

Thomas Jefferson District Board Meeting

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Greenville, NC

February 18, 2011

Minutes:

Board members attending: Ann Marie Alderman, Gracia Basham, Martin Bauer, Nato Hollister, Peter Kandis, Jim Key, Denise Rimes, Jennifer Ryu (via Skype), Pam Whistler

Board member absent: Fred Anderson

Trustee attending: Jake Morrill

Staff attending: Glenn Johnson, Annette Marquis, Sue Sinnamon

The meeting was called to order by Jim Key at 8:30 am.

Opening worship by Nato Hollister

Check-in proceeded thoughtfully

General process observer: Martin Bauer for am, Denise Rimes for pm-

ARAOMC process observer: Peter Kandis

Timekeeper: Pam Whistler

Motion to approve October Board Meeting Minutes made by Martin Bauer, second by Denise Rimes, unanimously approved as written.

President's Report - Jim feels we are a very forward looking Board and the comments from around the association have been mostly positive but some negative which seem to come out of the lack of trust in the covenantal process. It is exciting work. People are paying attention to what we do. We are trying to live out our dreams and Jim is very pleased. We have a strong sense of trust in each other and the process and are able to walk together in love.

Vice President's Report - Denise foreshadowed the linkage, policy manual, and by-law work that will be addressed later in the agenda.

Finance Committee Report – Martin Bauer reported that the committee had reviewed and approved the preliminary budget for 2011-2012.

APF is going to be 90% of what we budgeted, which is a result of the

slow economy and reduced returns from the UUA. There is no need for adjustments at this time. The Staff salary increase is a result of the adjustment in the District Administrator's compensation to move it to a fair and equitable level. The District Dues will be increased by \$1 to \$22 for FY 2011-2012.

The committee moved to accept the preliminary Budget and the motion was approved unanimously.

The committee moved to increase the district dues to \$22 and the motion was approved unanimously.

The draft report from the Auditors was positive with a "clean" opinion. The final report will be available in March. The audit, as it has for several years, suggested we have a bank lock box for receiving funds such as Chalice Lighter payments. The committee will work with the staff to assess the costs and benefits.

The Kinston Fund needs two members to replace Charles Howe, deceased, and Betty Corbin, who wishes to step down. Betty Corbin endorsed Nancy Proctor and Ann Marie Alderman to the Kinston Fund Committee.¹

The committee moved to accept the two new members and the motion was approved unanimously.

We have five congregations offering identical amendments to change the name of the district to *Southeast District* of the UUA: Richmond, Williamsburg, Statesboro, Beaufort, and Holston Valley. The by-laws require an estimate of the cost of any change. It was determined by the staff and finance committee the cost would not exceed \$2500 for web-page changes, logo re-design, and new letterhead.

The finance committee endorsed a proposal to raise \$250,000 in a capital campaign. Annette Marquis will bring a detailed fundraising proposal to the board for approval at the April meeting. Martin reported that our bank accounts in three different institutions will be consolidated to two accounts in two institutions. The Chalice Lighter

¹ Subsequent to the board meeting, a gathering on 02/19 to envision uses of the Kinston Fund after 11/11/11, questions were raised about the process of nominating Kinston Fund Committee members. Jim Key committed to resolving and communicating back. Jim has talked by phone to Betty Corbin and Gerald Simmons and expects to resolve end of March.

account with be transferred to our main account but with separate accounting.

Trustee's Report – Jake Morrill reported that the UUA Board of Trustees met in Tucson and crossed the border to meet immigrants and to observe and witness the problems with our immigration system. Planning for the Social Justice GA in 2012 continues. Jake said that the TJD Board was often held up as a way the future might be, that our work is mentioned often. In October, the UUA Board agreed to initiate a linkage process that used the Appreciative Inquiry tool. This work would take two years and could result in different Global Ends for our Association. The Design group will meet next month to continue this work. This work provides an opportunity for the TJD Board to work on linkage with the UUA and pass on ideas and suggestions. We need to better connect with and be represented by historically marginalized peoples who will be a better representation of all our people. Changing from a 20th Century authoritative system to a 21st Century collaborative, sharing system is a challenging process.

APF Report – Attached to the agenda for review. Jim noted that if every congregation had achieved Fair Share status, we would have had \$77,000 additional dollars to extend Unitarian Universalism. .

ARAOMC Monitoring Report – Peter Kandis agreed to Chair that committee ~~but realized this needed more study.~~ He and suggested that the Board needs to develop a charge for the Monitoring committee. ~~and decide how to divide the work.~~ The concern is that if we are recommending policy changes to the Board, it is important that a Board member not be on the Monitoring Committee. Peter would welcome help in developing the Charge and Denise Rimes offered to help. Annette said that she and Donna would develop a Racial Justice Committee and would welcome suggestions for people to serve on that Committee. As it stands right now, the language we use in our Bylaws to charge the nominating committee is that nominees should be 'representative of our constituency churches' and this maintains the status quo which is ~~not what we want~~ at odds with our goal of becoming multicultural. We want to include the people whom we would like be in our future. Peter believes we need to be intentional and explicit in welcoming those who will expand our diversity. The Board honors that the Nominating Committee is actively searching for people to serve on the District Board and is intentional on looking for diversity of representation but Peter feels that we need to be intentional in our charge to the committee regarding diversity.

District Executive's Report - Annette says the Planning Committee has done a great job of planning the retreat for people of color at Penn Center, St. Helena Island, SC. Annette has held calls with cluster leaders and they have made commitments to work towards becoming multi-racial, multi-cultural, and multi-generational. Clusters may meet together at GA. Annette and Sue have held two teleconferences with the representatives and will do one more. Virginia has not had an active Cluster structure, but Sue indicated they were close to being organized. GA planning is going well, with registration ready the first part of March. There will be a Suite for the Southland Region at the Omni that will accommodate 50 people in a reception setting. Glenn will be coordinating the scheduling for that Suite for meetings. There will be a Regional in-gathering room with a capacity of 500. The Regional staff and the four District Presidents will present a governance overview and a report of the Orlando Platform. Annette shared that many congregations are very actively trying to have 25% representation at GA, with fundraisers to meet this goal. We have our very first breakthrough congregation, one of four selected every year. This is the first breakthrough congregation from our District and it is the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Beaufort. Rev. Hope Johnson and Rev. Barbro Hanson are doing another workshop on the Thomas Jefferson Ball. There will also be a workshop on Laura Towne. Additionally, there will be a workshop on Unitarian Universalism in the South and why this is a great place to practice Unitarian Universalism. Leadership training will be facilitated by Annette and Sue for people to take what they learn at GA back to their congregations. Regional staff is doing a webinar series with topics on how to take your family to GA, how to choose your Delegates, and information on our Fifth Principle for a total of six webinars. At our April meeting Donna Sequeira will lead training on cultural competency from the book, 'Salsa Soul and Spirit'. Nan White has been nominated to be on the Planning Committee for GA, but this will be a contested election. The Growth Report shows that as a District our number of Members was down about .07% in total. There probably has been a 'Roll Cleaning' by many of our congregations because of the dues owed per member. We will know in the next few weeks what the numbers of growth are from other Districts to compare to ours. Some of our congregations who have had a decrease in members are in some form of transition or are in search for a Minister. There are several churches with Interim Ministry, or retiring Ministers, or are in search for Ministers. Asheville has decided to add an Associate Minister with a concentration on Social Justice and Pastoral concerns. Foothills UU Fellowship has moved to weekly services, hired a part-time Minister for six months, and are in a search for a settled Minister. There is a new congregation in Lake

Norman, NC that will be recognized at GA in Charlotte. Additionally, there is a new congregation forming in Greensboro and three other locations have plans for a possible emerging congregations.

Chalice Lighters Committee-is functioning well averaging \$27,000 per call.

March 11-13 a Workshop at Haw River on Thinking Multiculturally. The Board is encouraged to attend.

General discussion on the Orlando Platform – Ann Marie believes this will result in less middle management and more direct contact and representation of our people. The Mid-America Conference is looking at the Orlando Platform as a point of reference for the future. Florida District has followed our October Board Meeting decision to suspend co-employment and accept UUA global ends. Jake was intrigued by the concept of 'Elder' and what it means for our District. The leadership experience at SUULE has led the discussion of Elders and Jake sees a need for a definition of the term and that we educate our people on what this term means to our District. Peter pointed out that an 'Elder' does not necessarily mean that people need to be of a certain age. Jim said that congregations could identify Elders so they are not self-appointed. A healthy leader with talent and wisdom and the ability to engage in relationship are a few of the qualifications Elders should have. Jim asked how do we broaden the conversation on what are Elders? How can we develop a Staff of Elders for our Staff to call upon? Peter pointed out that Multiculturalism is one of the very important skills Elders need. Sue said we need training and requirements for our Board Members and not be afraid to fund it. We lose enormous amounts of experience with retiring District staff and board members because we have no resources to continue to bring them to conferences or trainings. Jake suggests this District could steer funding towards congregations that behave in a certain healthy way, so that healthy behaviors are fed and supported. Peter's church selects people who have been through leadership training which has resulted in two very healthy Boards. What do we want to tell our people at the Annual Meeting? Do we want a council of Elders who have taken training? Jake believes in setting values and standards to guide what comes next. Annette believes Elders should have demonstrated competence after training. Denise says the consulting team is what Elders should look like, but the piece that's missing is the bigger world and social justice. We need to do more rather than just 'be'. Jake believes there is a great need for Vision Holders, keepers of our history, who can hold us to what we need to be. Peter says the

future UUs are important to keep in mind as well. Annette thinks we need clarity of definition and a process for how Elders are identified and a way in which those people engage in Unitarian Universalism and our congregations. Input from our congregations is vitally important. Annette suggests a Strategy Team who could engage the congregations to develop that plan and bring it back.

Vice Presidents Report- Congregations are our primary source of authority and accountability. The question is how do we make this linkage without making spaghetti? From the Clusters would come skilled, educated leaders that could be tapped for Elders. Clusters may be the source for finding expertise. Then how do we make the connection between Clusters and the UUA? Denise recommends we might want to engage with the Linkage working group of the UUA Board of Trustees to make sure we are maintaining the connection with the UUA. We draw on the Elders as representing our sources of authority. Jake says that linkage issues are very important to the UUA Board and that the TJD Board could work with them on linkage. Jim believes we are ready to put together a working group on linkage to work in tandem with the UUA. Sue is concerned that we are not drawing from the edges or from our youth, and wonders what are we doing to engage ourselves with the Spirit of Life, Love and the Holy and our other Non-Congregational sources? Jim says that voices of people of color be represented to voice their needs and concerns. Annette has some concern that as we work on linkage we should make sure we do not identify people who can speak for a group, but that we develop ways multiple voices can be heard. The concept stage we are at now needs work and thought. Denise will work on this for the next Board Meeting.

Policy Bylaws needs a working group to study and recommend changes on Policy for the 2012 Annual Meeting. The only discussion on Bylaws at the 2011 Annual Meeting will be the Name Change issue brought forth by the congregations.

TJD Legacy Scholarship – The district has made 1/3 of the payment against our pledge of \$15,000. Nato suggested we be open to supporting a similar scholarship fund at Starr King School for the Ministry. There was consensus we could do that if sponsors presented themselves along the model of the Meadville Lombard model.

New Business - We have received five congregational initiatives from Richmond, Williamsburg, Beaufort, Statesboro and Holston Valley with a by-law change to change the name of the district to Southeast

District of the UUA. We need a mini-assembly at the Annual Meeting which Denise will lead. Annette has heard from the congregations that each Board Member needs to speak at the Annual Meeting in favor of the Name Change so the Delegates will see and hear them as leaders in this issue. We need to write an educational piece for the Annual Meeting along with the voting issue. Jake spoke to the need for ministry at our Annual Meeting for the grief that will be felt by people no matter which way the vote goes.

Jim is developing a group to plan the Annual Meeting agenda. The theme is Southern Unitarian Universalism, with three speakers with fifteen minutes sermons. The morning worship will be very vibrant to put us in a good space.

Future Board Meetings - after our Annual Meeting, our next Board Meeting would normally be our summer retreat. The AR Conference is the 24th of September so our Board Meeting will be on the 22 and 23rd. We may do our Retreat during the September Meeting in Knoxville to save costs, in conjunction with the Anti-Racism Conference.

DE Covenant – There was a full discussion of the Board/DE/DCL covenant which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Jake suggested we develop a covenant between the district board and the UUA board. Jim will follow on this with help from Denise as it relates to linkage.

Motion to approve the Covenant between the Board and the DE and the Director of Congregational Life with corrections was moved by Martin Bauer, seconded by Peter Kandis and passed unanimously.

Vital Congregation Strategy – Annette will bring a plan to the next meeting.

Policy Manual Assessment - With our recent changes, our Policy Manual will have to be examined and modified as appropriate. Denise will follow on this work.

Our first year with our Social Justice Coordinator is coming to an end and we need to assess fundraising to support leadership training on social justice, networking and funding our Coordinator for 5 years. The board supported a figure of \$250,000 to be raised over a three-

year period. Annette will bring back a detailed program to the next board meeting.

The Finance Committee moves that we approve a capital campaign of \$250,000; motion was approved unanimously.

Jim will follow with an email to remind Board Members to ask for their pledge and to model what we want to be.

Board education was enhanced by Annette's TED video presentation.

Process Observation - Denise said our energy level stayed very high, our reports were well written, discussions were balanced and respectful, we need to be sure to raise our hands and make sure we do not talk over one another.

ARAOMC Process Observation – Peter reported that much of the meeting involved talking about multiculturalism and was appropriate.

Closing Reading by Gracia.

Board went into Executive Session.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Gracia Basham