

# Thomas Jefferson District Executive Report

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February 2011

## **Goal 1: Training and Programming**

*We will provide a wide-range of effective and geographically-accessible training opportunities and programming for our member congregations within the Thomas Jefferson District focused on Unitarian Universalist faith development, leadership development, congregational health, social justice, and stewardship.*

We continue to focus on building capacity within our congregations by developing strong, competent leaders who understand their role in our larger Unitarian Universalist faith. To that end, we offered and/or planned the following training opportunities this fall.

- Spirit Play Training – Charlotte – Filled with a waiting list – 14 participants – 14 congregations
- Multigenerational Social Justice Training – Charlotte – 7 participants -4 congregations
- Multigenerational Leadership Training – currently accepting registrations for March event
- Scheduled Listening Circle and Small Group Ministry Training – Nov 2011
- Youth Advisor training and CON – Charlotte Feb 2011 – 11 congregations attending the CON
- Working with the Southland Region, four consultants and two staff became certified as Healthy Congregations Consultants. Three more of our existing consulting team members will receive this training in March

## **Goal 2: Right Relations**

*We will continually work toward living in right relations with each other by striving to transform the district and assisting its member congregations in living their covenant to be in relationship with each other and toward becoming anti-racist, anti-oppressive communities.*

In response to the TJD Anti-Racism Task Force report (August 2010), we began work on developing a TJD Racial Justice Committee. We expect to have this committee formed and functioning by the TJD Annual Meeting

- Are planning a Multicultural Leadership Training – March 11 – 13 at Haw River
- Offered a cluster workshop on bullying – Lynchburg
- Partnered with Williamsburg UU to offer a multicultural congregation training with Rev. Dr. Paul Rasor - 43 registered – 4 congregations
- Staff attended the Savannah Cross-Cultural Education Conference, Feb 2011

### **Goal 3: Transitions**

*We will provide consultation services to member congregations to assist them in assuring successful searches and transitions of ministers and other religious professionals.*

The transition of a religious professional is one of the most challenging times for a congregation and also holds the most promise for congregational transformation. We put a lot of emphasis on assisting congregations with successful transitions. To that end, we hold quarterly communication meetings with the Ministerial Settlement Representatives (full and part-time), the Compensation Consultants, and District staff to assure that congregations are receiving the best services possible. We are currently in the process of developing a Transition Consulting Team to assure that all congregations receive an appropriate level of service at this crucial time.

During these last few months, staff

- Conducted exit and transition ministerial transition interviews in Brunswick, GA, and Bluffton, SC. Currently scheduling interviews in Blacksburg, VA and Greensboro, NC.
- Offered new minister start-up workshops in Newport News, VA and Charlotte-Piedmont, NC and an interim start-up workshop in Winston-Salem, NC
- Assisted five congregations, Lake Norman (Davidson, NC – emerging congregation), Foothills (Maryville, TN), Red Hill (Clinton, NC), Black Mountain, NC, and Brunswick, GA in their search for a part-time minister. Lake Norman has concluded their search and others are still in process
- Consulted with ministers and congregations on the search process for new RE Professionals at Knoxville, Asheville, Lynchburg, Columbia, Savannah and Roanoke

### **Goal 4: Growth**

*We will grow membership within existing congregations and support new congregations to, at a minimum, keep pace with the population increases in our region.*

For the first time in at least nine years, the TJD did not grow numerically in 2010. In fact, we lost .67%, a total of 72 members. Our current membership is 10,628, compared to 10,700 in 2010. Twenty-six congregations (41.94%) gained members, twenty-nine (47.54%) lost members and 7 (11.48%) stayed the same. We believe this is, for the most, a continued result of cleaning the rolls for reporting purposes. In tight economic times, this is directly tied to Annual Program Fund and district dues payments. However, many of the congregations that lost more than 10% of their membership are in ministerial transition or have had a significant conflict in the most recent two years. These factors greatly influence membership. See addendum for additional data and analysis of these numbers.

To support congregational growth, we

- Gave a presentation to the VACUUM ministers and RE Professionals on Faith Formation 2020 attended by all the Virginia congregations with professional leadership

- Encouraged and supported this group to form 2 new clusters – Tidewater and Blue Ridge. They decided to be intentionally multigenerational as a result of the above presentation
- Developed a plan for a visioning workshop to be held in Greenville, NC, February 19, 2011 regarding the use of the Kinston Fund to encourage growth in Eastern NC

## **Goal 5: Lifespan Faith Development**

*We will develop strong lifespan faith development programs throughout the district with a special focus on programming for youth, young adult and campus ministry.*

- Working with Young Adults to network programs in our district congregations and plan a fall conference
- Worked with Virginia RE professionals to include 18 youth in the AR Conference – Richmond
- Working with a group at Shelter Neck to plan a Junior High Camp – summer 2011

## **Goal 6: Stewardship**

*We will be good stewards of financial and paid and volunteer human resources while educating congregations about the benefits of generosity and collaboration.*

- Working with Congregational Cluster and RE Collegial Circles
- Began work on planning a Blue Ridge Cluster Stewardship Conference and a Stewardship webinar with Wayne Clark, Director of Congregational Stewardship Services at the UUA
- Developed a stewardship plan to support the Racial and Social Justice Coordinator position for consideration by the Board at their Feb 2011 meeting

## **Professional Service**

- *Annette Marquis*
  - Participated on the UUA/UUSC Social Justice Taskforce to explore how the two organizations could work more closely together on social justice initiatives
  - Continued in her role as Regional Lead as regional staff works to develop more efficient and effective services in the region
- *Sue Sinnamon*
  - is a member of the advisory search team for the Director of youth and young Adult Ministries at the UUA
  - Participated in LREDA Fall Conference Conversations with Ministry and Faith Formation and LREDA Board
  - Attending Mid-South RE Summit and Annual Meeting (presenting a workshop)
  - Developed a GA Workshop Proposal on Best Practices of Faith Formation 2020 which was accepted

- *Annette Marquis and Sue Sinnamon*
  - Participated in the Orlando Gathering on Governance
  - Participated in the Fall SEUUMA Meeting on the theme of “Whose are we?”

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Marquis  
February 16, 2011