

TJD Board Meeting Agenda
April 29, 2011
Durham, NC
Eno River UU Fellowship

Vision of the Thomas Jefferson District of the UUA

We are a vibrant diverse faith community of healthy, inclusive, and multicultural congregations who grow through service and connection, thereby transforming ourselves and the world.¹

Grounded in our covenantal tradition, the UUA will inspire people to lead lives of humility and purpose, connection and service, thereby transforming themselves and the world.²

Objectives of Board Meeting

1. Approve a strategy from Annette Marquis to support congregations who are intentionally becoming a MR/MC community and that encourages other congregations to follow
2. Receive report from Peter Kandis on status of AR Monitoring Task Force
3. Receive report from Denise Rimes on status of plan to establish stronger linkage with our sources of authority and accountability that is aligned with UUA board ends
4. Receive and approve plan from Annette Marquis for capital campaign
5. Participate in cultural competency training delivered by Donna Sequeira
6. Receive and review reports from Pres, VP, Sec , Treas, Trustee, and board committees
7. Receive and review reports from DE, staff, and staff committees
8. Review plans for GA Charlotte and status of district attendance
9. Conduct the board's fiduciary and strategic business
10. Leverage the board's generative energy to meet objectives 1 through 5 and determine other ways to fulfill our vision

¹ TJD Vision Statement from Policy Manual before suspension of TJD Ends in favor of UUA Ends

² UUA Vision Statement from UUA Policy Manual embraced by TJD Board in Oct. 2010

COVENANT

Developed jointly by leaders and staff of
Thomas Jefferson District
September 30, 2006

WE, THE LEADERS OF THE THOMAS JEFFERSON DISTRICT, COVENANT WITH EACH OTHER TO BE ACCOUNTABLE TO OURSELVES AND OUR MEMBER CONGREGATIONS BY LIVING OUT OUR VALUES IN A TRANSPARENT, COMPASSIONATE, AND CARING WAY. WE WILL LISTEN WITH OUR MINDS AND HEARTS, AND ACT WITH INTEGRITY AND FORGIVENESS TO WORK FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF OURSELVES, THE DISTRICT AND OUR WORLD.

Thursday, April 28

05:00 pm – Finance Committee Meeting

Martin Bauer

06:00 pm – Adjourn

06:30 pm – Dinner

Friday, April 29

08:30 am – Chalice lighting/Centering

Fred Anderson

08:45 am – Check-in

09:15 am – Business Meeting³

- General Process Observer Martin Bauer
- ARAOMC Process Observer Ann Marie Alderman
- Time Keeper Fred Anderson
- Approve Agenda
- Approve Minutes from February meeting⁴ Gracia Basham
- Written reports received⁵
- President’s Report⁶ Jim Key
- VP’s Report Denise Rimes
- Treasurer’s Report Martin Bauer
- Trustee Report Jake Morrill
- APF Report Jeff Clark
- ARAOMC Monitoring Report⁷ Peter Kandis
- Leadership Development Committee Report Anna Olsen
- DE/Staff Report Annette Marquis
- Chalice Lighter’s Report Regina Largent
- Review action items from October Denise Rimes
 - Proposed bylaws changes related to Finance Committee (Rimes)
 - Develop charge for ARAOMC monitoring committee (Kandis)
 - How can/does the Board support the transformation of the Leadership Development Committee? (Key)
 - Follow up on candidate slate (Key-complete)
 - Growth strategies (ex: growing congregation only gets ½ price on new membership dues) (Marquis)
 - Board survey on cultural competencies (Kandis)
 - Personal development plans on cultural competency (All)
 - Linkage (Rimes)
 - Plan mini-assembly for annual meeting (Rimes, Key-complete)
 - Consider an expanded Board meeting for September in place of the August Retreat (Key, All)
 - Vital congregations update (Marquis)
 - District Covenant with UUA Board (Key)
 - Board commitments on capital fund drive (Key to follow up-complete)

³ Break at 10:00 am

⁴ Addendum 1

⁵ Send reports to Glenn by April 18, to be posted to the website by April 22

⁶ Addendum 2

⁷ Addendum 3

TJD Board Meeting

- Old Business
 - Annual Meeting logistics Jim/Annette
 - GA Charlotte logistics Jim/Annette
 - Vital Congregation Strategy Annette Marquis
 - Capital Campaign Annette Marquis
 - Kinston Fund committee composition Jim Key
 - Meadville Lombard acknowledgement
- New Business
 - October Board Retreat Jim/Annette
 - Cooley memos on Regional staffing⁸ Jim/Annette
 - Denominational growth data Annette
 - Regional staffing plan Annette
 - Feasibility of single 'ask' Jim
 - Discussion of board size Jim

12:00 pm – Lunch Recess

01:00 pm – Reconvene⁹

- Cultural Competency training Donna Sequeira
*Salsa, Soul, and Spirit*¹⁰
- Process Observation Reports Martin Bauer
Ann Marie Alderman
- Closing Reading Jennifer Ryu
- Recess to Executive Session with DE
- Recess to Executive Session with Directors

05:30 pm – Adjourn

⁸ Addendum 4

⁹ Break at 2:30 pm

¹⁰ Board members asked to read at August board meeting

Addendum 1

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.¹¹

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 account will 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. .

¹¹ 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 in April.

ARAOMC Monitoring Report – Peter Kandis agreed to Chair that committee and suggested that the Board needs to develop a charge for 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 in our Bylaws to charge the nominating committee is that nominees should be 'representative of our constituency' and this maintains the status quo which is 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

TJD Board Meeting

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

Addendum 2

President's Report

April 2011

As I complete my third year as President of the Thomas Jefferson District of the UUA, I stand in awe at the bold and courageous leadership in this district with whom I am privileged to serve. This boldness and courage is helping shape a renewed, energized, and focused Unitarian Universalist Association.

It is a joy to serve with our professional staff. They are innovative and have expanded their influence to the broader Southland region and beyond, and have expanded their reach through a growing professional cadre of volunteer consultants.

It is a privilege to serve with the engaged congregational leaders throughout this district. They have participated in district meetings, convocations, town hall meetings, webinars, cluster gatherings, and training events in increasing numbers to inform themselves on the myriad of issues and activities that can extend Unitarian Universalism in this part of the world.

It is energizing to serve with our trustees, the Rev. Jake Morrill, the TJD trustee, and the Rev. Jeanne Pupke, trustee at large. They make collaboration feel like shared ministry, and they have become a force of nature within our Association by their growing influence.

It is inspiring to serve with our board of directors. They demonstrate their love of this faith with their untiring commitment, passion, and energy every single day. They are living their faith.

The state of the district is good and improving. The four leadership legs—the staff, those congregational leaders in relationship with other congregations, our trustees, and the board of directors—are in covenant with one another and walking in love together. They (we) are confronting the issues of appropriate governance, becoming a multi-racial, multi-cultural movement, extending Unitarian Universalism, and assessing the role of regions.

However, I believe the state of the district could be stronger, and I have confidence that we are taking steps to make us so.

Governance

Recognizing that governance in our Association had become an inhibitor to our vitality, the board took action last October on four broad fronts that have had significant influence throughout the Association.

1. Voted to suspend Sections 2 and 3 of the TJD Board Policy Manual, Vision and Global Ends, for a trial period of approximately two years and embrace the UUA Board of Trustees' Global Ends.
2. Voted to suspend Section 8 of the TJD Board Policy Manual, Board/Executive Linkage, for a trial period of approximately two years and defer to the UUA as the singular employer of the DE and other co-employed staff.

3. Voted to enter into discussions with boards of those districts contiguous with our border, e.g. Mid-South and Florida to consider the risks and benefits of consolidation of two or more of the districts.
4. Voted to support the UUA Board of Trustees as it works to enable and monitor the Linkage policies of the Association. The TJD Board committed to be the UUA Board's partner in linkage initiatives. The District Trustee will be the champion for the UUA Board and the Vice President will be the champion for the District Board. It is anticipated that these two positions will collaborate and bring proposals for both boards to consider that will connect our congregations to each other, the District, and the Association as envisioned by the framers of the Cambridge Platform. It is further envisioned that this work will strengthen and support existing cluster groups and encourage the formation of other cluster groups.

Since we took these bold actions, the four districts of the Southland Region (TJ, Mid-South, Florida, and Southwest) met in Orlando in December and released the Orlando Platform that summarized our work and agreements. Subsequent to that meeting, all of the districts within Southland have acknowledged that the districts' Global Ends and the Association's Global Ends are the same. Moreover, these four districts and others have moved to a model of single employment of staff by the UUA. At last count, six of the nineteen districts have followed our lead and relinquished their role as co-employer of the district staff. Additionally, the Central Mid-West District has entered into a relationship with this district to share our experiences with them as they consider their response to governance changes.

A focus on governance also continues at the Association level. I served on the Task Force on UUA Board Restructuring and Representation that recommended the reduction in board size from 25 to 13. The full report can be found at http://www.uua.org/documents/boardtrustees/1104_uua_bot_restructure.pdf. The task force's vision:

- The Board of Trustees will be a board of visionary leaders whose task it is to embody a vision of the growth and development of Unitarian Universalism in a changing world.
- It will be a board that is culturally competent and accountable to historically marginalized groups, faithfully synthesizing the highest aspirations and practical concerns of Unitarian Universalism.
- It will be a board for moral, spiritual, and numerical Growth: a majority of the Board of Trustees should have enduring linkages to the growing edges of Unitarian Universalism – communities and people with whom we believe Unitarian Universalism can and should expand and flourish.
- Its role will be to forge and refine our strategic vision inspiring congregations, organizations and individuals to new ministries, new organizations, and new spiritual growth.
- It will work in covenant with the President to ensure that our resources and energies are responsibly and effectively used to meet our vision.
- The Nominating Committee will be unchanged in composition, consisting of nine members responsible for identifying, recruiting, and developing new leaders for the Association.

It is anticipated that the proposal will be on the GA Charlotte agenda for the delegates to consider.

Multi-racial, multi-cultural initiatives

The board received and approved the report of the Anti-Racism task force last August and established an AR Implementation committee, managed by the DE, and an AR Monitoring committee, managed by the Board under the chair of Peter Kandis. Additionally, the board approved funding for a People of Color gathering at Penn Center, St. Helena Island, SC that took place in February. Moreover, the board is assessing its own cultural competencies and seeking training to broaden these competencies.

Extending Unitarian Universalism

The board met in Greenville, NC for its February meeting and participated in a gathering of congregations east of I-95 in North Carolina for a visioning work shop on how Unitarian Universalism could be extended in that area.

Regionalism

As I have reported before, the UUA congregational services staff has been organized into five regions for several years. They continue to seek ways to extend specialized services across district boundaries for the benefit of all congregations. The four district boards of the Southland Region met in Orlando in December and released the Orlando Platform, specifically addressing governance issues. Out of that meeting came the consensus of the four district boards, staff, and trustees to continue to be in dialogue. Some of the dialogue has been around governance in the middle judicatory (districts) and how to reduce that effort. Additionally, we agreed to examine ways the district boards might evolve into a council of elders to encourage congregations to be in covenant with other congregations. This is often referred to as a shared ministry model. The four district boards will meet again at GA in Charlotte to continue these discussions.

In summary, the Thomas Jefferson District board has been leading the Association in taking bold and innovative steps to minimize our governance role in deference to one policy board, the UUA. We see our work together as a ministry, focusing our energies and passions on becoming a multi-racial, multi-cultural movement that will attract the hundreds of thousands of people in the Southeast who share our values. I continue to believe there are many, many people that are attracted to our values and the way we live out our faith, but who have not found us yet. There certainly are those who have the impression that we are a predominately white and affluent denomination that may not be comfortable with people like them and their stories and thus stay away. We have much more work to do to bend the arc of the universe towards justice, and we have gathered leaders who have the passion to advance that work. Our evolving task is to find ways to attract others to do share that work with us and stand on the side of love.

Addendum 3

On Annette's recommendation I went to the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Committee's (JTWTC) website and ended up reading most of it¹². I believe the charge of our district committee be similar to that of JTWTC, "to monitor and assess the work of the Association toward becoming a genuinely anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multicultural institution."

Committee's Name

Names matter. I wonder if we have already had some negative reaction to the current name of the committee. I would much rather be for something positive than against something negative. I would like to ask that the name of the committee be changed from Anti-Racism Monitoring Committee to Toward Justice Awareness Committee.

Scope of the Committee's Charge

I propose what might seem like a change in scope to the committee but I am persuaded of the need by the April 2007 JTWTC findings,

One of the major obstacles we discovered that hinders district A-O/A-R/MC efforts is that the fundamental linkage of all oppressions is often overlooked and not addressed properly. Addressing only one or some "isms" without at least mentioning and clarifying the realistic, historic, and functional linkages with other forms of oppressions provides an incomplete analysis.

One result of this fractured analysis is that the commonality of oppressions as well as the struggle to overcome them is not understood and acted upon. This creates artificial and counterproductive divisions among those who otherwise would be coordinating their efforts to maximize the collective impact.

The Board's Charge to the committee

The charge to the Toward Justice Awareness Committee is to monitor and assess the work of the District toward becoming genuinely anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and multicultural.

Bylaws change to our District nominating committee

The October 2010 JTWTC report places heavy emphasis on training, recruiting, and retaining culturally competent leadership. I strongly agree and feel that we must be explicit in our charge to our district nominating committee.

In an effort to live UUA values and reflect the community-at-large, the Board states that it expressly seeks volunteers for these vacancies from the rich diversity of [the UU] movement—theological, philosophical, geographical, political, ethnic, racial, affectional orientation, physical ability, gender and age. Consistent with General Assembly resolutions, the Board also has affirmed intentionality about becoming an anti-racist, anti-oppressions, multicultural institution, and wanting its committees to embody that intention.

As the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Committee studied these two committees' operating procedures and methods of implementation as the Association moves forward on its journey toward wholeness, the following questions arose:

¹² <http://www.uua.org/aboutus/governance/committees/jtwtc/>

1. Can a committee leader who is not culturally competent be fully effective when charged to recommend diverse leadership? (In this context, cultural competence is viewed as a set of capacities that inform every aspect of effective leadership, rather than as an added component or —icing on the cake.)
2. Are all possible steps being taken to find interested individuals who claim historically marginalized identities for leadership positions, and to support them once they are placed in those positions?

With these questions in mind, we proposed that our Association's transformation into the realm of cultural competence will depend on:

1. The depth and breadth of our leaders' understanding and skill in appropriately and successfully navigating the cultural issues and perspectives inherent in past, present, and future Association and congregational life; and
2. The successful recruitment, selection, orientation, support and retention of people with historically marginalized identities who could provide those necessary lenses in influential committees and executive positions in Association leadership.

Committee Members

We welcome nominations for members of the committee.

Addendum 4

April 27, 2011

To: All UUA Staff

RE: Departmental Restructuring

Congregational life is changing. This is true about congregations themselves, and it is true about the staff group of Congregational Life.

Our congregations are recognizing that they must develop leadership that goes deeper, that is able to deal adaptively with a rapidly changing world, and that builds upon the inherent capacity of the leaders themselves.

There is also a renewed commitment to growth in our congregations: growth in numbers as well as maturational growth grounded in spirituality and service to the world.

The Congregational Life staff group must respond to these shifts in understanding with some shifts in our structure and in the way we are approaching our support of congregations.

One shift has to do with growth. It is more imperative than ever that we develop a multi-dimensional set of strategies for growth. Rather than focusing on only one kind of growth, we will be developing our ability to help all our existing congregations' transition from one size to another, as well as generating some new experiments in new congregation starts, multi-site congregations, and yoking congregations.

Another shift has to do with placing more resources and energy into the field by developing more robust regional field staff structures. There have been many exciting developments over the last few months in terms of regional staff coming together in innovative ways to provide a wider variety of modes of service to congregations. I believe this will help make our staff structure more sustainable and agile in the long run, and it requires that we find ways to bring resources and support in this direction.

The following describes ways in which we are adjusting our staff structures to allow our work to move in these directions. These changes will not take effect formally until July 1, 2011, so there is time for all of us to adjust.

I. Creation of a new Office of Strategic Growth.

- a. Stefan Jonasson will be assuming a new full time position as Director of Strategic Growth and Large Congregation Support. He will be responsible for the development of new, measurable, and varied strategies for growth of existing congregations and new congregational starts, as well as continuing his support of Large Congregations
- b. Tandi Rogers will begin working ½ time as Strategic Growth Specialist in support of this work on July 1st, after she completes her work as Interim Youth and young Adult Ministries Director. She will be able to conduct "on the ground" experiments in districts. She will continue with the Pacific Northwest District ½ time.

- c. Both of them will work hand in hand with national and field staff to implement new strategies and to support congregational growth in our congregations.
- d. A part-time administrative assistant will be hired to support the Congregational Life Staff Group

II. Expansion of Regional Lead roles and responsibilities.

- a. The Regional Lead staff (five field staff representing each of the emerging Regions: New England, CERG, Southland, Mid-America and Pacific Western) will assume greater responsibility for creating regional staff team structures that develop new ways of adaptively serving our mission in the field.
- b. The Regional groups will have more support for meeting and working together.

III. Congregational Stewardship changes

- a. Congregational Stewardship is rolling out the new FORTH program which provides stewardship resources online and in ways that are integrated with mission and vision work in congregations.
- b. Robin Nelson will begin to work full time as Environmental Program Manager, specifically to expand our Green Sanctuary program into multiple levels of accessibility and depth. This wildly popular program responds to congregations' desires to adapt their practices to being good stewards of our environmental resources.
- c. Jesse Holm will become the fulltime Program Assistant for Congregational Stewardship Services.

I hope you will let me know what questions you may have.

Sincerely,
The Rev. Dr. Terasa Cooley
Director for Congregational Life

Regional Lead Staff & Regional Field Staff Structures
Developed by Terasa Cooley, Director, Congregational Life
Staff Group
4/2010

Ever-shifting Landscape:

Many districts have now shifted their understanding of their relationship to district staff away from the traditional “co-employment” structure toward a “single employer” concept. Alongside these changes, several regions are now moving toward a unified regional staff structure. These changes have been happening organically and have been generated within the district and regional structures themselves, but they require us to rethink the role of Regional Lead in ways that acknowledge a new reality. While several districts and regions have not yet gone in this direction, and may not do so anytime soon, it still seems important to structure ourselves toward these emerging directions. The changes I am suggesting do not require a regional staff structure, but they will equip us to work better with a variety of structures.

Becoming a “single employer” of so many staff places a different kind of accountability upon field staff that the Director for Congregational Life cannot administer alone. In order to keep much of the adaptability within a more localized structure, rather than trying to create a “one size fits all model”, the role of Regional Lead becomes ever more important in strategically developing a culturally relevant structure.

Language and Terminology

Given these changing structures the language of “district staff” and titles of “District Executive” and “Program Consultant” seem to be less meaningfully descriptive now.

The Mid America group is responding to the language of Andrew Sobel about “deep generalists”

(<http://www.andrewsobel.com/videos/view/13>)

in which the role of staff may still include specializations in particular areas, but which may be allowed to evolve and shift over time. This kind of shift helps us to recognize that there are core capacities necessary for everyone in field staff to be able to employ, along with a new level of collaborative development of ideas and approaches among one another. But I don’t think that printing business cards with “deep generalist” on them will get us very far!

For purposes of this document I will return to the old language of “field staff”, as it does not restrict us to “district”. But this language will not be sufficient for the future. I welcome any ideas you may have about how we can begin to describe our work more accurately.

More delineation of terms is detailed below.

Role Differentiation:

I. Regional Lead:

The previous description of the Regional Lead position (developed in July, 2010) was this: “The purpose of the role of Regional Lead District Staff is to provide leadership to the emerging regional clustering of district staff toward envisioning, assessing and structuring ways in which

collaboration across districts may bring greater value to the growth and vitality of Unitarian Universalist congregations and our future.”

This description is still relevant, but, it seems to me, insufficient. Several regional staff groups have moved beyond “collaboration” into firmer structures. With the changes in co-employment, etc., there is new impetus to strengthen this position.

Core Functions – some of these are similar to the previous role, but some clearly different.

(1) Facilitate development of vision and implementation of regional staff structures

- a. Provide impetus for conversation within regional grouping about the goals, purpose and outcomes of regional staff
- b. Assure development of covenant and articulated expectations among colleagues
- c. Assure development of culturally relevant structures

(2) Assure a robust structure for shared leadership

- a. Develop clarity of roles for each district staff member within region based on shared goals and individual interests/ skill sets.
- b. Establish communication structure within staff and between staff and district governance structures to assure transparency and ‘buy-in’ from district boards.

(3) Work with Director for Congregational Life (DCL) to develop adaptive regional staff structures for accountability

- a. Assess field staff needs as an entire region, and negotiate field staff transitions with appropriate District Boards and DCL
- b. Develop shared goals with staff group and methods of accountability to these goals.
- c. Work with each field staff person to establish a “staff review committee” to help assess performance toward goals (this idea is still in development, and I will address more fully in a subsequent communication)

(4) Be communication conduit between regional staff group and other UUA staff groups and structures

- a. Understand, and represent to other UUA departments, the particular cultural / geographic / historical contours and needs of each region
- b. Participate in monthly conference calls with other regional leads and with other UUA staff groups
- c. Assure methods of regional group input into these conversations.

(5) Negotiate appropriate relationship with District Boards within each region

- a. Meet with each District Board in order to build a relationship to explore regional staff and programmatic work.
- b. Assure continuity of leadership in existing staff relationships (i.e. respect the existing relationship with the District Executive)
- c. Assure proper flow of information about regional structures and processes to each District Board
- d. Assist District Boards in developing their relationship to one

another

Appointment Process

Given that these roles are changing significantly, I am reopening the application process for those who are interested in serving in this capacity. While I will make the final decision, I expect each regional group to have open conversations with one another about who may be interested and why. Decisions will be made by June 15, 2011, and implemented with the new fiscal year. Those interested may send me an email detailing your vision for what you could bring to this role, and what you would hope to implement in the future.

I hope that these appointments would be for a 2 year term in order to gain momentum and continuity. If the position changes again dramatically I may rethink this timeline.

There is additional compensation for this role of \$5,000 per year.

II. Continued Role of District Executives and Program

Consultants

While these changes will shift the nature of some of the individual roles of District Executives and PC's within each region (e.g. delineating new roles and responsibilities within the region), it is not my expectation that all staff within each region will become "equalized" in the near future, particularly with regard to salary structure. I expect to honor commitments made to each staff person, which recognize differences in experience, specialization, skill level, etc..

I also expect to honor commitments made to District Boards about who will serve them as executive officers and other special roles within each district.

In other words, the role of District Executive and Program Consultant has not yet formally changed, even as we explore new staff models.

It will be up to each regional group to devise a staffing structure that serves the whole and the parts well. These may be negotiated with me as well as with the relevant District Boards as they emerge over time.

To: District Presidents, District Staff
From: Terasa Cooley
CC: UUA Leadership Council
Date: March 18, 2011
Re: Shifting Co-employment

Memo

By last count, five UUA Districts have formally voted to relinquish their role as co-employers of District Staff, and at least eight more are in processes of consideration of this change. I thought it would be helpful at this stage to offer some thoughts about the long-term implications of this shift in understanding, and a possible framework for how we would move forward. In this document I am often simply offering my own opinion. At times, though, I am speaking for the UUA leadership structure and at those times I use “we” to indicate that. I welcome your thoughts and look forward to more conversation about these issues.

History and Current Practice

There is no formal, written agreement in place between Districts and the UUA about how we currently understand co-employment. It has been, rather, a series of understandings that are reflected in our practices. The practices that are most relevant to this discussion are:

- ❖ **Cost sharing:** Each district pays a certain percentage of the cost of district employees. Generally speaking each District Executive’s salary is shared 50/50 and Program Consultants are shared 25% (UUA) / 75% (District). There have been adjustments to this formula over the years, however, and these adjustments are reflected in the “other costs” portion of District bills, in which the UUA in effect subsidizes different districts to varying extents. (This “other cost” concept is exceedingly complicated, and this is not the place to explain it fully – just to note its existence.)
- ❖ **Hiring:** Hiring of co-employed staff usually involves a process of mutual discernment (including the District Board and the UUA) about the needs of the position and development of job description, candidates applying to the UUA for a position, candidates being “vetted” by the UUA, and then finalists being interviewed and chosen in a mutual process between a District Board or search committee and the Director of Congregational Life (DCL). The process of hiring Program Consultant type positions may simply be overseen by the District Executive and then final approval given by the DCL.
- ❖ **Termination:** Each District Staff person is given a letter of agreement upon hiring that stipulates that termination may be recommended by either the District

Board or the DCL. Should disagreement about termination arise, it is recommended that a District Board appoint a team to work with the DCL toward a mutually agreeable solution. Should that fail to come to pass, either party (the District Board or the UUA) has the ability to terminate the agreement.

- ❖ **Accountability:** District Staff are currently formally accountable both to the UUA Ends, through processes determined by the DCL, as well as to District Boards by processes determined internally by each. In practice, there is little formal process on the part of the UUA, given the large number of employees that would have to be evaluated (35). By verbal report, there are few District Boards that have a formal process of evaluation either (I believe there are only 3 at this point). Those Districts which utilize Policy Governance conduct their accountability measures through monitoring reports, but these are not reported back to the UUA.
- ❖ **Employment practice:** For legal and formal employment practice, all District Staff are considered UUA employees (payroll, taxes, benefits, personnel policies, etc.) There is no legal employment agreement between District Staff and District Boards.
- ❖ **Professional Expenses:** All District Staff are currently reimbursed by Districts for their professional expenses, at a rate determined by each District budget process. The UUA does not provide for any of these expenses, except for purposes of attending General Assembly, which is an expense shared by both the UUA and the Districts.
- ❖ **Strategic Vision and Direction:** All District Staff are expected to conduct themselves according to a code of conduct developed by the DCL (in collaboration with the staff). It is expected that each of them will take on specific projects as assigned by the DCL, and that they will generally promote and support the work of the UUA. There are general categories of job performance developed in collaboration between the DCL and the District Board at the time of employment. Each District may have specific expectations beyond these that relate to management of District assets, or specific District goals. Generally speaking, these different expectations are not seen to be in conflict with one another, except in the ways they may create an over-burdening of the Staff.

Who Makes Decisions about Co-employment?

Even though there is no formal written agreement about co-employment, it is my assumption that we would continue our current practices with each district, until and unless each District Board votes to make a change. Those that have already done so have negotiated, or are in the process of negotiating, a covenant with me to detail our understandings going forward. Obviously it would create a challenging circumstance if

each of those covenants were substantially different from one another, or if we end up with some Districts in co-employment and others not. We will have to live through this lack of uniformity and clarity for the moment.

What Would Ending Co-employment Change?

In a practical and formal sense, ending co-employment doesn't really change things, given that the UUA is the formal employer. From a cultural and practice standpoint such a move has bigger implications. I will attempt to address some of those implications in the following, including my opinion about how they would impact our relationship, our effectiveness, and our mission.

Commitment to Cultural Distinctions

One of the great benefits of our current system is that it allows for, even demands, that District Staff understand the particularities of the culture in which they serve. There is, for example, a big difference between how Unitarian Universalism is practiced in New England compared to the south or the west, and we expect our staff to adjust their recommendations or practices in ways that are reflective of these differences.

It is perhaps less obvious that the ways in which our districts are physically drawn could actually get in the way of cultural connection. When district boundaries cut across state lines, or encompass many different cultures, it is less easy to assert a strong and clear "district culture". It may also be true that some districts may enhance their cultural understanding by coming together in common cause, as seems to have happened with the "Southland" convergence. Their articulation of a shared mission of "evangelizing the South" with an indigenous version of Unitarian Universalism has allowed a truly spiritual expression of mission, based in local culture. The New England Districts have articulated a common vision of "History in the Making" – expressing the unique place of New England as the birthplace of UUism and their commitment to its future.

The UUA has no intention of making a shift to a "homogenized" field staff. We believe our mission will be best served by taking local culture into account in providing service to congregations. Whatever we put into place in lieu of co-employment must make that understanding clear. Our commitment is to continue the practice of including local voices in hiring decisions as well as in evaluation of staff effectiveness.

Covenantal Understandings

The Thomas Jefferson Board, which took the lead in deciding to affirm the UUA as sole employer of District Staff, developed a covenant between the Board, the DCL, and the DE of the District. Other District Boards are in the process of developing the same. This seems to me to be an appropriate way to move forward as religious bodies, given that they help us to articulate our expectations of one another in a way that is clear, but which also moves us beyond a “contractual” understanding.

While each District Board may have particular aspects that they wish to articulate (for example, the understanding of the District Executive’s management of District assets may differ), it would seem helpful at some point to have a common covenant across Districts. For the time being, I am comfortable with letting these evolve within individual Districts, obviously being informed by one another, and then revisiting them in the fall of 2011 to assess whether uniformity would be more advantageous.

A Shift in the Direction of Mission Focus

The current structure of co-employment was based in a number of implicit assumptions about the mission of Unitarian Universalism. The allocation of resources was predicated upon a notion of service that assumed that each congregation required personal “one to one” service from a District staff person (most particularly from the District Executive), especially in times of high conflict or crisis.

With the addition of Program Consultant positions, the notion of service was expanded to include specific attention to issues of religious education and support of religious educators. Over time, these positions have evolved into other areas such as growth and leadership development.

In the meantime a larger philosophical shift has been occurring: instead of only working with congregations “one on one” as in crisis intervention, district staff have been trying to find programmatic ways to build the congregation’s capacity to do deeper work themselves, for example to learn the skills of finding ways to work in healthy ways with conflict. This has resulted in a kind of “one to many” approach in which staff offer workshops or trainings to which congregations send teams of leaders who can learn together.

An even newer shift can happen with the advent of district staff teams (DEs and Program Consultants) and regional staff structures. We have been developing a kind of “many to many” approach in which several field staff members collaborate on programs delivered to congregational teams in larger geographical clusters or regions. This allows the participants to experience a panoply of skills and perspectives that can give greater texture to what they can bring into their congregations.

It is occurring to many of us that for reasons of resource sustainability, as well as to encourage the greatest measure of growth of our congregations and movement, that we may have to develop our service much more in the direction of this “many to many” approach. This actually parallels development of understandings of sustainability and growth in secular thinking about organizational development.

To me this seems very similar to what we teach congregations who are wishing to transition to a larger congregational structure. As a congregation moves from being a pastoral size (“one to one” relationships) to a program size (“one to many” relationships) and eventually to a corporate size (“many to many” relationships) those that are successful manage to learn to “organize smaller” in order to grow larger. The need for intimate relationships remains constant, but the method of those relationships changes. So congregations develop such strategies as small group ministries, or pastoral care teams, for example. I believe we in district structures must learn a similar truth: in order to grow our movement we must learn how to help congregations *connect to one another* in ways that will be enhancing of their ministry and of UUism. The role of field staff then moves toward helping to foster these “many to many” relationships, rather than only the prior notion of “one to one” service. There will still and always be a need for some one to one consultation, but the majority of energy needs to shift toward leveraging relationships among congregations to developing engaging and sustaining “learning communities”.

A field staff structure that is only focused on how a district staff person can serve congregations in each district will lose its capacity to move adaptively in this direction.

Distinction Between Service Delivery and Governance

Having said the above, I do not believe that a change in the way field staff are supervised necessarily has to impact district governance structures. It is entirely possible for a more adept structure of field staff to continue to serve the particular needs of District governance structures, and these agreements can continue to be negotiated about how field staff can help support the work of District Boards. Some have questioned the cost of having staff support the work of governance, and it is, indeed, a good question to reflect upon. But at the present time I see no need for us to resolve the governance questions before we can move into a different kind of staff service delivery structure.

(Let me note here that I use the traditional terminology of “service delivery” because that is what is most familiar. Field staff more often like to understand their work less as “service to constituents” and more “shared ministry in service of our mission.” But for purposes of this document I will stick with service delivery as a simple way to distinguish the work of the staff from the work of governance.)

Several of the Boards who have chosen to affirm the UUA as sole employer have also chosen to adopt the UUA Ends so as not to create confusing allegiances for their staff. Even in these instances, there are still expectations of field staff to continue to perform District asset and employee management functions. But here again, I do not see an adoption of UUA Ends to be necessary to move to single employment.

Regional Staff Structures

The movement toward regional staff collaboration and structures has obviously stirred much of this conversation about co-employment.

Originally the development of regional staff groups was intended to recognize that staff working collaboratively with one another would help increase the potential for sharing good ideas and ameliorate the isolation felt by individual staff. Over time the organic development of such groups has led a number of them to recognize how collaboration and staff sharing across district lines could present an opportunity for better resource management. The development of special areas of focus for different staff people (such as growth, leadership development, small church focus, etc.) has allowed us to see that it is unrealistic in a rapidly changing world to expect one staff person to “be all things to all people” and that having access to such specialization across lines could be helpful to each district.

Most recently, several regional groupings have begun to propose even more complex staff sharing arrangements in which field staff would be understood to serve more than one district in a substantive way, and in which specifically district employees could also be shared. The impetus for this is obviously a move toward sustainability in regards to financial resources, but it also has an important mission-based component, assuming that we could better serve the needs of complex and varying congregations with a complex staff structure which allows a plethora of skills to be put to use.

Such regional structures could still be technically implemented with our current understanding of co-employment. But the employment arrangements begin to become absurdly complicated what with the different formulas for different kinds of staff people (DEs and PCs) and the variations among “other costs” for each District.

Asset Distributions and Management

Our current system depends upon an understanding of both Districts and the UUA contributing part of their resources toward the support of field staff. The UUA could not currently afford field staff without the ability of District to contribute toward these positions. Districts would not be able to afford a full complement of “independent” staff people without the support of the UUA. We need one another to be responsive to congregations. I, for one, hope that District Boards do not “dissolve” without significant and complex consideration of how we could financially support these field positions!

There are conversations underway about whether having a district dues structure separate from the UUA APF dues would advance our work or harm it. These are conversations rich with potential, but as of yet unformed and undeveloped. I don't believe a change in co-employment necessitates an elimination of district dues, until and if we can put in place a different structure.

Each District has assets to a varying degree that need professional management, and I see no reason why a change in co-employment would create a need to change our assumptions about how field staff assist in that management. Assumptions about this

would obviously need to be built into the covenant with each District, but I think that can be managed without too much difficulty.

Accountability

It seems apparent to me, and perhaps to others, that our current structure has not done a good job in providing clear evaluation processes and accountability structures. The UUA has had a “hands-off” approach trying to recognize the unique nature of each district staff position, and also grappling with the infeasibility of doing evaluations of 35 staff positions from a distance. And from the other perspective, even those districts who do regularized evaluation processes struggle with how volunteer board structures can really do a comprehensive job of evaluation that gets at the core of effectiveness as opposed to satisfaction. And all of us are trying to figure out how to assess our progress toward goals that are not always measureable, like “transformation of congregational culture.”

Whether we transition out of co-employment or not, we have to institute new evaluative processes which engage both with the UUA Ends as well as with local entities and relationships. I have begun the most basic of survey processes to ascertain the ways in which congregations access and use district services, but that is only the beginning of an attempt to move toward assessment of effectiveness.

I will soon be proposing a new process that will create small groups of evaluators from local congregational leaders guided toward finding ways to measure success in fulfilling our purpose – a kind of “staff review committee.” These processes will be facilitated by the regional lead staff who would be better able to find a balance between local culture and adherence to standards developed in collaboration with me and the larger Ends of our Association. This idea is very much in formation, but I want to explore it as a way to include both local and larger perspectives on effectiveness.

Again, I will engage in these explorations, hopefully with the full help of District Boards, whether or not we move away from co-employment.

Staff Transitions

While changing co-employment may not impact existing staff structures in day-to-day ways, if a staff transition occurs the question necessarily arises about what kind of process would be followed for replacing staff if co-employment does not exist for certain districts.

The existing process for including both UUA senior staff in vetting candidates for field positions, and utilizing local search teams that can assist in ascertaining a candidate’s suitability for a particular culture has, I believe, been a fruitful partnership. I would not assume that this needs to change greatly if co-employment changes. I would continue to ask District Boards or localized bodies to assist in a search process.

The difference that I see going forward is that I would ask the Regional Lead staff person to participate in ascertaining how a staff position could enhance a regional structure, and how we could maximize resources among Districts to achieve greater goals. The benefit of changing co-employment is that it would maximize our ability to structure a position beyond the current constraints of percentages and formulas that are District specific. District Boards would still have to be in agreement about any use of resources toward a new position, and we would be able to discern together about how to structure a position for the benefit of our current needs.

Summary

There is much about this conversation about co-employment that I find creative and energizing and exciting. It feels like all of us are thinking deeply about how we put our resources and talented people in service of our movement. It is also true that any change entails a loss to a certain degree, and I am aware of how daunting those losses may seem.

I want to affirm that Districts have the right and responsibility to make these decisions based on their own best understandings of the issues at hand. I engaged in this exploration hoping to elucidate the implications of these possible changes, knowing that none of us wants to engage in thoughtless change, and aware that the larger weight of responsibility lies with Districts.

Please be in touch with me as your conversations unfold and know that I am committed as ever to our partnership on behalf of our faith.

District Apportionment Issues (or “Treaties”)

What are the District “Treaties”

“Treaties” is a term used to describe the agreement between the UUA and an individual district that determines the apportionment of monies used to support district staff.

Generally speaking, the UUA and each District share the expense of paying for a District Executive (roughly 50/50). District Program Consultant positions (where they exist) are supported by the UUA at a percentage of 25%. In the late 1980s when District staff positions were reinstated it was negotiated that the UUA would provide additional support for the DE positions in Districts where there weren’t adequate assets to fully support the position. There is no written record of these agreements, but they have been reflected in the district bills by a figure known as “other costs”, which is derived from another percentage figure that varies district to district. That same percentage figure has been used since that time, even while the asset structures within each district may have changed.

The question before us at this point is whether that subsidization needs to be rethought in order to better use our resources strategically, rather than automatically following an old formula.

“Suspension” of “treaties”

In order to give us space and time to consider the opportunities and more strategic apportionment of resources, I have proposed that for the next fiscal year (2011-12) we each agree (district boards and the UUA) to continue the current level of funding, plus 3% COLA and 4% benefit increase. During this time, we will study the ways in which we could reapportion support for staff to better serve our desired mission.

This would have no affect on other district assets or income streams or district or APF dues.

EFTF Task Force

At its November meeting, the District President’s Association voted to create an “Equity and Fairness Task Force” to assist the UUA in examining the implications of these agreements and to perhaps develop some alternative ways to consider to restructure our resource allocation toward field staff. This group (Dick Jacke, Jim Turner, Rachel Christensen, Pat Manley and Kevin Bolton) has already been assiduously examining the data, and plans to deliver a preliminary report to the DPA during its GA meeting.

Future Agreements

Any future agreements about shared resourcing of field staff would need to be mutually decided by each district board and the UUA.