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UUA Moderator
Chief Governance Officer

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Report to the General Assembly

I am pleased to offer my first report to the General Assembly as your Moderator. Since my election last June in Louisville, I have visited scores of congregations, a few clusters, several districts, a region, many organizations, too many committees to count, and all of the UUA staff groups. Meeting with hundreds of Unitarian Universalists and others who share our values, confirms to me that we are a religion whose values position us well to work with other progressive religious traditions to serve new generations in new ways.

The road "will be hard we know, and the road will be muddy and rough, but we'll get there."¹ We know that we Unitarian Universalists have good news to share and these are the right times to share it. Moreover, we know from surveys and research, that values embraced by the millennial generation are in alignment with the values of Unitarian Universalism.

When you examine the changes occurring in the broader culture and religious landscape, it suggests we need to expand our efforts to actively engage people outside of our traditional congregational structures. Specifically, the growth of the number of people, especially younger generations, who have no religious affiliation and no church-going practices require that we provide a clear and differentiating message of the difference we believe our Unitarian Universalist values can provide to individual lives, to our communities, and to the wider world.

That is why I like our new branding initiative, which will better communicate who we are, what we do, and why it matters.

I believe in the power of our liberal religious values to change lives and to change the world. Our congregations are the primary institutions to create transformation, especially when we understand

¹ Wojaja, Hymn 1020, Singing the Journey

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ourselves as part of a larger movement of purpose that is focused outward. And it is our congregations that do the work and make the changes this evolving world calls for.

We are a movement for our time, but we face choices as we work to attract Millennials, the spiritual-but-not-religious, and the "nones". The "nones" are those who check none-of-the-above when identifying religious affiliation. Additionally, the unchurched and the increasing number of people who hold multiple religious identities are drawn to our inclusionary values.

While it is arrogant and overly optimistic to think large numbers of the millennial generation and "nones" will naturally and without much effort be drawn to Unitarian Universalism, it is worth our effort to spread the good news of Unitarian Universalism. I believe the news is good and the times are right.

All of us who identify as Unitarian Universalists have much to do to live into our [Global Ends or Shared Vision](#), the result of excellent Linkage work in which many people participated. The board and senior staff hold a shared vision and are working together collegially to measure and monitor these Ends.

I invite all Unitarian Universalists to become familiar with our Ends. Return to your communities and encourage discussion and discernment about what they challenge you to do to inform your own congregation's long-range planning as we move into this young century.

The present board of eleven at-large trustees, elected at last year's General Assembly, has been as agile and generative in its work as the previous and much larger board imagined. They brought the bylaw changes in 2011 to reduce the board size that enabled the election in 2013. We thank them for their courage; they gave up their privilege in order to strengthen the governance of our Association.

Effective governance is the enabler of our dreams. It is how we operationalize our covenant with one another, our promise to one another. It has been a great pleasure to be a part of this collaboration as the board and staff have begun living into our covenantal faith together, making promises one to another, holding each accountable to the other as well as to the congregations and communities we serve.

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The Board is clear about the fiduciary, strategic, and generative modes of governance.² My charge to those of you in leadership is this: Seek governance in your congregation or community. Rise above the daily round of issues that we face surrounding power and authority, funding, and whether there is too much or too little God-talk. Focus instead on what we are in this world to be and do, and how well we are being and doing those things.

"None of us alone can save the world.
Together—that is another possibility waiting."³

The balance of my report is a collection of my reports to the Board of Trustees when we met in October 2013, and January, April, and June 2014.

Report to the UUA Board of Trustees October 2013

Since being elected to serve as your Moderator on June 22, I have been busy meeting with many people and organizations about their hopes and dreams for our movement. It has been deeply rewarding. However, I have had a few meetings where I've heard stories in which we didn't live up to our covenant with one another. Additionally, I have some references I recommend you read as we continue to develop our board culture begun at our Board Retreat in September.

I call your attention to several significant items iterated further below.

I had the privilege of worshipping at All Souls Unitarian in Washington, DC during their celebration of the 50th Anniversary March on Washington. The sermon Rob Hardies delivered on August 24 is a call to all of us in leadership.

The boards and staff of the four districts of the Southern Region met at the Mountain Retreat and Leadership Center near Highlands, NC, September 27 – 29. It was a incredible weekend of deep reflection and the Southern Region leadership

² *Governance as Leadership: Reframing the Work of Nonprofit Board* - Chait, Ryan, and Taylor

³ *Choose to Bless the World* - Rebecca Parker

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team continues to transform governance on behalf of their over 200 congregations, to expand ministries, and to encourage cluster development. I was pleased to be a signatory to their report.

Most of my conversations and meetings have been positive and spiritually deepening, and I am positive about the future health and growth of our religious movement. However, two conversations were very troubling. They involved hearing the stories of two congregants who filed complaints of sexual misconduct by clergy in recent years and feeling they were not properly heard or respected. I will report the specifics in an executive session of the board and will request that the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and the Ministries and Faith Development staff group, in conjunction with Trustees, conduct a review and assessment of our current process for handling such cases. As part of the review we need to look at the intent, goals, purposes and values of the process.

I want to thank the many people who met with me, specifically Peter Morales and the UUA staff who gave me the time to provide insights into their portfolios. I offer a special shout out to Gini Courter who spent countless hours providing background and history essential to the role of Moderator.

Meetings with congregations

- UU Church of Brevard (NC) – attended
- All Souls Church Unitarian (Washington, DC) – participated in the 50th Anniversary March on Washington
 - Hear The Rev. Dr. Robert M. Hardies [powerful sermon](#)
- UU Fellowship of Bay County (Panama City, FL) – preached
- The Unitarian Church in Westport (CT) – participated in a forum and preached
- First Church Boston – attended

Meetings with regions/districts

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- Southern Region Boards and Staff (The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center – NÇ)
 - Florida District of the UUA
 - Mid-South District of the UUA
 - Southeast District of the UUA
 - Southwestern UU Conference of the UUA
- Southern Region Mountain Meeting

Meetings with committees and organizations

- UU Church of Nashville Safety Net
- Transgender UU Religious Professionals (TRUUSt)
- Open UUA Committee
- GA Planning Committee (GAPC)
 - See Vice-Moderator's Report of meeting
- Council on Cross-Cultural Engagement (CCCE)
 - Diverse Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (DRUUM)
 - Allies for Racial Equity (ARE)
 - Unitarian Universalist Musicians' Network (UUMN)
 - Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA)
 - Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA)
 - GA Planning Committee (GAPC)
 - See Vice-Moderator's Report of meeting

Meetings with officers and staff

- Peter Morales, UUA President
- Harlen Limpert, Chief Operating Officer
- Tim Brennan, Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer
- Terasa Cooley, Program and Strategy Officer
- Helene Atwan, Director, Beacon Press
- Scott Tayler, Director of Congregational Life
- Janiece Sneegas, General Assembly and Conference Services Director
- Sarah Lammert, Director of Ministries and Faith Development
- Taquiena Boston, Director of Multicultural Growth and Witness

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- Terry Sweetser, Vice President for Stewardship and Development, Senior Advisor to President (Attachment 3)
- Kathleen McTeague, Director of the College of Social Justice

Meetings with individuals

- Gini Courter, former UUA Moderator
- Two complainants of clergy sexual misconduct whose names will be held in confidence.

References for Board Development

- [*Salsa, Soul, and Spirit: Leadership for a Multicultural Age*](#) by Juana Bordas
- [*Governance as Leadership: Reframing the Work of Nonprofit Boards*](#), by: Chait Richard, Ryan William, Taylor Barbara E.
- [*The Gremlins of Governance*](#), by Richard Chait
- [*Preventing Sexual Abuse in Congregations: A Resource for Leaders*](#), by Karen A. McClintock
- [*Faith Trust Institute*](#), founded by Rev. Dr. Marie M. Fortune

Report to the UUA Board of Trustees January 2014

I have received several emails, calls, and comments since our last board meeting that strongly suggest we, as a new smaller Board, must do a better job of communicating our activities to our Sources. While we have met in full business session only once since the election of all of us last June, there is an expectation from our constituents to communicate our deliberations and actions. Although we published a summary of our work on the UUA Web page, we have no presence on the Board blog or Facebook.

In reaching out to John Hurley, Director of Communications, I reviewed a copy of notes and recommendations from the Communications working group of the board from April 2010. It is appended for our review and discussion at our January meeting. I expect to emerge from that meeting with a Communications plan that we can begin to execute immediately following our January meeting.

My recent focus has been having discussions with multiple trustees and other stakeholders on how to make GA General Sessions, formerly know as Plenary, more engaging for the delegates while covering the necessary business of the Association. I will ask those individuals and

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organizations who traditionally present to provide a written report which will be printed and available to the delegates. This will provide more detail than the verbal report will have time to include.

Additionally, I will ask that the number of presenters for each report minimize the number of people involved, preferably only one person. Additionally, I will ask that the reports demonstrate linkage to our Ends as well as the theme of GA 2014, Love Reaches Out. I am consulting with young adult leaders and others to consider short TED-type teaser talks to engage delegates and encourage conversations outside General Session Hall or at specific workshops.

As we develop our 2015 board calendar, I am asking the Trustees to approve changing the offsite meeting, usually our January meeting, to April. I envision our April 2015 Board Meeting to be held in Selma, AL to coincide with the 50th Anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March to be celebrated in March 2015. You will recall that the UUA Board recessed their meeting in 1965 to answer the call from Dr. Martin Luther King to come to Selma after events on Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965. The [Living Legacy Project](#) will be organizing events for Unitarian Universalists and others to honor those who participated in the Civil Rights movement.

Meetings with congregations

- First UU Church of the Palm Beaches, governance workshop and preach

Meetings with committees and organizations

- UU Ministers Association
- District Presidents Association, Boston
- Presidents Council Retreat, Boston
- Audit committee, Boston
- Finance Committee, Telcon
- Executive Committee, Telcon
- Open UUA Committee, Telcon
- UU Society of Community Ministers, Telcon
- Ministerial Fellowship Committee, Telcon
- Meadville Lombard Theological School, Chicago

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- GA Planning Committee, Portland

Report to the UUA Board of Trustees April 2014

My attention since the last board meeting has been primarily focused on five major activities: planning for GA General Sessions, assessing Restorative Justice processes, reviewing and understanding the Business Resolution on Fossil Fuel Divestment, collaborating with senior staff on Ends Interpretations, and coordinating with the Living Legacy Project on arrangements for a 2015 Board meeting in Alabama.

GA General Sessions – Understanding that there will be 12.5 hours available for general sessions compared with 23 in 2013, I have been working with Donna Harrison and others to ensure our business can be conducted within that time. We have communicated with traditional presenters to keep their presentations short, demonstrate how they link to our Ends and the GA Love Reaches Out theme, and engage the delegates with questions they might want to reflect on. (Addendum 1)

The Board will be asked to approve the Business Agenda at the April meeting.

Restorative Justice – Following conversations I had with complainants last year about clergy misconduct, I have had several conversations with the MFC, “after pastors”, staff, Safety Net representatives, and other professionals to understand our current process for handling complaints. Meetings are scheduled in April to further our understanding, which I hope will lead to a process that will provide a more compassionate hearing for both the complainant and the accused.

Natty Averett will update the Board at the April meeting.

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Business Resolution – The proposed business resolution on fossil fuel divestment has been placed on the Tentative Agenda and will be discussed at our April board meeting.

I have invited the chairs of the Investment and Socially Responsible Investment committees to participate as well as those with a range of views to better inform the board.

Ends Interpretation – A team established by the board (Donna Harrison, Rob Eller-Isaacs, and me) has been meeting with Eric Craymer and senior staff to review the ends interpretation document.

The staff will present the Ends Interpretation at the April Board meeting.

2015 Board Meeting in Alabama – I have been working with the [Living Legacy Project](#) (LLP) to establish specific dates for our spring board meeting in 2015. As discussed at our last board meeting, we will be meeting in Alabama to honor and remember the UUA Board's recess of their meeting in 1965 to reconvene in Selma at the [Edmundite Mission](#) in solidarity with the Voting Rights march from Selma to Montgomery.

The current expectation of LLP is to welcome people to Birmingham Thursday afternoon, March 5, 2015, and to have programming that evening, followed by a full day of programs in Birmingham on Friday, March 6. It is likely that Saturday, March 7, will include programs in Birmingham as well as in and around Selma, with a return to Birmingham Saturday evening. On Sunday afternoon we expect the gathered Unitarian Universalists to take part in the march from Brown Chapel across the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

I will ask a trustee to work with the LLP and Convention Planning Staff to coordinate our Board meeting with 50th Anniversary events.

Other activities - Concurrently with the activities noted above, I have been engaged with many stakeholders about the work group initiatives of the Board, which include GA Proposal Planning, Policy Review, Linkage, Reviewing Committees, Inclusion and Empowerment, and Emerging Congregations and Communities.

These initiatives will be updated at the April Board meeting by the assigned conveners.

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Meetings with congregations

- Fourth Universalist Society of New York, delivered homily
- One Island Family, Key West, delivered homily
- Cedar Lane UU Church, Bethesda, attended installation of Rev. Abhi Janamanchi
- The Unitarian Church in Charleston, delivered homily
- UU Fellowship of the Peninsula, Newport News, delivered homily
- First Parish in Concord, conducted town hall meeting and delivered homily

Meetings with committees and organizations

- Beacon Benediction, Boston, attended
- UUA Staff Chapel, Boston, delivered homily
- Western Florida Cluster, Clearwater, delivered homily
- Tidewater Cluster, Newport News, delivered keynote and workshop
- Monthly meetings of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees

Addendum 1

Dear (Committee Chair Name) -

I am writing to you to let you know about some changes that I am making in how we manage time in the General Sessions (Plenary) at General Assembly. In response to the feedback from delegates, we are cutting back significantly the time delegates will spend in General Sessions. This reduction will allow more time for programming, networking, worship, and fellowship...what most delegates and others to General assembly cherish the most. In addition, as part of its work to transform the governance of our association, the Board is working to change the nature of the conversations that we have at GA and focus more of our time together on the issues and questions that have the most impact for our association and our faith going forward. Moreover, after updating the Ends of the Association last year, the Board is working to assure that delegates will continually deepen their understanding of how the work done by various organizations within the UUA system leads to the achievement of the Global Ends (see attached.)

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These changes have some practical implications for the reports that are presented to the delegates during the General Sessions at Providence GA. This year we have 12 hours of General Session time, down from 23 hours in 2013. This is a significant decrease, and the Board and I have determined that, other than the reports required by our bylaws, no organization will be guaranteed time in the General Session to deliver a report. We are asking all organizations who would like to present a report to the delegates to submit a proposal to the Board by March 14. We will review all proposals relative to the General Session time available and respond by March 31.

All reports that are required by our Bylaws will be granted General Session time, although it may not be as long as has been the practice in previous years. For other proposed reports, priority will be given to reports that support the following criteria: reports that help delegates develop a robust understanding of how the work of the proposing organization supports achievement of the UUA Global Ends; reports that pose significant questions or issues that the delegates should consider in future gatherings; and reports that clearly link to the theme of this GA, which is "Love Reaches Out." Additionally, we encourage all organizations to have only one person present their report and limit it to 250 words.

As you prepare the proposal please provide the following information:

- Describe the organization.
- Who will speak for the organization?
- Is your report required by the UUA Bylaws?
- What is the role your organization plays in helping the Association achieve the Ends (attached)?
- How will your presentation tie to the theme of Love Reaches Out?
- What important questions or issues will be posed by your presentation for the delegates to consider?
- Why is it important that you make a presentation at General Assembly? Are there other ways that this information could be provided to those who are interested?

Please send your responses to Stephanie Maron at scarey@uua.org. Stephanie is the administrative support for the UUA Board. If you have any questions, you may direct them to our vice moderator, Donna Harrison (dharrison@uua.org) or me at jkey@uua.org. Also attached are two documents that will detail the requirements for all speakers relative to logistics and script deadlines. These

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requirements are essential for our ARAOMC review and closed captioning preparation.

I am looking forward to hearing back from you! We are committed to offering the delegates a different and faster paced general sessions than in the past and general sessions that are assessable and inclusive by and to all.

James C. Key (Jim), Moderator
and Chief Governance Officer
jckey@icloud.com

Report to the UUA Board of Trustees June 2014

My attention since the last board meeting has been primarily focused on Planning for General Sessions with the objective of delivering an engaging and challenging agenda that energizes delegates and congregations.

Meetings with congregations

- UU Fellowship of Statesboro (GA), delivered homily and a \$25,000 Chalice Lighter Grant from the SE District
- First Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashville, Town Hall meeting, delivered homily
- Wildflower Church, a UU Congregation in Austin, Town Hall meeting, delivered homily

Meetings with committees and organizations

- Gathering to listen to victims of clergy sexual misconduct
- Panel on Theological Education, Chicago
- Southern Region Combined Annual Assemblies of SED, FLD, MSD, SWC: Delivered Keynote via Fuse
- Combined District Assemblies of MSD and CBD, Framingham, MA
- Leading Edge Conference: *Heal the Soul, Heal the World*, New York

Moderator's Report

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