

The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations  
Commission on Appraisal



January Meeting, 2010

Berkeley, CA

**Minutes**

(Pending approval in April, 2010)

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## **Thursday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Present:** Erica Baron, Barbara Child, Megan Dowdell, Pete Fontneau, Bev Harrison, Nana Kratochvil, Don Mohr, Michael Ohlrogge, Jacqui Williams

The evening began with a check-in and a review of the agenda.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the October 2009 meeting.

The evening ended with a closing worship led by Barbara.

## **Friday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Present:** Erica Baron, Barbara Child, Megan Dowdell, Pete Fontneau, Bev Harrison, Nana Kratochvil, Don Mohr, Michael Ohlrogge, Jacqui Williams

The morning began with a worship led by Nana Kratochvil

## **Report from Erica Baron and Don Mohr on New Feedback**

-Over 300 suggestions have now been received by the Commission through the Survey Monkey online response form.

-Only new category of topics that emerged was around issues of accessibility and disability.

-There were few new ideas the Commission hadn't seen in the earlier input.

-Likewise, the proportions of responses in each category did not substantially change.

-It was still very worthwhile though to extend the period of time for comment. It helped to connect more people with the Commission and its work.

-The Commission needs to be more clear in the future about deadlines for submission when it puts out requests for comments.

## **Processing Material in Reflection Papers**

Between the October and January meetings, Commissioners created reflection papers exploring potential issues to be addressed by various potential study topics. The Commission divided into three groups of three with each group evaluating the reflection papers of all those people not in the group.

Groups evaluate:

- 1) Upside & downside of topics
- 2) What do we see as the most viable central focus (amongst the papers other than our own that we've reviewed)?

After meeting in groups of three, all commissioners came together again to compare the relative strengths and weaknesses of potential topics. The Commission accomplished some narrowing of topics and then took a break to address other matters.

## Hearing Planning

The Commission decided to focus all of the time for its upcoming hearing on getting input around the new study topic. Participants in the hearing will be provided with empty space on their hearing evaluation forms to give additional input on other, non-related topics of concern to them within Unitarian Universalism.

For the hearing, the CoA would like to have time for people to talk in small groups or pairs, rather than just giving people an opportunity to come up to a microphone and talk.

## Topic Selection, Continued

Commission continued its process of narrowing down potential study topics and repeatedly noted the potential areas of overlap between topics. Ultimately, the Commission decided to center its next study around ministry, as the topic most promising for creating an effective and consequential report.

## Hearing Planning, Continued

The Commission discussed possible questions to pose to hearing participants at Saturday's hearing. The Commission also discussed its desired outcomes for the hearing. Commissioners decided they would like to know more about what UUs think of when they hear the word "ministry" (so that the Commission can get some sense of the terrain it will be operating in). The Commission would also like to learn from participants what they see as the most critical aspects of ministry for the Commission to focus its study on.

The evening ended with a worship led by Pete

### **Saturday, January 23**

**Present:** Erica Baron, Barbara Child, Megan Dowdell, Pete Fontneau, Bev Harrison, Nana Kratochvil, Don Mohr, Michael Ohlrogge, Jacqui Williams

The morning began with a worship led by Don.

## More Hearing Planning

(suggest to people that they group with people they don't know)

### **Four roles for groups of six:**

- 1) Recorder
- 2) Facilitator
- 3) Timekeeper
- 4) Reporter

### **Final Questions for Hearing:**

- 1) Describe a situation when ministry was important in your life. Maybe you were ministered to, maybe you did the ministering.
- 2) If you were going to do a study on the topic of ministry in Unitarian Universalism, what sub topics would you chose to study? In other words, what does Unitarian Universalism need us to study now about ministry?

Each group gets a piece of newsprint to record their responses for the two questions. Time will be provided at the end of the hearing for each group to share their answers to each of the two questions with all participants present.

## **Article II Followup Matters**

### **Non-CoA Article II Followup:**

The Metro New York Anti-Racism committee has picked up and is using the Commission's proposed inclusion statement in their work and programming. Barbara applied to do a workshop on this at the Heartland District Assembly.

Tom Loughery from the UUA Board sent an announcement to all of the UUA congregations inviting them to take action on the proposed inclusion statement, as recommended by the responsive resolution at GA last year. As with most such announcements, the number of people in each congregation reached by this mailing was highly variable.

Tom Loughery also reported that the UUA Board established a working group to look at the responsive resolutions pertaining to the CoA's proposed revisions to Article II. This group will issue a report to the next GA as to whether any changes should be made to Article XV, what they should be, if proposed, and any impact they would have on Article II, as well as timing issues relating to both articles. There will be no proposed bylaw amendment at this upcoming GA regarding either article.

### **CoA Article II Followup:**

Jacqui contacted the UUA publicity director and spoke about submitting the Article II materials for archive at the Andover library at Harvard. She will continue to work with Ned Leibensberger and the archivist at Harvard on this. Bev and Michael will work with Jacqui on getting permissions from people for submitting their material to the archives and then will work to get those materials submitted to Harvard's library.

## **Treasurer's Report**

Don reported on his latest reports received from the UUA regarding the Commission's expenses for the past several years. The Commission decided it needed additional information and clarity on these reports and made plans for Don and other Commissioners to follow up as necessary. The Commission also emphasized the importance of each Commissioner submitting expense reports in a timely manner and keeping accurate record of all Commission related expenses to be reimbursed.

All members will now send Don their expense reports as well as sending them to Nancy Lawrence. For those who are booking through the UUA travel agency, they will send the cost of their airfare to Don.

Don will collect expense reports from all commission members. He will also directly collect from each lodging location (or from the Commission member who dealt with the lodging location) how much the lodging costs.

## **GA Prep Work**

The CoA won't have a booth this year. The Commission decided to get a suite this year to provide space for the Commission to meet on its own as well as with different stakeholders in its new study on ministry. Commissioners don't need to be at GA until Wednesday. The CoA will need to do a lot of homework between now and April in order to use the April meeting to best advantage for refining the scope and focus of the study.

## **CoA Elections**

In the past, the project manager position was selected along with the selection of other positions. In this instance, however, the Commission will need to select a project manager probably at our April meeting.

What does the project manager do? To some extent, it is a position that the person filling it tailors to fit their skills, styles, inclinations, etc.

All Commissioners will write to Barbara before April to let her know their thoughts on project manager. Barbara will work with these to create a process for selection of the manager at the April meeting.

## **Communications Issues:**

### **CoA member pictures & bios on website.**

-All members support putting Commissioner bios and pictures on the website. All members will send these in to Michael by February 6<sup>th</sup>. Approximate bio length – 100 words.

-Michael will compile CoA pictures & bios and send them to Nancy Lawrence for posting on the UUA website.

### **Posting other “working” photos of Commission members on Facebook.**

-Due to the UUA website's new format, we probably don't have the option to post these types of photos up on the CoA's main website anymore.

-The Commission decided that there is no problem with posting any photos taken during Commission meeting time itself or during public events like hearings.

## **CoA Covenant**

Barbara led the Commission in an exercise to begin thinking about what should be a part of the new CoA covenant. Group members gave input on several matters which Barbara will process between now and April's meeting, when she will lead the group in exercises to finalize the new covenant.

## **Closing Matters**

The Commission discussed impressions and reflections based on the day's hearing. The Commission also reviewed the task list for this meeting and made plans in preparation for the upcoming April meeting. Barbara will send out suggested homework for all Commissioners to help prepare for our work on the ministry topic at the April meeting. Commissioners are also invited to take on any additional projects they believe will be helpful to the Commission as it prepares for its study of ministry. Erica will work to arrange for a hearing in Boston on the Saturday of our meeting, and Michael will provide assistance as needed.

The meeting ended with a check-out and a worship led by Erica.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Michael Ohlrogge, Secretary  
Commission on Appraisal