we want there to be specific follow-through and calls for accountability.

Alex: one of the five areas the JTWTC expressed interest in pursuing as a next step was working further with the Nominating Committee and Committee on Committees in implementing more recommendations from the 2010 report. **Scott:** It did feel like something that people who had worked more on the report were more enthusiastic about.

Walter: How did you come to the five possible next steps for the JTWTC? **Scott:** When we met at GA 2011 we brainstormed and came up with major things that people were passionate about. **Wendy:** There were some things that arrived more readily because of our many hats (like accessibilities).

Tracey: Core team: It was a very complicated body of people to be part of. I came on staff in 1995 and the core team already existed; they were charged to do internal organizing in response to the 1992 GA resolution. 10 or so folks, all UUA staff. What was complicated was we were involved in the very early stages of the Crossroads training (Mel Hoover was on the Crossroads board and also the UUA core team) and we were incorporated into testing the Crossroads methods. It got tricky around who was Crossroads-qualified to do the work. Before 2000, the core team had come undone: was no longer effective. In the early days when the JTWTC included staff; there were staff who were in both groups. JTWTC did not inherit any of the work of the core team.

Jonipher: Faith/spirituality focus: We originally hoped for that to be a whole section of the 2010 report but then decided rather to sprinkle it throughout. **Tracey:** Historically on UUA staff it wasn't a strong thread; the place it came out was around the snag with racism as original sin and what our UU theological response to that was. **Jonipher:** I wonder if it would make sense for us as a group to have a common language around theology. Maybe at the next meeting? **Carrie:** And a theological grounding/rationale for why we're doing this work. **Wendy:** Ongoing teambuilding and grounding as a team opportunity!

	<p>Tracey: Class assumptions: In our largest community we seem to describe ourselves as being highly educated, almost upper class financially. My experience is that the reality is many more of us than one might imagine have working class / poor histories. Then there’s the conversation that has been going on for years about the relationships between race and class. Wendy: Then there’s the story we tell ourselves about how welcoming we want to be to folks of different economic situations vs. our choices. David: There’s always a conversation about which trumps: race or class, which is a dead-end argument because you don’t address the relationship between them. Walter: would like to put this issue on the table with some level of clarity today. Jonipher: Want to address educationalism as a critical component of class. David: Want to address what <i>ally</i> means – it’s deep. Walter: We misname ourselves in terms of class. Carrie: We need to talk about the meaning of class.</p>	
Revisiting covenant discussion – Scott	<p>Scott: There may be some usefulness in addressing the issue of speaking for ones own experience. As we tell our stories, we need to know that our story is our own. Taquienna: This does speak to the “speak our truth” point, and also the first item on the cultural competence definition. Speaking our truth, owning our biases and assumptions, naming them when helpful.</p> <p>Speaking our truth in constructive and civil ways, while taking responsibility for our own words and actions // while owning our biases and assumptions (and naming them when helpful) ?</p> <p>Carrie: “acceptance” is needed somewhere.</p> <p>Group decided to move on without making any further changes at this time. David suggested going to the RC website after the meeting and check out the methods that group uses. Taquienna: Between the covenant, the definition of cultural competence, and the process observation document, we have our sacred texts. Having this conversation gets us deeper in relationship.</p>	Agree to revisit covenant at fall meeting. Words to remember: acceptance & humor.
Reading – Taquienna	Taquienna shared a reading.	
Lunch and re-sharing	Jonipher re-shared his story for Tracey and Carrie, who weren’t present on the first call.	
Mission	<p>Carrie: Our charge is to monitor and assess the work of the association toward becoming a genuinely anti-racist anti-oppressive multicultural institution. How do we interpret this in terms of mission?</p> <p>David: How do we define transformation? To me it speaks to the qualitative. Taquienna: In physics there’s an understanding that even to observe the thing is to change it. Tracey talking about where’s the opportunity to leverage. Walter taking about questions that can be transformative. Scott: Seems to be a divergence between our charge (naming what’s happening) versus actively changing what’s happening. Wendy: I have a strong bias to be in sync with our charge. We did ask board representatives very directly about how to be in line with our charge, and they affirmed the five different directions we had offered up.</p> <p>Tracey: I am always looking for leverage—where can I make the most change, the most impact, leverage the most opportunity into the institution? Walter: I’m willing to live with the charge, but I want to be able to interpret it. I think there’s lots of room to leverage change within the context of meeting our charge. Peter Block talks about transformation and says it’s the question, not the answer, that really matters. The questions can change the conversation. David: The charge and the</p>	

	<p>transformation interact – we get to determine the yardstick; the qualitative measurement.</p> <p>Walter: I’m glad the issue of mission got raised, because I don’t see it present – I see tasks. How do we help our denomination transform by leveraging the knowledge and experience we have? And then seek to monitor and assess what we think is essential in doing this work. Taquierna: To me it’s not what success looks like, but what health and wholeness looks like. What does it look like to be faithful and whole? That would be transformative.</p> <p>Scott: It sounds like perhaps our mission might be to ensure/build cultural competence in our faith.</p> <p>Jonipher: This brings me back to the theological question of what the sanctification and process of holiness in our society looks like. Walter: We’ve been talking about what transformation looks like, and we should also consider what transformation takes.</p> <p>Walter: I don’t see a need for us to get our mission approved by the board, etc. I can see us using it as our own internal guide. Wendy agrees.</p> <p>Carrie: I feel like we are now doing the spiritual work.</p> <p>p.s. Tracey: Has the shift to policy governance shifted or will shift our charge/responsibility? Wendy: No, because we aren’t being asked to participate in terms of the monitoring process in regards to the board.</p>	
Class	<p>David: We discussed there being both elitism in the UUA and illusions regarding the story we tell about ourselves, also a false dichotomy around class vs. race in terms of what trumps, and needing to talk about language like privilege as benefits vs. as social control, allies vs. solidarity, oppression vs. exploitation.</p> <p>Ben: When we talk about ARAO work, the focus is often on people of color, and working class whites are often ignored. When we talk about privilege, same thing. We need to recognize how we fit in the racist institution and where our role is. Scott: David, are you speaking about the UUA as an institution or as all UUs. David: UU culture generally. Scott: Naming our social location can be very powerful.</p> <p>Walter: It’s not an accident that the #1 item on the definition of cultural competence is an awareness of our own biases and assumptions, and this is not something that we do in UU culture. We’re too busy being proud of who we are to have an honest assessment of where we come from and how much that continues to be a part of who we are as a denomination (not as individuals). We do a disservice by telling a story that <i>we</i> are middle class. It’s not who we are historically or aspirationally. You can’t be a UU minister without a master’s degree, and we are the most educated denomination.</p> <p>Taquierna: Linguaging becomes critical. The demographic and the cultural perception of UUism is rooted in educational elite, if not financial elite, and “professional.” I’m looking at how our culture and our history is a barrier. When my cultural community talks about what education means, it’s a pathway to freedom. UU culture says education is a pathway to privilege. How do we help UUs see the barrier without excluding people who say theologically this is who I am? So linguaging it as “this is our history and it’s a barrier,” rather than saying “this is who we are.”</p> <p>Wendy: I am hearing so much Universalism in our theology these days, yet “we” “historically” speaks solely Unitarianism to me. Carrie: A lot of folks have been wounded, so pride is a</p>	

	<p>compensation for the woundedness. And being a denomination of lots of converts means we have to do healing in order to move from the “I” to the “we.” For me, class is the hardest thing to understand for myself. We need to be able to look at how our own stuff has been a barrier.</p> <p>David: You can be exploited and oppressive at the same time (e.g., the white worker). And social control comes in with privilege – which are not “benefits.” Privileges are thrust upon you and you can’t just give them up, you have to repudiate them, fight them off. White on white social control is more important in terms of social control than white on black oppression. Taquienna: White on white social control is a hard concept for people to grasp—what can it look like in congregations?</p> <p>Ben: It’s in the interest of each white class to oppress the one below it. That’s the area that’s relevant for UUs to look at—how their identity is caught up in that. Taquienna: I think that’s the piece about solidarity, which I would like to talk about at some point. I have a hard time with the word ally (I’m a good person for just showing up). Solidarity = oppression to any is a threat to all.</p> <p>Tracey: <i>Elite</i> does an assessment of our history through a class lens. I’m curious as to what his analysis would show us about areas to explore. Also, I grew up working class and was raised Southern Baptist and I often wonder if once I discovered I could fit into UUism whether that wasn’t a way of class passing. Ben: I read a study about different Christian denominations and who had the most “converts.” Converting was analyzed as being a form of social mobility. Carrie: The word “elite” fits perfectly. Tracey’s story speaks to my parents’ experience too. Walter: How our church and worship services operate reflects class stuff so much – rational, logical, scientific – so you get book lectures as sermons and we don’t do the great awakening stuff of which faith is.</p> <p>David: that doesn’t mean there isn’t a hunger for it. And then there’s the history of the religious right doing class warfare in terms of setting up institutions and infiltrating Yale, etc. It’s always about dichotomizing and segregation through inequality.</p> <p>Jonipher: Tracey, when you were talking about passing my mind went immediately to racial passing, and how many people of color have white partners. Is there an element of wanting to fit in with society, being part of a white denomination. Taquienna: I joined a UU congregation because it was multicultural. It was the place where difference was held – theological, racial, class. So it depends which portal we enter through.</p> <p>Alex: Let us not forget, from the 1997 resolution that created this committee: “WHEREAS racism and its effects, <i>including economic injustice</i>, are embedded in all social institutions as well as in ourselves and will not be eradicated without deliberate engagement in analysis and action”</p>	
Faith/spirituality	<p>Walter: I feel like there is a horrible lacking in our faith communities when we can’t bring our pain and be held by our faith communities because they don’t get it. That’s where we need to be transformed, and it doesn’t happen through intellectualism and theory. I want us to be able to address: How do we live what we espouse?</p> <p>Carrie: With the new regionalization, the Southern regional staff renamed ourselves the Hallelujah staff, sort of to recognize that we are a little bit different. I see that as a positive. Scott: I’ve talked a lot about how ARAOMC is theologically grounded because my understanding of the holy and of our</p>	

theologians has to do with the idea that revelation is not sealed and comes from the voices of all. If we can talk to people about where the holy/sacred is beyond our limited personal experience and reach for transcendence, that creates the opportunity to do transformation work.

Wendy: The theological pieces for me have to do with the location of the work of ARAOMC plays in the understanding of people and their identity as UUs, and also the reticence of our people to name their way of being as tied to their identity as UUs. Also the theology of wholeness. There are so many UUs who understand AR/MC as a specialty of that person/minister, rather than it being central to everything I've known about UUism. It was handed to me as core.

Taquienna: I think of UUism as something of a compass. It's my conscience and my consciousness. It keeps calling me to a broader consciousness of what it means to be human and what it means to be connected beyond my own self-interests. That is what makes it faith. And having a community means I know that when I act I have a community that acts with me. For a long time being Christian meant how you acted. I became a UU because I saw more Christianity in UUism than in Christianity. What I struggle with is that in other traditions there are stories that call to that, and we don't have any compelling stories to hang our faith on.

Jonipher: When I'm leading a new members class and going through our history, it's much easier to explain the moral compass and theology of Universalism than that of Unitarianism. Naming where one is coming from and who one is is so important. Wouldn't it be interesting if one of the main questions we asked each other was what is your spiritual path?

Walter: Every congregation creates a congregational record that says this is who we are, these are the issues we are dealing with, will deal with, and will never deal with, here's the breakdown of our belief systems. When I was candidating, there was a question like "how much is your UU faith part of your identity?" and I was surprised that less than 50% said it was very much a part. Somehow we separate who we are from our faith. I did a sermon on how we do social justice work and said we feed the birds, rather than inviting them to the table. How we do social justice may well be reflective of our privilege and self-definition.

David: Because there's a possibility that they might transform us. I'm interested in how to get a muscular, values-asserting UU faith in places where conservative religion dominates. A lot of work can be done by asking "Who is your neighbor?" and asserting that we believe it's the whole world. I really believe that's part of our work.

Carrie: Because we have privilege, we don't have the need for faith. **Tracey:** Theologically, intellectualism and privilege reinforce each other. To the extent that we continue to focus on our first principle, we reinforce privilege as necessary for individuality. Interdependence is actually a threat to privilege—my privilege prevents interdependence from rising. I think we mislead ourselves if we believe that UUism is not a culture-bound religion. New England culture lives within us.

Walter: The stories we tell and our sense of our past dictate what the future can be. Until we can change our stories we can't have a different future, and we can't go into the future until we finish doing the work of living our past. It requires claiming the truth of our faith. **Taquienna:** Leaders tell compelling stories that contradict the dominant narrative. You project the vision, you talk about the

	<p>current reality, and then you put the people in the role of protagonists to create the vision. What is the good news of UUism, and what does that mean in terms of creating a vision of a better world? We have to create some sense of dissatisfaction and a vision of what's better. We are really good at analysis, but not vision. In my staff group we're moving from issue-based to relationship-based.</p> <p>Tracey: I had a sudden vision of a GA plenary where someone moves to put the last principle first.</p>	
<p>What's next? (brainstorm)</p>	<p>Jonipher: How about we do an assessment of five "energy centers," (congregations actively engaged and committed) approaching it with the lenses of how do they address issues of class/educationalism, accessibility, faith development, and missional, and how do all of these factors lead toward wholeness/holiness and overall health?</p> <p>Scott: We could write a report, or create a blog, or a video blog. Jonipher: This could be like the breakthrough congregation project, and I think it would be great if a few of us were assigned to each congregation and built relationships with an eye for how this energy could become contagious.</p> <p>Scott: What if we did UU communities, or an organization, or an online community? Or a camp/conference?</p> <p>Tracey: I'm curious if there are opportunities available to us in our system currently that we ought to take advantage of, or if there is some sense of urgency that we could leverage for our next efforts.</p> <p>Wendy: What's our real truth? Who are we in the context of the Journey? (UUs) truth-telling.</p> <p>Walter: It occurs to me that the data already exists in congregations – what if we asked for records for the congregations that just went through a search process and assess them using the metrics we want to hold up (accessibility, economics, etc.).</p> <p>David: I don't want to lose sight of the general U.S. history piece. Jonipher: I don't want to lose the piece of UUism as a global movement by focusing on U.S. history.</p> <p>Scott: whatever way our focus goes, some ways to do this focus could be GA report, GA worship, GA workshop, workshop for LREDA fall retreat, UUMA Ministry Days, other conferences.</p> <p>Jonipher: In the past we've also brought speakers into our meeting to inform our work.</p> <p>Scott: What if we evaluated/assessed GA 2012?</p> <p>Tracey: How about just the question of accountability – is that an area for monitoring/assessment?</p> <p>Walter: Assessing the work that's been done by the JTWTC in 15 years.</p>	
<p>What's next? (discussion)</p>	<p>Tracey: I'd like us to create an alternative narrative to compete with the dominant one. I want to make sure we don't follow a (breakthrough congregations) model that is seen as being played out.</p> <p>Scott: Often individuals on this committee have had a strong passion for something but it doesn't totally feel owned, and I want to be sure we move forward with something that everyone has energy around.</p> <p>Walter and Wendy both saw Assess JTWTC's work over 15 years and What's our UU real truth as</p>	

	<p>being similar and might be able to be combined.</p> <p>David: It feels like creating an alternative narrative would speak to many of the ideas up there.</p> <p>Taquiena: We see ourselves as counter-cultural but we are dominant cultural. We see ourselves as North American but we are a global movement. There is a diversity of experience within UUism that competes with the dominant narrative. How does that relate to Assess JTWTC's work over 15 years and What's our UU real truth? When you get beyond our North American shores, social justice is what it looks like to be UU.</p> <p>Tracey: I think I've talked myself into believing that creating an alternative narrative is our central task. Any of these strategies or tactics could be shaped into this, so the question becomes what is the most effective one right now. Taquiena: We had a visible demonstration of this at the Minneapolis GA. The response to the (monocultural) representation of UUism in the opening created a alternative narrative.</p> <p>Jonipher: How does it relate to the charge? Tracey: I think monitoring and assessing the story we tell ourselves is one of the best ways to create an alternative narrative. So for example: Vision: a UUism transformed into an ARAOMC faith. Mission: To create an alternative narrative that competes with the dominant narrative to further that vision. Tactics: monitor and assess 5 congregations/communities as energy centers.</p> <p>Wendy: Given our charge of monitoring and assessing, we hold up who we profess to be and where we profess to be going, here is what the journey has looked like, here's where the energy centers come in, and here are the steps they've taken, and here are the areas they have run counter to the dominant narrative? Tracey: I feel like I can support any of these if I have a sense of the larger purpose and this is where we're going. Carrie: Also, our continuing education allows us to be able to do that.</p> <p>Scott: In the past 15 years, we have changed, here are the ways it's happened, and here's where we can go. Alternative narrative: Just living life changes us. Being anti-oppressive requires intention, as opposed to letting change happen to us. Over the past 15 years we've both used the tools of the oppressor and not.</p> <p>Tracey: I think it's unfortunate that many of the words we've printed about the journey toward wholeness have been accompanied by a graphic of a road with no one on it going nowhere. What are the most effective tools for creating an alternative narrative and getting it out there in compelling and powerful ways.</p> <p>Tracey: I would propose that we take the three ideas lifted up forward and discuss them further on our next conference call. Taquiena: I would ask that assessing the work that's been done over 15 years include a non-UU person.</p>	
<p>Closing logistics and next steps</p>	<p>Wendy would like to create a meeting wizard to have a phone call in early June. Goals: Clarity around our future work, and conversation about future meetings.</p> <p>Wendy would be willing to try to put the next step conversation into a paragraph that we will discuss on our June phone call.</p>	<p>Conference call: Wednesday June 6, 5pm Eastern</p> <p>Wendy will put the next step conversation into a paragraph to</p>

	Wendy will work on GA financials and let Alex know within the next few days.	discuss on June call. Wendy will work on GA financials and let Alex know within the next few days.
Process observations	Walter offered process observations.	
Celebration and check out	Committee celebrated having the time together and committee members checked out.	
Closing reading – Ben	Ben offered a closing reading.	

Parking lot:

- New member guide (Scott)
- Question: How can we continue the story-sharing process with new members but more immediately with each other?
- **Scott** and **Jonipher** were charged with developing a mentoring plan, and are wondering if that's something folks would value or not.
- **Jonipher** wondered if it would make sense for JTWTC as a group to have a common language around theology. Maybe at the next meeting? **Carrie** added the desire to discuss our theological grounding/rationale for why we're doing this work. This was started but may need to be ongoing.

Respectfully submitted,
Alex Kapitan
May 22, 2012