

**District President's Association Meeting  
November 5-8, 2009  
Boston, MA**

**Thursday, November 5, 2009**

DPs Present: Mary Ellen Morgan (Pres), John Sanders (VP), Ernie Hall (Treas), Jim Key (Sec), Jose Ballester, Mike Harris, Rachel Christensen (VP Florida), Jim Turner, Michael Sallwasser, Howard Rees, Ted Fetter, Maris Cornell, Dick Jackie, Phil Reed, Kathy Bowman, Pat Manley, Judy Buxton

DPs Absent: Lisa Jennings, Daniel O'Connell

7:00 pm - Mary Ellen Morgan, DPA President, shared opening words and introduced John Blevins. John presented a history of policy governance implementation by the UUA Trustees. In addition to the DPs, we were joined by Gini Courter (Moderator), John Blevins (UUA Trustee), Nancy Bartlett (UUA Trustee), and Eva Marx (UUA Trustee and DPA liaison).

**Friday, November 6, 2010**

8:00 am - Mary Ellen shared opening words and introduced the morning activity. The DPs broke into regional groups with Trustees and Moderator working with the breakout groups.  
See Addendum 1.

1:15 pm - Peter Morales, UUA President, joined us and outlined his hopes for the Association.  
See Addendum 2.

3:00 pm - Nancy Bartlett, UUA Trustee, facilitated a discussion around linkage.  
See Addendum 3.

**Saturday, November 7, 2010**

Linda Laskowski (UUA Trustee) and Harlan Limpert (UUA VP) joined the group, Nancy Bartlett (UUA Trustee), Eva Marx (UUA Trustee and DPA liaison) remained.

8:45 am – Opening reading: John Sanders shared a reading by John O'Donahue.

For a New Beginning

In out-of-the-way places of the heart,  
Where your thoughts never think to wander,  
This beginning has been quietly forming,  
Waiting until you were ready to emerge.

For a long time it has watched your desire,  
Feeling the emptiness growing inside you,  
Noticing how you willed yourself on,  
Still unable to leave what you had outgrown.

It watched you play with the seduction of safety  
And the gray promises that sameness whispered,  
Heard the waves of turmoil rise and relent,  
Wondered would you always live like this.

Then the delight, when your courage kindled,  
And out you stepped onto new ground,  
Your eyes young again with energy and dream,  
A path of plenitude opening before you.

Though your destination is not yet clear  
You can trust the promise of this opening;  
Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning  
That is at one with your life's desire.

Awaken your spirit to adventure;  
Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk;  
Soon you will be home in a new rhythm,  
For your soul senses the world that awaits you.

~ John O'Donohue ~

*(To Bless the Space Between Us)*

9:00 am – After a single word check-in, Mary Ellen summarized the work of the group from Friday:

- DPA arrived at a place where they were ready to align our vision across the continent to realize our shared intention to,
  - a. Empower our UUA President by clarifying co-employee reporting relationships and evaluation processes.
  - b. Allow the association to do more with the resources we have and use them more wisely and effectively,
  - c. Look at new roles for region and district leadership to support new forms of governance.

Following an extended discussion, the DPA Executive Committee recommended holding regional meetings before GA 2010 that would include District Boards, UUA Trustees, District Staffs, Peter Morales, Gini Courter, and Harlan Limpert to take them through the discovery process that the DPs went through. This discovery process is providing a framework for all district leaders to re-imagine how the district and regions may need to align our governance structures with the UUA board and the president of the UUA.

10:15 am – The group broke into regional groups to discuss barriers to the recommendation.

11:20 am – Debrief:

Pat Manley: I went to a meeting, it was transformative, you had to experience it yourself, it concerned how the UUA will change, and I want you to be part of the process of change. There is nothing more important in our movement. Because of importance, Peter Morales, Gini Courter, and Harlan Limpert will clear their calendars to join us.

Suggestion that Gini prepare a video to frame the need for a regional meeting that will be called by the Presidents. The Exec Committee will prepare a packet to share with the Presidents. A suggestion was made to have a conference call by Presidents by Region with missing Presidents (2). In the case of new Presidents, they will be invited to join the meeting.

John Sanders suggested a script for sharing what we experienced this weekend:

A Suggested Message to Our District Boards:

I went to a meeting.  
It was a transformative experience.

I don't want to try to describe it to you, I want you to experience it yourselves.

It concerns how the UUA is going to change in a fundamental way.

I want you to be a part of the process that defines that change.

I would like you to join me in a meeting with all the district boards and district staffs in our region on June 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> (his regional meeting date).

Because nothing is more important to our movement, the UUA President Peter Morales, the UUA Moderator Gini Courter as well as UUA VP Harlan Limpert will be joining us for this important gathering.

A talking point white paper was developed by an ad hoc group:

- Opportunities Compelling Change
  - UUA Org chart is overwhelming
  - Present structure is unsustainable
  - Present governance lacks focus
  - As the more wieldy UUA moved to PG, the Board has defined ENDS
  - The District Boards moved more quickly to PG, but are now needs to be re-focused
  - District boards have been saddled with doing extraneous non-value add activities
  - Co-employment performance evaluation becomes unmanageable
  - Governance costs are becoming burdensome
  - The price we've paid for de-centralization was overwhelming inefficiency
- Possibilities of Regionalize approach
  - Specialized services can be focused
  - May retain semblance of existing service delivery infrastructure for feedback
  - Potential for cost savings and more value-add by consolidating and reducing resources consumed by governance
- Potential for Change
  - More consistent performance arising from better alignment
  - Elimination of redundant monitoring and direction
  - Better use of the energy and skill now going to district board work
  - Much smaller UUA Board
- Exciting Opportunities
  - Re-imagine ourselves

Action items for business meeting: Hold regional ingatherings at GA; get on schedule, 6:45 Wednesday, June 23, 2010.

Action items for business meeting: Start DPS meeting on June 22, 2:00 pm.

Executive committee to develop a package to go to board presidents.

Harlan Limpert to take regional meeting desired dates to schedule with Gini and Peter.

Mary Ellen to schedule conf calls with each group of DPs (by regions) in January. Presidents will give Mary Ellen available dates.

1:10 pm – Journey Toward Wholeness: Michael Sallwasser and Jim Key facilitated a discussion of a JTW assessment with breakout groups. A decision to report on district actions at the June 2010 DPA meeting was tabled until the regional meeting logistics could be assimilated.

2:00 pm – APF report: Dick Jacke represented Laurel Amabile who could not attend the meeting. He posed questions for the DPs to reflect and comment on:

Do Presidents have reservations about the efficacy of APF? Should APF do more? Perhaps a fuller message that funds a vision.

PG now requires that staff perform “the ask” and not the board. What is the response of the DPA if the fair share amount is increased?

How might districts and APF might tap capacity? A unison ask approach similar to that used in JP was generally supported.

2:45 pm – Harlan Limpert

- Background on regional lead position.
- Organization chart
- Presentation on new web site.
- GA programs changes for 2010
- UU University report from GA
- Breakthrough congregations discussion
- \$20M budget, \$12M unrestricted, \$25% budget challenge

**DPA Business Meeting (Draft notes until approved as Minutes)  
November 7, 2009**

Present: Mary Ellen Morgan (Pres), John Sanders (VP), Ernie Hall (Treas), Jim Key (Sec), Jose Ballester, Mike Harris, Rachel Christensen, Jim Turner, Michael Sallwasser, Howard Rees, Ted Fetter, Maris Cornell, Dick Jackie, Phil Reed, Kathy Bowman, Pat Manley

Absent: Lisa Jennings, Daniel O'Connell, Judy Buxton

Guests: Eva Marx (UUA Trustee and DPA liaison, and Harlan Limpert (VP Ministries and Congregational Support)

DPA President Mary Ellen Morgan called the meeting to order at 3:15 pm.

Approval of Minutes: The notes of the June 2009 have been destroyed. Reconstruction based on the agenda record suggests the following:

June 24, 2009 at Salt Lake City, UT

9:00 am – Chalice lighting, reading, welcome, introductions

10:45 am – John Blevins, UUA Trustee reviewed UUA Ends and Sources of Authority and Accountability followed by discussion. Reinforced our covenant between UUA boards and district boards.

1:00 pm – Harlan Limpert reviewed the partnership between and among districts.

2:00 pm – Business meeting (**need notes from anyone**) TBD

**Moved:** Jose Ballester: To table the approval of minutes until the June meeting, seconded by Pat Manley, approved unanimously.

**President's Report:**

See Mary Ellen's notes from UUA Board observation previously routed to the DPs. She solicited a DP for the APF Formula Task Force; volunteers should contact Mary Ellen. Mary Ellen also solicited a

monitor for the DPL UUA list; Mike Harris and Michael Sallwasser volunteered. Exec Committee will send out a communication for DPs to share with their boards regarding the work we did this weekend and the regional meetings planned.

### **Treasurers Report:**

See Ernie Hall's report attached as Addendum 4.

There was a general discussion of subsidizing any DPs who need underwriting for the extra meeting day for DPA meeting in Minneapolis; anyone needing such funding should contact the Treasurer. The DPs were requested to document actual expenses and submit them for accounting to ensure tracking all expenses allocated to governance rather than not submit and personally absorb the expenses. The form allows the expenses to be submitted and then donated rather than requesting reimbursement.

**Moved:** Phil Reed: To hold the DPA meeting at GA 2010 starting 2:00 PM on Tuesday June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2010 (a day early) and lasting until the in-gatherings on Wednesday June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2010, seconded by Michael Sallwasser, and approved unanimously.

**Moved:** Phil Reed: To add an additional day at the next DPA meeting in June in Minneapolis, seconded Michael Sallwasser, and approved unanimously.

### **Nominating Committee Report:** (By Howard Rees)

**Moved:** That the following slate of officers is accepted;

President: John Sanders  
Vice-President: Judy Buxton  
Secretary: Pat Manley  
Treasurer: Jim Turner  
Nominating Committee:  
Mike Harris  
Michael Sallwasser  
Rachel Christensen

Accepted unanimously.

**APF Report:**

Dick Jackie led a discussion and his report attached as Addendum 5.

Discussion ensued about the APF Fair Share formula; who was driving and who was participating.

Old Business: None

New Business:

**Moved:** John Sanders: That we recommend to our districts that we participate in regional in-gatherings at GA 2010, seconded by Phil Reed, and approved with 14 in favor and 2 abstaining.

**Moved:** Phil Reed: That the DPA requests that the districts in each region jointly hold a regional meeting before GA. 2010, that would include the district boards, the UUA Trustees and the co-employed district staffs. The purpose of said meetings is to explore how the districts and regions could align our governance structures with the UUA Board and the president of the association. Seconded by Ted Fetter and approved unanimously.

There was a sense of the DPA that the summary of our work this weekend was:

- DPA arrived at a place where they were ready to align our vision across the continent to realize our shared intention to,
  - a. Empower our UUA President by clarifying co-employee reporting relationships and evaluation processes.
  - b. Allow the association to do more with the resources we have and use them more wisely and effectively,
  - c. Look at new roles for region and district leadership to support new forms of governance.

Closing reading by Mary Ellen Morgan.

**Moved:** John Sanders: To adjourned, seconded by Phil Reed, and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Jim Key, Secretary to the DPA

**Addendum 1**

Notes provided by Jim Turner.

## FRIDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

8:00 – 8:15 am	Chalice Lighting and Reading, Housekeeping, Introductions
8:15 – 8:30 am	Logistics and preparation for question set 1 discussion
8:30 – 9:15 am	Discussion of question set 1 in regional groups
9:15 -9:45 am	Report/capture information from discussions of question set 1
9:45 – 10:00 am	Preparation for question set 2 discussion
10:00 – 10:15 am	BREAK
10:15 – 11:15 am	Discussion of question set 2 in regional groups
11:15 – 11:30 am	Report/capture information from discussions of question set 2
11:30 am – 12:00 pm	General discussion, further exploration

**Notes from small groups:**

1. Several understood the call to service better after they had entered the position. (Ted Fetter...)
  - a. What did they learn in the position that made the call clearer?
2. Called to serve
3. Want to be part of transformation
4. Opportunity to learn...

**Leadership Roles:**

1. Facilitator
2. Coach, trainer, teacher
3. Persuader, director, mediator
4. Issues janitor
5. Consensus builder, synthesizer
6. Agenda manager
7. Pastor
8. Spokesperson for regional vision
9. Asking good questions
10. Process observer
11. Provide strong leadership

**What needed to take Gov to next level?**

1. Time for deeper conversations
2. Generative thinking
3. Continuous practice of good gov.
4. Training all the time
5. Make PG the way to do good gov – reduce requirement to train each new trustees
6. Wide spread adoption of PG
7. Availability of pg consultant
8. See linkage as our ministry..
9. Learn how to do linkage. Linkage with cong is biggest challenge.
10. Shared learning from other PG districts.
11. Need Mary Higgins help us with PG.
12. Call on help from outside district.
13. ENDS monitoring – outcomes assessment
14. Aligning gov language and structure across the Assoc
15. Regional focus from NRG District.
16. Review form and content of Annual Meeting
17. Reduce size of Board (using PG)
18. Address bigger issues – set the vision
19. Linkage...
20. More people on board who understand they are Trustees

21. Build a foundation by institutionalizing the knowledge
22. Help get people excited by their call.

### **Next Question Set:**

Gini's intro...

Role of trustees – customer view vs vision holding

Size of the trustee job... District role...

Engaging youth & PoC on Board?

Using UUA ENDS for purpose of evaluating co-employed staff?

#4 Barriers to using UUA Ends for purposes of evaluating co-employed staff:

1. Structure & priorities not aligned
2. Dist board will want to influence priorities (but they are pretty much aligned now).
3. Some parts of Dist vision not included in UUA vision.
4. Dist ranks priority of ENDS in various ways. Not connected to all of them. NRG also mentions this.
5. Does the monitoring report, when affirmed, constitute the evaluations of the staff? (this is a PG principle..)
6. Is there a barrier in the UUA Bylaws preventing separation of roles?
7. How can we actually measure the ENDS? Are they measurable?
8. Do Peter's and DE's interpretation of ENDS need to be the same? If not, what happens.
9. How fit with normal HR procedures? Objectives & evaluation?
10. NRG – not an issue? Alignment OK.
11. Risk of trivializing the District role.
12. How do we include the non-congregational activities in a district in the evaluation process?
13. Forming of new congregations not included in ENDS...
14. Takes away part of job of the Dist board
15. Hard to understand the implications.
16. Still desire to have a cooperative role in evaluation.
17. Relies on the DP to communicate to the Dist Board.
18. Should districts even exist?
19. IS UUA trying to "take over".
20. DP should be involved in evaluation.
21. Why aren't the ministers in this conversation? Do they want to produce the vision?
22. Feels like a back door implementation of CCF...

23. Our inherent culture of independence...

Q #5: Trustee role on Dist Board & options to fill need

1. Not an issue.
2. Information flow two way...
3. Bylaws require attendance
4. Sense that Trustee represents the District on the UUA Board
5. Advice & counsel to dist board
6. Serves on committees and is full voting member (Bylaw changes)
7. Could maybe use technology to help with communications.
8. Bylaw changes needed, but not an issue.
9. How to maintain connections..
10. Asking UUA Board to help with needed Bylaw changes, to reflect removal of District Trustee.
11. Help realize and maintain a sense of connection to UUA
12. Ask Dist trustees to serve on regional or national work teams... Provide perspective...

Q #6 Value of collaboration in regions?

1. Leadership training & schools
2. Regional specialists
3. Governance training
4. Webinars
5. Feeling connection to larger movement
6. Regionalization of services...
7. Possible joint board meetings
8. Help congregations be regionally engaged, or cross district.
9. Share specialized personnel.
10. Distances due to geography prohibit regional meetings.
11. Leadership Summit: with all regional district boards, UUA Trustees, DP's, DE's.
12. Linkage and sharing resources...

## **Addendum 2**

Notes provided by Jim Turner:

\Peter Morales to DPA (11/6/09)

Harlan Lippert – VP of Ministry and Congregational Life

Described as exciting:

- Staff will be doing a study looking at the difference

  - MFC

  - Ministerial continuing education

  - Etc etc

  - What do we need in our ministerial resources in 20 yrs

  - Integrate all pieces with that strategic focus

  - Use consensus building process to bring pieces together

and support

- Area of growing “our movement”

  - Has presently flat-lined in the face of lots of people looking for religious home

Some have grown over time and we need to identify and collaborate with them. We’ve never really STUDIED what they do and are doing.

Story about leaders and minister not wanting to grow their congregation

- Public witness: raised a notch under Sinkford

  - Using SSL to inspire and drive public witness

  - New home and 1<sup>st</sup> landing page to be up and live on Jan 1

  - Develop electronic infrastructure..

How can we partern with you? 90% of those that recognize that they need to change DON'T

The biggest mistake that orgs make is that they fail to create an emotional urgency to change

Beat the drum of change and its urgency. Leaders have a high tolerance for repetition.

Focus more and more on the ones that can make a difference

Stop enabling dysfunction

Prophets of the possible

Be a powerful voice for the priorities of the districts

What are your thoughts on regionalization.. Would sue a consultant that would recommend the present structure...and probably win.

Challenge is to work over, under, around and through and in spite of the existing structure

Regionalization is a process that has kind fo self identified and evolved presently.

District boards have been saddled with doing extraneous non-value add activities

If you can't say "no" you don't' have a strategy

Get over out idolatry of individualism and learn to work together. True religion starts as mysticism and d ends in

Morales for President UUA website – READ IT!

Talking point source

Maybe there ought to be a different role for the folks that have come out of their congregations...Evangelists? Organizers? Builders? Architects?

### Addendum 3

Notes provided by Jim Turner:

Notes from Linkage Discussion, DPA meeting, 6 Nov 2009  
Nancy Bartlett presenting..

1. Buxton: sometimes Sources of Authority and Accountability (SoAA) feel “used” by the linkage work. They only give info, and typically don’t receive anything back.
  - a. Gini: must educate people to the “ownership” role. Engage in values discussion, uncover them. Get past the idea of what you’re going to do for me... For example, you may see some of your thinking appear in revised ENDS.
2. Buxton: So will we have to train on governance and linkage forever?  
Answer: yes. It’s a culture change.
3. Ernie Hall: Who will Trustees meet with when they do linkage?  
Minimum set: minister, board president.
4. Ernie: Will linkage visits be preannounced? Will questions created come back to the congregational Pres or the Dist. Pres?
5. Jim Turner: So who will represent the congregation? A statistical sample? Ans: mostly the people the cong has elected or called to speak for them.
6. Mary Ellen: How can district and UUA Board collaborate on linkage?  
Some DP’s want to work with Trustees on this. And conversation must be about ENDS, not services.
7. Phil: How will we keep the information flow open in the district? Inform DP and DE, maybe district newsletter?
8. Ernie: St. Lawrence has just done deep linkage with most of their congregations. We want to avoid sending UUA Trustees to “redo” this work.
9. Bowman: How will Trustees share “results” from a linkage session with the district?
10. Michael: Interested in collaboration, but I don’t know how interested I will be in “distilled” results, and I don’t know how valuable the “raw” results will be to me.
11. Michael: How do we move the ENDS questions to the national level, and not just the districts, or the congregations? Even beyond the UUA to “UU’ism”.
12. Nancy Bartlett: What if we invite DP to join the linkage conversation?
13. Ted: MNY story on linkage. First time we were very intentional, and we still got a conversation about services. Second time, we structured the meeting differently, started with dinner, educated about owner linkage. And we received really dramatically improved information.
14. Phil: How will we keep these conversations on track? How will we engage new people, untrained in PG?

15. Nancy B: Would DP be interested in collaborating to work on other Sources (beyond congregations...)?
16. Blevins: On going training => gov institute of some kind? New roles for Dist Boards: deep linkage?
17. Buxton: She has learned that two Co-ops practice PG, and in fact train their members on PG. What can we learn from them?

**Checkin:**

1. Phil: future concerned. More members of boards need to be included.
2. Michael: ground is shifting under me. How do I translate this back to district board?
3. Eva: excited about potential of this conversation. See opportunity for new partnerships.
4. Buxton: excited about offers of collaboration that I see here. Collaboration helps me keep my grounding.
5. Rachel: How do we develop the message that goes back to our districts? Excited about PG.
6. Maris: very exciting. Need to process a lot of stuff, before I speak to my Board.
7. Jose: For first time in a long time, I am actually hopeful for Ballou Channing. See calls to link with many other sources in the district.
8. Mike Harris: Will ask my Trustee to do this linkage presentation with JPD Board.
9. Jim Key: Linkage conversation helps me see new roles for dist & national boards.
10. Dick Jacke: Mixed messages about what role of board could or should be. Not clear to me. It is clear there are some things broken about the system. I see that I may have to live with ambiguity for a while. I would like a more concrete plan in the intermediate term.
11. Kathy Bowman: How will I present this to PSD Board next week? Dialogue between Blevins & Bowman?
12. Ted: I am more optimistic for our movement after this conversation over past 24 hours. I do have uncertainty and concern about the amount of work to do in my district. Linkage to what end? District role over time? More than Linkage?
13. Mary Ellen: I am Lewis & Clark and I can smell the ocean. Very optimistic.
14. Ernie: I like this new level of engagement with UUA Board. I like change. We're about to launch a new future. Regionalization is going very well.
15. Pat Manley: see benefits. Very concerned that most of my congregations are isolated, even though there are many of them. Competition among them for the same audience. Some are engaged in bigger picture. We may have ignited a spark.
16. John Sanders: Leading my board into PG. Hard road to travel.. Confusion about how and why. We are going to need to change the way

- my Board operates. UUA Board also changing. We must find new ways of relating to each other. I don't have any guideposts about how to communicate back to my board, my congregations? Need much deep discussion about the meaning a governing board in my district. I don't know how to do this now. I don't think it will work for me to go home and advocate for something – this pits me against the Board.
17. Bartlett: Very impressed with quality of leadership around this table. A great experience for my first meeting with you. Open to change. Deeply engaged in questions.
  18. Jim Turner: We're rattling the cornerstones of this organization. It's all new to me. The org chart makes it clear that change is needed. How can we orchestrate our own reorg to be compatible with UUA Board. I'm enthused.
  19. Howard Rees: Feel some apprehension. My board not in PG. Also feel hopeful. Energized about participating in linkage conversations in district. Will elevate our vision. This can only help us as a board with a greater sense of purpose – more than service delivery..
  20. Blevins: We had to take this step to get someplace else. DP's showed courage and creativity and openness to change. We had the substantive conversation that we all desired. I don't know where we will end up, but we had to take this step to get started.
  21. Gini: Hears the concern about how to carry this back to districts. We don't want to carry only ambiguity back to districts. Suggests we consider creating a list of talking points to carry back. Go back and read Peter's campaign web site again. It's consistent with what we heard today, and may help you communicate back to districts. A shared sense of urgency.
  22. Gini: District boards have been struggling to find their role, their job, for the 22 years she has been involved in UUA. How do people beyond the congregation make a difference (it's not just serving on a board)? Move from governors to be evangelists? How do we find ministries that make a difference?
  23. Gini: How do we make the Board smaller in my last term (the next 4 years)?