

# Board of Trustees

**MEETING: June 19, 20, 25, Kansas City, MO**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tim Atkins, Greg Boyd, Kathy Burek, Susan Frederick-Gray (President), Barb Greve (Co-Moderator), Dick Jacke, Sarah Dan Jones, Tanner Linden, Manish Mishra-Marzetti, Patrick McLaughlin, Denise Rimes, Christina Rivera (Secretary), Bailey Saddlemire, Lucia Santini Field (Financial Advisor), Elandria Williams (Co-Moderator).

**ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS:** Carey McDonald (Recording Secretary & EVP), Tim Brennan (Treasurer), Stephanie Carey Maron, Latifa Woodhouse, Chelsea Hendrix, Danielle DiBona, Leslie Takahashi, Jesse King, additional guests and observers

## Meeting Minutes

*Tuesday, June 19*

Co-Moderator Mr. Barb Greve called the meeting to order at 8:06 am and offered opening words. Members and staff did a personal check-in. Co-Moderator Elandria Williams welcomed guests and observers at 8:50 and opened the public portion of the meeting, reviewed the revised agenda, and read the Board covenant.

Denise Rimes moved, Lucia Santini-Field seconded, and the Board unanimously approved the consent agenda.

Board members introduced themselves and invited guests and observers to introduce themselves, as well.

### **Commission on Institutional Change and Religious Professionals of Color Charge**

Co-Moderator Williams reviewed the statement affirmed by the Board at the April meeting. Since the meeting, the Board had made public communications to distribute some of the recommendations included. The UUA staff also published a recent blog post pointing to current work in mobilizing to respond to crises, support for healthy ministries over the next year, looking at ministerial transitions, and commitment to larger conversations about ministry and leadership. Remaining issues were confirmed to be part of the coming year's mission and vision planning for the Association.

Leslie Takahashi, in her role as chair of the Commission on Institutional Change (COIC), shared that the COIC is focused on big picture trends and needs, and is gathering stories to avoid those stories' erasure. Leslie noted that the COIC's next deep dive will be into ministerial and other professional credentialing processes, including work with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. She said that the COIC continues with data project and will recommend types of data to collect and track over time, including the number of ministers who are not making it through



preliminary fellowship. She again noted that for non-ministers there is almost no data, and said that will be included in the COIC's recommendations.

Other issues raised by the COIC included the recommendation for a specially-trained team of staff who are skilled with trauma-informed care, and continuing to reconsider processes for negotiated resignations.

Board members encouraged COIC to continue the broader framing that was used in the April report. They also affirmed the value of numbers and data, even though they cannot fully capture the spiritual trauma and pain carried by religious leaders of color. They also called attention to the question of how individual leaders in conflict situations are feeling about UUA support.

### **Our Work Ahead – Moving into Next Year**

Co-Moderator Williams noted how much is on the Board's agenda for next year and identified need for goals for what should be accomplished by GA 2019. E noted that conversations about the mission and vision of the Association started at October 2017 meeting, but haven't included much about strategy, and that greater clarity is a prerequisite for beginning a review or rewrite of the bylaws. Questions included how to understand and practice governance as how we make decisions together, rather than being limited to monitoring processes and voting/Roberts Rules; what is the Association's overall strategy for anti-racism, anti-oppression and multiculturalism; and what is the Board's role, and what is for other leaders?

The meeting broke into small discussion groups at 9:55. Each group answered the question of "where and who do we want to be in 2, 7 and 25 years." The full group reconvened at 10:20 to share observations, which are included as Appendix 1.

The Board agreed to continue the conversation in August to plan for the coming year, leading into General Assembly 2019.

The meeting took a break at 10:48 and reconvened at 11:02.

### **Ministerial Fellowship Committee Rule Change**

Board members reviewed proposed changes to the Ministerial Fellowship Committee's (MFC) rules and procedures relating to preliminary fellowship renewals. They agreed Content of changes makes sense, asked about the need to move definitions from Board-approved rules to policies over which the MFC has sole discretion. They recognized the principle of empowering volunteer leaders, but also asked about the right way to share responsibility with the MFC given the bigger conversations about credentialing which are underway. Some members noted that changes in preliminary fellowship have been years in process, and stated closely reviewing MFC process before it happens (rather than after) would imply lack of trust since the Board does not typically review this level of detail

The discussion raised wider points about the relationship between the Board and UUA committees, including:

- How important is it for the Board to be consistent in its policies across the committees of the UUA, given that they have really different functions and activities
- What really needs to come to the Board before it happens? The Board's role has shifted over time, and most details are delegated to individual



committees. At all levels, there is a need to discern what is bylaw vs policy vs rule.

- What does the Board expect in terms of regular reporting from committees? There is a need to find better ways to continue institutional memory on the Board, e.g. in-depth linkage work on relationships with committees three years ago, now that Board members do not sit on committees. If committees are sharing feedback with the Board, then there should be a way to show that something was done with it.
  - Does the MFC feel the Board has been an impediment to change?
  - How does the Board remain accountable for the definition of preliminary and final fellowship?

MFC chair Jesse King joined the meeting, and was asked to answer whether the MFC feels the Board has been an impediment to change, and how the Board would remain accountable under these changes for the definition of preliminary fellowship? He clarified that these changes were brought before the Board because of the barriers which some ministers were running into during preliminary fellowship when their work was not qualifying for renewals because it is not at least half-time compensated. He noted, and Leslie Takahashi confirmed, that this existing rule disproportionately impacts young ministers, ministers of color, and others most likely to be involved in alternative forms of ministry.

Jesse said the MFC wants to create more detailed and flexible rules to help more kinds of ministry count for preliminary fellowship annual renewals. He offered that the MFC can report to the Board on any changes that get made to the policies, which would help improve transparency overall. Additionally, he said that the Board has not been a barrier per se, but the process for changing rules and policies is complex, and there is some internalized fear of pushing against existing policies where people are comfortable with the status quo.

The Board came to consensus to take the MFC's planned policy changes and move them to Board-approved MFC rules, rather than eliminating rules altogether.

### **Reports (Co-Moderators, Secretary, Financial Advisor)**

The Co-Moderators noted their report was submitted in writing and reflects what will be shared as part of General Session. This included the fact that the role needs to be made to a manageable size for volunteers, even when it is shared.

Christina Rivera said that the Secretary's report was also submitted in writing. She noted that there is no Secretary's manual, including around congregational credentialing and approving exemptions and reissuing delegate cards at GA. Christina said she waits to reply to email sent to the Board to see if others may want to reply, and then does not always reply all to the entire Board. She offered appreciation for Stephanie Carey Maron for noting the places the Secretary needs to show up at GA.

Lucia Santini-Field noted Financial Advisor report also written. She offered gratitude for the Stewardship and Development team's opportunity for linkage for BLUU Campaign calls, and requested the ability to do follow-up calls to thank those congregations which eventually contributed after the initial conversation. She noted it was a critical period of transition with outgoing Director of Stewardship and



Development and urged the Board to invest more in its fiduciary duty and encourage generosity. She again encouraged Board members to complete the information technology security training! Lucia offered appreciation for what a transformative experience the past year has been.

Members noted that the Board needs to be clear overall about what is required for all of the roles on the Board, since the workload is not evenly distributed.

The meeting took a break for lunch at 12:02 pm, and reconvened at 1:00 pm.

### **Ends monitoring and report from the President**

President Susan Frederick-Gray and EVP Carey McDonald presented the revised global ends monitoring report and accompanying dashboard of indicators, which were distributed prior to the meeting. Tim Atkins offered specific feedback on the interpretations, which included mentioning community impact metrics for justice work in End 1.0, asking about congregational covenant of right relations and conflict resolution policies for End 1.1, and ideas for measuring multigenerational communities and youth retention for End 1.3.

Discussion addressed the question of whether the UUA should track all kinds of diversity equally? Members recognized that separating gender and sexuality would be valuable and that socio-economic diversity (and its interactions with race) is also valuable but very difficult to measure. Members agreed they want to support people being their whole selves, including their physical and cognitive ability.

Program data was also recognized as valuable, such as tracking young people of color at a program or service level so they can be connected to resources and opportunities. Participants asked whether data drives program decisions, or does it support or challenge our analysis? If program managers are surprised by data, then that may imply the need for better relationship with constituents.

Participants raised the possibility of regular but not annual surveys (e.g. census). That would give the chance to take care in decisions about the questions asked. It could also happen on a rolling basis, sampling a portion of congregations every year. It was asked whether the UUA could partner professional groups such as the Association of UU Administrators to do a 5-year survey? It may also be helpful to have more buy-in in the way questions are worded (e.g. LREDA talking about religious education enrollment)

It was noted that congregations need to track demographics to be able to report them, and the data the UUA asks for may actually push congregations to do more tracking and shape how people think about who matters in their congregations over time.

Board members asked UUA staff to be clear that quantitative data is always incomplete without the personal dimension, and to develop frameworks how the dashboard fits into qualitative evaluation.

Treasurer Tim Brennan shared that the fourth quarter financial forecast is looking like the UUA will roughly break even in this fiscal year.

Co-Moderator Williams closed the meeting at 1:45 pm.



## **Wednesday, June 20**

Co-Moderator Greve called the meeting to order at 10:44 am, and invited members and participants to introduce themselves.

Susan Weaver and Brock Leach led a discussion about the ways in which the UUA Board can strengthen connection with the UU Service Committee Board. Brock recognized that the two organizations' work is intertwined with the UUA and UUSC, even though the UUA serves congregations and members while the UUSC exists to serve people who have been denied human rights. The intersection of that work is mobilizing UU's to help advance human dignity, so how do we do that better together. He held up the UUSC's focus areas of criminalization and climate forced displacement, noting that historic challenges around migration and persecution, which prompted UUSC founders Waitstill and Martha Sharp to do covert work in the 1940s to help people escape Nazi Europe, are still present.

Both Brock and UUA Executive Vice President Carey McDonald affirmed a commitment to collaboration on the intersection of the two organization's work, including daily and weekly communication on a staff level, and a re-signed MOU for the UU College of Social Justice.

Members asked what kind of formal links need to be established between the UUA and UUSC boards? Suggestions included making contact during strategic planning processes about what each organization wants to accomplish, include relationship with UUSC as part of orientation for new UUA Board members, considering whether the UUA Board liaison to the UUSC should be a current Board member, and continuing to make times for human connectivity. Members agreed to try to schedule a joint board meeting or conversation in the coming year.

Discussion raised the question of how the UUSC is thinking about its role in internal UUA conversation about countering white supremacy and how our structure reflects our value and justice-based commitments. It recognized that connection and mutual strengthening between the UUA and the UUSC specifically is one of the Global Ends, and wondered what the UUA can we learn from UUSC partners in reimagining governance and community?

### **General Assembly run-through**

The Board's run-through covered the Board huddle before each General Session, Board office hours, the Safety Team, the discussion guide for General Session VI breakout groups, the debate and discussion process for business meetings, the presence of Board members at pro, con and procedural microphones to answer questions, and the Board report on stage.

### **Closing**

Participants went around answered the following questions: what are you excited about, what do you find challenging, and what support do you need?

The Co-Moderators distributed gifts to show gratitude to Board members.

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 for lunch with Regional Leaders Group.



**Monday, June 25**

*Additional participants: Janice Marie Johnson, Tuli Patel, Ila Klion, Stephanie Carey Maron, Brent Lewis, Theresa Soto, Carrie Stewart, Marcus Fogliano, Elaine McArdle, Leon Burke, Jennifer Grayson, Cecelia Hayes, Cheslea Surfus, Marta Valentin, Janette Lallier, Darrick Jackson, Cheryl M. Walker, Stephanie Samson, Debra Boyd, Oshara Misha, Jan Sneegas, Laura Conkle, Karen Armina, Carolina Krawarik-Graham, DeReau Farrar, Jolanda Walter*

Co-Moderator Williams opened the meeting at 8:37, welcoming members of the GA Planning Committee, the Council on Cross Cultural Engagement, the Commission on Institutional Change and other participants. E noted that this meeting is to provide a shared debrief of General Assembly, rather than in separate meetings as has been done in the past.

In the debrief, participants went around the room and shared their reactions and feedback on GA overall. Participants continued the debrief in smaller groups and returned to share additional reflections. Reactions which were publicly shared are detailed in Appendix 2.

The Board agreed to support justice actions in June and July around justice at the US/Mexico border and an end to family separation, and Co-Moderator Williams and Christina Rivera agreed to work on a statement of support.

The Board offered tokens of gratitude to the co-moderators for their work.

Co-Moderator Williams adjourned the meeting at 11:02 am.



Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Carey McDonald

Recording Secretary

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES SCHEDULE

- **Videoconference Meeting: August 2018**  
Monday, August 13, 2018; 8:00 PM Eastern  
Meeting URL: <http://zoom.us/j/864211230>  
Meeting ID: 864 211 230  
Phone: (646) 558-8656
- **Videoconference Meeting: September 10, 2018**  
8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. (Eastern)  
Meeting URL: <http://zoom.us/j/359478776>  
Meeting ID: 359 478 776  
Join by Phone: +1 646-558-8656
- **Meeting: October 2018, Boston, MA**  
Thursday, October 11 — Saturday, October 13, 2018
- **Videoconference Meeting: November 12, 2018**  
8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. (Eastern)  
Meeting URL: <http://zoom.us/j/529745195>  
Meeting ID: 529 745 195  
Join by Phone: +1 646-558-8656
- **Videoconference Meeting: December 10, 2018**  
8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. (Eastern)  
Meeting URL: <http://zoom.us/j/299243682>  
Meeting ID: 299 243 682  
Join by Phone: +1 646-558-8656
- **Meeting: January 2019, Boston, MA**  
Friday, January 25 — Saturday, January 26, 2019
- **Videoconference Meeting: February 11, 2019**  
8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. (Eastern)  
Meeting URL: <http://zoom.us/j/985901272>  
Meeting ID: 985 901 272  
Join by Phone: +1 646-558-8656
- **Videoconference Meeting: March 11, 2019**  
8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. (Eastern)  
Meeting URL: <http://zoom.us/j/614125629>  
Meeting ID: 614 125 629  
Join by Phone: +1 646-558-8656
- **Meeting: April 2019, Boston, MA**  
Friday, April 26 — Saturday, April 27, 2019
- **Videoconference Meeting: May 13, 2019**  
8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. (Eastern)  
Meeting URL: <http://zoom.us/j/596473699>  
Meeting ID: 596 473 699  
Join by Phone: +1 646-558-8656



- **Meetings: June 2019, Spokane, WA**  
Tuesday, June 18—Wednesday, June 19, 2019: Board of Trustees Meeting  
Wednesday, June 19—Sunday June 23, 2019: General Assembly  
Monday, June 24, 2019: Board of Trustees Meeting
- **Meeting: October 2019, Boston, MA**  
Thursday, October 17—Saturday, October 19, 2019
- **Meeting: January 2020, Boston, MA**  
Friday, January 24—Saturday, January 25, 2020
- **Meeting: April 2020, Boston, MA**  
Friday, April 24—Saturday, April 25, 2020
- **Meetings: June 2020, Providence, RI**  
Tuesday, June 23—Wednesday, June 24, 2020: Board of Trustees Meeting  
Wednesday, June 24—Sunday June 28, 2020: General Assembly  
Monday, June 29, 2020: Board of Trustees Meeting





## Appendix 1 – Reflections from small discussion groups

Where and who do we want to be in 2, 7 and 25 years?

*Overall reflections*

- Reimagine relationship – spirit of love, showing up, true equality
- Get to a strategy conversation, not just tactics; strategy is how we turn prophecy into reality
- What is visionary, what is attainable on timelines which we can plan? How do we create the conditions in the world and our communities that make the changes we want to make more possible?
- Honest and accountability in our congregations, moving from defensiveness to action when we see the ways we fall short
- Congregational leaders need to be involved in the crafting of what shows up on the floor of GA, so people feel true ownership and participation. Every congregation needs to participate in GA
- Moving from a club to a prophetic community, pushing outwards towards the margins and borders rather than just inclusivity
- We can't all wait 25 years! Want to be able to see big change in our lifetimes



*By 2020 (in 2 years)...*

- Settle into the container in which we do UUA business – that may be bylaw revisions or moving away from Roberts Rules; some folks who have been involved in the current system for decades are already having a tough time with what to expect, so need to keep moving to focus on big picture questions rather than arguing over wordsmithing or make it a competition of justice issues
- More resources for congregations engaging in non-traditional ministries (both support and push)
- More active youth and young adults in leadership; young folks often get interested in activism and start participating in UUA governance and leadership, but get frustrated by the long process of change
- Give the next Board leaders a different set of choices so they don't have to go through the same challenges
- Better support for interim ministers to lead culture shifts
- Have in place a pipeline for diverse, skilled volunteer leaders in the UUA, including youth and young adult leaders.
- Beginning a robust program of lay ministry.
- Investing in youth leaders and teaching about the ways to lead in the UUA; so few young UU's know anything about the UUA
- Continue to support staff members in actually doing work together with the Board, rather than just delegating
- New data system to track leaders and congregations in place and growing
- Overall, we are more skilled and adept at centering voices from the margins
- Shift in the average UU's connection to the UUA and the wider faith. Clear commitment to the reciprocal UUA covenant with congregations
- "Spokane Platform" – accessible, contemporary interpretation of the Cambridge Platform

- Collective excitement and clarity about the direction our faith is headed in. Once you start being clear when you haven't been clear in the past, some people will opt out, but more people will be motivated and aligned
- See more joy and more meaning in the conversations we have together. People feel like what happens when we are together is meaningful because it is having an impact on their lives.
- Be a part of not just the resistance, but the reimagining of our wider world

*By 2025 (in 7 years)...*

- Theological rigor for what we are doing in justice work and our Associational practices/GA
- Model governance differently, from congregations through all levels of the Association to make us strong organizations and communities
- Justice work is about building strong institutions that can change material and economic reality, not just witnessing the struggle; carrying over conversations happening in movement organizing right now
- Renewed engagement with interfaith and global faith partners, especially those who are experiencing oppression
- Have a system in place to ensure young leaders who come up in the faith have transformative experiences (e.g. at GA) that will prepare them to be the next generation of UUA leaders
- Reimagine settlement systems for all religious professionals
- Understanding faith development as the central experience and purpose of congregational life and worship
- Reimagine relationship in congregational polity, power and authority, and generational shifts in leadership



*By 2043 (in 25 years)...*

- Become a true prophetic voice in the world

## Appendix 2 – Post-GA debrief

Reflections shared by a range of leaders and participants

- This GA, felt a lightness of spirit, more relaxed and spacious and without major stresses or disasters
- Gratitude for staff and volunteers
- Looking forward to big conversations yet to come, and to setting more clarity in our Association
- Highlights included Sunday morning, worship and music, a networking session among disabled and trans\* folk, the bilingual worship service, Ware Lecture, Service of the Living Tradition sermon, youth-led Saturday morning service
- Happy that business sessions went well, appreciating the flexibility shown in General Sessions
- General Session VI breakout discussions were special and valuable, good work in Board linkage
- One of the best GA's because of consistent attention paid to transformational work, leaving feeling good about UUs and the UUA
- Did a lot of things differently this year, but it went pretty smoothly
- Lowest attendance in at least 13 years, even with very low hotel rates, need to think about financial tradeoffs differently
- Pain that it has taken so long for us to get this far Aware of the ongoing racism and patriarchy that is present, people of color and transgender folk being mistaken for one another
- Noting how both cultures of white supremacy and the perspectives of people of color have showed up at the center
- Lots of positive feedback and reactions from general attendees
- Gratitude to ancestors including Denny Davidoff, who made it possible for many to access theological education and leadership experiences
- Board has worked hard to feel like a team, affirms the work that happens over the entire year but is only on display at GA
- Connecting with GA and national leadership helps those who don't have access to that support in their own congregation
- Every space felt welcoming to families and young children, including family space in General Session hall
- Participants ranged from having their first GA to over 20 GA's
- Happy about youth trustee vote, and the precedent that sets for congregational boards
- Context of wider world remained heavy
- Great GA for religious educators, including the bylaw change, Angus MacLean and President's Volunteer Service Award
- Mindful of how hard it is to make changes that stick, especially with volunteer leaders who are term-limited
- Lot of collaborative opportunities, and collaborative leadership was demonstrated
- Felt the ministry and pastoral leadership present
- Proud of the sustainability work at this GA, which impacts the entire conference industry, including in Kansas City
- A more humane schedule with new opportunities for connection were incredibly valuable
- Showed how to both love people in and also challenge them appropriately



- In the future, need to reimagine what giving and legacy are in all of their ways, including predecessors and mentors in anti-racism work
- Acknowledge that there is still resistance to countering white supremacy work, consider who did not show up at this GA
- How do we build excitement for Spokane, what do delegates need to bring from their conversation?
- A Ware lecturer that could drive attendance would be very helpful
- Recognize the need for healing in so many different spaces and ways
- GA should be a training ground for concrete things that can be brought back to congregations
- Can there be more spaces for connection across group like this over the course of the year?

Recognition that this GA has been a lot of small shifts, and there are bigger shifts to come around business, governance, training and more so that GA is focused on strengthening the work of the Association

