

Report of the Religious Education Credentialing Committee To the General Assembly, 2006

The Religious Education Credentialing Committee has the responsibility for all aspects of the Religious Education Credentialing program. The Committee consists of eight members including a UUA Board Liaison. The committee meets twice a year, in October and in the early spring. The meeting in October is in connection with the Liberal Religious Educators Association's Fall conference, and the spring meeting is scheduled in a different part of the country to make our meetings geographically accessible.

This year the RECC began the process of rotating members. Rev. Betty Jo Middleton was the first of our members to rotate off the Committee. We appreciated her commitment to the development of the Credentialing Program and her understanding of the process that led to its establishment. We bid her goodbye with deep gratitude. The position of the committee is designated for a Minister of Religious Education and we welcomed Rev. Colleen McDonald at our meeting in March. The UUA Board also voted to create a liaison to the RECC, and appointed Rev. Pan Allen-Thompson to that position. She met with the committee for the first time this past October. The current members of the committee are:

Pam Allen-Thompson, Liaison to the UUA Board
Gail Forsyth-Vail, Credentialed Religious Educator – Masters Level
Liz Jones, Chair, and nominated by the Liberal Religious Educators Association
Kirk Loadman-Copeland, Parish Minister
Steve Lynn, Lay Member
Colleen McDonald, Minister of Religious Education
Sue McGovern, Lay Member
Katherine Warrior, Lay Member

The RECC is concerned that we need to continue to work to broaden our awareness of Anti-Racism/ Anti-Oppression issues, and educate ourselves on the issues relevant to our congregations. We have committed ourselves to reading articles and books related to the various dimensions of AR/AO and to spending time at each meeting discussing the issues raised. At our March meeting we invited Tracy Hurd from the Lifespan Faith Development staff group to talk to us about the Family Matters Task Force and issues of Family Ministry. We believe that we need to take the responsibility to reach out beyond our own experience in order help us more responsibly serve the needs of our congregations.

This year the Committee has been working to refine our Policies. This is detailed work to be sure that our actual process and written policy document are in line with the Rules approved by UUA Board last year. We have been designing and refining our process at the same time we have been implementing it. Our actual experience as well as the experiences of the participants in the program has helped us smooth the process. We are aware that during this period, some participants have felt that the process has been continually changing. As a committee we have been well aware of this sentiment and are truly appreciative of all the participants who have been part of this development process. It has been their willingness to provide us with their feedback and to adapt to the changes that is helping to make this a program that works for everyone.

The Committee has shifted its working process. When we began, we worked together on everything. We broke into smaller groups when necessary to cover more material, and reported our work back to the whole committee. This was necessary as we began in order to fully understand the breadth and context

of what was being created. We are now at the place where we need to begin working with a subcommittee structure. We presently have two subcommittees. One subcommittee works with reviewing requests for reading list substitutions, and meets as needed. The second subcommittee deals with equivalencies, and meets every two months. The subcommittees allow us to work more efficiently, and they allow participants the ability to move through the process more rapidly because they do not have to wait until one of our twice yearly meetings for a decision.

The Committee has developed an Outcomes Survey. The survey is intended to assess the impact of the Credentialing Program on congregations and on the religious educators themselves. We have just begun gathering the raw data and we still need to analyze it. We plan to regularly survey participants to assess the impact of the program over time.

In this past year eight credentials were granted. Three were granted at the Credentialed Religious Educator – Associate level, four were granted at the Credentialed Religious Educator level, and one was granted at the Credentialed Religious Educator – Masters level. As of our last meeting in March, there were forty-two active participants in the program.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Jones
Chair, RECC