The Ballou Channing District

Unitarian Universalist Association

2018 Annual Report

Portraits of William Ellery Channing, left, known as "the apostle of Unitarianism," and Hosea Ballou, called "the father of American Universalism," hang in the headquarters of the Unitarian Universalist Association at 24 Farnsworth Street, Boston.

Annual Meeting

Murray Unitarian Universalist Church

May 5, 2018

Ballou Channing District

2018 Annual Report

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BALLOU CHANNING DISTRICT

of the Unitarian Universalist Association

Regional Office: 24 Farnsworth Street * Boston, MA 02210 * 617-742-2100 * ballouchanning@gmail.com

To: **Parish Chairs/Presidents, Ministers, Religious Education Directors, Parish Clerks**
From: **Charles Donnelly, Ballou Channing District Secretary**
Subject: **Call to Annual Meeting**
Date: **April 4, 2018**

Call to Meeting
Ballou Channing District Annual Meeting

Pursuant to Article V of the Ballou Channing District bylaws, "District Meetings", notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the Ballou Channing District of the Unitarian Universalist Association will be held on **Saturday, May 5, 2018, at Murray Unitarian Universalist Church, 505 North Main Street, Attleboro, MA, commencing at 9:00 a.m.**

The Annual Meeting shall attend to the business matters of the District as posted on the final agenda.

Annual Meeting materials

Print copies of materials for Annual Meeting delegates will not be provided.
Instead, electronic copies in PDF format will be found on the **BCD portion of the New England Region website**, where delegates may download them to print or transfer to mobile computers, tablets and telephones. Documents will be available on the website as of Friday, April 13, 2018.

Materials available for download on the website include:

- Memo describing procedure for registering delegates. Delegates must be registered before the business meeting starts at 9:00 a.m.
- Schedule of events and meeting agenda
- Proposed budget for Fiscal 2019
- Minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting
- Meeting Rules of Procedure
- Reports from officers, the Nominating Committee, nominee biographies, and regional and district budgets. These constitute the Ballou Channing District Annual Report. NOTE: we will NOT be providing print copies of the annual report.

Delegates and guests need to register online. A link to registration will be available shortly on the Ballou Channing District Website.

Ballou Channing District
Agenda for the Annual Meeting

Meeting May 5, 2018, at Murray Unitarian Universalist Church,
505 North Main Street, Attleboro, MA, 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Agenda for the annual meeting

A. Call to order
B. Report of Secretary regarding credentialing
C. Appointment of Parliamentarian
D. Adopting Rules of Procedures
E. Approve minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting
F. Receive Reports
    1. President
    2. Treasurer
    3. Grants Committee
    4. Chalice Lighters Committee
G. Discussion: the future of the Ballou Channing District
H. Vote on budget for the 2019 fiscal year
I. Receive Nominating Committee Report
J. Elect Officers, Directors, Nominating Committee
K. Adjourn

Schedule for the day

9:00 a.m.	Delegate check-in, registration and continental breakfast
9:30 a.m.	Worship service
10:00 a.m.	Annual meeting begins
10:45 a.m.	Annual meeting concludes
11:00 a.m.	Workshop, *Difficult Conversations Across Difference*
12:30 p.m.	Workshop concludes

Ballou Channing District

DELEGATE CREDENTIALING PROCESS
PLEASE READ

The BCD Board of Directors will continue the new delegate registration /credentialing process begun three years ago. **No delegate cards will be sent to congregations**.

The process is described below.

The Annual Meeting of the Ballou Channing District will be held on Saturday, May 5, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Murray Unitarian Universalist Church, 505 North Main Street, Attleboro, MA. At the business session, only registered delegates will be entitled to vote, though the meeting is open to all individuals. There is no absentee balloting or proxy votes.

Lay Delegates (non-minister or non-religious educator)

Congregations are entitled to five lay delegates. Congregation leaders should determine who will be delegates among those attending from the congregation.

There will be a Credentials Table near the Conference Check-in/Registration table. Delegates are to come to the Credentials Table, sign in, and receive a voting card and final agenda. When the congregation's allotted number of delegates has registered the delegate roster will be closed.

Credentialing will open at 8:30 a.m. and close at 9:15 a.m. It will reopen at 9:45 a.m and close at 10:00 a.m.

Minister and Religious Educator Delegates

Congregations are entitled to the number of minister, (including interim, assistant/associate, affiliated and minister emeritus/a) and religious education director(s) delegates, as have been reported to the district office as of October 1, 2015.

Special situations:

- A minister who has emeritus/a designation for more than one congregation will be recognized as a delegate from the last congregation served.
- A ministers who is both affiliated and hired in a part-time capacity with another congregation will only be recognized as the delegate for the past-time/hired position

Questions should be emailed to ballouchanning@gmail.com.

Ballou Channing District
Report from the Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee Report

Ballou Channing District Annual Meeting

May 5, 2018

The Nominating Committee presents to the 2018 Annual Meeting the following nominees for the Ballou Channing District Board of Directors and Nominating Committee:

Board of Directors nominees

Officers

President:	Ralph Brown – one-year term, expiring 2019
Vice president:	Mary Lu Love – one-year term, expiring 2019
Secretary:	Charlie Donnelly – one-year term, expiring 2019
Treasurer:	Rev. Paul Sprecher – one-year term, expiring 2019

Directors

Director:	Rev. Sarah Person – three-year term, expiring 2021
Director:	Kate Sullivan – one-year term, expiring 2019
Director:	Rev. Catherine Cullen – one-year term, expiring 2019

Nominating Committee member

Member:	TBA – three-year term, expiring 2021

Continuing to hold office

Individuals continuing to hold office are:

Directors

Director:	William Clark – three-year term, expiring 2020
Director:	Elisabeth McGregor – three-year term, expiring 2020

Nominating Committee

Member:	Chris Korbin – three-year term, expiring 2019
Member:	Rosemary Donahoe – three-year term, expiring 2020

Pursuant to Article X, Section 1 of the Ballou Channing District Bylaws, nominations may be made from the floor. Further, vacant positions may be filled by appointment by the Board of Directors until the next scheduled election.

The Nominating Committee remains committed to finding individuals with diverse racial, ethnic and/or gender differences to inform our ability to live and practice the Seven Principals in our work on behalf of the District.

Respectfully submitted by the Nominating Committee:

Rosemary Donahoe
Chris Korbin

Ballou Channing District

Biographies of nominees

Biographical information for 2018 nominees for officers, board members and members of the Nominating Committee of the Ballou Channing District, Unitarian Universalist Association

President: Ralph Brown is finishing his first term as president of BCD board. after serving terms as secretary and director. He has been a member of First Parish in Hingham (Mass.), Unitarian Universalist, also known as Old Ship Church, for 13 years. He retired from the Boston Globe in 2009, where he helped manage the paper's electronic publishing system. He is a relatively new Unitarian Universalist. He grew up as an Episcopalian, left organized religion for many years, then joined the Swampscott Church of Spiritualism, where he learned about the Spiritualist belief that life continues after death. His interests at Old Ship have included parish government, stewardship, the Candlelight Concert series, small group ministry, and teaching church-sponsored classes in genealogy.

Vice President: Mary Lu Love joined the BCD board in 2009 as a director, and served as president from 2014 to 2017. She is a 30-plus year member of Unity Church of North Easton, Mass., where she leads a covenant group, has served on the restoration committee, been the assistant treasurer, collector, president, and has worked in the religious education program. Her husband, Ken, is also active in Unity Church. She works at the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston on a variety of grant funded projects supporting early childhood education. As adjunct faculty, she also teaches early childhood courses. Her expanding family includes two adult children: a daughter, son-in-law, and two grandsons who live in Cambridge and son and daughter-in-law who live and work in Chicago.

Secretary: Charlie Donnelly has been a member of the BC board since 2012, and is in his second year as secretary. He has been a Unitarian Universalist for about 20 years. Before joining the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of South County (UUCSC) in Peace Dale, RI, he was a member of the Unitarian Society in Fall River, Mass. He is a past president of the UUCSC, and has been chair of its membership, worship and adult religious education committees. Charlie also enjoys being a senior youth advisor. He lives in Narragansett, RI. Professionally, he is a librarian with the Pawtucket School Department, where he is an advisor to the Gay Straight Alliance at Tolman High School.

Treasurer: Rev. Paul Sprecher has served First Parish Church Unitarian Universalist in Bridgewater, Mass., since 2014. Previously, he served as Sabbatical minister at the Chatham Meeting House and at Second Parish in Hingham. He was a member of the BCD Board of Trustees from 2008-2011, serving as president from 2010-2011. He holds a master's degree in divinity from New York Theological Seminary.

Director: William Clark, a member of First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church of Scituate, Mass., is serving his first term as a member of the Ballou Channing District board. He is a psychotherapist for individuals, couples and families. He has served as a case management supervisor for the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health, and director of outpatient services for the South Shore Association of Retarded Citizens. He has degrees in psychology and education from the University of California at Santa Barbara and Clark University in Worcester, including a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Clark.

Director: Rev. Catherine Cullen is minister of First Parish Church in Duxbury, Mass. A graduate of Andover Newton Theological School, she has led the Duxbury congregation since 2004. She joined the Ballou Channing District Board in 2011, and she also represented the district as a trustee on the board of the Unitarian Universalist Association. She was interim minister at the Unitarian Universalist Church of South County, RI, Summer Minister for the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Reading, and part-time intern minister at First Parish Brewster (Mass.) Unitarian Universalist. Before entering the ministry, Rev. Cullen spent 20 years as a trial lawyer. She was driving to work one day when she heard a story on National Public Radio about a woman who had left her career in law to enter the ministry. "I said, 'That's what I'm going to do,'" she recalled. "My call came from NPR."

Director: Elisabeth McGregor is a long-time member of the Unitarian Church of Sharon, Mass., a former president of the Ballou Channing District, Trustee of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and member and chair of the General Assembly Planning Committee. She also served as regional coordinator for the UUA General Assembly in Providence, RI, in 2014. At the Sharon church, she's involved in religious education, ministerial search, church history, and social justice work.

Director: Rev. Sarah Person joined the BCD board as a director in 2013. She has been parish minister at the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Middleboro, Mass., since 2012. She graduated from the Boston University School of Theology in 2005, and later served as intern and Youth Ministry Coordinator at First Parish Church in Weston. She subsequently was Interim Associate, then Associate Minister, at the Universalist Church of West Hartford. She also serves as a Good Officer for the Ballou Channing District of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association. She has considerable board experience, including First Church and Parish of Dedham (MBD), Boston Community Services (an urban community mental health center), Medfield Public Library, Connecticut Council of Interreligious Understanding, Growing Racial and Cultural Equity (CBD), Old Colony YMCA, Middleboro Affordable Housing, and Middleboro Area Assistance Coalition. She is also a Peer Facilitator for the New England Region. Rev. Person is married with two grown daughters and lives in Middleboro.

Director: Kate Sullivan has been a board member since 2013. She joined First Parish Church, Unitarian Universalist of Kingston, in 2000, and became its Director of Religious Education in 2005. She has been an active member of the BCD Religious Educators' Group for seven years, becoming its treasurer in 2009. In her leadership capacity at First Parish, she has worked to increase the presence of children and youth in the overall life of the church. Kate is a developmental psychologist who teaches psychology and leadership at Stonehill College. She lives in Pembroke with her college sweetheart, their two children and two dogs. She and her family have deepened their commitment to Unitarian Universalism by attending the Religious Education week at Ferry Beach UU Camp and Conference Center for the past seven years.

Nominating Committee member: Rosemary Donahoe is a member of First Parish Church, Unitarian Universalist of Kingston. She is a former president of the Ballou Channing District and has been a member of the Nominating Committee in the past.

Nominating Committee member: Chris Korben is a member of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Middleboro where she has served on Membership and Stewardship committees and is a past President. She is a former a Director of the BCD. She began her journey into Unitarian Universalism in Jamestown, NY, spent a year at the Falmouth, MA, congregation before moving to Middleboro in 1994 and jumping in with both feet. She pursues her passion for horses as both a vocation and a connection to her spirituality.

Ballou Channing District
Minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Ballou Channing District of the Unitarian Universalist Association was held on April 22, 2017, at the Hilton Hotel, Woburn, MA, in conjunction with the New England Regional Assembly.

A. Call to order and welcome:

Rev. Sarah Person, BCD Vice President, called the meeting to order at 3:45 PM. She welcomed guests, including Joe Sullivan from New England Region staff, head of the Peer Facilitators program.

B. Report of Credentials:

Acting Secretary Beth McGregor certified the presence of 27 delegates from 14 congregations, more than meeting the quorum requirements of 20 delegates from 8 congregations.

C-D. Appointment of Parliamentarian and Adoption of Rules of Procedure:

Acting Secretary Beth McGregor was appointed parliamentarian, and standard Robert's rules of procedure were adopted by consensus.

E. Approval of minutes:

The minutes of the 2016 Annual Meeting were reviewed; there were no corrections or amendments offered. Moved (Korben, Middleboro), second (Pickel, Norwell), **voted to approve**.

F. Reports Received:

Officers' reports were presented using a powerpoint "State of the District" presentation.

> **a. President's Report**: In the absence of President Mary Lu Love (due to a family wedding), Vice President the Rev. Sarah Person summarized the President's report submitted in advance by Love, including a review of grants, regionalization, the unified collection of district and APF dues, and the quarterly payments made by BCD to support New England Region staffing and programs.
>
> **b. Treasurer's Report**: BCD Treasurer the Rev. Paul Sprecher presented the BCD balance sheet of assets, liabilities and equity, a report of budget vs. actual expenses for FY 2016-17, and a proposed budget for FY 2017-18. Total district assets are $1,483,913.03. The budget ran at a deficit due to various factors, primarily litigation costs in the Cedar Hill case.
>
> **c. Grants funded**: Rev. Sprecher reported on three BCD grants awarded in 2016-17: To the Unitarian Society of Fairhaven for a "Youth Together" program; to the Unitarian Church of Sharon for a Five Points Cluster workshop on membership growth and retention; and to the Unitarian Church of Barnstable to make a documentary film.
>
> Beth McGregor reported on the activities of the Five Points Cluster, a collaboration of the Canton, Easton, Foxboro, Sharon and Stoughton congregations, which includes shared worships on holiday weekends; various programs and social events; a growth workshop funded by the BCD; and coordinated social justice and service endeavors. While the ministers still meet in clusters, Five Points is the first lay cluster the BCD to be active since regionalization; she recommended that other congregations try the model.

G. Chalice Lighters Update: Board member Ralph Brown explained the reopening of the BCD Chalice Lighters grant program in 2017-18. He reviewed the history, explaining that while the last Chalice Lighters call raised over $9,000, this program had been put on hold when the district lost its office and administrative support. Now an agreement has been reached to purchase administrative support from the Northern New England District. Using Bloomerang software, after an initial hard-copy mailed brochure we will set up a system to do three Chalice Lighter calls per year by email and let people

donate electronically. Brown reviewed the application criteria and dates of application and award, all of which, along with forms to sign up to be chalice lighter and to apply for a grant are available on BCD website. Documents will be made interactive to facilitate an all-electronic application system.

H. Presentation and vote on FY 2017-18 budget: The Treasurer explained the proposed budget of $150,233, noting that it requires a transfer of $81,000 from our Morgan Stanley Reserves to meet the maximum anticipated costs of legal fees related to the Cedar Hill litigation. He also noted that 10% of Chalice Lighter income will be retained to pay for our contracted administrative costs, with 90% being disbursed to recipient congregations. Moved (Dalton, South County), seconded (Richardi, Attleboro), and **voted to approve**.

I. Nominating Committee Report: Chris Korben of the Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers and directors:

President: Ralph Brown, First Parish Hingham (one-year term, expiring 2018)

Vice President: The Rev. Sarah Person, First UU Society Middleboro (one-year term, expiring 2018)

Secretary: Charlie Donnelly, UU Congregation of South County (one-year term, expiring 2018)

Treasurer: The Rev. Paul Sprecher, First Parish Bridgewater (one-year term, expiring 2018)

Directors: Mary Lu Love, Unity Church North Easton (one-year term, expiring 2019)

The Rev. Catherine Cullen, First Parish Duxbury(one-year term, expiring 2018)

Continuing to hold office: Directors Beth McGregor (2019) and Kate Sullivan (2018); Nominating Committee members Rosemary Donahoe (2019) and Chris Korben (2018)

Korben noted that there is currently a vacancy for one director and one nominating committee member, to be appointed by the Board, and asked for assistance in trying to recruit and mentor persons of color within the district to fill one or both of them.

Moved (Person, Middleboro), seconded (Davis, Middleboro), and **voted to approve** the slate as presented.

The delegates participated in a brief ceremony of swearing in of the elected officers and directors.

J. Discussion: Person opened the floor for further questions and discussion. Topics included:

Clarifications on grant policies and procedures.

Purpose of the BCD to encourage developmental connection between the New England Region and congregations and laterally among congregations, with particular attention to outreach and growth of smaller congregations.

Questions of BCD governance structure, how its work is done (primarily electronically, with no administrative support) and whether it could be further trimmed down.

Plans for BCD board activity.

Questions on the Cedar Hill litigation and the broader history of the Cedar Hill Conference Center, most of which were deferred to an informal information session after adjournment.

The Rev. Vail Paine-Weller, representing the UUA Annual Program Fund, spoke briefly on the importance of stewardship, supporting each other through contributions to the APF and the Region to bring services and programs like this conference to congregations. She congratulated the BCD congregations on being ahead of last year's contributions to date.

Call for Adjournment: Moved (McLean, Attleboro), seconded (Dalton, South County) and **voted to adjourn**.

The meeting ended at 4:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted: Elisabeth McGregor, Acting Secretary

Minutes of the Annual Meeting *(continued)*

Note: This was a 'green' meeting, with no hard copy reports. All meeting materials were provided electronically in advance for individual download or printing, and projected onscreen at the meeting. No advance requests for printed materials were received. All are available on the BCD website, http://www.uua.org/new-england/districts/ballou-channing-district

Swearing in of Officers and Directors

Chair of the Nominating Committee: Mindful of the covenant which our member societies have made to affirm and promote the principles and purposes of the Unitarian Universalist Association and our mutual relationships as member congregations of the Ballou Channing District . . .

Delegates to the Annual Meeting: . . . we gather at this annual meeting of the Ballou Channing District to support and confirm the election of our district officers, directors, and member of the Nominating Committee.

Chair of the Nominating Committee: The primary purpose of our district is to assist and inspire member congregations to grow in spiritual and institutional health, and to advance the principles and purposes of the Unitarian Universalist Association . . .

Delegates to the Annual Meeting: . . . therefore, we charge you, our district officers, directors, and member of the Nominating Committee, to dutifully and rightly engage in measures that fulfill these purposes to the best of your ability.

Chair of the Nominating Committee: Will you who have been elected at this annual meeting accept this charge to serve faithfully and diligently and work to serve the best interest of all the congregations?

Elected District Officials: We, the duly elected officials of the Ballou Channing District, accept freely and in good faith the trust, the responsibility, and authority delegated to us by you, the delegates to this 2016 annual meeting and pledge to be diligently and faithful in fulfilling our obligations

Ballou Channing District

Rules of Procedure

Annual Meeting
May 5, 2018

1. Upon adoption by the delegates these rules shall govern the Annual Meeting:

2. The District President shall be the Presiding Officer. If the President is unable to attend the meeting the Vice-President shall be the Presiding Officer. If the Presiding Officer wishes to speak to an item on the agenda s/he will appoint a Presiding Officer Pro-tem who shall serve until the Presiding officer finishes his/her comments and/or answering questions about their remarks.

3. Robert's Rules of Order will be used, except as they conflict with the Ballou Channing District Bylaws, in which case the bylaws shall have precedence.

4. A Parliamentarian shall be appointed at the beginning of the meeting.

5. The committee chair or other individual presenting an agenda item shall make the motion to adopt/approve the item when such motion is required to initiate discussion. A second shall be taken from the floor and recorded.

6. To ensure that all delegates are able to hear discussion on an issue, speakers will make their statements from a designated place.

7. Speakers will be asked to give their name and congregation and identify if they are speaking in favor of or opposed to the issue under discussion or are asking a question of the Chair or the individual who initially presented the report/issue.

8. Speakers shall have a two (2) minute time limit and not speak a second time until all other speakers have been heard, except that persons may reply to questions asked by another speaker or the Chair about their statement.

9. Discussion may be ended at the discretion of the Presiding Officer if no speakers against the motion remain.

10. Amendments to motions shall be presented to the Secretary in writing to ensure their accuracy in the minutes.

11. If the Presiding Officer is unable to determine whether the majority vote is for or against the motion she/he will ask the Secretary to take a count of the vote.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION

Ballou Channing District

Bylaws of the Ballou Channing District

As Amended by Delegates to the Annual Meeting of April 25, 2015

Article I — Name

The name of this corporation shall be the Ballou Channing District of the Unitarian Universalist Association, Incorporated.

Article II — Purpose

The purpose of this corporation shall be to support and strengthen Unitarian Universalism. It will do so by working to promote relationships among member congregations and the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA); to link information and resources of the UUA and member congregations; to serve as fiduciary custodians of district assets; and to support the UUA.

Article III — Geographic Boundaries

This corporation, hereinafter called the District, shall operate primarily within the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations and the following counties of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Barnstable, Bristol, Dukes, Nantucket, Norfolk and Plymouth. Nothing in this article shall prevent the District from admitting members outside said boundaries or cooperating with and assisting churches, parishes, fellowships and organizations outside said boundaries.

Article IV — Membership and Representation

Section 1. **Members:** All churches, parishes, and fellowships that are member societies of the District at the time of adoption of these revised bylaws shall be recognized as member societies of the District. A congregation that identifies itself as Unitarian Universalist, has been accepted by our UUA as a member society, and is geographically located within the area described in Article III or in adjoining areas will become a member of the District upon acceptance by the District Board of Directors (hereinafter referred to as "the District Board") of a written application for membership from the governing board of such society. The society shall in its application pledge to subscribe to the purposes of the District and to provide annual financial support to the District, New England Region, and/or UUA. Any member society may change its district affiliation in accordance with applicable provisions of the UUA bylaws and rules.

Section 2. **Conditional Members:** The District Board may grant conditional membership for a period of up to two (2) years to a congregation that is newly forming and in the process of affiliating with the UUA. Conditional membership congregations may receive support and services from the District but may not vote at District meetings.

Section 3. **Representation:** A member society of the District that is in active membership status with the UUA and has made a financial contribution to the District in the current or preceding fiscal year may be represented by voting delegates at District meetings.

Article V — District Meetings

Section 1. Annual and Special Meetings

(a) The Annual Meeting shall be held in either April or May of each year at a time and place to be determined by the District Board for the purpose of electing officers and directors, receiving reports including budgets, adopting or amending the bylaws, and conducting other such business as may be brought before the meeting.

(b) Special meetings may be called by the District Board or shall be called at the written request of five (5) member societies which has been adopted by a majority vote of the societies' governing bodies stating the specific purpose of the meeting. No other business may be brought before a special meeting beyond that stated in the official notice of the meeting.

Section 2. Delegates

(a) Each member society of the District shall have five lay delegates. Each delegate shall be a legal member of the society represented.

(b) Ordained minister(s) serving a society in the District, minister(s) emeritus/a of a society in ministerial fellowship with the UUA, ordained community minister(s) voted by a society to be in official association with that society, and directors of religious education engaged by a society are entitled to represent that society as a delegate.

(c) All members of the District Board shall be voting delegates at all meetings.

(d) Each delegate shall have only one vote.

Section 3. Agenda and Notice of Meeting

(a) The District Board shall set the agenda for all official District meetings. A congregation may submit an item(s) to the District Board to be placed on an agenda provided that each item has the written support of at least one additional congregation and has been adopted by a majority vote of the societies' governing bodies.

(b) The Secretary shall send electronic notice at least twenty-one (21) days prior to any District Annual or Special Meeting. The notice of the meeting to the member society offices which shall state the date, time, and location of the meeting and shall include the agenda for the meeting. The Secretary shall also include in the notice of the Annual Meeting the report of the Nominating Committee, the proposed budget, and other reports, resolutions, and information relevant to the business upon which delegates will vote.

Section 4. **Quorum:** Twenty (20) delegates from at least eight (8) member societies shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business at any Annual or special meeting except that a lesser number may adjourn the meeting to another date, time, and place.

Section 5. **Conduct of the Meeting:** Rules of procedure for conducting the meeting shall be adopted at each District meeting. At the discretion of the presiding officer, the privilege of speaking to the meeting may be extended to individuals in attendance who are not voting delegates. Only that business for which the meeting has been called and which has been stated in the official notice of the meeting shall be acted upon at a District meeting except that at the Annual Meeting a motion or resolution for nonofficial business actions related to greetings, acknowledgment of anniversaries or special occasions, statements of witness, or similar matters may be offered by a delegate(s) and may be admitted to the agenda by the presiding officer.

Section 6. **Voting:** Voting at all meetings shall be by those present and properly credentialed.

Section 7. **Credentialing:** The Secretary, or his/her designee, shall affirm the voting credentials of delegates, report to the meeting the number of delegates registered, supervise elections and balloting procedures, and report the results of voting. A delegate shall be any member, minister or religious educator of a member congregation who presents themselves as a delegate; up to five per society.

Article VI — Officers and Directors

Section 1. **Board of Directors:** The Board of Directors of the District shall be comprised of four officers and five directors, as defined in the following sections. In determining the length of service, only full years shall be counted. For the purpose of this Article of the bylaws, a year shall mean the period from July 1 to June 30.

Section 2. **Officers:** The following officers shall be elected by ballot annually for terms of one year each at the annual meeting: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Each officer may be elected to an office for two (2) additional successive terms. No officer shall be eligible for reelection to that office until after one year has elapsed after the expiration of such three terms.

Section 3. **Directors:** Five directors shall be elected by ballot annually for terms of three years at the annual meeting. Each director may be re-elected for two additional successive terms. No director shall be eligible for re-election to that office until after one year has elapsed after the expiration of three terms.

Section 4. **Eligibility:** To be eligible to serve on the District Board a person shall: be a member of a member society of the District and shall not have served on the District Board more than nine (9) consecutive years unless one year has elapsed since serving nine (9) consecutive years, No more than one member of the same member society shall serve as a member of the District Board at the same time. This restriction shall not apply to any District Board member who changes his/her membership to a member society already represented by another District Board member. When nominated to serve as an officer or Director, the nominee shall designate the member society of which he/she is a member, and, if requested by the Nominating Committee or the Secretary, shall provide evidence of such membership. If more than one member of a member society is nominated, the member receiving the most votes shall be elected.

Section 5. **Assumption of Office:** All Officers and Directors elected at the annual meeting shall assume office on July 1 following the annual meeting.

Section 6. **Absences and Vacancies:** If any Officer or Director shall be absent from three consecutive meetings of the District Board, the District Board by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting may declare the position vacant. Vacancy in any office elected by the Annual Meeting may be filled by the District Board in consultation with the Nominating Committee until the next Annual Meeting, at which time the unexpired portion of the term for that office shall be filled by election by the Annual Meeting.

Section 7. **Resident Agent:** The Secretary of the Board shall serve as a Resident Agent for the District. If the secretary is not a resident of Massachusetts, the President will appoint an officer of the Board who is a Massachusetts resident to serve as Resident Agent.

Article VII — Duties of Officers

Section 1. **President:** The President shall preside at all meetings of the District and of the District Board, serve as liaison to the New England staff, and officially represent the District as appropriate, serve as ex officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee, and engage in such actions as are normally expected of an organization president.

Section 2. **Vice President:** The Vice President shall perform tasks designated by the President and, in the absence or inability of the President to serve, shall be vested with the powers of and shall perform the duties of the President.

Section 3. **Secretary:** The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping full records of the official actions of the meetings of the District Board and of the District. The Secretary shall give notice of Annual meetings of the District as specified in Article V. The Secretary shall advise individuals of their election to office and report results of District elections electronically to the member societies.

Section 4. **Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall oversee the receipt and deposit of all monies collected under the authority of the District and the payment of all expenses authorized within the budget or by the District Board. The Treasurer shall keep faithful accounts of and archive all financial transactions, maintain a balance sheet, submit written income and expense reports to the Board on a timely basis. The Treasurer shall be ex officio a nonvoting member of the Endowment Committee as provided in Article X, section 2(a).

Article VIII — Duties of the Board and the Executive Committee

Section 1. **Powers:** The general direction of the affairs of the District and the general powers necessary for exercising such direction and promoting the interests of the District shall be vested in the District Board. The District Board is empowered to:

(a) authorize the Treasurer, to make disbursements;

(b) employ whatever personnel are deemed necessary and for whom the necessary funding is included in the budget adopted by the District;

(c) form such operating committees as may be needed from time to time to fulfill its responsibilities and appoint the chairs of those committees;

(d) authorize the Treasurer or any officer or committee to open an account at any bank or other financial institution and execute such agreements as are usual for the opening and maintaining of such accounts without further action of the District Board;

(e) provide for an audit or financial review as needed and report any such audit to the next Annual Meeting;

(f) establish a financial asset management policy; and

(g) perform other appropriate tasks as determined by the Board from time to time.

Section 2. **Meetings**

(a) Meetings of the District Board shall be held at least four (4) times during the year. Special meetings of the District Board may be called by the President and must be called upon request by five (5) members of the District Board. Meetings of the District Board require ten (10) days notice. Five (5) members of the District Board shall constitute a quorum.

(b) A summary of the minutes of all meetings of the District Board shall be available electronically to member societies. A report of the actions of the District Board during the preceding year shall be submitted to the Annual Meeting.

Section 3. **Executive Committee:** There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and one Director to be chosen annually by the District Board. During the intervals between meetings of the District Board, the Executive Committee may, but shall not be required to, establish Board meeting agendas, perform other tasks as directed by the Board, and in emergency and time-limited situations may exercise powers vested in the District Board and shall report any such actions to the next full meeting of the District Board.

Article IX — Committees and Task Forces

Section 1. Nominating Committee

(a) There shall be a Nominating Committee of three (3) persons serving terms of three (3) years with one member elected at the Annual Meeting each year. Members of the Committee shall not be eligible for reelection for one year after serving a full term. The Chair of the Committee each year shall be selected by the Committee from its membership. The District Board in consultation with the Nominating Committee shall fill vacancies until election at the next Annual Meeting.

(b) The Committee shall prepare a slate of nominees for each position to be filled by election at the Annual Meeting. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be submitted to the Secretary at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the Annual Meeting. The Committee may submit a report without all positions filled and may subsequently offer an amended report at the Annual Meeting with the names of individuals for the vacant positions. In making nominations the Committee shall take into account the need for fair balance of geographic representation as described in Article III insofar as possible and should strive for a balance among ministers, religious education leaders, and lay persons within the District. In addition, the committee may assist the District Board with identifying individuals for committees and task forces.

(c) Nothing herein contained shall be construed as limiting or abridging the right of delegates to nominate from the floor candidates for offices to be filled. Every nomination, whether made by the Nominating Committee or from the floor, shall be made only with the consent of the nominee and shall be accompanied by a brief statement of personal qualifications.

Section *2*. Endowment Committee

(a) The District Board shall appoint an Endowment Committee composed of three (3) members who are members of a society in the District. No more than one member of the same society shall serve on the committee at the same time. The President, , and the Treasurer shall be ex officio nonvoting members of the Endowment Committee. Any member of the Endowment Committee may be removed from office by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of District Board members present and voting. The District Board shall fill any vacancies.

(b) Each member shall serve a term of three (3) years except that the initial committee members shall be appointed to staggered terms of one, two, and three years such that the term of one member will end each year. Members may be appointed to no more than two (2) consecutive terms including partial terms of less than three (3) years.

(c) The Endowment Committee shall meet at least twice a year. A quorum at any meeting shall consist of two (2) voting members. The Committee may establish its own operating policies and procedures.

(d) The Endowment Committee shall advise the Board concerning the management of funds designated by the Board as endowment funds, including investment and reinvestments of such funds. Recommendations shall be made in accordance with a financial asset management policy established by the District Board. The Endowment Committee shall provide reports at least annually to the Treasurer for his/her report to the Annual Meeting.

Section 3. Appointed Committees and Task Forces Appointed committees and task forces shall conduct programs or engage in studies as determined by the District Board. The District Board shall specify the charge to the committee or task force and its duties and responsibilities, and shall determine the number and terms of its members. The District

Board may require any committee or task force to make reports to the District Board and to the Annual Meeting.

Article X — General Provisions

Section 1. **Fiscal Year:** The fiscal year shall be from July 1 to June 30.

Section 2. **Seal:** The seal of this corporation shall be circular in form and contain the name of the corporation and the words: Incorporated 1964.

Section 3. **Dissolution:** In the event of the dissolution of this corporation or if no Annual Meeting of delegates shall be held over a period of three (3) years, all its property, both real and personal, shall become the property of the UUA.

Article XI — Indemnification

Section I. Except as otherwise stated in this section, no officer, director, committee member, employee, or other agent named or appointed shall be held personally liable or accountable for any error or mistake of fact, law, or judgment, or any act or omission of any agent, proxy, attorney, other manager, or any person to whom he/she may delegate his/her powers, or any other person or by reason of the invalidity, irregularity or non-enforceability of these bylaws or its provisions, or by reason of any action taken or omitted in good faith or in the belief that he/she is acting in accordance with the provisions and intent of these bylaws, or be liable or accountable for more money or other property than he/she actually receives, or be so liable or accountable by reason of the existence or failure to disclose the existence of any known personal or adverse interest, or by reason of anything. No officer, director, committee member, employee or other agent shall be liable or accountable by reason of any action taken, suffered or omitted in accordance with or in reliance upon an opinion or legal advice of legal counsel employed by the District (who may be a member of a law firm of which an officer, director, committee member, employee or other agent is a member). This indemnification does not extend to any officer, director, committee member, employee, or other agent engaged in individual willful misconduct with the knowledge or belief that his/her action is in violation of his/her powers.

Section 2. The corporation shall indemnify each person who is serving, and each person, or the estate or heirs of any such person, who has served as an officer, director, committee member, employee or other agent, upon receipt of a written request for indemnification from the person or his/her estate or heirs. Indemnification extends to all of the expenses incurred in defending any criminal or civil action or proceeding arising out of or connected with any act or omission of such person while acting within the scope of his/her office as an officer, director, committee member, employee or other agent. Indemnification extends to the payment of any judgment, or, if the District gives its written approval in advance, to any settlement. The provisions of this section do not apply if the person, or his/her estate or heirs, is adjudicated not to be entitled to indemnification under the provisions of G. L. c. 180 s. 6 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as amended from time to time. Any person, or his/her estate or heirs, who requests indemnification prior to the final determination of any civil or criminal action or proceeding must agree in writing at the time the request is made to repay to the District any indemnification payment made if such person or his/her estate or heirs is adjudicated not to be entitled to indemnification.

Article XII — Amendments

These bylaws may be amended only by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the delegates present and voting at any Annual or Special meeting provided that the substance of the proposed amendment shall have been included in the notice of the meeting, copies of which having been sent to member society offices at least twenty-one (21) days before the date of the meeting at which the amendment is to be acted upon.

Reports from the Officers and Committees of the Ballou Channing District

Ballou Channing District

Annual report from the president

For our annual meeting of May 5, 2018, at Murray Unitarian Universalist Church, Attleboro, MA

Welcome to our 54th annual meeting! We were formed in 1964, in Brockton, three years after the merger of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America. It is important to remember our past as we look forward to our future.

1. Role of the district

Our future has been on the minds of the Ballou Channing District board since the Unitarian Universalist Association created the New England Region in 2015. In doing so, the UUA moved most district operations, and staff, into the region.

Four separate, independent districts represented the congregations in New England: Ballou Channing, Clara Barton, Massachusetts Bay and Northern New England. The single New England Region represents the same congregations.

A year after the region came into being, two districts – Clara Barton and Massachusetts Bay – determined that their reasons for being had been subsumed by the region. They decided to dissolve, turning over their assets to the UUA. The two remaining districts – Ballou Channing and Northern New England – decided they were not ready to dissolve, and continued to operate.

Both of these districts asked themselves, "Should we continue?" And after reflection, they answered, "Yes." While governance was no longer needed, operating grant programs and maintaining relations with the New England Region and the UUA looked to be areas where there was work to be done.

In March, however, the Northern New England District board decided to dissolve. After examining its activities for the past two and a half years, it concluded that it is no longer "relevant".

This decision by Northern New England begs the Ballou Channing district to ask this question: should we continue to operate? Is what we are doing so different from our three neighboring districts that we should continue even though they have decided not to?

The BCD board began discussing this latest development at our April board meeting. Following a rich conversation, the board voted to begin "taking the necessary steps to dissolve the district as soon as possible." Doing so is complicated by some legal issues, but our work now seems clear.

2. Grants

1. District grants

   The district awarded grants during the year to two programs that were joint efforts by groups of congregations. The first was the Rev. William Zelazny Collaborative Grant, consisting of $2,500 in matching funds. This went to a group led by the Unitarian Church of Sharon, which proposed funding a consultant for directors of religious education for all district congregations. This is designed to replace a DRE consultant on staff, which was dropped with the reorganization accompanying the arrival of the New England Region.

   The second grant went to the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Middleboro. It consisted of $2,100 from the Olney and Sandwich funds to support a multi-congregation OWL program for Middleboro, Bridgewater and Murray UU congregations.

2. Chalice Lighters

   A rejuvenated Chalice Lighters program awarded a total of more than $3,000 to two programs. The first, at the First Parish Church in Taunton, provided $2,250 to support a Farmers' Market. The

second, at First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist, granted $850 for a sign project.

Restarting our Chalice Lighters program was made possible with cooperation of the Northern New England District, which allowed the Ballou Channing District to purchase administrative services needed to operate the effort. We're especially grateful to Northern New England for this help.

3. Congregational activities

The district offered a gathering for congregational leaders in October called "BCD Connects". This was designed as a "meet-and-greet" for lay leaders, directors of religious education and clergy to to form new and renewed connections, and to learn about vital resources. One board member caught a participant's observation that forming connections becomes increasingly important should the district dissolve.

Activities in the district this year have included the Five Points Cluster, created by congregations in Brockton, Canton, Easton, Foxborough, Sharon and Stoughton. These congregations conduct shared services once a month, and also collaborate to offer a Community Closet at the Brockton congregation. The group also conducted a workshop, entitled "Living our Values in a Messy World," which explored ways that congregations can support individuals within congregations who are acting on the commitments of their faith.

4. Cedar Hill

We continue our efforts to reach agreement in the lawsuit filed against the Cedar Hill Retreat Center and the district by Wildlands Trust, Inc., which holds the conservation restriction governing operation of Cedar Hill. The BCD board and our lawyers met with the Cedar Hill board and their lawyers in November to discuss the suit. Litigation is still in process, which prevents us from discussing it outside of the courtroom.

5. Relations with the UUA and the New England Region

It has been a difficult year to be part of the UUA and the New England Region. An extraordinary series of departures of senior UUA staff began with the resignation of the Rev. Peter Morales, president of the UUA, in April, with three months left in his second four-year term. Two other leaders, including the Rev. Scott Tayler, UUA Director of Congregational Life, resigned soon thereafter.

These departures were prompted by questions surrounding the selection of a new regional lead for the Southern Region. Three interim co-presidents chosen to succeed Rev. Morales instituted a hiring freeze to assess hiring practices throughout the UUA and its regions. That study concluded that 40 percent of people in managerial and decision-making positions should be people of color and/or indigenous people.

The 2017 General Assembly in June chose the Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, lead minister of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Phoenix, Arizona, to be the new president of the UUA.

Meanwhile, the New England Region lost staff as well. The Rev. Sue Phillips, regional lead, in July stepped down from her post to become Ministry Innovation Fellow at Harvard Divinity School. In this position, she is working with "the emerging landscape of millennial spirituality". Two other region staff resigned, prompting the region to suspend much of its workshop offerings. That resumed in March, with the hiring of Chanel Gomez as Events Coordinator.

I have begun meeting monthly with Dawn Casstevens, Director of Operations for the region, to share with her what is on our minds and to learn what the region is thinking. I have also begun representing the district in the Regional Leaders Group, a UUA-wide organization that consults with UUA leaders. This group meets twice a year, in November and at General Assembly, and attends meetings of the UUA board.

I'm pleased to share with you that a successor to Rev. Sue Phillips as regional lead has been chosen by the UUA. Woullard Lett, a congregational lay leader at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Manchester, NH, became Acting Regional Lead for the New England Region on May 1. The post is "Acting" because the position he will report to, the Director of Congregational Life, is still vacant.

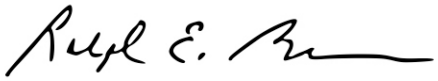
Lett has held leadership positions in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People of Manchester, the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America and the New Hampshire Health and

Equity Partnership.

Professionally, Lett has worked as a nonprofit and community development consultant, and was a senior college administrator for Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) and adjunct faculty member for SNHU and Springfield College. I'm looking forward to meeting him and learning how we can work together.

This annual meeting concludes my first year as district president. I've encountered a lot this year, and I continue to have much to learn. I look forward to listening to each of you, and to the extraordinary Unitarian Universalists who constitute the board of the Ballou Channing District.

I welcome your help in the work we face.



Ballou Channing District

Annual report from the Treasurer

Report of the Treasurer for the fiscal years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019

Ballou Channing District FY2019 Budget

FY18 BCD BOARD OPERATING BUDGET

	2018 Budget	Expected June 30	Difference	2019 Proposed budget	Comments
INCOME					
Chalice Lighters Grants - 3 annually	$9,000	$6,177	-$2,823	$0	Anticipate $3,000 more in April Call
Olney, Woonsocket, Sandwich Funds	$2,850	$2,481	-$369	$0	
Tranfer from Morgan Stanley Reserves	$81,550	$60,000	-$21,550	$24,000	
BCD Endowment Fund Distribution for Board = 12.5%	$15,000	$6,435	-$8,565	$6,400	Income overestimated; should have been 12.5% of $51,500
BCD Endowment Fund Distribution for Operations = 87.5%	$41,833	$45,049	$3,216	$45,000	
TOTAL INCOME	**$150,233**	**$120,142**	**-$30,091**	**$75,400**	
EXPENSES					
Overhead- Bank Service Charges, Bookkeeping, Legal Fees, IT	$3,000	$3,544	$544	$1,850	FY 2018 Includes Chalice Lighters costs of $1,795 to NNED PLUS $1,188 for Bloomerang, also for Chalice Lighters
Legal Fees	$85,000	$71,074	-$13,926	$25,500	Covered by Transfers from Morgan Stanley - Estimate $24,000 Remain at Year End
Board Expenses - retreat, regional meeting, other meetings, Conferences	$2,500	$83	-$2,417	$500	
GA Expenses - President, scholarships	$2,000	$2,000	$0	$2,000	
RE Scholarships	$0	$0	$0	$0	
Annual Meeting	$500	$500	$0	$500	
Congregational Grants - Olney, Woonsocket, Sandwich, Zelazny, plus	$6,850	$4,600	-$2,250	$0	Grants will not be awarded next year in light of the anticipated dissolution of the BCD
Chalice Lighters Grant	$8,100	$6,100	-$2,000	$0	Grants will not be awarded next year in light of the anticipated dissolution of the BCD
DPA Membership Dues	$450	$550	$100	$550	
Support for Regional Operations	$41,833	$33,332	-$8,502	$44,442	
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$150,233**	**$121,783**	**-$28,450**	**$75,342**	
NET Profit/Loss	**$0**	**-$1,641**	**-$1,641**	**$58**	

4/18/18

Rev. Paul Sprecher, *Treasurer*

Ballou Channing District
Annual report from the Grants Committee

Report of Ballou Channing District grants awarded in 2017-2018

In 2017-2018 the BCD Board received a total of two grant applications, both of which were funded.

The BCD awarded $2,100 from the Olney and Sandwich Funds to the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Middleboro for the establishment of a multi-church Youth Owl program. This program will include 22 youth and 4 trained OWL facilitators from the Middleboro, Bridgewater and Murray UU churches, and will provide a comprehensive sexuality education curriculum for the middle-school youth of those communities.

The BCD also awarded matching funds from the Rev. William Zelazny Collaborative Grant in the amount of $2,500 to the Unitarian Church of Sharon, to fund a Director of Religious Education consultant for all Ballou Channing district congregations. Applications from congregations that are in collaboration are favored for this grant award.

The purpose of this grant is to hire a part-time consultant to provided much needed support for district DREs. In the past, the Ballou Channing District had a professional Religious Education consultant on staff. This person provided substantial support and consultation to all the DREs in the district. With regionalization, this position was dropped.

Kate Sullivan, *Committee Chair*

Ballou Channing District

Annual report from the Chalice Lighters Committee

Report of Ballou Channing District Chalice Lighter grants awarded in 2017-2018

The Ballou Channing District revived the Chalice Lighters program this January after a hiatus. With the transfer of administrative functions to the New England Region, BCD no longer has any paid staff, so a number of changes needed to be made to make the program viable again. In particular, we were able to obtain administrative support from the Northern New England District as well as adopting the Bloomerang donor database system to automate parts of the process of sending out requests for donations.

As of this date, we received a total of $3,127 in response to our call, which was consistent with our expectations in previous years. Two of our congregations had submitted applications:

The First Parish Church in Taunton requested $2,250 to support their farmer's market, and we were able to fund the full amount of that request.

First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist is upgrading the signs around their campus at a total cost of $5,000, of which they propose to pay 25%, requesting $3,750 from Chalice Lighters for the project. We were able to provide $850 toward this goal. We will dedicate the April call to meeting the balance of the amount requested.

Unfortunately, the costs involved in our January call were significantly higher than in previous calls because we no longer had paid staff available, so we were obligated to pay on an hourly basis for the work entailed. Because we had not issued a call for several years, we mailed to everyone on our list, a total of over 900 constituents. We also had annual costs for our new Bloomerang database, as well as all of the costs of printing and postage. We received contributions from a total of 150 donors averaging just over $20 per donor.

We asked all of our donors to give us their email address and we will be conducting the April call largely by email, sending letters only to those active donors for whom we don't have addresses. We expect that the costs for the April call will be significantly less than for the January call.

Rev. Paul Sprecher, *Committee Chair*

Ballou Channing District

Letter from the president

Concerning the future of the Ballou Channing District – please read and share with congregants

Dear congregational leaders, directors of religious education and ministers,

I'm writing to you to share with you the news that the Board of Directors of the Ballou Channing District has voted to begin "taking the necessary steps to dissolve the district as soon as possible."

Historical background

We were formed in 1964, in Brockton, three years after the merger of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America. Since then, four separate, independent districts have represented the congregations in New England: Ballou Channing, Clara Barton, Massachusetts Bay and Northern New England.

Our future has been on the minds of the Ballou Channing District board since the Unitarian Universalist Association created the New England Region in 2015.

In doing so, the UUA moved most district operations, and all staff, into this new administrative undertaking. Since then, the single New England Region has represented and served the same congregations served by the four districts.

A year after the region came into being, two districts – Clara Barton and Massachusetts Bay – determined that their reasons for being had been subsumed by the region. They decided to dissolve, turning over their assets to the UUA. The two remaining districts – Ballou Channing and Northern New England – decided they were not ready to dissolve, and continued to operate.

Both of these districts asked themselves, "Should we continue?" And after reflection, they answered, "Yes." While governance was no longer needed, operating grant programs, promoting the development of congregational clusters, and maintaining relations among the member congregations and with the New England Region and the UUA looked to be areas where there was still work to be done.

Recent developments

In March, however, the Northern New England District board decided to dissolve. After examining its activities for the past two and a half years, it concluded that "a distinct Northern New England entity" is not needed for these activities to take place.

This decision by Northern New England, following the moves by Clara Barton and Massachusetts Bay, prompted the directors of the Ballou Channing district to consider a similar action: should we continue to operate? Is what we are doing so different from our three neighboring districts that we should continue, even though they have decided not to?

The BCD board began discussing this latest development at our April board meeting. However, this was not the first time we considered this. At summer retreats in 2016 and 2017, we found that the region was understaffed, had suffered loss of leadership, and had suspended offering workshops and gatherings, so that there was a void for the district to fill. We identified the following "markers" that, should some or all of them appear, suggested that dissolution needed to be looked at more closely:

- Our ability to recruit effective board members and other volunteers
- Settling the Cedar Hill lawsuit
- Examining whether the district was the best way to foster connections between and meet the needs of congregations, or whether the region was doing so adequately
- Creating a mechanism for serving and communicating the needs of local congregations and

clusters to the region and the UUA

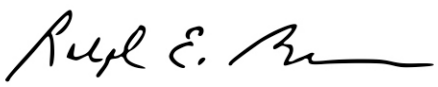
- Financial sustainability
- Existence of full, stable staffing and functioning of the region

Following a rich conversation of these issues, the board on April 14 voted to begin the process of preparing to dissolve the district, which will ultimately be accomplished by a vote of representatives of our BCD congregations. Doing so is complicated by the Cedar Hill suit, but our direction now seems clear.

It is not clear what the specifics are that need to be accomplished for this move to take place. Legal issues surrounding the actual dissolution, agreements about moving our assets to the UUA and other matters, as well as resolution of the lawsuit, look to be complex actions. I expect we will create a task force to undertake these, in consultation with our attorneys.

We expect that a vote by the members at an annual meeting will be necessary, giving you an opportunity to voice your wishes. And we will ask you for help. You members of our congregations are our greatest source of strength, and pool of talent, and we invite you to join us in this effort.

I welcome your help in the work before us.



President