

**UU Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**DPA Observer Notes**  
**January 18-20, 2008**

**Friday, Jan 18**

On Friday evening, the Reverend Robert Eller-Isaacs and Louise Wolfgramm led a workshop entitled Policy Governance – Values and Theology. In this exercise, Board members and observers met in small groups in which the members were afforded the opportunity share moments in their lives when they had experienced the “holy.” Each group then identified values reflected in those stories and reached a consensus on three such values. The Board and observers then reconvened and each group shared its consensus on those values. After a brief discussion and an effort to combine similarly described values into one word, each individual voted for three values as best representative of sacred Unitarian Universalist experience. The result was:

Connection  
Transformation  
Wonder

Authenticity finished just out of the top three.

**Saturday, Jan 19**

- Opening words and chalice lighting by Rev. Burton Carley
- Consent Agenda introduced by Jackie Shanti and approved by the Board
- Gini Courter reviewed the agenda for the next two days.

**Introduction of Board members and guests**

The Rev Robert Eller-Isaacs and Louise Wolfgramm continued the discussion from the previous evening focused on Values and Theology. Several Board members summarized the experience and the insights gained last night from the discussion of our experiences of the holy and how the values embedded in those stories should guide us in our work.

Rob reflected that the values that he grew up with in the movement were expressed as Freedom, Tolerance and Reason. He indicated that he was initially surprised at the consensus of the Board the previous evening, but that as he reflected further, he found threads and similarities to the Board’s expression being Connection, Transformation and Wonder)

**Policy governance as theological work**

Rob and Louise reflected that this simple exercise led us to a system of values that will impact so much of our work. Others reflected that as the Board continued to do work on the road to adopting “policy governance,” they had often felt an impatience to get to “ends” – last night’s experience felt closer to the process last night – talking about values means we must be getting closer to ends.

Louise observed that it is often easy to confuse values with ends. Others observed that they perceived the Policy Governance process as boring until last night when it became clearer that it is values based.

Rob emphasized that there is a fine line between making sure that sufficient information is gathered for a trustee to make a decision and the impulse to delay making a decision about values out of fear that we will offend someone or not be inclusive. This is a common obstacle for the liberal religious movement. The “Open Space” process at General Assembly was a brave attempt to gather the needed information about values that the Board needs.

The groups from Friday night then reconvened to draft a mission statement for the UUA that were grounded in the three values identified last night – the mission statement should be a clear statement of what difference we want to make to what people. The seven draft statements were:

1. Grounded in a sense of wonder and gratitude for the improbable gift of life, the mission of the UUA is to transform our lives and the life of the world. We seek this transformation through discovery of the authentic self, deeper connection to one another and works in service of justice and mercy. We respond to this transforming call with humility, understanding that our collective voice is but one part of a larger chorus of the holy.
2. Congregations nurture, honor and celebrate the wonder of life and interconnectedness. Congregations engage in connections within and beyond themselves. Congregations transform themselves and the world in ever widening circles.
3. The mission of the UUA is to create religious community where we can face the holy wonder, which calls us to be engaged in service and in right relationships with our neighbors and our earth.
4. The mission of the UUA is to support congregations as:
  - Sanctuaries for spiritual community and connection, grounded in liberal religious tradition
  - Agents of personal and social transformation, and
  - Havens of wonder.
5. To promote communities which foster religious intimacy and provide opportunities for connection with each other and the holy. These religious communities will transform the lives of individuals so that they may transform the world.
6. The mission of the UUA is to bring people together, honoring each individual’s sense of wonder and mystery, opening the door to personal, institutional and global transformation that calls us to freedom, tolerance and justice in our world.
7. The UUA will:
  - inspire and support congregations to provide congregants and their communities with a connection to the holy to achieve both personal and world transformation.
  - invite seekers and wonderers to join us on our journeys
  - provide a voice of moral liberal religious authority in the world.

Rob noted that if this were the time, the next step would be to distill these down to one mission statement that is poetic, memorable and powerful. This would serve to ground our work in our values and provide the linchpin for the definition of ends.

The Board and executive staff then took some time to personally jot down their sense of the implications of the work done over the last day to their role as a trustee or a member of the Executive Staff. Each then shared their personal experience of this and the implications of that experience to their role as Board member or Staff.

Gini outlined future opportunities to make this work part of a larger dialogue. At GA, we will invite congregational leaders, ministers and other religious leaders to join in the Appreciative Inquiry process at GA – to join the conversation about what we value and what we are about. That information will be available to us in October. The DPA will be meeting with us in October to join with us in the definition of ends. There will be an invitation to the UUMA to join us in the conversation leading to “ends” work this fall.

### **Executive Vice President’s Report**

Kay Montgomery reported new hires Daisy Kincade as public witness specialist, Elizabeth Mclain as director of Friends of the UUA, and Javier Caban as controller – he is the successor to Florence Einhorn who is retiring.

Kay announced a change in staff structure in which the campus ministry office and the young adult office are being combined. This will bring the resources of lifespan development to young adult programs and strengthen our AR/AO work.

Capital campaign gifts are close to provided the resources necessary to hire a long wished for position - Director for Music and Worship Resources. Kay’s office has assumed responsibility for UUA musicians’ certification. Her office is also currently in search for a director of Diversity in Ministership – the job is posted now.

### **Treasurer’s Report**

Tim Brennan reported that Rachel Daugherty is new assistant treasurer and Javier Caban is now controller.

General Investment Fund – Initiatives now underway include 1) an effort to improve communications and disclosure, 2) improve materials for promoting the fund, 3) enhance transparency with investors, 4) improve consistency in the reporting of returns and value, 5) improve consistency with policies and compliance with the exemption from federal and state securities laws. The new name of the General Investment Fund will be the UU Common Endowment Fund. There will continue to be quarterly conference calls, and investment information memorandum, enhanced quarterly report, an annual report, a listserv for investors and information regarding shareholder advocacy initiatives. The Board will be asked to approve on Sunday, a motion adopting the new investment policy. Investment guidelines will be finalized in February and new informational and promotional materials should be ready to go to print in May.

Tim also addressed a letter from the treasurer of a congregation that is considering using the GIF and raised several compliance questions. Letter raised valid questions in the context of the previous investment policy – the new policy addresses each of those concerns.

### **Ministerial Fellowship Committee**

The Reverend Jory Agate presented a summary of the MFC rule changes and By-law changes. The driving force to the modifications was to bring both the rules and the By-Laws up to date and to revise disciplinary process. The revised approach provides more options to the MFC short of removal from fellowship to engage individual situations. Among the recommended changes are:

- Elimination of the category “associate fellowship” – which will now be redefined as “inactive.”
- Community minister – changed the credential requirement from continual endorsement by a congregation to a requirement to be endorsed while in preliminary fellowship.
- Added a probationary period for ministers in final fellowship – making it look like preliminary fellowship and provides for annual evaluations.
- Added grounds for removal from fellowship without a formal complaint – added language around incompetence – it has been observed that congregations in distress often did not file a complaint once the relationship was ended.
- Process has been revised to make it look less confrontational and less like a court case. The MFC is a credentialing body, not a court system. Credentialing is a privilege, not a right. Consistent with this approach, the right to a hearing has been removed as well as the right to an attorney. This doesn’t preclude the MFC from deciding that having attorneys present would be appropriate in certain situations.

The rules modifications require Board approval – the By-Law changes need to be approved by GA. Motions to approve the rule changes and to put the By-Law changes on the GA agenda will be presented to the Board on Sunday.

Rob Eller-Isaacs, current president of the UUMA, informed the Board that the UUMA is in support of the changes, and is also modifying its own rules to be consistent with the revisions to the MFC process.

### **Investment Committee Report**

Dan Brody reported that the new five page policy was approved by the Investment Committee (IC) and the Committee on Socially Responsible Investing (CSRI) with no dissenting votes – when approved by the Board, this will replace a 30 something page outdated document. The Policy delegates to the CSRI the responsibility to develop SRI Guidelines. It delegates to the Investment Committee the responsibility for other investment guidelines. The committees work together and report to the Board every two years.

Audit report – KPMG provided an unqualified audit report – which is a great accomplishment. The customary Management letter accompanying the report was three pages (11 pages in FY06) and contained two minor recommendations. This is evidence of great progress and the good work of treasurer. A separate audit of the health plan trust is underway and should be completed and reported on in the spring.

Darwin Smith has resigned as chair of the Audit Committee and Chris Reece has agreed to become chair. There is a discussion regarding increasing the committee size to provide more continuity – this would require a by-laws amendment). Current initiatives include exploring a conflict of interest policy, a policy addressing off-balance sheet funds and a whistleblower policy.

Congregational Loan Policy is now the responsibility of a staff committee, not a board committee. The existing policy will need to be modified to give authority to the President to manage the loan program under certain guidelines – which will be presented for approval to the Board.

At last Board meeting, the question arose whether internal rent allocations would have an impact on Beacon Press, Health Plan Trust, UUCEF etc. Rent is a marginal cost – IT and HR are not really marginal costs. Therefore, the rent allocations will be based only on operational costs – not capital or real estate based. Operating units will see increase in costs and budget. This will have negligible impact on Health Plan Trust and UUCEF, but WILL have an impact on Beacon Press because they have a lot of employees and use significant space – probably about \$100K. Under current policy, Beacon Press cannot have an annual operating loss of \$300K or a loss of \$600K over five years. To mitigate this impact, the IC will propose a motion to the Board that for the first five years, there will be a transfer from UUA budget to Beacon for the exact amount of the rent charge so that Beacon will not be harmed by the impact of the rent allocation. After five years, it will be up to the Board to reassess importance of Beacon to the vision and means of the organization.

### **Secretary's Report**

Paul Richter reported that the deadline for recertification of congregations is Feb 1 – only 25% of our congregations have responded. Usual pattern is that all but a few will come in the last week. 17% have responded on the congregational action poll.

Election – Jan 1<sup>st</sup> was the first date that someone could announce candidacy for president. Two have so indicated – Rev Laurel Holman and Rev Peter Morales. There will be a public forum at GA right before the Weir lecture. The Board has a covenant that Board members will refrain from endorsing any candidate until the conclusion of GA 2008.

Paul recommended that we vote to put an item on the agenda at GA recognizing the new district in northern New England.

### **First vice-Moderator's Report**

Jackie Shanti reported on several administrative matters.

### **Congregational Working Group – Eva Marx**

International Report - Will Saunders reported that the decision was made last year to prepare Memoranda of Understanding with each international group with whom we are in partnership. There is an effort underway to formally define the relationship of the Board to the ICUU – the MOU was drafted and is currently being reviewed by the ICUU. With respect to the Partner Church Council, that is a staff relationship, not a Board relationship. The MOU with the Partner Church Council was drafted by that organization and is currently being reviewed by the staff.

International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF) – Will distributed a draft report from the President which could serve as a template for a monitoring report by the administration to the Board regarding IARF – there is no action required by the Board except to receive the report. The Board agreed to use this reporting mechanism as a learning experience in the monitoring

process. The contents of this report should be treated by Board members as sensitive information until such time as formal Board action is taken on its conclusions and recommendations.

Crisis Response - Kay Montgomery that the final version of the crisis response plan will be ready in the spring. Kay also reported that the Washington Ethical Society is interested in an affiliation with the UUA – similar to a federated church model. The final report on this activity will be ready in the spring.

Welcome to new congregations – Rev. Doug Gallagher reported that two new congregations will be welcomed to the association:

- Prairie Circle UU Congregation in Grayslake IL
- Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Rocky Mount, Rocky Mount NC

### **Growth Working Group**

The Rev Doug Gallagher reported that the branch of First Albuquerque would like to be listed in the directory even though it is not a separate congregation.

College bowl advertisements and Time magazine advertisements have been written up in Boise papers. Certain Google searches take surfers to the specific page within our website that is pertinent to their search.

Nominations for Break-through Congregations – there are 25 to date.

Rev. Jose Ballaster summarized a report from the forum at GA of Lifelong UU's (now called "home-bred"). The report posed and addressed the question of how we keep these UU's within our movement and recommended that we repeat the forum this year.

Conversation with Rob Eller-Isaacs – conversation about Excellence in Ministry recognizes that there is also some resistance among some ministers against growth, not just congregations that resist growth. He anticipates that about 300 ministers will eventually participate in this conversation.

### **Our Association Working Group**

Tamara Payne Alex reported that many still do not understand the Board's initiative regarding Independent Affiliates. Some Board members observed that there are unintended negative consequences to the move to reduce the number of IA and to be very discriminate about those relationships. Others responded that the consequences that some see as negative and unintended were really foreseen and not considered negative during the long process that the Board went through to arrive at its current policy. It was suggested that the history be reviewed at a future meeting so that newer members have the benefit of that thinking.

The Ministry for Earth group is continuing its application and will be recommended for Independent Affiliate status. The Channing-Murray Foundation application will not be recommended.

The group also reviewed the Homebred UU report and is exploring questions and observations raised therein.

Election process – the group explored the values that it wants embedded into the election process and raised very probing questions about process as it exists today. The seeds of recommendations for modifying the process are in the brainstorming stage; the group will craft a paper summarizing the start of the conversation - a session at GA will further flesh this out. Any bylaw changes must be formalized by GA 2010 to be in place for the next election cycle.

### **Governance Working Group**

John Blevin expressed that he was moved by the work the Board had done on Friday evening and Saturday morning and suggested a workshop at GA entitled “Governance as Holy Work.”

He indicated that a conversation about language regarding executive limitations – will come back to Board at next meeting that will be more consistent in its language.

Finance group is working diligently on policies and a web call will be scheduled to finalize language across the working groups.

Invited input from all Board members as to how what we learned this weekend regarding values affects our governance work. The “Appreciative Inquiry” process at GA should also help.

District Presidents will meet with the Board in October to focus on ends statements.

### **Living Our Faith Working Group**

Tom Loughrey reported that the working group met with DRUUM to understand the organization and focus – DRUUM representatives made it clear that they do not speak for people of color – they speak for the members of DRUUM. They are looking for ways to increase awareness of their existence among people of color. They are looking for ways to raise funds independent of the UUA. They are looking to regionalize their work to become more effective. With regard to issues affecting people of color, DRUUM representatives would like to be asked for input, but insist that they don’t want to be the only folks asked or regarded as speaking for people of color.

The group had preliminary discussions about the potential for social interaction at GA between members of the Board and DRUUM – invitation to DRUUM leaders to join the Board next January. Roger Comstock noted that DRUUM originally formed as a support group for people of color, and also served an accountability function for the Board.

With regard to moving the Board meeting to a location outside of Boston – found that it would cost more than \$25,000. It was difficult to quantify the benefits of meeting elsewhere. The group will recommend to the Board to take this off the table for awhile until those trade-offs can be planned.

The working group is also struggling with where unaffiliated organizations fit now? This may require collaboration with the Our Association Working Group.

### **AR/AO Assessment and Monitoring Team Report**

Joan Lund and Charlie Burke reported that the Board Observation Forms are being modified to reduce the number of Yes/no questions and increase the questions that require reflection. To

facilitate progress, the observers will be assigned ahead of time for the next Board meeting – it is the intent of the Team that this task be spread around.

As part of our ongoing commitment, training for Board members to be effective allies will be scheduled for a two hour block of time at the April meeting.

The Team also recommended that time be set aside at each board meeting for three members to report for five minutes each on some AR/AO/MC progress - either on an individual, congregational or district level. A schedule will be put out about a year ahead so that people can prepare. The first of these will be in June.

Charlie expressed that the driving value in their work is to ensure that Board members are agents for anti-oppression work.

Joan formally thanked Paula Cole Jones for training received early in the week and indicated that the Team will directly thank her. Paula has been invited back in October.

Jose Ballaster expressed that multiculturalism work is being ignored in our focus on anti-racism and anti-oppression work and illustrated his point with a metaphor comparing and contrasting the structure and light produces by a mosaic versus that of light shining through stained glass and how that light illuminates a white shirt. He drew a distinction between Poly-culturalism – which is an interaction of cultures – and multiculturalism, which is not.

### **Ministerial Fellowship Committee Report**

Jackie Shanti reported that the reading list has been completed and is available.

Latest meeting of the committee was in San Francisco and saw nearly as many male candidates as female candidates.

The rule changes and By-law changes have been a huge part of the work of the committee over the last 18 months and it is gratifying to the committee that the work is nearing completion with Board adoption imminent.

Multicultural competence is lagging in the MFC also.

### **GA Planning Committee**

Eva Marx acknowledged the seriousness of concerns about civil liberties and the potential for racial profiling that have been articulated over the last few months. The GAPC is recommending to the Board that we proceed with plans to hold GA in Ft. Lauderdale. While it may not be the ideal site, it also has many factors favoring the site. Eva's report outlined and described the plans and actions being taken to actively address and prepare for issues that may arise. There will be another communication from Bill, Gini and Beth reminding all why we chose Fort Lauderdale originally and to address the concerns that have been raised.

A motion was introduced to reaffirm the Board's decision in 2004 to hold 2008 GA in Ft. Lauderdale. It was expressed that it will be very important to communicate this in the context of the reasons that Ft Lauderdale was selected in the first case. (Those reasons include that the other candidate sites were deemed unsuitable. Charlotte and Tampa didn't have food and beverage capabilities. Richmond had various urban issues. Ft Lauderdale had accessibility, cost

effectiveness (promised not to charge attrition), hotels agreed to pay for convention center and shuttles (\$80K), very diverse community as well as within the hospitality community, gay and lesbian transgendered community. At the time of the added security measures, it was assumed that the convention center would be moved outside of the port – that has not happened. More discussion on Board action was deferred until Sunday.

The GA planning committee also agreed to refrain from endorsing a candidate prior to the end of GA.

Scholarships for GA – there have been very few such applications.

The Working Group reported that the theme of GA going forward would seek a uniform branding as “General Assembly: A Meeting of Congregations” rather than identifying an annual theme.

Site selection for 2012 will be Phoenix. Jan Sneegas described the GPAC’s site selection process and the factors considered – some such factors include hotels, convention center, rates for economic justice, green initiatives in the city, closeness of hotels etc – again for green impact, area of the country to make sure we are geographically diverse. 2012 is a west coast venue (Charlotte in 2011) and proposals were received from Phoenix, LA, San Diego, Long Beach. LA began as the favorite, but the expense turned out to be greater than expected. San Diego was too expensive right away. Long Beach is now too expensive also and facilities aren’t appropriate. Phoenix guaranteed rates of \$139 five years from now – ministers indicated that one prepares for heat the same way one prepares for cold. Faith in Action team in Phoenix focused on environmental sustainability, accessibility and worth and dignity. Only downside was the heat. All housing will be within five minute walk of the convention center – dorms less than three blocks away - \$45 per night. New restaurants, new light rail system about to open, food available in convention center.

Accessibility Services will be provided at GA facilities. The GAPC cannot realistically provide such services at hotels, the airports etc and has generated a policy. This will be coordinated with the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Committee.

## **Finance Committee**

Lyn Conley reported the following:

- Variance report – we will end in the black.
- IT is looking at on-line directories so that congregations can enter contact information directly into the directories and be able to generate their congregational directories from the data base.
- Investment policy was reviewed and will move that it be approved.
- Stewardship and development report is on-line – confident that APF will meet their goal; it is unclear whether projections for Friends of the UUA.
- Association Sunday a complete success – can see what the districts will get. All congregations participating will get a letter of thanks.
- 74% of goal is in cash – less in legacy gifts than usual.
- Facility condition assessment schedule – five and ten year projections are established. Not a capital budget – just a plan to do the maintenance and spread out over ten years.

Unclear how it is going to be funded – much in the way of deferred maintenance was identified.

- Congregational Loan Policy – addressed by Dan Brody earlier – will replace previous policy. This clarifies changes brought about by moving this from a board policy to a staff policy.
- Beacon Press will meet their budget and be well within plan. Rent allocation issue to be voted upon tomorrow will provide equal offsetting support payment for any rent allocation to Beacon Press for the next five years. From a governance perspective, the President may charge rent as he sees fit – this motion reaffirms the Board’s commitment to Beacon for another five years.
- Health Insurance Plan – first year has \$934K surplus. Premiums will increase only 4%, benefits will increase and we have experienced a 10% increase in enrollment. Motion tomorrow to include UU World of Children employees in health plan.
- UU fair share highest level of compliance in any denomination. How do we make sure it is understood that this is not a fee for services – it is about who we are. Board action is and should remain in the “think about it” phase.
- Budget goals and 2009 priorities – compared budget items to 2003 budget to assess trends. Under prior process, board would be getting the budget at this meeting. Now, the President provides goals and priorities at the January meeting and the formal budget proposal at the spring meeting. The 2009 priorities were generated in consultation with the Leadership Council. Four additional priorities for 2009 1) technology and infrastructure to deliver more services to congregations; 2) anti-racism – JUUST Change; 3) coordinator of service activities – marry service with congregational life by providing opportunities to serve together with theological grounding (close to major donor gift to make this happen); 4) Music resources professional. Excellence in Ministry conversation will have to be funded in 2010 and community ministry staff position. Tim Brennan noted that a loan program is being established to help congregations get access to money for projects such as accessibility initiatives. Community ministry – social justice and legislative ministries – we have a coherent plan related to public witness – we need similar plan for social justice to bind our activities together and it is underway.

## **Summary of Motions for Action on Sunday**

Gini and the Board collaborated to summarize the list of motions to be presented on Sunday.

## **Compensation for the Moderator**

Jackie Shanti assumed the moderator’s chair to discuss compensation for the moderator. Board is examining election processes and the moderator’s role.

Role, skill set of moderator – acts as chief governance officer. Recognizing what the moderator has come to do and the level of skill and expertise the person needs to bring from the outside. Roadblocks to those having the skill set actually serving – can we expect them to mortgage home, not send kids to college, abandon their job, use their retirement funds. All speak to accessibility issues.

Comments:

- We harm ourselves by depriving ourselves of those with skill and talent because we fail to pay for services received.

- Astonished that moderator does not receive stipend. If we don't make a change, those with skill will not make themselves available to us.
- Job has grown beyond moderating GA and moderating the Board as defined in the by-laws. Current moderator makes appearances and serves as face of organization.
- Reason job has grown is that individuals have defined it that way – we need to have a conversation about whether the big job it is now is the way we want to define the job.
- Most in congregations think the job is paid.
- The energy and expansion of the job that the moderators have achieved have been helpful to the organization. Some of what they have undertaken is staff work – and that would have to be made up.
- Moderator is now chief governance officer and that change is already in effect.
- Does the moderator's position as unpaid enhance the credibility of the office – keeps the moderator independent of the professional staff. Do we lose something by compensating the moderator? The financial implication of compensating the moderator is not and should not be the driving factor in this decision.
- In congregations, leading the meeting is usually a volunteer position and that is the expectation. The other activities undertaken by this and previous moderators are what is warranting the compensation.
- It is a volunteer job that has enormous latitude in how one defines the job. We should have access to talented people to run meetings brilliantly too – not just for all the extras.
- The Board changed the title, but did not discuss the implications of the changing title on the changing role. We have to focus on what we want the role of the CGO to be.
- Moderator must be seen separately from staff and administration. Payment should not be a determining factor there. Role of moderator is larger now than originally conceived – even separate from the ambitious roles undertaken by the individuals occupying the role. How do we address this as an accessibility issue?
- Election implication: Should the Board elect the moderator? There is legitimacy by election at GA and benefits from being able to be elected by petition. Perhaps Board should nominate at least one candidate for moderator.

The time line for this conversation is consistent with the conversation about changes to be recommended for election of the president. GA session this summer, discussion next year – all grounded in our values. System is not set up to provide us what we want and need as an Association – now it is a confederacy of cousins with the illusion of democracy.

This issue will continue to reside in the Association Working Group.

### **Process Observation**

Justine Urbikas presented her observations on our process and AR/AO/MC awareness.

## **Sunday, January 20**

Dan Brody led our worship, with music provided by Alan and Isaac Brody. Chalice lighting and opening words were provided by Linda Laskowski.

### **President's Report**

President William Sinkford reported that the edgy and provocative visibility campaign for Unitarian Universalism is well underway. The twin objectives of the campaign are 1) to energize UU's to become more confident and active evangelists for our faith and 2) to increase awareness of Unitarian Universalism.

Preliminary on the ground reports, which are representative of other feedback, is that there is an increase in visitors citing ads, return of former members, congregations are giving out Voice of Liberal Faith DVD's to newcomers. One report is that a longtime member lit candle, held up the UU ad in Time and read the entire ad with tears of joy in his eyes. He expressed that he long thought that there were a lot of people out there who are hungering for our message.

The ads have been put in the hands of more than 40 million people – that has translated into significantly more clicks on website.

The advertorials have not been working as well. The Time religion pages were a disappointment – refused to allow click through access. Few people visited from the religion pages. Ads on Google adwords (key word searches brought up ad for UU) resulted in 10K first time visitors to tailored visitor pages. Because we only pay for click-throughs, this is an extremely cost effective approach.

With respect to the Voice of Liberal Faith DVD – Bill report that for the first time in his experience, he has not gotten one complaint about the content, form or length of a presentation. So far, there have been over 16,000 viewings on UTube.

Right now – we are taking a breather – current political and economic times activities would make it tough for our campaign to break through the noise.

We are forging a public identity for UU – offers hope to so many people who are yearning for a liberal religious home.

Bill attended the Growth team consultation weekend in Louisville attended by twelve ministers of congregations that have grown. These ministers described their successes and challenges in a forum hosted by Alice Mann. They were asked to describe in two or three sentences only – the saving message of your congregation. Minister after minister, using their own language, said the same thing. Saving – nurtured spirit of life, connection to life. People are called to help heal the world, transform themselves and the world toward beloved community. Nurture the spirit and help heal the world. Those are the words at the top of the ad campaign.

These insights offer a hope that we can stop looking for a small core belief that holds us together – Bill expressed that he really doesn't want to talk about lowest common denominator, humanism vs mysticism beliefs. One key question asked of the ministers was whether the growth they experienced came from the vision they cast or the love and affirmation they expressed.

Without exception, the ministers at the growth conference wanted to talk about love – our focus on boundaries between clergy and laity may have sidetracked us. We cannot undo and shouldn't undo those hard earned professional boundaries, but we may have lost the focus on the transformative power of love in congregational life. Each of them appeared to work very hard to use the language of love because it invited an intimacy that could be inappropriate – it was the opinion of the twelve ministers that it was that expression of love that transformed their congregations. This poses difficult questions and does not mean that we undo the hard work on boundaries. Bill then showed a brief six minute portion of the DVD from that weekend to give the Board a very powerful flavor of the conversation.

Excellence in Ministry - Panel on theological education received many proposals and approved eight. UUMA are on task – schools are trying to take a look at pieces of the elephant – consultant is looking at – reports are due prior to April Board meeting. Time for the conversation has come and we are pointing at December for a major consultation. Many threads are coming together – board work, ads, conversations, tapestry will articulate our collective saving message for the world.

UU has guaranteed funding of \$200K to the theological schools – trend away from entitlement to mission based support. That relieved some of the anxiety from the conversation.

### **Board Motions:**

#### Congregations Working Group Motions

- Voted to accept the Prairie Circle UU Congregation in Grayslake IL into the Association
- Voted to accept the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Rocky Mount, Rocky Mount NC into the Association
- Voted to approve Phoenix be as site of GA in 2012

#### Our Association Working Group Motions

- Voted to accepted Ministry for Earth as an Independent Affiliate
- Voted to accept modifications to the Religious Education Credentialing Committee Rules 7 and 18

#### Living Our Faith Working Group

- Voted to defeat a motion to remove from the table that the Board meet from time to time outside of Boston beginning in Jan 2009. The effect of the vote is to keep the motion tabled because there isn't the desire to address it right now. This issue thus stays with the Living our Faith Working Group.

#### MFC Bylaw changes

- Voted to approve changes to the MFC Rules recommended by the MFC committee.
- Voted to approve the MFC Bylaw changes and to place them on the agenda at GA. One of the changes is a "C" bylaw (consolidation), requiring a vote in two consecutive GA's.

#### GA Planning Committee Motions

- Voted to reaffirm 2004 Board decision to select Ft Lauderdale as site of 2008 GA. The actual motion reads as follows:

“After careful consideration of the report of the GAPC and concerns expressed about security arrangements at GA, the Board of Trustees reaffirms its 2004 decision to select Ft Lauderdale as the site of the 2008 GA. The Board requests the Moderator, President and Chair of the GAPC communicate the detailed accessibility considerations that underlie the selection of Ft Lauderdale. The Board encourages participation by member congregations in the important governance and business matters of the Association in Fort Lauderdale.”

- Prior to the vote, the Board engaged in a long and spirited discussion about a number of concerns including the appropriateness of voting to reaffirm a previous decision, the content of the motion, the proper way to communicate the decision in a way that acknowledges and honors the very real concerns expressed regarding the security arrangements at GA.

#### Finance Committee Motions

- Voted to approve the changes to the UUA Investment Policy, reducing it to five pages
- Voted to approved the Board policy of Loan Guarantees and grants to congregations
- Voted to approved the Board offset support to Beacon Press if they are charged a rental allocation by the staff
- Approved participation in the UU Health Plan of the employees of the UU World of Children.

#### Secretary's Motions

- Voted to approve the motion to place on the GA agenda the consolidation of the NH-VM and Notheast District and the establishment of the Northern New England district.

### **Demonstration of Persony**

The Board witnessed a demonstration of a web meeting tool named Persony which can be used by the Board working groups. This is also available to others within the Association and is also available to the DPA. Power point based presentations can be very effective, but can also include excel and word documents. Presenters must download a small piece of client software – attendees can access this through any computer or web browser. All attendees dial in to a conference call bridge.

### **Executive session**

The Board met in executive session for a brief period at this time.

### **Future agenda items**

The Board brainstormed future agenda items. I didn't catch all of them, but the ones I did included the following:

- History of Independent Affiliates issue
- Briefing by Health Plan director
- ARAOMC Training – What does it mean to be a White Ally
- Excellence in Ministry

- Youth Working Group
- Meeting with presidential candidates

### **Moderator's Update**

Gini Courter stated that most of the information she usually delivers at this point in the meeting has been addressed elsewhere. She solicited from new members concluding their second meeting what might have been missing in their orientation or information that they now are lacking that they would like to know. These questions included:

- What was the genesis of the working groups and what are their specific charges? Are they totally independent? Are they collaborative and if so, how do they work together? Is it proactive, reactive? Each of the Working Groups then gave a brief synopsis of their charter and operations.
- Unfamiliarity with UUA organization, how work is done in the association – primarily staff functions and how they fit together.
- Instead of using first name of staff members, refer to full name and position.
- Would like to know more about theological schools.
- How did the Board work before policy governance? Brief response from longer term members of the Board - In 90's, there were no working groups so motions were crafted together. Now more efficient, but working groups used to mirror or reflect staff work and were vulnerable to becoming advocates for staff.
- What is the Board expectation of the liaison relationship?

Evaluation form for Board meetings – Gini will send one out over the next week. Everyone will be able to see the results and be part of the process of evaluating and improving our work together.

### **Committee on Committees**

The Board again moved into Executive Session and this humble reporter made his exit.

Notes prepared by  
Ken Wagner  
President, DPA