

Report for January 2009 Board of Trustees Meeting Congregational Services

Successful Stewardship in Difficult Economic

In response to many requests, Wayne has gathered nine recent papers that all relate to stewardship in difficult economic times. The last two papers refer specifically to ways of remaining positive, especially in difficult times. The compilation has been shared with the district field staff, Congregational Services staff, Stewardship and Development staff, the UU Ministers Association, and the district presidents. Wayne has been invited to speak about the topic at upcoming district events in San Francisco, Houston, Philadelphia and Fort Myers. The titles of the nine papers are listed below. The complete text of the nine papers is being sent by separate e-mail.

1. "Past Sheds Light on Recession Giving" by Sharon Bond
2. "Anticipating the Effects of the U.S. Economy on Congregational Giving in 2008/2009" by Laurel Amabile
3. "10 Steps to Successful Stewardship in Difficult Economic Times" by Wayne Clark
4. "Thoughts on Giving in Tough Economic Times" by Ian Evison
5. "10 Stewardship Issues Every Church Leader Should Consider in 2009"
6. "Thoughts on Annual Stewardship Drive" by Frankie Price-Stern
7. "This is the Time for Fair Share Giving" by Frankie Price-Stern
8. "The Problem Trap" by Larry Peers
9. "Appreciative Tip: The Power of Great Questions" by Robert Voyle

Green Sanctuary Program Update

The Green Sanctuary Program continues to flourish under the management of the UUA. Since July 1st, the UUA has accredited 8 congregations, welcomed 27 congregations as candidates, and placed 3 congregations in deferred candidacy. Currently, 195 UU congregations are officially involved in the Green Sanctuary Program. The Office of Congregational Stewardship Services is continuing to formalize the program and bring more structure to it as well as increase communications with Green Sanctuary congregations. On January 1, 2009 the Green Sanctuary Manual will be available on the UUA website free-of-charge.

Planning for Growth

Now in its second year of operation, the recently-expanded Planning for Growth and Vitality (P4G) pilot project for small (> 150 members) and smaller midsize (150 – 350 members) congregations is already making a difference to participant congregations. Twenty-four congregational teams in four districts (Clara Barton, Central Midwest, Northern New England, and Ohio Meadville) have met and begun work, with a fifth district (St. Lawrence) to begin in Spring of 2009. Districts that join after these five will no longer be piloting, they will be participating in the redesigned process. The current teams have become enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and outward-focused. This excitement has spread to the congregations themselves.

Two to three times a year, the teams meet as a learning community to incorporate growth-oriented information, practices, and cultural orientation from their district staff and from the UUA's trained consultants. Between training sessions with their consultant, the teams use an intelligent range of media to communicate ideas and progress, and they are mentored by district growth staff and volunteers, and supported by headquarters staff.

With the UUA consultants, these district-based paid and volunteer staff are building district infrastructure for growth. The plan is to perpetuate the learning within the district so that growth work continues and spreads over time and over a wide area.

As they share expertise and resources, the congregational teams have become increasingly energized by the pilot project and have already made innovations such as increased outward focus to welcome and serve new people, increased giving and external donations, and shared youth group.

Web Pages for New and Emerging Congregations

A new section of UUA.org for new and emerging congregations is now live. It was created in collaboration with nearly 20 UUA headquarters and district office staff and UUs outside the staff. Content includes how to start a new congregation, how to begin new programs well in a new congregation, and how the UUA and districts are involved. New and expanded content will continue to be added in the coming months.

Young Adult Ministries

Moving forward with our vision to inspire growth in congregations by retention and addition of new young adults, the office has increased communication and collaboration with Susanna Whitman, Growth Services Program Manager and Valerie Holton, Marketing Outreach Director. The Office of Young Adult ministries convened 25 district and congregational staff and volunteers at an event in October to network and strengthen young adult and campus ministry in the denomination. In November, the office strongly advocated for and successfully hired the Rev. Dr. Monica Cummings as Program Associate for Ministry to Youth and Young Adults of Color. Although this position is currently housed in LFD, Nancy DiGiovanni shares supervision of this position with Mara Dowdall and Monica participates in weekly conference calls and meeting with the Young Adult Ministries Office.

The Acting Co-Directors' attendance and participation at the UUMN conference, Excellence in Ministry Conference, LREDA Fall Conference, PSD workshop for Young Adult Ministry, and Northern New England District Leadership Module demonstrate intentional outreach, networking and active advocacy for Young Adults in crucial communities in our denomination. Along with staff from Lifespan Faith Development, the office held a two day meeting with members of Groundwork, our youth and young adult anti-racism and anti-oppression training and organizing program, and we have hired a consultant to assess our current Groundwork program for optimal efficiency and effectiveness.

In collaboration with the UUA ITS Staff Group, we recently completed the synchronization process development which will allow communication between our online database (ConnectUU) and the UUA's main constituent database (Raiser's Edge). Other ongoing and future projects include resource development for bridging ministry, preparation for General Assembly 2009, and enhancements to ConnectUU.com, the online young adult and campus ministry group and event directory.

JUUST Change - District Antiracism, Anti-oppression, Multiculturalism Strategy

Building on the process developed for the Joseph Priestley District, a strategy to increase ARAOMC competency at the district level is underway in nine other districts. The strategy takes into account the unique place each district is in, depending on their history and current status with ARAOMC work, and provides guidelines and tools for bringing this work into districts, congregations and regions. Representatives from Congregational Services met with **District Presidents** at their annual meeting in Boston in early November to review and discuss the strategy. In addition to JPD, districts in some phase of the strategy (including the very earliest) are: Clara Barton, Florida, Metro New York, Mountain Desert, Ohio-Meadville, Pacific Central, Pacific Southwest, Prairie Star, and St. Lawrence.

National Conferences and Notable Gatherings

Congregational Services took part in the **New England UU Regional Conference on October 18, 2008** with a display table and CS representative presenting materials and services from two key programs, ARAOMC, and Hospitality and Outreach.

Online registration is now available for the National Midsize Congregations Conference taking place in Houston TX, **February 6-8, 2009**. **"Envisioning Inclusive Excellence in Midsize Congregations"** features keynote speaker *Dr. L. Lee Knefelkamp*, who will speak on how midsize congregations can work towards and achieve inclusive excellence: a multi-layered approach to integrate diversity and the range of issues and vision in individual midsize congregations. Workshops focus on four key categories: Excellence in Outreach and Growth, Inspired Justice, New Leadership Skills, and Inclusive Stewardship. To learn more and register go to <http://www.uua.org/events/midsizecongregations/2009/index.shtml>.

Formed in early 2005, the **JUUST Change Consultancy** has not had a face-to-face meeting since then and so it is with heartfelt anticipation that consultants plan to meet in Boston **February 27 – March 1, 2009** to consider and affirm the JUUST Change mission, share successes and learning, review in-depth the ARAOMC District Strategy and DOMT Initiative, and participate in skills training.

Jubilee Two trainers are scheduled to come together in Dallas TX for the first time since early 2006 and will meet **March 20-22, 2009** for an in-depth training of updated materials and processes (of the curriculum provided by Crossroads Ministry), and to discuss Jubilee Two going forward. Congregational Services hopes to bring together Jubilee One (Creating a Jubilee World) trainers for similar work.

Unitarian Universalists from throughout the United States will meet in Tulsa, OK April 3-5, 2009 for **“Leading Congregations into a Multiracial, Multicultural Future – now is the time!”** This third in a trio of annual conferences that focus on building multiracial, multicultural competency among Unitarian Universalists and their congregations, explores the challenges of sustaining congregations that are truly welcoming and inclusive. While in Tulsa, conference attendees will participate in a wide range of experiences as the conference partners with Tulsa’s richly diverse UU congregations that include cultures of native peoples and urban churches. Information and registration will be available online beginning in early January.

Google Adwords Campaign

Google AdWords provide a tactical and ongoing way for the UUA to get its message out. One of the primary benefits of Google AdWords is the fact that ads can be created quickly to respond to timely news and media events.

Since the beginning of this new fiscal year, the UUA has conducted the following campaigns:

- **Tragedy in Knoxville** – the UUA conducted a campaign to educate the public on Unitarian Universalism as a liberal religion and for the Knoxville relief fund.
- **Abstinence and Comprehensive Sex Education** – after the announcement that Sarah Pallin’s unmarried teen daughter was pregnant, there were a lot of media conversations around sex education. The UUA sought this opportunity to promote our position on comprehensive sex education and the “Our Whole Lives” curriculum.
- **Randy Pausch** – Randy Pausch, a Unitarian Universalist, wrote the popular book The Last Lecture. Randy passed away in summer and his death generated a lot of media attention. The UUA linked our Google AdWords to a UUA interview.
- **Bill Moyers’ Journal** - Bill Moyers did a segment on his NPR program about hate speech, violence and the role of the media. It featured Rev. Chris Buice and the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church

(TVUUC) in Knoxville. The program aired on Friday, September 12, 2008. We quickly ran a short google ad campaign.

- **Forrest Church** –Terry Gross interviewed Forrest Church on NPR's "Fresh Air" about his latest book, Love and Death: My Journey Through the Valley of the Shadow. The UUA responded with a short google ad campaign.
- **Marriage Equality** - Immediately following the November 4 passing of California's Proposition 8, the UUA ran a series of ads on Marriage Equality. These ads continue to run.

TOPIC	TIME PERIOD	TOTAL IMPRESSIONS	TOTAL # CLICK-THROUGHS	CLICK-THROUGH RATE	COST PER CLICK
Knoxville Tragedy	7/31- 8/17	609,123	5,983	.98%	\$.31
Abstinence & comprehensive sex education	9/10-11/3	1,598,681	6,245	.27%	\$.58
Bill Moyer	9/12- 10/4	293,543	435	.15%	\$.36
Randy Pausch- Last Lecture	9/10/-11/3	1,169,318	5,076	.43%	\$.24
Forrest Church	10/28 -11/4	2,696,981	1,326	.05%	\$.78
Marriage Equality	11/4 - 12/2	5,359,273	13,875	.26%	\$.49

Regional Marketing Campaigns

The UUA is working with the Baltimore/Washington DC Growth Team and regional leaders to determine how to move forward with a campaign. We are also in preliminary conversation with four congregations in the Albany, New York area for a 2009/2010 marketing campaign.