

**Minutes**  
Commission on Appraisal meeting  
October 20-23, 2005, in Boston

THURSDAY EVENING

Check-in, reviewing agenda for the meeting

Worship, led by Tom.

FRIDAY MORNING

Centering by Linda

We worked with Tracy Robinson Harris on vision, mission, and covenant.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON

**Conversation with Bill Sinkford.**

We talked about the response to the last report, and solicited his ideas and suggestions for our future directions.

Arthur apologized for being late, and checked in about how he got here and why he was late. Was there some breakdown of communication, or something, that needs to be avoided in the future? —No. Perhaps, though, we should confirm with travel plans in the future.

Orlanda urges us all to get expense reports in promptly—within two weeks is what the UUA prefers.

**Discussion of study topics.**

FRIDAY EVENING

In the morning session with Tracy, three task groups were assigned to work on: revising the mission statement, revising the covenant, and drafting a set of guidelines for process observations.

At this time they reported back to the Commission.

A question about process: are we deciding on these things now, or thinking about it later? —We're going to hear everything, and see how we feel.

We discussed the covenant at some length, especially the suggested change about consensus versus voting. We decided that any description of what our decision-making procedure is, belongs in the Handbook—in fact, there is already a section on decision-making in the Handbook, which we decided needs much re-consideration, and we put it on the parking lot. What is in the covenant about consensus is the part of the consensus issue that

belongs in the covenant, and so we kept it there.

Process & AO Observation: Some discussion.

We haven't adopted any of the documents, but we have a process to do so tomorrow morning.

Process observation, and closing.

## SATURDAY MORNING

Centering by Michael

We reviewed the various text pieces (mission statement, covenant, process and Anti-Oppression observer guidelines), as modified last night by the small groups. They were posted and people reviewed them. We accept them as amended.

We also have explicitly added “age and clergy status” to the notes on the Anti-Oppression observer in the Handbook—it's not just part of the “etc.”

Suggestion that the list of questions for process and Anti-Oppression observers to consider be appended to future meeting agendas, so they're there for easy reference for everyone.

## Study Topic Selection Conversation

Process Observation

## SATURDAY AFTERNOON

We decided to add people's dietary restrictions to the roster.

**January meeting:** 19-22 in Orlando, FL

Travel arrangements: Plan to be ready to meet by 6 (if at all possible) Thursday—flights around 3 or 4, and definitely by available at the meeting site until 10am Sunday, and hopefully to go to church together. We need to be more specific about arrivals and such: please send flight information (times and numbers) to Jim as soon as you've booked them. Great International Travel is the new travel agent (see the new handbook for contact information).

Airport: Use MCO.

There will be a hearing, probably Saturday afternoon (or morning? do we provide lunch?), so we need to figure out what we want to do with that. It will be advertised... in a packet? Need to do more advertising: ask the District office to communicate specifically. Arthur is on the cluster Board for FL, and he'll make sure they know about it. Barbara mentioned the Florida UUMA chat line—that's the way to get the word out.

Be thinking about what fun thing we might do on an afternoon off, especially those who are familiar with the area.

The facility should be accessible.

Can we come up with a provocative question or title, for hearing advertising?

### **Synchronization meeting**

It's Feb 3-5, in Orlando

Starts 9 am. Probably have to go down evening of the 2nd.

Leaders of elected bodies will meet to offer... voices, suggestions, solutions? Groups represented: Appraisal, CSW, Planning, Nominating; Moderator and President, some Board.

Jim and Orlanda will be the ones to go. Perhaps at the January meeting we'll know more about the plans and agenda for that meeting, and can discuss it further.

### **Calendar Review for 05/06**

January 6 '06: Paper deadline before the next meeting

January 19-22 '06 : Orlando meeting

February 2-5 '06: Synchronization meeting, Orlando (Jim and Orlanda only)

April 20-23 '06: Columbus, OH meeting. At Ohio-Meadville District meeting.

June 21-25 '06 (Wed-Sun) : GA in St. Louis

October 26-29 '06: meeting, not sure where—we're thinking about the Southwest.

There is some confusion about the date of our October '06 meeting. To clarify: It's either Oct 19-22 not in Boston, or 26-29 in Boston (due to the availability of Pickett-Eliot). We discussed where we haven't been recently (Washington, DC?), and we have come up with the following tentative plan:

October 26-29 '06 : Boston (P/E)

Jan 18-21 '07 : California, either San Francisco, LA, or San Diego

Apr 19-22 '07 : Washington, DC

with the understanding that, if Orlanda is unavoidably double-booked, the Oct '06 date may be changed to the preceding weekend, and the meeting moved to Washington, DC. She will let us know soon about her availability.

[short break]

We are re-visiting some of the items from the agenda for Thursday night.

**Electronic communication manager position**—Jim will keep doing it, since no-one else has a burning desire to do it.

### **Chaplain**

It shouldn't be Jim, nor Mark, nor Linda, due to their other duties.

There is a logic to having someone who's new, who doesn't have a history with other members.

We briefly described where the position came from and why, and acclaimed Barbara to the

position. Hooray!

### **Exercise on identities**

We had a deep and moving sharing of our identities.

[break]

### **Responses to the last report**

There is, actually, a mention in the Handbook about keeping an eye on what comes out of reports. At the moment, there are 3 people who had nothing to do with the writing of the report, but at the same time, 6 of us were very involved....

Some ideas that came out of the ensuing discussion:

Gini and Bill are where the action is really going to happen. They have a lot of great energy... I think it's important to keep in touch with them.

It would be a good idea if some of the responses to the report were archived, for historical purposes. We note that there is a electronic mail list, which is archived.

Some other responses:

Peter Richardson—we discussed his letter, and what has happened since. He hadn't intended to be hurtful.

Jim: We got a message at the [coa@uua.org](mailto:coa@uua.org) address, from someone who'd photocopied just the last chapter and given it out to her Board, and their consensus was that it was incomprehensible. My response was well, they haven't read the rest of the book...

Several of us noted places that the report is being taken up by ministers and others as the subject of sermons, discussions, etc. We also noted a few specific recommendations we have made, which are being implemented, e.g. by the MFC, and the ministerial settlement office at the UUA.

We aren't sure that we are the right people to be tracking implementation—that seems more like the job of a staff person, or Gini or Bill. Again, the idea of a staff person for the Commission came up.

We note that we do have the power to put items on the GA agenda. Perhaps agenda items at the GA where a report comes out would be a logical way of following up on a report, or encouraging its implementation.

### **Parking lot items—left over from earlier**

The “quirk conversation” is postponed until the January meeting. Probably Thursday evening.

We had a discussion about political correctness and “language police,” following up on some comments that were made in the discussion of AO process observer. We don't want to be punitive towards people over the language they use, and there is a concern about extreme oversensitivity about language that is metaphorical. We also want to be compassionate towards one another, and not use language that others find hurtful.

We agree that any lifting up any issues of language would be for compassionately helping someone understand a different perspective, and not for slapping someone on the wrist for failing to live up to some standard of behaviour.

Decision-making process: Tabled until early in the next meeting, because we're too tired to deal with it now.

Conceptual time

We're not going to do it today, because we've had fairly conceptual discussions already. But we feel it would be worth having as a regular part of our meetings.

[break]

Concept papers: It might be worth having a person or two pick up one of the ideas for a concept paper and play with them a bit, to see if they're worth exploring further.

**Tasks lists**

**Study topic**

We agree that, if asked what our new study topic is, we'll say we're still refining it, but not say what it is yet; we're working on it, and will let you know early in 2006.

**Check-out and adjournment.**