

MINUTES

BOARD OF TRUSTEES UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION

January 17-18, 2009

Pursuant to notice duly given, a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Association was held on January 17-18, 2009 at 25 Beacon Street in Boston, Massachusetts.

MEMBERS

PRESENT: Adair, Ballester, Blevins, Brody, Burke, Carley, Comstock, Conley, Courter, Friedman, Gallagher, Greene, King, Laskowski, Lund, Loughrey, Marx, McNatt, Olsen, Payne-Alex, Rickter, Saunders, Shanti, Solomon, Urbikas, Wooldridge, and Sinkford

MEMBERS

ABSENT: None

ALSO

PRESENT: Allen, Brennan, Lawrence, Montgomery, and observers

Gini Courter, Moderator, called the meeting to order at 8:30 am on Saturday, January 17, 2009. Nick Allen provided opening words. It was announced that Joan Lund would lead Sunday's worship service. Trustees and visitors were introduced and the agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF JUNE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of the October 2008 meeting of the Board of Trustees were approved as written.

APPROVAL OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

The minutes of the November 4-6, 2008 meeting of the Executive Committee were approved by the Executive Committee and then ratified by the Board of Trustees.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Paul Rickter, reminded trustees of the deadline for congregational credentialing and discussed the process for absentee voting for 2009 UUA elections.

FINANCIAL ADVISOR'S REPORT

Dan Brody, Financial Advisor, reported on the impact of the global financial crisis on the UUA's endowment funds. He described the Association's current endowment spending policy, and discussed several alternate spending policies. He noted that while the current policy tempers the effect of a sharp decline in the value of the endowment, it cannot prevent a significant drop in spending from the endowment.

Brody recommended that the Association consider adopting a policy, modeled on ones in use by Yale and Stanford Universities, designed to provide greater stability in spending from endowment. Such a policy would limit the increases in spending from endowment during years of strong stock market performance, reinvesting the money to avoid the need to reduce spending during years of stock market declines. He noted that it was necessary to switch to such a policy at a low point in the market cycle, so that now is a good time to contemplate this change.

AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

Chris Reese, Chair of the Audit Committee, reported on the most recent audit statements, noting that a clean opinion had been issued, as well as other financial activities of the Association. He advised the Board that the committee was working on conflict-of-interest and whistleblower policies.

COMMISSION ON APPRAISAL REPORT

Discussion was held with Orlanda Brugnola and Barbara Child of the Commission on Appraisal concerning the Commission's recommendations for changes to the Purposes and Principles of the Association.

M (Burke), S, and

VOTED: To receive the report of the Commission on Appraisal with gratitude.

M (Saunders), S, and

VOTED: To amend the Commission on Appraisal's proposed changes to Article II of the Bylaws by substituting the following language for their proposed language in the last sentence of Section 2.2:

“Grateful for the traditions that have strengthened our own, we seek to engage cultural and religious practices in ways that call us into right relationship with all.”

M (Greene), S, and

VOTED: To place the following proposed changes to Article II of the Bylaws on the agenda of the 2009 General Assembly:

ARTICLE II: Covenant

Section C-2.1. Purposes.

This association of free yet interdependent congregations devotes its resources to and exercises its corporate powers for religious, educational, and humanitarian purposes. It supports the creation, vitality, and growth of congregations that aspire to live out the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Through public witness and advocacy, it advances the Principles in the world.

Section C 2.2. Sources.

Unitarian Universalism is rooted in two religious heritages. Both are grounded on thousands of years of Jewish and Christian teachings, traditions, and experiences. The Unitarian heritage has affirmed that we need not think alike to love alike and that God is one. The Universalist heritage has preached not hell but hope and courage, and the kindness and love of God. Contemporary Unitarian Universalists have reaped the benefits of a legacy of prophetic words and deeds.

Unitarian Universalism is not contained in any single book or creed. Its religious authority lies in the individual, nurtured and tested in the congregation and the wider world. As an evolving religion, it draws from the teachings, practices, and wisdom of the world's religions. Humanism, earth-centered spiritual traditions, and Eastern religions have served as vital sources. Unitarian Universalism has been influenced by mysticism, theism, skepticism, naturalism, and process thought as well as feminist and liberation theologies. It is informed by direct experiences of mystery and wonder, beauty and joy. It is enriched by the creative power of the arts, the guidance of reason, and the lessons of the sciences.

Grateful for the traditions that have strengthened our own, we seek to engage cultural and religious practices in ways that call us into right relationship with all.

Section C-2.3. Principles.

Grateful for the gift of life, we commit ourselves as member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association to embody together the transforming power of love as we covenant to honor and uphold:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement of spiritual growth;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

- The right of conscience and the use of democratic processes;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Reverence for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

As free yet interdependent congregations, we enter into this covenant, pledging to one another our mutual trust and support. Capable of both good and evil, at times we are in need of forgiveness and reconciliation. When we fall short of living up to this covenant, we will begin again in love, repair the relationship, and recommit to the promises we have made.

Section C-2.4. Inclusion.

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.

Section C-2.5. Freedom of Belief.

Congregational freedom is central to the Unitarian Universalist heritage.

Congregations may establish statements of purpose, covenants, and bonds of union so long as they do not require a statement of belief as a creedal test for membership; nor may the Association employ such a test for congregational affiliation.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board voted to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters and, when it returned to regular session announced that the conversation would remain confidential.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Kay Montgomery, Executive Vice President, announced the hire of Timothy Griffin as Website Manager beginning February 23.

DISCUSSION WITH CLARK OLSEN REGARDING PEW DATA

The Rev. Clark Olsen presented data from the 2007 Pew Survey regarding religious affiliation and culture, asking relevant questions to Board members.

REPORT OF THE GROWTH WORKING GROUP

Members of the Growth Working Group reported on their discussions, noting that they had reviewed data connected to the Growth Team and expressing interest in further demographics concerning growth. They reported that they had discussed the Excellence in Ministry Conference and concerns expressed by the District Presidents' Association concerning cultural barriers to growth.

REPORT OF THE ASSOCIATION WORKING GROUP

Members of the Association Working Group reported on their discussions, saying that they recommended the current process of appointing Independent Affiliate Organizations be discontinued. They reported on the Excellence in Ministry Conference and recommended that the Board initiate a relationship with the Boards of each of the Unitarian Universalist seminaries. They reviewed possible changes in the election process for UUA President and Moderator and proposed that such changes be placed on the agenda of the 2010 General Assembly. They discussed the possibility of compensation for the Moderator and asked the board to select a subcommittee to explore what the job of Moderator/Chief Governance Officer would look like under policy/governance. Members discussed possible Bylaw changes that would establish credentialing for members of the UU Musicians Network and reported that they felt it would be inappropriate to make such Bylaw changes in light of possible future changes for all credentialing processes. The Secretary was asked to communicate this to the UU Musicians Network.

M (Payne-Alex), S, and

VOTED: That the UUA Board no longer accept or renew Independent Affiliate applications as of June 2010, contingent upon the UUA staff creating a strategy to honor and harness the incredible talent, passion and experience present in this large group of dedicated Unitarian Universalist volunteers. We encourage these important organizations to partner with the staff to create best practices for engaging with congregations, districts, and staff in carrying out our vision for Unitarian Universalism and the hope we have for healing the world.

Jose Ballester asked that it be noted he had voted in opposition to this motion.

M (Payne-Alex), S, and

VOTED: That the Board initiate a relationship with the boards of each of the Unitarian Universalist Theological Schools.

M (Payne-Alex), S, and

VOTED: To request that the UUA President and the Congregation Working Group facilitate a full Board conversation on highlights from the Ford Foundation summit on transforming theology to be held in May as well as the working group discussion on "What is a congregation?" as soon as the Board agenda will reasonably allow.

M (Payne-Alex), S, and

VOTED: To charge the Ministerial Fellowship Committee with coordinating willing partners in addressing the theological education priority of "Ministerial Culture, UU Growth and Impact of Credentialing" as identified at the Excellence in Ministry Summit in December 2008.

M (Payne-Alex), S, and

VOTED: To plan a full discussion at the time of the April 2009 meeting of the Board of Trustees to determine the exact changes desired to the election process for President and Moderator and that the changes be voted on at the April 2009 meeting.

It was agreed that the Executive Vice President would forward the proposed changes to legal counsel to craft bylaw language for the Board to review at the October 2009 Board meeting and to vote on at the January 2010 meeting for placement on the 2010 General Assembly Agenda.

M (Payne-Alex), S, and

VOTED: That the Board select a subcommittee consisting of one member from the Association Working Group, one from the Finance Committee, and one from the Governance Working Group to explore what the job of Moderator/Chief Governance Officer would look like under Policy Governance and what a reasonable compensation/per diem stipend or honorarium might be, how many days per year would be considered work days, etc. The subcommittee shall present its findings and recommendations at the April 2009 Board Meeting.

REPORT OF THE LIVING OUR FAITH WORKING GROUP

Members of the Living Our Faith Working Group reported on their discussions, saying that they had discussed the history of the UU Trauma Response Ministry and its response to natural disasters and violence affecting congregations as well as protocols concerning communication in the wake of trauma in congregations. They announced that they had met with Rev. John Hickey, Executive Director of the UU Urban Ministry as an opportunity for them to strengthen the Board's relationship with that organization.

REPORT OF THE CONGREGATIONS WORKING GROUP

Members of the Congregations Working Group reported on their discussions, including a report on a memorandum of understanding between the UUA and the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists and discussion of crisis management by staff. Discussion was held concerning a Board conversation with Debra Haffner on healthy boundaries and a review of a Board code of conduct. A joint meeting was held with the Growth Working Group concerning a General Assembly workshop on "What is a Congregation?"

M (Olsen), S, and

VOTED: To accept the Foothills Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Maryville, Tennessee as a member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association

REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP

Members of the Governance Working Group reported on their work, including a discussion with the Fifth Principle Task Force draft UUA Ends, ongoing work on the Governance Policy Manual, distinctions between Board-appointed and President-appointed committees, an annual calendar for monitoring, and preparation for discussion of Ends at General Assembly.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Lyn Conley, Finance Committee Chair, reported on discussions of that committee.

M (Conley), S, and

VOTED: To request that the General Assembly Planning Committee authorize a collection in plenary at General Assembly 2009 to support the Association's work on marriage equality, with half the funds raised going to support advocacy work and half

designated to the President's Freedom to Marry Fund for grants to congregations and districts in support of marriage equality.

M (Conley), S, and

VOTED: That for Fiscal Year 2010, the amount made available for expenditure from the Association's endowment shall be computed over the thirteen calendar quarters ending on December 31, 2008. This policy applies to all UUA endowed funds including unrestricted, restricted and campaign funds.

M (Conley), S, and

VOTED: To reconsider the vote of April 20, 2008 to establish an Annual Program Fair Share fee for fiscal year 2010 of \$58 per member.

M (Conley), S, and

VOTED: Recognizing that the economic recession being felt across the country affects Unitarian Universalist congregations, the lives of their members, and the Association, the UUA Board of Trustees resolves that:

- together we shall seek creative ways of reducing costs while enhancing environmental sustainability, using technology in new ways, and supporting one another through the challenges sure to be ours over the near future
- the Association shall continue to deliver essential services to member congregations and assist them in addressing fiscal challenges, while examining all expenditures and programs carefully for their centrality to our mission.
- we approach these challenges with the spirit of positive reinvention
- Further, we will hold the Annual Program Fund Fair Share contribution for fiscal year 2009-2010 at the current rate of \$56 per member and hold the percent of budget option for large congregations at the 2008-2009 level.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Tim Brennan, Treasurer, reported on investments in the UUA retirement plan and the UU Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF). He said that the top priorities for his office included addressing the auditors' management letter when it is delivered, preparing a request for proposal for the administration of the retirement plan, acquiring new budgeting software, improving controls and updating finance procedures, revising the chart of accounts, investing state approvals for the UUCEF, and creating building security procedures.

ANTI-RACISM, ANTI-OPPRESSION, MULTICULTURAL ASSESSMENT TEAM REPORT

Members of the Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, Multiculturalism Monitoring and Assessment Team reported on their discussions, including multiculturalism training for the board, forms for process observation, trustee ar/ao/mc reflections, and personal behavior in welcoming others. They reported that they would sponsor a conference call with Mark Morrison-Reed to discuss his book *In Between*.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Beth McGregor, Planning Committee Chair, and Eva Marx, Board representative to the Planning Committee, reported on plans for the 2009 General Assembly.

MFC REPORT

Jackie Shanti and Burton Carley reported on recent activities of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

M (Shanti), S, and

VOTED: To amend the Rules of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee as follows:

CURRENT Rule 19:

19. CANDIDATES SEEKING TRANSFER OR PLURAL STANDING

The Committee shall determine whether or not to grant Preliminary Fellowship to a transfer candidate based on a review of that candidate's completed application and any other information discovered during the review conducted by the Ministry and Professional Leadership staff on behalf of the MFC.

Transfer candidates, or those seeking plural standing, shall be subject to a thorough review of their present and/or past denominational, associational or adjudicatory standing to ensure that all appropriate information has been shared with Ministry and Professional

Leadership and the Committee, and that no pertinent information has been withheld.

Candidates will be required to sign an authorization form, either before or immediately after their interview with the Committee, permitting Ministry and Professional Leadership to conduct such a review. If Ministry and Professional Leadership later learns of detrimental information previously undisclosed, the Committee will be notified and may recall the candidate or deny Preliminary Fellowship until the matter is resolved.

The MFC may require that transfer or plural standing candidates fulfill certain contingencies and/or requests, which may include, but are not limited to, an internship, supervised ministry or CPE as determined by the Committee.

PROPOSED RULE CHANGE to Rule 19: **add** to the above . . .

19A- Ministers in Plural Standing and disciplinary issues

(1) A minister in plural standing is required to notify the Executive Secretary of the MFC in writing, as soon as practicable but no later than ten (10) days after notice of the initiation of an investigation or fitness review as a result of any complaint made against him/her to, or any disciplinary action taken by, any non-UU judicatory.

(2) The minister shall cooperate with the MFC's Executive Secretary or his/her designee and promptly provide any and all requested information, including authorization to speak with any person relevant to the complaint, investigation, fitness review, or disciplinary action, on a continuing basis.

(3) Failure to comply with the requirements of this rule may result in suspension and/or removal from Fellowship. The MFC will make recommendations for appropriate actions, if necessary, in accordance with the MFC Rules and Policies. “

CURRENT Rule 13E:

13E. INTERIM MINISTRY

For purposes of renewal of Preliminary Fellowship, only one interim ministry, whether for one or two years, can be counted for such renewal. Where, however, the minister has been accepted into the Accredited Interim Ministry training program and is making expected progress toward completion, each year of interim ministry may be counted.

PROPOSED RULE CHANGE to Rule 13E: **substitute** the following . . .

13E Continuity of Ministry of Preliminary Fellowship

To receive Final Fellowship, a minister must have been granted at least two renewals from the same congregation or organization. Where, however, the minister has been accepted into the Accredited Interim Ministry training program and is making expected progress toward completion, each year of interim ministry may be counted

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Bill Sinkford reported on the financial situation of the Association, saying that the 2010 budget would be reduced by approximately 10% and that the primary goals and mission remained constant. He said that the work of the Youth Ministry Working Group was moving forward with enthusiasm and that their report would come to the Board in April.

Sinkford discussed his trip to Africa, saying that he had visited six countries, four of them with Unitarian Universalist groups. He announced that in May he, along with the Revs. Ned Wight and Rob Eller-Isaacs would be attending a Ford Foundation conference on contemporary theology. Finally, he pointed out that our active ministers of color now totaled 57 as opposed to 33 in 1999, with most of those ministers working in the parish.

REPORT OF THE PANEL ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Tamara Payne-Alex reported on the work of the Panel on Theological Education and the recent Excellence in Ministry Conference, saying that the conference had been rich and useful in bringing an excellent group of UUs together to consider the future of our ministry.

FIFTH PRINCIPLE TASK FORCE REPORT

Jose Ballester reported on the work of the Fifth Principle Task Force, saying that they would be presenting to the Board at the time of their April meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board voted to go into Executive Session to discuss committee appointments and, when it returned to regular session, entered those appointments into the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.

COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES' REPORT

M (Solomon), S, and

VOTED: To approve the following committee appointments, effective immediately and, unless otherwise noted, extending through December 2009:

Religious Education Credentialing Committee
Rev. Kirk Loadman-Copeland, interim chair (through April meeting)

Tandy Scheffler, LREDA

New England Regional Subcommittee on Candidacy

Rev. Sarah Gibb Millspaugh

Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Committee

Janice Marie Johnson, co-chair

ICUU Board Nominations

Nominate Rev. Jill McAllister, Vice President (rather than
Trustee at Large, approved at the October 2008 meeting of the
Board of Trustees)

Second nomination of Nihal Attanayake of the Phillipines as
Trustee at Large

CLOSING

Jackie Shanti provided closing words and the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm on
Sunday, January 18.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Kathleen Montgomery
Recording Secretary

BOARD OF TRUSTEES' SCHEDULE

*The board normally meets as follows in **January** and **April**:*

Thursday: Committee Day: Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression/Multiculturalism Assessment and Monitoring Team; Committee on Committees; and Finance Committee meet. Whole board activities begin with Thursday dinner.

Friday: Working Group Day

Saturday: Board meeting

Sunday: Board meeting followed by Coordinating Council meeting

*In **June**, the Board meets before and after the General Assembly. The schedule allows Board member participation in UU University and UUMA Ministry Days. Working groups normally do not meet at the June meeting. In election years (odd years), newly elected trustees must attend Anti-Racism / Anti-Oppression training for leaders following General Assembly.*

*In **October**, the Board meeting is one day longer, with Committee Day on Wednesday. In October of odd years (2009, 2011 ...) the Board meeting is preceded by a retreat for new board members beginning on Tuesday or Wednesday.*

April 2009, Boston, Massachusetts:

Thursday, April 16 - Committees

Friday, April 17 – Working Groups

Saturday, April 18 – Sunday, April 19 – Board of Trustees meeting

(Board packet deadline: **March 16, 2009**)

June 2009, Salt Lake City, UT:

Tuesday, June 24 – Wednesday, June 25 – Board of Trustees meeting

Wednesday, June 25 – Sunday June 29 – General Assembly

Monday, June 30 – Board of Trustees meeting

(Board packet deadline: **May 18, 2009**)

October 2009, Boston, Massachusetts:

Wednesday, October 14 – Retreat

Thursday, October 15 – Committees

Friday, October 16 – Working Groups

Saturday, October 17 – Sunday October 18 – Board of Trustees meeting

(Board packet deadline: **September 21, 2009**)

January 2010, Boston, Massachusetts:

Thursday, January 14 - Committees

Friday, January 15 – Working Groups

Saturday, January 16 – Sunday, January 17 – Board of Trustees meeting

(Board packet deadline: – **December 21, 2009**)

April 2010, Boston, Massachusetts:

Thursday, April 15 - Committees

Friday, April 16 – Working Groups

Saturday, April 17 – Sunday April 18 – Board of Trustees meeting

(Board packet deadline: **March 15, 2010**)

June 2010, Minneapolis, MN:

Tuesday, June 22 – Wednesday, June 23 – Board of Trustees meeting

Wednesday, June 23 – Sunday June 27 – General Assembly

Monday, June 28 – Board of Trustees meeting

(Board packet deadline: **May 17, 2010**)

October 2010, Boston, Massachusetts:

Thursday, October 14 - Committees

Friday, October 15 – Working Groups

Saturday, October 16 – Sunday October 17 – Board of Trustees meeting

(Board packet deadline: **September 29, 2010**)

January 2011, Boston, Massachusetts:

Thursday, January 20 - Committees

Friday, January 21 – Working Groups

Saturday, January 22 – Sunday, January 23 – Board of Trustees meeting

(Board packet deadline: – **December 20, 2010**)

April 2011, Boston, Massachusetts:

Thursday, April 14 - Committees

Friday, April 15 – Working Groups

Saturday, April 16 – Sunday April 17 – Board of Trustees meeting

(Board packet deadline: **March 14, 2011**)

June 2011, Charlotte, NC:

Tuesday, June 21 – Wednesday, June 22 – Board of Trustees meeting

Wednesday, June 22 – Sunday June 26 – General Assembly

Monday, June 27 – Board of Trustees meeting

(Board packet deadline: **May 16, 2011**)