



NOTES: August 11 – 15, 2014

Commissioners Present: David Breeden, Caitlin Cotter, Susan Goekler, CJ McGregor, Christina Sillari

Monday, August 11, 2014

- Checked in over dinner starting at 6:30.
- Met in meeting room of the Normandy Best Western Hotel, Minneapolis, MN at 8:30 pm.
- Reviewed agenda for the week.

Tuesday, August 12, 2014

1. Starting at 8:30 am, we read aloud the current CSW Mission and Covenant and then Susan shared a chalice lighting.
2. We participated in a visioning exercise on what the world would be like if reproductive justice existed and created a list of key points to include in a Statement of Conscience (SOC) on the issue.
3. We added to the list comments we gleaned from congregational response forms, presentations and feedback received at GA, and the original CSAI.
4. To frame the statement, we discussed and decided on the following issues:
 - a. Is the scope global or national?—Answer-global
 - b. Who is the audience for the SOC? – UUs
 - c. Is this a treatise on Reproductive Justice or a statement of the UU role in movement? – the latter
5. To clear the air and contribute to honesty, we shared our personal biases and relevant histories.
6. Together, we reviewed the draft SOC prepared by UUA Staff Jessica Halperin.
7. After reviewing previous SOC's for format, we agreed that the draft is missing proposed actions.
8. We divided into two groups and drafted possible actions for individuals, in relationships, as congregations, and as an Association.
9. We reconvened and shared the draft actions.
10. Caitlin provided process observations.
11. Adjournment at 5:10 pm. Notes by David.

Wednesday August 13, 2014

1. Caitlin shared a chalice lighting & opening words at 9 am.
2. In the morning, we discussed what sections to include in the SOC and then broke into small groups for drafting the introduction, history and theological sections.
3. Before breaking at 12:45, we reconvened as a group and shared our work.
4. After lunch, we broke again into small groups processing, re-writing, and editing sections of the statement, each person working on a different section than in the morning.
5. We shared our work and discussed the history of justice-making in our denomination, our theological grounding and anti-racism, anti-oppression, multicultural issues, working diligently to be inclusive of all people. Recognizing the diversity of our people, we reflected on the difficulty of upholding our first principle when addressing the complexity of reproductive justice.
6. After combining the various sections of the draft statement, we read through it as a group and did some editing. We referred back to the list of key points to identify any missing elements. We noted that the action section does not fully represent the statement we drafted.
7. David shared process observations.

8. We adjourned at 5:30 pm. Notes by Christina.

Thursday, August 14, 2014

1. David shared opening words and a chalice lighting at 8:30 am.
2. We reviewed some already adopted SOC's to examine format and the list of key points we generated Tuesday.
3. We read through the draft SOC and added identified issues that had yet to be included in the draft statement.
4. After lunch, we reviewed the Action section of the draft SOC.
5. Each member took an Action section and reworked it so the actions were realistic and consistent with the narrative.
6. As a group, we reviewed the reworked Action sections and edited them further.
7. We composed an introductory statement for the Action section of the SOC and a closing statement.
8. We set aside the SOC and reviewed the agenda for the week to determine what work remained.
9. Christina shared some comments about the CSW's work that colleagues had recently shared with her. Susan reviewed some CSW history that provided a context for the comments. We discussed the need for discernment of the CSW's role in a policy governance framework.
10. We reviewed the tasks for tomorrow. Christina asked for guidance on what to bring to the GA scheduling meeting to be held in September, where she will represent the CSW.
11. Christina shared process observations.
12. Adjourned at 5:14 pm. Notes by CJ.

Friday, August 15, 2014

1. Christina shared opening words at 8:35 am.
2. We reviewed the agenda to ensure we cover everything we need to before we leave today.
3. We reviewed the draft of the SOC written the day before; made a few changes. We decided to ask our UUA Staff liaison to send it to her advisory group to ensure there are no "red flags." Then it will go to attorney and be ready for posting in time for the November 15 deadline.
4. We reviewed a draft framework for creating the guide on the new CSAI on Escalating Inequality prepared by Jessica Halperin on the UUA Staff. We agreed with her suggestion for advisors to the UUA Staff on developing the guide/curriculum. There will be no "core team" working with the CSW. The charge to the advisors will be: To help UUA staff create the study guide on the Escalating Inequality CSAI by identifying existing resources around income inequality and suggesting the potential niche role(s) that Unitarian Universalists could most strategically fill in this movement as progressive faith-based advocates. We had no issues with any of the advisors she proposed.
5. After a break, we revisited the mission and covenant of the CSW and revised both to better reflect our understanding of the current work, values and vision of the Commission.
 - a. **Mission of the UUA Commission on Social Witness:** The Mission of the Commission on Social Witness is to discern and craft a vision for the Association on pressing social issues as a reflection of the values of our faith and the voices from our congregations.
 - b. **Covenant of the UUA Commission on Social Witness :** As we endeavor to do the best possible work on behalf of our congregations, we covenant to be in right relationship with one another other by:
 - i. finding the holy within each of us;
 - ii. listening to understand and suspending judgment;
 - iii. being honest and open about our personal biases;
 - iv. respecting the contributions and circumstances of one another;
 - v. trusting one another's good intentions and commitment to our work;

- vi. affirming different learning and working styles; and
 - vii. grounding our relationships and work in the practices of anti-racism and anti-oppression.
6. We reviewed individual portfolios.
 - a. Caitlin: Liaison to Youth and Young Adults – She would like to provide an introduction the CSAI/AIW processes as part of the Youth Caucus’ programming at GA. She will contact the UUA Staff liaison to the Youth Caucus and find out how to request time on their agenda next GA. There is currently no Young Adult Caucus, so that role is more fluid.
 - b. Caitlin: Liaison to Reproductive Justice – will include planning an implementation workshop.
 - c. CJ: Liaison to Escalating Inequality – will include planning a workshop at GA.
 - d. Christina: Liaison to UUMA and sermon contest – in 2015, we will accept sermons on topic of Reproductive Justice, Escalating Inequality, or both. Christina will post a notice this fall on the list serve reminding clergy of the opportunity and encouraging sermons on these topics.
 - e. Christina: CSW Budget – she asked us to send her copies of any reimbursement requests we submit.
 7. Susan: GA logistics – Susan plans to meet with Jessica and her supervisor Tequina this fall to discuss the need for staffing at GA.
 8. We considered the need for virtual meetings during the coming church year.
 - a. October – prepare GA proposals and consider need for updating the AIW proposers’ guide.
 - b. October – review opportunities for an article in the *UU World* on the CSAI process and social witness at GA. David will check with the *UU World* staff about how to proceed. Christina will reach out to a *UU World* reporter she has met.
 - c. January – possibly meet with UUA Board.
 - d. February or March – review comments on draft SOC received during the congregational poll.
 - e. March or April – select sermon contest winners.
 - f. April or May – plan for GA.
 - g. When Caitlin gets her schedule, she will let Susan know her availability in October. Susan will send poll to select date and time for video conference.
 9. After process observations by CJ, CJ closed the meeting with a reading from Emerson. Notes by Caitlin and Christina.