

Re-Imagining Governance Working Group
Report to the UUA Board of Trustees
March, 2015

The Re-Imagining Governance team has spent the time since our January meeting talking to a variety of stakeholders about various elements of the proposals we discussed at the January meeting.

- **National gatherings (GA) as a place for delegates to focus on learning with additional discussion to happen in the congregations:** Voting would be directly by the congregations rather than by delegates. Progress: Met with Mark Steinwinter to discuss options. Mark is confident that the technology that we need is available and that the remote delegate platform is a good starting place. We plan to do a technology trial in FY 2016 at a cost of roughly \$1000.
- **Addressing economic barriers to participation:** Jim Key is working this issue in conjunction with his proposal for scholarships. He is focused on finding a sustainable, budgeted approach rather than a one-off idea that the board would need to fund.
- **Creating an accountable, supported delegate body:** Rather than focus on technical solutions (e.g. requiring delegates to be elected early etc.) this team asked why congregations are not more involved and interested in UUA Governance. The team believes that if congregations are engaged, accountability will naturally follow. We observe that the times when many congregations have cared deeply about association governance have revolved around equality and justice – both within our association and in the world. The team is exploring whether turning the primary focus of our governance and gathering to these types of outward facing issues would strengthen the interest and engagement of the congregations. We are planning a series of video conferences with leaders from a variety of groups during the spring and prior to GA. We will record these conversations so that they may be viewed by the board and others. We also plan to spend some of our time at the March meeting discussing this question with the Board.
- **Multi-year calendar with governance (voting) only happening every other year:** The team is finding no real support for the idea of regional gatherings in the off years. The concerns come from a variety of sources – concerns about stretching the staff too thin, concerns about losing the benefits of national gatherings, a belief that the costs of participating in a quality regional gathering won't be significantly less than attending GA. The Transforming Governance Team will not be pursuing regional gatherings further as an option for the off years. We are still very focused on a four year calendar with a schedule that is along the lines of Theology work, Business work, Justice work, Business work on a four year cycle.
- **Multicultural models for decision making:** One of the Board's early conversations on re-imagining governance focused on creating a more inclusive model for decision making, and

there was enthusiasm for this concept at the time. This is not a topic about which any of us are truly expert. The Re-Imagining Governance team recommends engaging a consultant to work with the UUA Board to explore and recommend changes in our GA debate and decision making processes in order to be more multicultural and inclusive. This is not in the FY15 budget, so we are not in a position to do a full consultant contract now. This will need to be in the FY 2106 budget. We have drafted a proposed scope of work and will be contacting consultants in the coming weeks and will have a more solid cost estimate at that time. Even without a contract for FY15, we believe that we can learn a great deal this year as we talk to various consultants in preparation for the contract. In addition, we plan to gather feedback at GA in a variety of ways. Currently we expect these to include a series of questions to the delegates about "How could we do this differently?" We would like to gather feedback through the GA App. In addition, we will have a way for those who are not using a PDA to provide feedback.