

March 2, 2017

Dear Jim and members of the UUA Board,

Thank you for having the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Committee present at your January, 2017 meeting. We appreciated the opportunity to share our current work and affirm the benefit of a deepening relationship.

We are writing now with a reflection, a request, and an offer.

The reflection:

One of the most sacred pieces of our work is making the lived experiences of our UU siblings present at all levels of our association. We understand it to be a central motivation for the delegates of the 1997 General Assembly in calling for the creation of the JTWTC. We further understand the JTWTC to be, by design, positioned to monitor and assess the board itself in regard to AR/AO/MC. It is with these understandings in mind we share our reaction to the January conversation. During that conversation, the administration shared their surprise that the JTWTC believed we had much work to do on accessibilities. Harlan Limpert held up the positive relationship the UUA has with EQUUAL Access and Tim Brennan referenced the high level of accessibility at 24 Farnsworth Street. These comments signaled the enormous gap between how the association measures success and the lived experiences of those living with the oppression. The board's seeming lack of response in a public meeting of the association further signaled our lack of systems of accountability. These statements were counter to what we presented in our most recent report, *Amazing Transformation*

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=9&v=2kS2we0Mi7A).

The request:

This interaction, coupled with Rob Eller-Isaacs's suggestion that the work of the JTWTC should become obsolete as the board takes on this important work, offers us a rich opportunity. We would like to meet with the UUA Board at the April meeting to discuss this interaction. We seek a 30-minute time slot. Our goals are two-fold: to model the right relationship process by naming and discussing this interaction with specificity. This invites us all to heightened awareness of how we best determine 'success' on the journey; and, to reinforce the role of the JTWTC as the lived commitment of the delegates. With the 20-year anniversary of the formation of the JTWTC coming up at this year's GA, to do so in this manner offers a reminder to all of us that this journey is shared and requires commitment and accountability at all levels of our association.

The offer:

We do see this as a shared journey and bring a perspective that has been shaped by hours of interviews, conversation, and analysis. Part of the way that the JTWTC supports the board's mission and best practices of board governance is to expand the work of governance into a model that allows for the concerns of marginalized people's to be active concerns at the center of leadership. Our existence separate from the board and administration allows us a unique lens.

As part of fulfilling our charge of monitoring and assessing, we also have a practice of offering recommendations and sharing best practices via GA workshops. We invite the UUA Board to identify an hour during GA (other than Wednesday and during our workshop on Saturday at 1:30 pm) to experience a workshop designed specifically for the board. While we may not be in agreement that the board should take over the role of the JTWTC, we are in strong agreement that our collective goals are furthered as every body of the UUA increases its capacity for AR/AO/MC analysis. Nowhere is this more important than at the UUA Board level where you represent the entire GA throughout the year.

In closing, we once more express gratitude for the work the board and administration are doing to further our journey on becoming the anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multicultural association we strive to become. As we approach the 20th anniversary of the 1997 business resolution, *Toward an Anti-Racist Unitarian Universalist Association*, and the creation of this committee, we celebrate the opportunity to recommit to that imagined future.

Yours on the Journey,

UUA Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Committee

Theresa Ines Soto, co-chair

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