

TJD Board Meeting Agenda  
October 2-3, 2009  
Charlotte, NC

**Friday, October 2 – Finance Committee Meeting**

5:00 pm – Committee meeting at hotel

6:30 pm – Group Dinner

**Saturday, October 3 – District Board Business Meeting**

9:00 am

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| • Chalice Lighting and Reading          | Jennifer Ryu               |
| • Check-in                              |                            |
| • General Process Observer              | Andy Reese                 |
| • ARAOMC Process Observer               | Peter Kandis               |
| • Time Keeper                           | Cyndy Bailes               |
| • Parliamentarian                       | Fred Anderson              |
| • Approve Agenda                        |                            |
| • Approve Minutes from August meeting   | Gracia Walker <sup>1</sup> |
| • President's Report                    | Jim Key                    |
| • Vice-President's Report               | Denise Rimes               |
| • Treasurer's Report                    | Cyndy Bailes               |
| • Finance Committee Report              | Martin Bauer               |
| • APF Representative Report             | Linda Nelson               |
| • Written reports received <sup>2</sup> | Various                    |

10:00 am

- Old Business
  - Name-change responses Jim Key<sup>3</sup>
  - Action Items from August meeting
    - Annette Marquis will bring a proposal for a Toward Justice staff position within 30 days
    - Denise Rimes, Cyndy Bailes, and Gracia Walker to review trustee applications and present to the board for final decision within 30 days

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<sup>1</sup> Addendum 1

<sup>2</sup> Reports to be sent to Glenn by September 21, collected and board package posted to web site September 25.

<sup>3</sup> Addendum 2

- Policy-based governance work groups, identified in transition plan developed at the August board retreat will proceed with completing ends statements and draft other policies, executive limitations, and linkage documentations.

10:15 am – Break

10:30 am

- New Business Bob MacDicken, Minister  
UU Church of Catawba Valley;  
Hickory, NC  
Bob has requested time with the board on the subject of the proposed name.
- Discuss “District Services Report to the President”

11:30 am – Recess business meeting to workshop on Policy-based governance

12:30 pm – Lunch

1:00 pm – Policy-governance work continued

2:30 pm – Break

2:45 pm – Policy-governance work continued

3:45 pm – Generative Thinking

4:15 pm - Process observation reports

4:20 pm – Closing reading Gracia Walker

4:25 pm – Executive Session Board members

4:30 pm - Adjourn

Next Board meeting: February 5, 2010, Richmond, VA

**Addendum 1****Thomas Jefferson District Board Meeting**

August 14-15, 2009

Charlotte, NC

Attended by Jim Key (President), Denise Rimes (Vise President), Cyndy Bailes (Treasurer), Gracia Walker (Secretary), Annette Marquis (DE), Glenn Johnson (DA), Sue Sinnamon (DFD), Andy Reese (Dir), Peter Kandis (Dir), Steve Pearsall (Dir), Pam Whistler (Dir), Rev. Jennifer Ryu (Dir),  
Fred Anderson (Dir)

Jim called the meeting to order at 2:10 pm, August 14, 2009.

- Peter gave the Opening Reading
- Agenda approved
- Minutes from May BOD approved
- Annette's Report
  - Annette has been working on revamping leadership training and reports the new Leadership Experience in partnership with the Florida, Mid-South, and SW Districts with very positive reports.
  - She has identified a diverse group of leaders to establish an anti-racism committee to re-imagine TJD's anti-racism efforts. Their first report is expected to be ready by the next February Board Meeting.
- Treasurer's Report-Cyndy feels our budget looks good and encouraged the Board to keep updated by looking at QuickBooks online. The new program that Cyndy and Glenn are using is working out very well.
- Jim Key spoke on the District name-change process. Jim gave the Board copies of a letter written by Rev. Jake Morrill, a very moving call for change and work on anti-racism in our District. Jim spoke on the need for bold leadership on this issue.
- Motion by Steve Pearsall, seconded by Peter Kandis, to change the name of the Thomas Jefferson District in conjunction with our visioning and ends-statement work and communicate to the congregations the following week.
  - The discussion revolved around the fact that everyone was in agreement that this change was necessary, but that the focus should be on our vision and how we live out that vision in the community. The need for a part-time staff person to look at how we promote justice work in the district was discussed.
  - Motion approved unanimously.
- Andy Reese suggested that we defer picking the specific name until the following day after we all had time to reflect on the appropriate name.
- Motion by Peter Kandis, seconded by Denise Rimes, directing Annette to bring a proposal and budget forward for a Toward Justice staff position within 30 days was approved unanimously.
- Motion by Denise Rimes, seconded by Pam Whistler, to approve the move of UU Church of Tullahoma to Mid-South District passed unanimously.
- Motion by Fred Anderson, seconded by Andy Reese, to approve the nomination of Chris Breivogel to the SUUSI Board passed unanimously.

- The 2011 General Assembly will be held in Charlotte. We discussed the role of the District Coordinator. Annette is working with Rev. Jay Leach of UUCC to identify candidates. This will be the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the merger between Unitarians and Universalists.
- Association Sunday-Jim encouraged the Board to encourage this effort in their home congregations, to consider lighting the Chalice that Sunday for all UU congregations, joining the Connecting Congregations program and doing what we can to promote this campaign.
- Alternate approach to face-to-face Board Meetings-to reduce spending on travel expenses we agreed to try a Board meeting by phone conference this fall. (As a result of the Policy-Based Governance work done later in the weekend, a face-to-face meeting was scheduled for Oct 3)
- Discussion ensued about the process that resulted in the cancellation of Fall Leadership Conference to better focus resources on the October 10 Equality March on Washington.
- Annette reported that we will have buses from Knoxville, Chattanooga and Chapel Hill going to the Equality March in Washington D.C. UU President Peter Morales will speak at All Souls in D.C. Sunday morning after the March.
- The board accepted the resignation of Anna Olsen as Trustee with deep regret with praise for her work the past two years.
- TJD Trustee Nomination-Denise Rimes was been given the role of leading the process to solicit applications for people interested in being named Trustee. The Board, per the by-laws, makes the decision after applications are received from interested parties. Both Jim Key and Fred Anderson indicated their intention to apply and be considered for the trustee position. Jim Key recused himself from discussion of this topic. After allowing one month for applications, Denise, Cyndy and Gracia will review the applicants and present to the board for a final decision by conference call within 30 days.
- Rethinking Annual Business Meetings-Our keynote speaker is Rev. Chris Buice of TVUUC in Knoxville. We will have a workshop on the District Name Change as well as a budget workshop. Our Theme for the meeting will be "Standing on the Side of Love".
- Board Calendar-October Board Meetings in Charlotte, Saturday, Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> from 9:00 am-3:00 pm; Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> in Richmond, VA, April 30th, Beaufort, SC; and telephonic meetings as required.
- Pam Whistler gave the general Process Observation reports and Steve Pearsall gave the ARAOMC Process Observation report.
- Cyndy Bailes gave the closing reading.
- The business meeting was recessed to go into a board retreat, facilitated by Joe Sullivan of Unity Consulting, which focused on updating our vision, developing our ends statements, and establishing a transition plan as we move towards Policy-Based Governance.

The business meeting was reconvened at 4:30 pm Saturday, August 15. Jennifer Ryu, Gracia Walker, and Cyndy Bailes had left in the interim.

- A robust discussion ensued regarding the name and its implications. Many felt that the name *Toward Justice* had the appeal of the same initials of the Thomas Jefferson, applied to all oppressions not just racism, and honored Leon Spencer who, as former District President and Trustee, had worked tirelessly for racial justice and who first

suggested the district name be changed to Toward Justice. Other names considered were *All Souls* and *Grand Covenant*. All agreed that the name was not the important issue, but rather our vision which had been developed in the board retreat just concluded. The revised vision as we move to Policy-Based Governance is: **Grounded in our covenantal tradition, we are a vibrant faith community of healthy congregations who grow through service, connection and right relationships, thereby transforming ourselves and the world.** All spoke from their hearts on the appropriate name that better reflected our vision and how we wanted to be viewed in the world. A motion was made by Peter Kandis, and seconded by Denise Rimes, that the board recommend that the district change its name to *Toward Justice*, subject to the approval of the delegates at the next District Annual Meeting, May 1, 2010. Six were in favor of the new name and one was opposed. The motion passed.

- The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Gracia Walker

**Addendum 2**

Name-change responses.

**PRO**

- 1. Wow, Jim, that is a powerful news report!

Thanks for this *major* step forwards. I fully support.

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- 2. Congratulations !!! Bold moves all. I hope to be there to support these changes.

I led the meeting in Charlotte in about 1996 that asked for a vote to change the District's name. It was the culmination of a lot of people's work over 2 years. The delegates had moved the vote back in the agenda to the last issue of the meeting. The motion to change the name came close but did not gain the needed 60% vote, but I felt everyone had been given plenty to discuss and think about. I certainly had.

The vote was taken. The results given and I adjourned the meeting. At that moment, John Buehrens, President of the UUA, walks into the sanctuary. It was a most interesting (!!) time.

Thank you for your presentation. You and the Board have done an excellent job and, again, I plan to be there to support you.

former President, TJ District

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- 3. Thank you for all your wonderful work on behalf of our district. You give each of us an incredible gift.

Thank you for sharing the results of some of that work. This news letter is exceptionally thoughtful and well worded.

As our congregation finally begins to focus on and discuss the name of our church and our relationship with Thomas Jefferson, I am sure that the leadership by the District and this particular document will facilitate the beginning steps for our journey.

Hope to see you again some day soon.

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- 4. Good work. I plan to attend the annual meeting so that I can vote in our new name.

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5. Glory Halleluia! Thank you so much for moving forward with the name change proposal. Ever since attending that distressing District Meeting in, I think, 1995, where the name change was debated ever so painfully for those of us who are justice-oriented, I have been hoping this would happen. I use this issue often as an example of white privilege. I plan to be there on St. Helena Island to cast my vote for Toward Justice. Thank you again,

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6. I am very pleased to share the District News below. Of particular interest to me are the revised vision and the proposed new name **Toward Justice District**. If you have questions or comments, feel free to contact our District President Jim Key

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7. I like the proposed name and I'm excited about the new position which will focus on Social Justice.

Way to go Board!

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8. Wow! That must have been some Board retreat you all had! I love what came out of it. Thank you for being leaders who actually lead.

In my letter to you, I said that, if you opened up a deeper conversation than the old one about the District's name, you could count on my support. So, pasted below is a draft of a letter I'll send to every minister in the TJ District this week, asking them to support your vision.

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## CON

1. I like the first and third initiatives. Don't like the second. While I approve and appreciate the theme of "toward justice", I love our association with Thomas Jefferson. Although I don't necessarily agree with everything he said, he spoke so eloquently about the things in which we believe, and he provides a strong image for a religion that is so little understood here in the south. Our association with his name is important – we need to preserve it.  
Thanks for listening.

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2 Just wanted to express my concern over the district name. Not that I think the new name is improper, Just not necessary. In my opinion it reflects our movements lack of a central core or identity and our inability to be religious leaders. UU's seem to be adrift. Sorry to be so general with my thoughts.

Thanks for your work,  
In Faith,

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3. The Unitarian Church in Charleston happened to have a Vestry and Program Council meeting today. I do not think you are going to get much support with your idea of changing the district name to "toward justice". Great for a vision or mission, but most thought it was a joke for a District Name.

You may have a hard sell.

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4. I can not understand the need to do this. You can not change history just learn from it. Jefferson was not the only Unitarian to have slaves. He did so much in the religious freedom fight. To disown him is an injustice in it self. I am so disappointed in the direction this denomination is taking that I am ready to change my will. Xxxx,former president of the Thomas Jefferson District.

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5. I hope this is a really bad joke -- or at least that I will not have to wait until some official vote is to be taken before I can voice my extreme displeasure with the "proposed name." Please tell me it is a joke, or at least tell me where and how I can raise my objections!!

Minister

His response to my acknowledgement:

Why was I under the impression that suggestions would be invited, that churches would be asked to discuss a number of options, not just one. I really feel strongly that this is one of the worst choices we could ever ever think of -- and a thinly veiled smug to all of the UUA by saying "like it or not, we will continue to be known as the TJD." To whom do I address my

complaints, and will they really be heard, or will we just vote on the name you suggested on May 1 no matter what I say?

As you can tell, I am more than a little upset by this.

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6.

You asked for comments. Here's mine. I am writing as an individual member of my church here. I must say I am very much opposed to the name change of our district. I base my first four points only on what you wrote and the records you attached. But I checked with some members of our church who are more long standing than I and found out that there is a history of proposals to change the name of our district, that there has been concern that because Thomas Jefferson was a slave holder, some people might be turned away from our church. Numbers 5-7 deal with that information.

1. The name of all the districts in our region are based on geographic location--nothing else. The Thomas Jefferson name is readily identifiable with this region our district is in. "Toward Justice District" seems an awkward name and one that only speaks of one of the many values our church subscribes to.

2. It is of historical record Thomas Jefferson believed in our principles and wanted to be a Unitarian and would have been had there been such a church in his area. (See religious affiliations of the presidents on the web)

3. Jefferson personified many of our ideals. He wanted his three greatest accomplishments on his tombstone--1) author of The Declaration of Independence 2) father of The University of Virginia and 3) writer of The Virginia Statue of Religious Freedom All represent values deeply embedded in our UU principles.

4. Jefferson was also a man of his time and age and it is true he did not fully live out the very principles he espoused--namely not freeing his slaves. But it is unfair to judge him solely on that and with 21st century hindsight. He laid the groundwork for the ideals this nation is still struggling to fulfill. WE--ALL of us-- are like Jefferson--imperfect, unable to see everything as clearly as we might, unable to let go or change in mighty ways. His name offers us some humility.

Now about the information regarding reasons not stated in the records.....

5. It is simplistic to think that someone who finds our church and holds our principles dear--even sacred--and then finds out we are in a district with the name Thomas Jefferson will find it so aversive to make it uninviting. It speaks poorly of new members commitment and others understanding of history.

6. In the article about our faith's racial make-up by Reed-Morrison and Pres. Morales, two points are made that would say the board is aiming in the

wrong direction: 1) they point out that UU's have an overdeveloped superego regarding social problems that include unwarranted guilt and 2) and the other outgrowth that unless we don't do something, the world cannot be saved. You might want to review their comments on this important matter.

7. We have more important things to do than to revisit this type of proposal. What we do will speak louder than any name we bestow upon ourselves.

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7. I write regarding the proposed district name change. With all due respect because I know everyone involved in proposing this change had the best of intentions, I am totally against it. I say this because the change offers nothing positive while it has negatives.

It adds nothing positive: We are a congregation that believes in justice; especially since it is one of the seven core principles of our creed. Having it in the name adds nothing. That is, we will be a community of congregations that believe in justice without the change.

It has two negatives. First, my initial reading of it is that it's either cute or silly or both. I assume some others will assume the same. Second, we have such a great name in the Thomas Jefferson District. He stood for justice as well as many things beyond justice. With his name we also get, among others: (i) church-state separation (which is of great significance to us as a minority religion); (ii) the moral teaching of Jesus (helping those less fortunate) without the Jesus as savior aspect (the Jefferson Bible); and (iii) rationality over superstition (he was, after all a scientist). Why give this up.

I fully support change for the better. But, to me, this change is for the worse.

Isn't anything sacred anymore?

Thanks.

(and a follow up note in response to my acknowledgement)

I'm sure you are quite busy so I truly appreciate your taking the time to respond. And I owe you an apology; having re-read my e-mail, it was quite rash. Next time I will instead bring such matters to my congregation and ensure my tone is courteous.

Thanks again for listening.

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8. I am very disappointed in the choice of the name for the Thomas Jefferson Distirct. Though it remains TJ , Toward Justice seems contrived and clumsy .  
With so many icons in the district's history , it would have been appropriate to be named Theodore Parker or William Ellery Channing or a host of others. I hipe to be at the Annual Meeting to vote against it.

### **Addendum 3**

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

How do we broaden the understanding of our covenantal tradition?

How and what can we do to increase vibrancy?

How do we measure the health of congregations?

How and what can we do to support our healthy congregations and improve the health of those not healthy?

How and what can we do to become more inclusive and multi-cultural?

How do we drive right relations?

How and what can we do to grow through service and connection?

How and what can we do to transform ourselves? The world?

Why do we have minister and staff turnover?