

UUA Board of Trustees Meeting Notes

Jan. 22-23, 2005

Prepared by
District Presidents Association Board of Trustees Observer
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Top topics:

Summit news

GA 2005 will include a Summit the Wednesday evening before our Thursday meeting and GA's beginning, and all District Presidents are invited.

DPA, after lengthy discussion by the Executive Committee, reported to the Board at this meeting that DPA believes our association's elected leaders should regularly meet together but that we lack the resources to organize a Summit this year on our own. The Our Congregations Working Group responded:

- We want a Summit to occur in 2005. We feel a responsibility to DPA, as a Working Group, as a co-owner of that effort.
- Purpose of Summit is to get elected leaders together to share energy and vision, develop alignment in vision, mission and ministry. Call it the Alignment Summit.
- Should be a significant spiritual component to this alignment work.
- Conversation will build on questions posed by DPA about role of districts.
- Work from here will be accomplished by a task force of board and DPA representatives, moderator and Director of District Services. Event will be financed by board in response to DPA financing last year.

Our BOT liaison Eva Marx's motion was approved "that the Board of Trustees invite District Presidents, selected administrative staff and others to be determined to join them at an Alignment Summit on the evening of June 22, 2005, (the evening preceding the start of GA), to explore the alignment of vision, mission and ministry related to the role of districts." The Board knows DPA welcomes incoming District Presidents to our GA meeting is expecting to invite them to Alignment Summit, too.

Our questions about the role of districts

The Board is joining DPA's line of conversation about funding delivery of services through districts. Board members had rich conversation about the history of districts, their role and relationship in the UUA and with congregations in context of upcoming Alignment Summit. It's a continuation of our November conversation with Moderator Gini Courter about districts, and you will hear more before the April board meeting.

And we had more questions

DPA liaison Eva Marx called Trustees attention to two of DPA's other questions: Where and what are association's resources for growth and the relationship between mission/vision/ministry of association and ministerial training.

Central Midwest resolution prompts response for everyone

The Growth Working Group presented its response to Central Midwest District's resolution dated April 24, 2004, which questioned the board's planning for and implementation of growth efforts. Coming via e-mail.

In other news

1. The Open UUA committee is considering asking to meet with DPA, possibly at GA.

2. Moderator Gini Courter asked Our Congregations Working Group to prepare a plan for pre-GA training for congregation presidents in 2006. Response: Training should be a for-CPs version of the BOT training on the spiritual practice of being a steward of the association, leading CPs through the spiritual discernment process that helps us define why we do this work. Will Saunders and Judi McGavin led this training for the board, based on model of "Inquiring Leadership" and Quaker model of queries and advices. Harlan Limpert will work with them and recast the training for CPs.

Points of interest about this training plan:

- Marketing opportunity: CPs will be able to have same training provided for Association BOT.
- DPA available to help as needed.
- Next training for CPs should be anti-racism/anti-oppression.

Meeting highlights:

About GA and Congregational Presidents

- The Board affirmed GA Planning Committee efforts to reapportion GA workshops to reflect current UUA priorities.
- The Board approved Salt Lake City for GA 09 (and, if date not available, for a date in the near future). If date not available, another city from search list will be presented for board approval.
- GA reception by Bill Sinkford and Gini Courter between District Ingatherings and Banner Parade is for Congregation Presidents and only CPs, with regrets because of space considerations
- Times for Congregation Presidents to network, as requested by CPs surveyed, will be Friday evening and Sunday evening, semi-faciliated by Harlan Limpert and Tracy Robinson-Harris then open.
- Still working out details of how to do well in planned recognition of breakthrough congregations at GA.
- More plans to come in April
- St. Louis GA in 06 will be Wednesday through Sunday, the beginning of a two-year experiment also growing out of conversation with CPs
- Board Secretary Wayne Arnason reported he expects there will be two contested elections at GA this year, for the Commission on Social Witness and GA Planning Committee.

About funding our faith

- Highlights of FY06 budget (to be adopted at GA) are 5% overall budget increase for staff salary increases (not for across-the-board application, but to address inequities and merit), UU World publication frequency changes and additional Friends of the UUA income from fund-raising process changes. Otherwise, it is an extremely tight budget.
- APF level set at \$53 per member for FY 07 and \$54 in FY 08 (or 4.2% total expenses for both years for congregations of 550-plus members)
- UU World changes, to save money but maintain service as a voice to and of UUs, will be to change from 6 to 4 issues a year and the addition of a weekly online edition.

- Beacon Press's future is good. The Press is successfully completing its three-year plan, and it will continue to be the UUA's publishing arm, with routine oversight by the UUA administration and board.
- Changes in Friends fund-raising, recommended by a consultant, are intended to reinvigorate and expand the donor base. The new budget includes the expectation of more income from the Friends program.

About public witness, social justice

- UUA to be honored by Religious Coalition for Freedom to Marry
- The Living Our Faith Working Group reported that the Commission for Social Witness and the moderator will continue to be engaged in a conversation about how we do Social Justice work at GA. More to report in October.
- Enthusiasm around new Public Policy Statement process. See the example online at www.uua.org/TRUS/jan05/index/html. Look under Policy Drafts.

About professional ministry

- Changes in MFC rules on categories of fellowship and preliminary fellowship. See text online at www.uua.org/TRUS/jan05/index/html. Look under Policy Drafts.

To the attention of districts, congregations

- The Board calls attention to Committee on Socially Responsible Investing's work reviewing the screening tool. Urges districts and congregations to be vigilant about investments and to consider using CSRI tools of shareholder activism, community investing and screening (positive and negative). Find the Appendices to UUA Investment Policies and Guidelines online at www.uua.org/TRUS/jan05/index/html.
- Congregation of the Larger Fellowship member names are available for district databases. Contact the Congregational Services office for information.
- Audit Committee charter approved. Charter is intended to keep association out in front of federal financial ethics and truthful reporting standards. Good for districts and congregations to consider how to use it as a model for their own policies. Find the charter online under Policy Drafts at www.uua.org/TRUS/jan05/index/html.
- Biannual professional ministry salary range recommendation review nearing discussion, vote in April.

Other Association matters

- Renewed Interweave Independent Affiliate status and held it up as model for what IAs should be. Requested report from Association Working Group on IA structure, particularly as it affects GA, both in access to workshop slots compared to congregations' access and as a way our association does its Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression/MultiCultural work.
- Working Group convenors group working to further conversation about Lifespan Faith Development, given board members concerns and questions, discussion of role of staff and of congregations' effectiveness and concerns about how we treat our religious educators.

- The Congregation of the Larger Fellowship is supporting the creation within it of the Congregation of the Younger Fellowship to provide an online spiritual home for young adults not served by a congregation with a young adult program.