

Thomas Jefferson District Board Conference Call

December 16, 2010

In Attendance: Jim Key, Peter Kandis, Rev. Ann Marie Alderman, Pam Whistler, Nato Hollister, Sue Sinnamon, Rev. Jeanne Pupke, Rev. Jake Morrill, Annette Marquis, Gracia Basham

Call to order at 6:30 pm

Opening Reading by Jim Key

Check-In

Orlando Platform Draft Report-Nato shared that the committee is working on a first draft and that the first document will be sent for comment to the four District President's before Christmas. The intention is to have an approved statement ready before Christmas or shortly thereafter. Jim mentioned that after the appearance of the article in the UU World Magazine outlining the Regional Meeting in Orlando, many people had questions and were eagerly awaiting the finished Orlando Platform.

Engaging the Congregations in the Conversation-Jim's experience is that as long as congregations continue to receive services, some of them may not be too concerned with governance issues. Jake said that all of this change is an attempt to move toward better governance and strengthen relationships. Board Members will be sharing the happenings in Orlando with their churches and Boards. Peter reported to his church about the Southland meeting. Sue feels that the biggest question people will have is how this will change the congregation's relationships with the District and how the leadership roles will change as a result of these changes. Jeanne shared that the Orlando Platform needs to call our leadership to the hunger we all feel for renewal in our faith. Our February Board Meeting will give us a chance to provide more feedback on how other congregations are receiving the changes.

Impacts to the By-laws and Policy-Jim shared that this work is still going on as Denise could not be with us tonight. The February Board Meeting will be a time for us all to study this.

Impacts to Financial Policies/Practices-Jim has been talking with Martin about this and their findings will be presented at the February Board Meeting.

Covenant with UUA Dir of Cong Life re TJD BoD and UUA – Jim is working on a sample of a Covenant with the UUA for us to look at involving our co-employed Staff and the change we voted for. He will send out this sample for us to read sometime around the first week in January.

February Visioning Meeting for the Kingston Fund - Annette shared that the vision for the Kingston Fund was not only to sustain the present UU Churches within this area but to use these dollars as a way to encourage growth. There is a great opportunity for creative thinking. She is considering two people to help facilitate the visioning meeting who are widely respected within our faith. Ann Marie thinks this work is absolutely essential, and we need to be visionary about growing UUism east of I-95.

Town Hall Meetings - Jim said there will be a Town Hall Meeting via a Webinar in January to discuss and inform those attending the February Board Meeting about the Orlando Platform and what this will mean to our District. There will be another Town Hall meeting prior to the visioning meeting on Saturday, February 19, 2011.

UUA Board Reduction and Restructuring Task Force report - Jim shared that the work of this committee is to look at how to reduce the number of trustees on the UUA Board from its present size of 24, and how to make sure we represent historically marginalized people and hear their voices in our discussions. Jim believes there is a deepening renewal at the National and District level that is exciting. This committee will be making a recommendation to the UUA Board at their January meeting.

ARAOMC Monitoring Committee Update - Peter spoke on the ARAOMC Report and he believes there should be a second committee who will actually work on putting these recommendations into practice, possibly Staff-led. This group could be a study group, a group with its 'ears to the ground' and a resource for generative thinking. This committee could be a Council of Elders. Jim said that this could be an opportunity to model what a Council of Elders could look like, that would work on Multigenerational, Multicultural issues. Annette believes this makes sense and is a good direction to go in for possibly two teams of people, one of which will be 'out there doing the work'. Peter reminded the board that we had agreed to read Salsa, Soul, and Spirit before the next board meeting. Annette suggested she, Sue, and Peter would work on training on the Cambridge Platform to help folks understand the context of the term elder in the historical and covenantal context.

Consider input for trustees to take to their January meeting - we discussed the importance of claiming the term 'Elders' and a 'Council of Elders', pointing back to our history with the Cambridge Platform and the need to define these terms and then clearly communicate to our congregations the very important work these kinds of people can do within our faith. The use of the term "Elders" is consistent with our Congregational Polity. Annette suggested for Board Reading the Contemporary Readers Edition of the Cambridge Platform and Annette and Peter will put together a Board Training on this subject for our February Board Meeting. Jeanne said the way the Orlando Platform document describes Elders will be very important. Jake shared his belief that linkage issues are alive in people's minds and that these issues will become clearer in the future. The Orlando Platform will also help guide the UUA Board in how to proceed. Sue believes that generative thinking and linkage to the congregations is important work for Elders in our future.

Closing Reading by Jim

Adjourn 7:40 pm

Respectfully submitted by Gracia Basham