

## **TJD Board Approves Policy Manual; Responds to Suggestions and Proposes other Names for District**

I continue to appreciate the dedication and leadership of my fellow board members. They braved the Virginia winter storm and met in Richmond February 4 and 5 to do the important work of the district. We all feel privileged to serve the 62 congregations of the Thomas Jefferson District of the UUA. You can follow our work on your congregation's behalf by going to the district website <http://www.tjdistrict.org/> and clicking on the *TJD Governance* tab and then the *Minutes and Reports* tab <http://www.tjdistrict.org/tjdgovernance/minutesandreports.html>. There you will find our recent board agenda, reports, and notes.

There are two important highlights of the recent board meeting that I want to share with you.

- The board unanimously approved a new Policy Manual that will be presented at the Annual Meeting April 30.
- The board approved other names for the district and a process to vote on them at the Annual Meeting

### **Policy Manual Draft**

The draft of the District policy manual can be found online at <http://www.tjdistrict.org/tjdgovernance/policiesprocedures.html>. Open the PDF file *Board Policy Manual Draft* to review. The board welcomes your comments; you can comment by going to my blog and posting comments <http://www.tjdistrict.org/DistrictPres/>.

There will be a workshop at the Annual Meeting for interested delegates to review the history of Policy Governance and answer questions about the draft Policy Manual. The Annual Meeting will be held April 30-May 1 at historic Penn Center, St. Helena Island, outside of Beaufort, SC. Details of that meeting will be forthcoming soon.

### **Three Possible District Names and a Process to Pick One**

I reported in my letters of August 2009 ([http://www.tjdistrict.org/images/08-21-09\\_Policy-Based\\_Governance\\_and\\_District\\_Name.pdf](http://www.tjdistrict.org/images/08-21-09_Policy-Based_Governance_and_District_Name.pdf)) and October 2009 ([http://www.tjdistrict.org/images/10-15-29\\_Board\\_Accelerates\\_Policy-Based\\_Governance.pdf](http://www.tjdistrict.org/images/10-15-29_Board_Accelerates_Policy-Based_Governance.pdf)) the board's commitment to recommend a new name more appropriate to our revised vision:

*Grounded in our covenantal tradition, we are a vibrant faith community of healthy congregations who grow through connection, right relationships, and service, thereby transforming ourselves and the world.*

The board proposed the name *Toward Justice District* at our meeting in October 2009. Since then we have heard from many individuals, a few congregations, and the Virginian Cluster of UU Ministers and Religious Educators.<sup>1</sup> The board appreciates the letter from Virginia Ministers and Religious Educators and follows as Addendum 1. Their suggestion for voting at the Annual Meeting will be incorporated in the Annual Meeting Notice that will be distributed this month.

As a result of all of the thoughtful comments we have received, we are announcing three names for delegates at the annual meeting to consider:

- **Atlantic Southeast** – this proposed name reflects on our geography and is consistent with district names in other parts of the nation, e.g. Pacific Southwest, Pacific Central, and Pacific Northwest. While it does not relate to our vision, adopting a geographic name is consistent with many other district names.
- **Towne-Jordan** – this proposed name draws on our history and covenantal tradition in our vision as it honors *Laura Towne* (Unitarian), who founded Penn School (1862) outside of Beaufort, SC; and *Joseph Jordan* (Universalist), who founded a church (1887) for Universalists of color in Norfolk, VA. You can read more about them in the addendum of our board meeting agenda <http://www.tjdistrict.org/tjdgovernance/minutesandreports.html>.
- **Toward Justice** – this proposed name draws on our future, right relations in our vision, and our commitment to bending the moral arc of the universe toward justice as sought by Theodore Parker and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

We have scheduled District Town Hall webinars for Thursday, March 4 at 7:30 pm and Saturday, March 13 at 10:00 am to talk about the name-change recommendations and process. These Webinars will provide an opportunity for congregational leaders to prepare their delegates to the Annual Meeting. Our hope is that congregations will employ a process of delegate selection that will ensure we have informed delegates voting for the best interest of Unitarian

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<sup>1</sup> Addendum 1

Universalism throughout our district. Contact the district office if you need suggestions for developing a delegate education process.

As always, direct your comments to me at [jkey@uua.org](mailto:jkey@uua.org), and I will share them with the board.

In faith and Standing on the Side of Love,

Jim Key, President  
Thomas Jefferson District of the UUA

## **Addendum 1**

# **Virginia Area Cluster of Unitarian Universalist Ministers & Religious Educators**

December 31, 2009

To the Thomas Jefferson District Board:

We, the undersigned members of our group, thank the Thomas Jefferson District Board for your leadership on the issue of the District name. In an effort to promote a good outcome, we would like to make two recommendations concerning the voting process at the Annual Meeting:

1) Divide the voting at the Annual Meeting into two stages so that the first vote is a yes/no vote on whether or not to change the name. If that vote receives majority approval, then offer 3 or more options for the new name. Continue discussion and voting until one of the alternative names gains the two-thirds vote necessary for changing the TJ District bylaws.

2) Design a clearly articulated process by which three or more alternative names, including "Toward Justice District," are selected for consideration at the Annual Meeting. Communicate this set of alternative names to TJ District congregations prior to the Annual Meeting.

We believe the process suggested above would decrease the amount of confusion and frustration surrounding the decision-making process. Dividing the voting process into

two separate votes will decrease the likelihood that the Board's motion to change the name to Toward Justice District (which would require 2/3 approval) could be defeated by a minority coalition consisting of two groups: (1) those who wish to preserve the present name and (2) those who wish to change the name to something other than Toward Justice District.

We would also like to submit the following name for consideration: The Towne-Jordan District, named after Laura Towne (Unitarian) and Joseph Jordan (b. 1842, Universalist). Laura Towne founded the Penn School for freed slaves during the Civil War. Now called Penn Center, it continues to serve persons of color in the antebellum low country. Joseph Jordan founded and served a church for Universalists of color in Norfolk, VA, a congregation that gave hope and encouragement to the Virginia tidewater in harsh and dark days.

Signed,  
Rev. Paul Boothby  
First Unitarian Church of Lynchburg, VA

Rev. David MacPherson  
First Unitarian Church of Richmond

Leia Durland-Jones, Credentialed Religious Educator  
Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church Unitarian Universalist, Charlottesville, VA

Rev. Terre Balof  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Glenn Allen

Rev. Jeanne M. Pupke  
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Richmond, Virginia

Margaret M. Sequeira, Director of Lifespan Faith Development  
Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists

Morris Hudgins, Interim Minister  
Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church  
Charlottesville, Virginia

Rev. George "Kim" Beach  
Madison, VA

Rev. Ed Piper  
UU Fellowship of Waynesboro

Rev. John Manwell, Interim Co-Minister

Unitarian Church of Norfolk

Pyllis Hubbell, Interim Co-Minister  
Unitarian Church of Norfolk

Susan Fox, (will be ordained on 1/17/10 by the Glenn Allen UU's)  
Professor of Supervised Ministry & Director of Field Education and Placement  
Union Presbyterian Seminary

Rev. Dr. Cathie Stivers, Community Minister  
affiliated with UCC Glen Allen

Rev. Makanah E, Morriss, Retired  
Member of First Unitarian Church of Lynchburg

Rev. Robert L. Morriss, Retired  
Member of First Unitarian Church of Lynchburg

Joanne Dingus, DRE  
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Peninsula

Rev. Christine Brownlie  
Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Blacksburg VA

Rev. Don Garrett, Interim Minister  
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Peninsula

Rev. Jennie Ann Barrington  
Interim Minister, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Fredericksburg, Virginia