

# General Assembly Planning Committee Meeting Notes

## April 13 - 15, 2007

Attending: Linda Friedman, Chair, Barbara Atlas, Joan Benziger, Lynda Bluestein, Ginger Brown, Fred Cole, David Fisher, Eva Marx, Beth McGregor, Judi McGavin, Tim Murphy, Jan Sneegas, Walt Wieder

Also Attending on Friday: Gini Courter

### Friday, April 13, 2007

#### 1. Conference Call with Helen Bishop on Open Space Technology at GA 2007

Helen Bishop and Don Plante were joined in conference with the Planning Committee. 22 people have been lined up as facilitators; 8 are on the planning team; there is good geographic coverage.

“In today’s complex world what is our mission as a faith community?” is the question the UUA Board would like to have answered. The UUA Board, in addition to the big “ends” question will formulate the topics for the 10 domains or big issues at their meeting next week. Within the domains small groups will break off into discussion groups, (ministry, RE, administration....)

Helen plans to set up an 11<sup>th</sup> room for people who are not comfortable with the idea that they have been assigned to a domain room by a number on their nametags to talk about authority issues.

The space requirement at GA 07 is for 10 domain rooms 20 workshop rooms and 6 breakout sessions for 120 small groups. The OST Planning Group will collect the names of facilitators and titles for what they will be facilitating and prepare a schedule on the Marketplace Wall /printed Master Schedule to get out to the whole of GA.

On Sunday at the final Plenary Session, the 30 most important questions that have come out of this process will be put before the delegates to be prioritized.

Very Important: Each facilitator will be responsible for resetting the small group rooms exactly as the room was set up when the group began. There are substantial added Convention Center costs that GA will be subject to if rooms are not reset. Arcs work the best for OST discussions, circles less desirable because each time someone comes in the circle has to be reset. Cost of not properly resetting rooms will be made known to all.

#### Comments & Action Items:

1. Open space will work better if participants attend one or two workshops within their assigned domain.
2. Room A-103 is Open Space Central – where reports from workshops are turned in to be put on a master list and prepared for distribution to GA Participants in the *Dragon Boat Lobby* early Thursday afternoon.
3. The 22 facilitators from the morning session will need to have 4,000 copies printed after the “someone” TBD inputs all of the workshop titles into the master schedule. They need to go to Room A 103 to pick up their copies and then report to the Dragon Boat Lobby to distribute master schedules.

4. Need one or two computers in A103 loaded with Master Schedule Templates.
5. Helen to ask UUA Board to assign a person to enter input to create master schedules.
6. At the end of convergence sessions there will be 3 questions – most critical issues discussed in small groups. These 30 questions get turned into resolutions for discussion at the last Plenary Session.
7. Helen needs to know if this Convention Center uses interlocking chairs.
8. Need volunteer ushers for each room who will need to monitor the number of people in rooms so they don't over fill.
9. Helen does not want anything said about OST at Orientation other than come to Thursday's Plenary where all will be explained.
10. Weekend and part time attendees may receive a different handout to be prepared by Helen.

## **2. Conference Call with Bill Sinkford**

An invitation has been extended to Bill Moyers. Has not heard back but will follow up the week after next.

Bill has been in communication with Liz Lerner and rationality seems to be winning out as those folks who had expressed concerns about this year's lecturer no longer have those concerns.

Bill said this will be his busiest GA ever and that he does not expect to have time to play any additional roles other than those in Opening, the President's Report in Plenary and the Service of the Living Tradition, Ware Lecture, various receptions and Closing Worship.

He has not yet finalized the Opening piece celebrating the three anniversaries that will be celebrated: 10, 10 and 30 year anniversaries celebrating the work in our Association on Accessibilities, ARDC and Women in Religion. Bill stated that he will be in conversation with Gini a lot next week and that he is very aware of the June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for scripts.

With regard to this year's Public Witness Event, that is being coordinated by Susan Leslie.

Bill stated that he does not expect to have any role in OST and does not think his presence would be appropriate. Is excited to see what direction and ideas come out of OST.

The COA has gotten very little traction in their conversations on Principles and Purposes. People are quite satisfied with the Principles. The piece that has been lacking is the Purposes – our mission or sense of calling. Perhaps the OST process will help that process along.

## **3. The Members of the Planning Committee met with the Youth Caucus Leadership over Lunch.**

## **4. Task Groups Met Separately for an hour each**

## 5. Report Back from Plenary Task Group

Agenda and scripts okay. Ware Lecture also seems to be under control. Mini Assemblies on bylaw changes not expected to have great interest/participation this year. The time keeper for CSW will be Marc Lousteau. Ambience – Beth and Joan working with Stan Jewett. Location of Banner Parade staging area may be problematic -- need to look at alternate locations during the tour of the Convention Center. Stage Design and technology is under control, will have floor plan (seating and stage layout) by end of next week. The Plenary Hall rehearsal schedule is still being worked on.

### Comments & Action Items:

1. Fred and Barb need to communicate with groups doing events using Plenary Hall to make sure they know about scheduling Plenary Hall Rehearsal time.
2. We will need 40-50 ushers. The Head Usher has now been identified, a member of a Nashville congregation, Richard Bird. Nancy Loughrey is the Usher Coordinator this year.
3. Still looking for conflict management trainer. Ginger will contact the local District Executive to ask for suggestions. Will invite ushers, chaplains, members of Planning Committee and Volunteer Committee to attend.
4. A Tech consult is needed to evaluate new plan for SoLT where ministers do not 'walk'.

## 6. Report Back from Worship & Celebration Task Group

Tim reported on Sunday Worship, SoLT, the Hymn Sing, Hymn Coordination, the GA Adult Choir, Youth Led Worship and Bridging, Opening Celebration, Thursday and Friday Worship Services and the CSW Worship.

## 7. Report from the Moderator

**OST** will not generate votes on 30 items but 1,600 people will be asked cast 5 votes somehow. Need to imagine a creative way to provide delegates with tangible objects (pennies, marbles, and slips of paper) to vote with during final Plenary.

How is the outcome of the OST process going to be made into resolutions to be voted on in the final Plenary? Suggest that the convergence from workshops write statements and not questions.

**Cultural Misappropriation Conversation:** DRUUMM, ARE, UUMN have sent representatives to a meeting first envisioned as a single meeting last September. UUism is an 'appropriating' faith. "Misappropriation" is using something inappropriately. Earlier this week the folks who will be leading worship and songs met together to work on ways to lead a song or a worship service for a multicultural congregation of 4,000 people. For this GA a Right Relations Team is being formed to deal with issues at GA.

**Worship at GA:** Gini noted that the various worship services at GA have specific purposes, but that a worship service with the primary purpose to minister to the whole community is needed on Saturday night,

**Election – Candidate Forum:** even though an uncontested election, we will not expect delegates to vote on people they have never had a chance to see or meet. The Candidates' Forum will be held in Plenary IV from 8:00 – 9:00 PM which will also include an election by affirmation and the recognition of elected leaders who are concluding their terms at the end of GA.

### **Comments & Action Items:**

1. Need to continue the process of imagining what object to use for the voting in the final Plenary Session.
2. Need to identify a staff person who can type really fast to be in A 103 and type up the Master Schedule for OST.
3. The Cultural Misappropriation Task Force will meet again as the outcome of the first two meetings has been so positive: communities are now tied together who did not know each other before (DRUUMM and UUMN). The next meeting will include Youth.
4. Every single song will be introduced either in words or in the order of service.
5. The GAPC needs to think about a pastoral worship service on Saturday night. (move the Ware Lecture)
6. The need to have text of sermons way ahead of time does not allow the minister to minister to the congregation that is gathered – GA.
7. GAPC to consider electing the next Chair before the end of GA in June so that relationships can be forged during GA.

**Saturday, April 14, 2007**

**1. The Planning Committee Members toured the Portland Convention Center**

**2. Discussion of Convention Center Issues**

Multiple levels in the CC will present a challenge to scooters. Elevators will be the primary means of transport among levels – they are small but there are many of them.

Need to ask the delegates to sit in the center section not staff or others because the space is 180 wide and will be hard to visually sweep the hall for assessing votes.

RE: transportation from our hotel block to the Convention center -- there may be some frustration because the trains are kind of small. Walking should be encouraged.

Potential safety issues near the Lloyd Center as gang related incidents have been on the increase recently. Curfew is enforced in Portland and needs to be emphasized to the Youth Caucus participants and sponsors.

Need plenty of volunteers for the first choir registration (8). Choir room w/piano is excellent – registration the first two days will be a challenge. May need to have them sign up and pay for music in hall (volunteers with clipboards) then take a slip showing paid and go into the choir room to pick up music.

**Comments and Action Items:**

1. Patty Cameron will be providing information on how to negotiate the CC using wheelchairs and scooters in her accessibility orientation.
2. Walt will let Beth M know that the ministers who wish to be recognized at the SoLT will not be able to also sing in the Minister's Choir.
3. At sound/tech checks participants need to be coached to speak to the cameras because the house is so wide and our ministers and most participants in GA will not have had the experience of speaking in space configured like this one. They will need coaching about how to use the camera as the audience.
4. Walt needs to check to find out how many scooters may be in the class of ministers so space can be configured.
5. Need to have Judi or someone from the VC see if we can get a Police Officer to speak to the Youth/Youth Sponsors at their meeting to emphasize safety issues. Also add a piece on safety issues in the Program and during Orientation.
6. Need to check on whether or not chairs used in Open Space Rooms are connected.

### 3. Jan's Report Part I

**Registration Update:** Current registration 2,207; 35% are electing to purchase Carbon Offsets. Both numbers put Oregon GA ahead of this time last year in St. Louis although we won't be able to say for certain this will be a substantially larger GA until after May 1<sup>st</sup> when early registration closes. Most registrations from California, Washington, Massachusetts, and Oregon. A high proportion from West Coast. The UUA will not be facing any attrition issues this year because the entire block sold out immediately and new hotels have been added. They are kind of far flung but people are being told that.

**Background Checks for Young FUN Staff:** It has come to Jan's attention that Young FUN staff is not CORI checked. There is a cost associated with this.

**Project Equality** went belly up but Carleen is available to continue working with the GA Office conducting EEO audits of hotels and convention facilities. **Future Sites:**

**2010 After** the UUA Board voted to withdraw from Minneapolis, we received a letter from the head of the Union promising that there will be no labor action when we are there. Tim and Kay are advising the PC to put Minneapolis back as a site.

**2011** the Site Selection Committee had hoped to secure either Washington, DC or Baltimore. Washington, DC gave our dates away even before the site visit. The day before the site visit ; Baltimore also gave away our dates for 2011 but had dates open for subsequent years so the site team proceeded to visit both Baltimore and Charlotte. Baltimore was too expensive and had some other physical plant issues in the Convention Center. The group strongly recommends Charlotte, NC as an economical and high quality site – and is very interested in getting into the religious convention market. We will present Baltimore with a proposal for 2014 which indicates our economic limitations to see where it goes.

#### **Comments & Action Items:**

1. People who want to register for only one day want to see the program first before they register so they know which day to choose so we need to get info on the Program out on the UUA list even before the publication is finished.
2. The Planning Committee voiced strong support for incurring the cost and having all staff and volunteers CORI checked rather than relying on reference checks and other Safe Congregations Policies alone.
3. The PC voiced support for continuing to have Carleen conduct her educational audits with hotel and convention centers on our behalf.
4. Motion #1: Beth McGregor writing to place Minneapolis back as recommended site for GA 2010.
5. Motion #2: Barbara Atlas writing to recommend Charlotte as the site for 2011.

### 4. Members of the Planning Committee met with Members of the PNWD Volunteer Committee over lunch

## 5. Jan's Report Part II

Schedule for GAPC at GA: Discussed some changes from the schedule we followed in St. Louis. Schedule of PC meetings – need to change the January 2008 meeting because of the NY holiday. Jan will prepare a schedule of GA Meetings for the PC and circulate. January 2008 the PC meeting will start one week later on December January 10<sup>th</sup> instead of December January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## 6. Report from the Scholarship Committee

The Scholarship Committee did not get scholarships that met established criteria that expended the full amount in the pool – only \$14,308 out of a \$20,000 fund and recommended devoting remainder to Young Adult scholarship fund. Gini asked that funds be made available to OST facilitators (need based) with the balance to Young Adults.

### Comments & Action Items:

Next year advertise availability of scholarships more widely and modify the minimum congregational match needed to qualify.

Motion #5 Eva Marx to write to approve the recommendation of the Scholarship Committee. Beth will contact Helen Bishop and Michael Tino to arrange distribution of this fund.

## 7. Report from the UUA Board Liaison Eva Marx

**Independent Affiliates:** only three applications, one will likely qualify. Deadline is April 30. Two **new congregations** to be introduced at GA 2007.

**Special GA Ask at a Plenary** TBD to support volunteer scholarships for work in New Orleans. Board intends to vote in September 2008 on policies for Policy Governance. There is a new Working Group on the Board focused on the transition to Policy Governance.

The UUA Board is working to strengthen relationships with UUMN and UUMA.

The Board will have a special evening to talk about ministerial excellence.

The board agreed not to publicly support any candidates for 2009 election until after the 2008 GA. The Board wants/plans to sponsor a candidate's panel at GA 08.

At its April meeting the UUA Board will be receiving a report on the growth initiative in JPD.

### Comments & Action Items:

1. May need to reserve seating for new congregation delegates. Eva to send request to Ginger.
2. Board members to work alongside ushers outside Plenary prior to the Ware Lecture to check name badges.
3. Need to follow up with organizers of the Big Donor's Reception just prior to the Ware Lecture with a reminder that although credentials are not required for the Reception they must have them to get into the Ware. The Development Office needs to arrange for credentials for any major donor special guests. Linda to communicate to Development Office.

## 8. Other Business Discussed

Members of the PC received a request from Soulful Sundown to take up a collection at their service for their work. This is a PC sponsored event and granting this request would violate a pivotal policy. Tim to advise the group of this decision.

**Right Relations Team:** still in process – the size of the team hasn't been determined and does not replace the usual "go-to" people for issues that involve various constituencies. The PC should receive a draft of a process with names and phone numbers attached to it for managing conflicts. These folks would likely be identified during Plenary and Evening Entertainment. Gini and Petra Aldrich are currently facilitating the conversation with the stakeholders. TBD Cultural misappropriation definition distributed.

**Conflict of Interest:** Materials in the packet were briefly discussed and explained.

**Discussion of Baltimore** as potential site for 2014 if our economic expectations can be met. 2013 Columbus, Louisville, Indianapolis are all potential sites if we move our cycle up a year. This year the PC lost two sites because of our timing – may need to do dual site searches each year (recommend to the Board that we commit further out). Indianapolis is significantly more expensive for Convention Center facilities than either Louisville or Columbus although it would be cheaper to fly into. The consensus was to wait and see how things progress.

**Welcoming Dr. Denise Hall to the GAPC:** Linda Friedman to extend an invitation to her to join us at GA meetings in Portland.

Jan met with the UUA Crisis Team which is reconvening on April 30<sup>th</sup> to take a look at emergency preparedness and amend their current Plan. When the Plan is ready we will put this plan into our Manual.

We have 4 positions to fill on the PC for the coming year. Chair, Two Vice Chairs, and one Secretary.

Judi asked that we provide her with clear expectations on what we would like her to do in order to specifically address the safety issues of Portland in the Lloyd Center area.

### Comments & Action Items:

1. Motion # 6: Fred Cole to write to adopt the Conflict of Interest Policy included in the meeting packet with some recommended language edits.
2. Beth indicated her interest in being the Chair for the coming year, Lynda, Tim, Barb and Ginger would like to be elected to the vice chair positions and no one indicated interest in being elected secretary.
3. Safety piece in Orientation, Youth Caucus, and at In-gatherings and in first Newsletter.



## Sunday, April 15, 2007

### 1. Volunteer Committee Report by Judi McGavin

**Information Services:** "Ask Me" Volunteers at airports and hotels will be receiving AR/AO Training.

**Local Bed & Breakfast:** 75 of 100 homes offering B&B have been reserved; Hood River Tour: filled so this tour will take place.

**Ambiance:** Stan J will have as his only liaison Beth M.

**Volunteers:** Rosie is working with a floating number of volunteers needed – still has not sent letters out.

**Evening Entertainment:** Beth Hiller Wed Darryl Grant performing a Jazz Night; Thurs. Alfredo Muro from Lima – classical Latin Music; Friday night Dance with DJ; Saturday night Coffee House.

**Registration:** Rudy seems to have things under control.

**Accessibilities:** Patti Cameron has been working to line up scooter and wheelchair rentals and is where she needs to be at this point in her planning. Rain ponchos may be sold as a fundraiser and provided to those with scooters/wheelchairs. Will also have page readers and listening devices.

**Service Project:** several kids from the Seeds of Harmony Garden will be in the booth at all times. No trips will be scheduled to the garden spots as most are near private homes and one is inaccessible. Sarah Schurr is the coordinator. Still need to work out how to publicize this project to the delegate body during GA prior to the Sunday Worship Service. Gini has been asked to think about how to incorporate information on the project in Plenary.

#### Comments & Action Items:

1. Ask if Jerry (Information Services) can be available at GA Orientation to answer questions about Portland.
2. Baskets for the Collection on Sunday will come out from Boston on the truck.
3. to Everyone: stay in communication and include history of the threads on responses. Follow the PCs E-mail protocol.

### 2. Motions

The following motions were moved, seconded, and approved following discussion:

#### **Motion #1: 2010 Site**

That the GAPC recommend to the UUA Board to adopt Minneapolis as the GA site for GA 2010.

#### **Motion #2: 2011 Site**

That the GAPC recommend the selection of Charlotte, NC as the site for GA in 2011.

#### **Motion #3: Responsibility for site Selection**

The GAPC is responsible for selecting all GA sites/facilities used in conjunction with GA and GA connected programs.

#### **Motion #4: CORI Check Policy**

It is the policy of the GAPC that adult staff and volunteers working with minors be subject to a current clearance or offer evidence of a current clearance.

**Motion #5: Scholarship Committee Recommendation**

Motion to approve the report of the Scholarship Committee to award \$145,308 to support applicants' attendance at the 2007 GA, allocate up to \$2,000 to support registration for OST facilitators, and give the balance to support attendance of Young Adults.

**Motion #6: Conflict of Interest Policy**

Motion to adopt the DRAFT policy included in the April Meeting Packet a policy which addresses the identification and management of potential conflicts of interest between the members of the Committee and other designated parties and the best interest of the GA.

**Comments & Action Items:**

The following actions are needed related to the motions that approved:

1. Eva to take to UUA Board.
2. Eva to take to UUA Board.
3. Contact Young Fun organizers and work out a process for selection of future Young Fun sites.
4. Tim to check w/Youth Office, Barb to communicate w/Young Fun. GA Office will implement.
5. Beth will submit recipients' names to the GA office and contact the OST Facilitator and Young Adult Ministry Office.
6. Complete and publish in the GAPC Policy & Practice Manual for full implementation of provisions at the close of GA 2007.

**Meeting Notes Prepared by Lynda Bluestein, Secretary**