

Meeting of the St. Lawrence District Board of Trustees

February 8 - 9, 2008

Friday, February 8 - Unitarian Universalist Church of Binghamton

Dinner and Cluster Conversation

Representatives from churches in the Southern Tier Cluster joined us for dinner and then shared what has been going on in their churches. Among the activities mentioned...

Karen Palmer talked about the recent activities of the Board and reported that our grant request to NYSCU had been approved to fund leadership training for the Southern Tier cluster.

Board of Trustees Meeting - Ernie Hall convened the meeting at about 9:00.

Attending: Ernie Hall, Robb Smith, Debby Herman, Jerol Kent, David Friedman, Nancy Reed, Karen Palmer, Casey Asprooth-Jackson, Rev. Frances Manly. Tom Chulak was absent due to his mother's serious illness.

District Executive's Report After a check-in with members of the board, Ernie gave a report on Tom's recent activities.

* **Tom's sabbatical** has been postponed because of his mother's illness. There are no financial consequences, to the district, because of this change.

* Tom has been working with Plattsburg, Auburn and Amherst churches.

* **GA workshops** - The district will be sponsoring - 1. The Greater Good program 2. The effectiveness of the district cluster program

* There have been further discussions on sharing a **growth consultant** for the 4 districts.

Ernie announced that Mark Jackson will be the new SL District Treasurer.

Saturday, February 9 - Treadway Inn Owego, NY (site of this year's District Assembly)

Attending: Frances Manly, Debby Herman, Ernie Hall, Jerol Kent, David Friedman, Robb Smith, Nancy Reed, Karen Palmer. Linda Friedman joined us later in the morning.

Opening words - Ernie lit the chalice and opened the meeting at 9:15 AM.

Formal reports:

Lifespan Faith Development - Debbie Herman submitted a comprehensive report. ([Attachment #1](#)) In addition, she asked trustees who are liaisons to clusters of churches to encourage requests for **Young Adult and Campus Ministry Consultant** Robbie Brydon's services. ([Attachment #2](#)) He and Elayne Mosher from Oneonta are available and may be most efficiently used by a cluster of churches.

There was discussion about the desirability of **planning guides** for district events, including RE events, and what was already developed by Ernie for local planning.

Debbie reported that 2 district DRE's are moving toward being credentialed.

* **UUA Trustee** - David Friedman's reports ([Attachment #3](#)) included the recent news from the UUA and a report from the November and January **Congregation Come First (CCF) Committee** meetings. He noted....

* This will be a tight year for the UUA so some UUA spending is on hold.

* The CCF team activities will be minimal for the remainder of 2008 to save expenses and because of the UUA presidential campaign.

* **Liaisons** - Liaison reports describing the news from district clusters were given by the Trustee liaisons. ([Attachment #4](#)) Some additional comments -

* The board should somehow acknowledge May Memorial's generosity hosting so many district activities.

* The Albany church is enjoying its new Emerson Center space.

* The possibility of the Plattsburg congregation connecting with the Burlington congregation across the lake.

* The W. New York cluster churches, including Albion, will be surveyed about their interest in sharing a full-time minister. The need there could be for more than one minister.

* The UUA is helping investigate the purchase of a Chautauqua building by the Chautauqua congregation.

* The Rochester cluster had a successful meeting and seems to have gotten some new momentum.

* There is a district list-serve to connect district presidents online that is frequently used.

****Motion: To approve the minutes of the November Meeting - MSP**

Financial Reports - Ernie reviewed the budget. ([Attachment #5](#)) We are 7/12 into the fiscal year and doing well. The best estimate is that the income to budget for next year will be \$115 - 117, 000. We will receive slightly less than expected from the UUA and will probably need to go slightly into our reserves, but our reserves have increased for the last 3 years.

The budget report shows that the RE committee has accumulated \$12,000 from conference fees. The conference expenses were paid out of another RE committee budget line. The bookkeeping has now been adjusted and Ernie will consider how to address this. No board action was taken.

The main addition to the budget in 2008-2009 will be the salary and benefits of the Program Consultant for Lifespan Faith Development and the Planning Consultant. The presentation of the budget to the District Assembly should include a strong statement of gratitude for the congregations that have stepped up so well this year.

Ernie explained that the UUA is considering new ways to equitably calculate the credits given to congregations for their share of the District Executive's "other expenses". This might result in districts paying a greater percentage of these costs.

District Assembly - Linda Friedman joined us. She reported on the proposed schedule for this April's DA:

***Lodging** at both the Treadway and the next-door Hampton Inn, Owego.

Friday, April 25 - Binghamton Church - Registration, dinner (additional cost), music, the Gould Lecture and cookies afterwards.

Saturday, April 26 - Treadway Inn, Owego.

Registration, Exhibit tables in the lobby. Morning Worship and Keynote address

After some discussion, she suggested having the annual meeting in the morning after the keynote address and having all the workshop sessions in the afternoon. Fran then suggested doing the awards during lunchtime. Linda will look into the logistics of these changes and will try to have the **draft brochure by the end of the week**.

Financial support will be available. There will be a very minimal **child-care** fee. There was discussion about encouraging young adult participation and how much cost is the issue.

Linda is also looking ahead and requesting information on future DA sites and topics as early as possible.

Programs

* **Social Justice** ([Attachment #6](#) from Rev. Dick Gilbert)

* **Religious Education** (See [Attachment #1](#))

* **Youth** Casey Asprooth-Jackson gave his report on the major issues being discussed by YAC this year. (Attached) He elaborated on the new **Youth Chaplain training program**.

* **YACM** Informational flyer from Robbie Brydon ([Attachment #7](#)).

* **Communications** - Ernie reported that a beta version of the new SLD website is online and he will send us the link to view it. The hope is that the final version will be live very soon.

* **Financial Resources/Fund Raising** - We will encourage participation in the stewardship conference in Rochester in May with UUA consultant, Wayne Clarke.

* **Ministerial Settlement** - Rev. Priscilla Richter has been to a training workshop and is enthusiastic about her new position as the Ministerial Settlement Representative

PC Youth Coordinator Search Process - Debbie Herman reports that there are 2 good candidates. The interview is scheduled for February 24. The board will be notified and will vote by conference call in early March.

District Safety Policy ([Attachment #8](#))- Debbie presented the comprehensive final version of safety guidelines for district events. The board noted that this is a great service to district churches. Debbie will check into the legal wording of the definition of sexual abuse.

****Motion - To approve the district safety policy as presented. - MSP (Moved, seconded and passed)**

Futures Team - To begin to develop a new long-range plan for the district.

****Motion - To approve the formation of a long-range planning team. - MSP**

Endowment Fund -

**** Motion - To change the name of the "Endowment Fund" to the "Reserve Fund"**

- MSP

Scheduling of April Board Meeting - It was decided to schedule April's SLD Board of Trustees meeting on Friday, April 25, at the Binghamton church from noon - 5:00 PM.

Budget - Final discussion before accepting the 2008-2009 Budget included...

* The cost of the new PCLFD position may change some after the candidate is selected and it is known whether he/she will need health care benefits.

* The income to come from congregations is an educated estimate.

* Interest income will be put back into the report.

* Money approved for the Catalyst group will be added as an expense.

* With these considerations there was a ...

****Motion: To accept the 2008-2009 Budget as amended - MSP**

****Motion: To offer \$500.00 to the Catalyst Group for their activities this fiscal year. - MSP**

Additionally, Ernie asked everyone to consider who in their district might be candidates for some of these important district committees.

Karen asked for help with awards and gifts given at the District Assembly. Debby Herman requested to help with the RE awards and Nancy Reed offered help.

Ernie extinguished the Chalice and adjourned the meeting around 4:00.

Nancy Reed



Nancy Reed
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Attachment #1

REPORT TO THE ST. LAWRENCE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES From the Acting Program Consultant for Lifespan Faith Development February 8, 2008

RE Transitions:

- Saratoga Springs hired a new DRE in January, Merle O'Connor.
- Schenectady is still in search for a DRE, and hopes to have someone in place by next summer. They have contracted with Rev. Pat Hoertdoefer to consult with them through the search. In the meantime their acting DRE is doing an excellent job.
- Rochester Unitarian has just hired a Youth Ministry Coordinator, with Chalice Lighter funding.

Youth Program:

- **DYC Search:** Committee members will be Jeff Lamicela, a former DYC and youth advisor; Leah Purcell, DRE in Albany; Tracy Landers, a youth advisor in Binghamton; Brin Taylor, youth member from Binghamton; and Taylor Longo, a youth member of the YAC. I wanted to wait until after the Feb. 2 YAC meeting before convening the committee, so that I could get their recommendation for youth members. I hope to have a start-up meeting on March 1st, interviews around the time of DA, and a person hired by early May, before Tom leaves on Sabbatical and in time for the new DYC to attend the June YAC meeting.
- **YAC meeting:** The YAC's winter meeting went very well. They approved the proposed safety policy, discussed the bridging ceremony and Friday night overnight for DA, and developed a process for selecting chaplains for youth conferences from among the newly-trained youth. In addition they decided to ask Martin Lang, one of the YAC adult advisors, to resign from the YAC. They have asked Kelly Johnson-Eilola, the youth advisor for the Canton congregation, to take his place, and she accepted. This last took place on Friday night, and I arrived Saturday morning. I talked with the group about the fact that in the future, with our new policy, they will no longer be able to vote adults in as advisors without going through an application/reference checking/interview process. They were fine with this, and supportive of the new policy. In the meantime, I know that Kelly is an appropriate choice.

Young Adult-Campus Ministry:

- **Service delivery:** As a result of a conversation that Tom and Robbie and Jean Ott and I had following the YA-CM Leaders workshop last October, we have decided to re-structure Robbie Brydon's role and mode of service delivery in the district. I assume he will cover the details in his own report, and I will also attach the flyer that he included in the recent district mailing. But to summarize – we have decided to have Robbie focus on offering consultations and workshops to individual congregations and clusters of congregations, rather than on building a district YACM committee, coordinating conferences, etc. We feel that we need to establish some young adult groups within individual congregations before trying to organize them into some sort of district structure. So Robbie will publicize his availability for this type of consulting – consultations can either be one-day, or on-going with follow-up for up to about 3 months. His visits could also be more low-key – possibly consisting of his leading a contemporary worship service followed by informal conversation with interested congregants over coffee or lunch. My thought is that it would be ideal if congregations could receive initial consultations/workshops for free, paid through Robbie's stipend, with those able to do so contributing as necessary and as possible if they request a more long-term relationship. Offering the consultations to clusters of congregations (with the group dividing up and working in congregational groups for the second half of the workshop) would allow for much wider participation given our resources.
- **Board assistance:** The biggest challenge seems to be getting congregations to request Robbie's services. We have a number of ideas for addressing this, but it would be helpful if Board liaisons/facilitators for the cluster groups could promote Robbie's services at cluster meetings, and

encourage congregations to avail themselves of his services as a cluster if not as individual congregations.

- **UUA Training:** Both Robbie and Elayne Mosher from Oneonta will attend a UUA-led Young Adult-Campus Ministry leaders training near Princeton, NJ the weekend of June 13-15. The UUA will cover all of Robbie's expenses, but the SLD will need to pay for Elayne. Elayne has agreed to work with Robbie in offering YA-CM consulting services on a per-diem basis, especially in the eastern part of the district which is more difficult for Robbie to visit. The UUA offering will be a combined training for YA-CM consultants and for congregational YA-CM leaders. Hopefully a few of our congregations will choose to send their YA-CM leaders.

District Safety Policy:

I have made a few minor changes to the proposed district safety policy, based on input received from various groups, including the District RE Committee and the Youth-Adult Committee. I also submitted the draft to the ministers prior to their fall retreat, for their review and input, but did not receive any comments from them. I included the proposal with my November Board report, but if you would review the revised version and offer any final comments, I would like to offer it, including your amendments, for your approval, to be presented for a vote at District Assembly. I would like to have the final version posted on the district's website, with an email notice sent to district leaders and committees, so that DA delegates will hopefully have had an opportunity to review the policy in advance, and be able to vote from an informed perspective. As you review the document please in particular take a look at the fire safety rules on page 4, and let me know whether or not you feel they are reasonable, and whether this policy is the appropriate place for them.

District Assembly:

As the staff liaison to District Assembly, I have tried to stay in the planning loop as much as possible and as appropriate, although my involvement has mainly centered around the role and responsibilities of the Binghamton congregation. I attended their November board meeting, as well as a recent meeting of their in-house planning committee, and forwarded their suggestions to the district committee. I would particularly like to highlight their suggestion that we replace the Saturday night dinner at the hotel with a nice reception for everyone - with the cost included in the registration fee. I can elaborate during our meeting if you wish.

Planning guides for district events:

Rev. Deane Perkins asked me for help recently in organizing a district-wide workshop on Small Group Ministry. I wrote him a pretty detailed response, outlining procedures for registration, billing/reimbursement, publicity, etc. However it occurred to me that there should really be a checklist somewhere that committees or congregations can use when they want to host events that will be open to the wider district community. A planning guide for congregations hosting District Assembly would also be of great help.

Meetings and travel completed or planned since November 8th Board meeting:

November 15: Attended Binghamton's Board meeting to discuss 2008 DA.

December 12: PC Search Committee start-up meeting in Oneonta.

January 5: Led RE Vision Retreat for Syracuse 1st UU.

January 11: Meeting with Tom C. and DYC Jody Brown in Syracuse.

January 18: Meeting with Cortland RE coordinators and teachers

January 24: Meeting with Binghamton's local DA planning group

February 2: Youth-Adult Committee meeting in Syracuse.

February 8-9: Cluster and Board meetings

February 10: Meeting with Rochester Universalist's DRE & RE Committee

March 1 (tentative): Start-up meeting for DYC search committee in Syracuse

Respectfully submitted, Deborah Herman

Young Adult and Camps Ministry Consultations

Why don't our younger adults come to service?

There's a handful of us younger folks - what can we do?

How can we keep our youth involved after high school?

Is there any way we can get college kids interested?

Where are all the young adults?!?

Do any of these questions apply to your congregation? Do you want to try to work out some answers? Knowledgeable help is available!

Robbie Brydon, the STLD Young Adult and Campus Ministry Consultant, is available for congregational or cluster consultations.

Just who are these young adults?

The category, as laid out by the UUA, covers people aged 18-35 and really spans 3 or 4 distinct life stages. They are combined into one group because they are the missing link in the UU chain; this is the one age group that is missing from our faith. What are we losing because of it? We're losing the resources and talents of our most energetic demographic; we're losing the most up-to-date skill set available; we're losing a segment of our human circle; and we're losing the chance to support people who may need this community as much as we do.

What will a consultation do for you?

A consultation will be geared to your congregation's needs and can address any of the questions above or numerous others. The consultant will put on a one-day workshop that will present new ideas and material on ministry with young adults and will help you to develop strategies appropriate to your congregation and your area. These may be advanced – like introducing an additional worship service in a more contemporary style – but are more likely to be basic: starting or growing a young adult group; finding ways to engage young adults in congregational life; holding a homecoming service; etc. If the consultation deals with a particular group or team, the consultant can stay in relationship with them over a 3-4 month period thereafter to support the work of implementation.

Cost for the initial workshop will be covered by the St. Lawrence District. Please contact Robbie at stlawrence.doc@gmail.com or 416-762-0496 to discuss how this could benefit your congregation or to discuss any aspect of ministry with young adults that interests you.

Attachment #3

UUA Board of Trustees Meetings
Boston, January 17-20 2008
Report to St. Lawrence District
David Friedman, Trustee (dfriedman@uua.org , 585-865-5918)

(The request being honored is to report in bulleted format.)

- ***\$- Matters***
 - SLD congregations raised \$15,226 for Association Sunday and District will thus receive for its part, a grant totaling \$6,158.
 - This is a tight fiscal year for the UUA, so some spending is on hold.
 - The Property and Loans Commission, which to date has focused on large loans, say for buildings, will soon be offering small loans in the \$20,000 to \$100,000 range.
 - The new Health Plan has passed audit for its' first year of operation.

- ***General UUA Matters***
 - A consolidation of the Young Adult and Campus Ministries Office and the Youth Office will happen this year.
 - Funding for first three years has been obtained to establish a Director of Worship and Music Resources.
 - New Rules of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) were approved.
 - Background checking requirements for the RE Credentialing Process were approved.
 - Much progress was reported in the development of a Crisis Response Plan (More in April).
 - This year's Breakthrough Congregations were named: Unity Temple, Oak Park, IL; Pacific Unitarian Church, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA.; Bull Run UU Church, Manassas, VA.; UUF of Wayne County, Wooster, OH.
 - President Sinkford reported that the new Ad. Campaign is "Forging a Public Identity for UUism."
 - One more Independent Affiliate was approved, "Ministry for Earth." The Board re-iterated the position that it does not sit in judgment of any I/A's work, but seeks to de-incentivize separation and instead seeks organizations that are in collaboration with like groups, are agents of or in a covenantal relationship with congregations/Association and/or which have shared accountability and overlapping mission and purpose.
 - The Board saw a demonstration of and will pilot "Persony" software which allows for on-line computer-based conferencing in which up to 25 participants can have the same documents (e.g. Word, Excel, PowerPoint) open and in mark up. The UUA has group license so UU-bodies may do such conferences.

- ***General Assembly Matters***
 - A site was approved for the 2012 General Assembly, Phoenix, AZ.
 - The selection of Fort Lauderdale for GA 2008 was re-affirmed by the Board, which re-iterated its reasons for selecting this site in the first place, economic accessibility and friendliness to our diverse membership. Not to speak of prudent stewardship, recognition

of where we are in the year, and the “values issue” inherent in canceling and becoming known in the trade as an organization which does not honor contracts and cancels in “the last minutes.”

- An “appreciative inquiry” approach will be used at GA 2008 to further process the initial key learnings from GA 2007’s Open Space effort.

- ***Matters of the 2009 Elections at GA, Salt Lake City***
 - At the moment, two ministers have announced as candidates for the presidency, the Rev’s Laurel Hallman and Peter Morales. Others may yet enter the process. Petitions may be filed as late as Feb. 1, 2009. Formal campaigning may not commence before January, 2008.
 - In recognition of above, I have covenanted with the other UUA Trustees to refrain from endorsing, promising to endorse, or providing financial support to any candidate for UUA President, Moderator, or Trustee-at-Large before the General Assembly of 2008. We MAY engage in conversations with those seeking information in the discernment process for running. Trustees may host some forums, possibly regionally, issue DVD’s of the forums, or otherwise assist congregations knowing candidates, thus the neutrality.

- ***Board Trainings***
 - In two short workshop segments with Rob Eller-Isaacs and Louise Wolfgramm of Unity Consulting, the Board relearned that the transition to Policy Governance is about religious grounding, bringing governance in alignment with values. It is not for the purpose of improved efficiency. The small groups came to see a focus on the values of “connection”, “transformation”, and “wonder”.

 - The Board continued its grounding in Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppression work with Paula Cole Jones.

Ps. In my last report, I promised documents from the November Congregations Come First meetings, which never were issued. Instead, a combined report was issued out of the CCF’s January 2008 meetings, just concluded and the report is attached.

Report of the Congregations Come First (CCF) Team

January 26, 2008

The Congregations Come First Team is a partnership of our UUA Board of Trustees, District Presidents Association, Annual Program Fund Committee and UUA district staff and includes a parish minister and UUA national staff. As a task force of the UUA Moderator, the CCF Team has been charged to recommend systemic changes and influence culture and practices that will ensure a more equitable and effective allocation of resources to support our congregations in their missions. With no single center of authority and accountability, efforts to design and implement system-wide improvements uniquely challenge our greater Association. We are called to be good stewards of our resources. Our goal is to increase the effectiveness of our Association of Congregations.

After several meetings, the CCF Team produced in the fall of 2006 a concept presentation that suggested a regional method of distributing and managing services to congregations and offered recommendations on a number of other matters related to equity and efficiency. We took pains to report first to our four partner groups, and to encourage dialog with each of them. We asked district leaders (the District President, the UUA Trustee, the District Executive and the APF representative for the district) to meet to discuss our concepts and decide how to share them with other leadership in their districts. Later our initial concept report was posted on the UUA website. We asked that the district leaders listed above provide feedback to the CCF before our next meeting in February 2007.

The feedback was voluminous. There were positive responses, and there was criticism. The CCF Team's concept presentation included significant changes in the system that some perceived as threatening. Upon reflection we observed that our concept, though controversial, had sparked discussion and stimulated imaginations to consider how our system might be better.

It is evident that positive change is occurring in the system. We can be very effective in encouraging healthy change by asking questions and stimulating conversations. The remainder of this report addresses these changes and asks questions for consideration by all of our leaders.

A Vision Consistent with Unitarian Universalist Values

We envision mutually supportive healthy congregations providing vital ministries to their members, their communities, and our world.

Effective and equitable structures and systems would advance this vision in accord with our covenant by:

- Increased connectedness and cooperation among congregations
- Increased congregational participation in the life of our Association
- Promotion of right relationship in funding systems and resource allocation
- A generous spirit of faithful stewardship

Equitable structures and systems distribute resources so that no congregation is disadvantaged by location or historic arrangements.

Effective structures and systems provide appropriate, high quality general and specialized services in a timely fashion in ways that yield positive impact on congregational health, vitality, and growth.

A deep sense of covenant leads to openness, accountability, innovation, and bountiful opportunities for UUs to apply their leadership, talents, and passion to service to our movement.

The Promise and the Challenge

Here's what we're seeing: Significant innovation and initiatives are increasing the effectiveness of our Association's services to congregations, moving us toward equity and strengthening our covenant. We also see areas where we are "stuck" in old paradigms and patterns. Our observations lead us to raise specific questions about effectiveness, equity, and covenant.

Effectiveness

We affirm the UUA Administration and national staff for these initiatives in support of congregational effectiveness:

- + Articulating identity for our faith by creating the new DVD "Introduction to Unitarian Universalism"
- + Deepening our faith by publishing the new Tapestry of Faith curriculum online
- + Working to increase our rate of numerical growth by establishing a national growth plan, convening a growth consultation with ministers of the fastest growing congregations, and launching the new national marketing campaign
- + Supporting ministers of color and the congregations that call them because diversity is key to our growth into the future
- + Recognizing Breakthrough Congregations and helping others learn from them

We affirm regional, district, and cluster initiatives to increase our effectiveness:

- + The five New England districts organized a regional conference on ministry and leadership in lieu of separate district conferences. This has become an ongoing event. Ballou Channing District and Mass Bay District will hold a joint spring event.
- + Metro NY, St. Lawrence, Joseph Priestley, and Ohio Meadville District staff worked together to create a successful new Leadership Institute.
- + In several places, congregations have networked to develop statewide legislative ministries. Paid staff leads these ministries in California and Washington State.
- + A new level of collaboration among our UUA, the district, and local congregations is helping our growth efforts.

and yet...

- ✘ We currently have about 160,000 adult members, about the same number as 46 years ago. During that same time, the U.S. population has grown by 50%. Although in the last 20 years we have fared better, we are still growing at a rate of just one person per congregation per year.

- ✘ In the last decade, 1.5% (16) of our congregations have accounted for 25% of our growth; about ½ of our congregations have grown and about ½ have declined.
- ✘ We have a part-time office for service to large congregations, but we have nothing comparable for midsize or small congregations. Congregations of all sizes are asking for more specialized services.
- ✘ While future-oriented organizations effectively develop and use networks -- multilateral collaboration that connects them not geographically, but according to interest and need -- we have little expertise in social networking or the technology that supports it.

and we wonder...

- ? How could we more effectively organize ourselves as we move into the future?
- ? What would the structure and accountability of our system look like to reflect growth as a priority?
- ? Will the initiatives listed above lead to systemic change?
- ? Are we changing quickly enough relative to changes in the larger society?

Equity

Looking at our Association landscape, we found several new ways district leaders have been working together to provide congregations with equitable access to financial, technical, and personnel resources.

We affirm the following district initiatives:

- ✚ District presidents in the fall of 2006 agreed to share equally the total benefits cost for co-employed staff. This action equalized the benefits costs among all our districts. In prior years, payment of the actual benefits costs had been the responsibility of individual districts.
- ✚ The four districts of NRG (New Regional Group of St. Lawrence, Joseph Priestley, Ohio Meadville, and Metro New York), recognizing disparities of resources, developed and implemented a plan to share specialized staff to provide congregations equitable access to expertise.
- ✚ Several districts are investigating how to share district-focused software and IT support and systems.

and yet...

- ✘ In the Southwestern UU Conference, a large geographic district, two full-time professional staff members and one full-time equivalent administrative position serve 76 member congregations and five emerging congregations. In the relatively smaller and more compact Joseph Priestley District, six professional staff (four full-time, two half-time) and two administrative (one full-time, one half-time) serve 64 member congregations and four emerging congregations.
- ✘ The ratio of district staff members per congregation ranges from 1:11 to 1:45.

- ✘ The amount that our UUA reimburses districts to support their offices ranges from \$23,000 to \$78,000 as a result of financial agreements dating back as far as 1982.
- ✘ -- On a "dollars per congregation" basis, the reimbursement ranges from less than \$500 to over \$1,600.
- ✘ -- On a "dollars per member" basis, the reimbursement ranges from less than \$4 to almost \$12 per member.
- ✘ While some districts are hiring additional specialized staff, another is requesting a line of credit from our UUA to pay its one staff person.

and we wonder....

- ? What if all congregations had access to resources in roughly the same ratio?
- ? What if all congregations had access to specialized staff and services based upon their needs rather than their location?
- ? Can we imagine a more equitable method to distribute money and other resources or share costs between and among districts?
- ? How would the structure and accountability of our system need to change for equity to be a reality?

Covenant

We affirm new collaborative efforts and partnerships, which remind us we are a covenantal faith.

Collaboration among congregations:

- + Clusters are working together for growth or starting new congregations in many areas, including north Texas, Philadelphia, northern Connecticut, and central Massachusetts.
- + Although their joint media campaign ended several years ago, the congregations in the Kansas City area continue to work together to develop new cooperative initiatives.
- + Ministers from congregations in Minneapolis and St. Paul collaborated to create a five-session lay theological education series, "Faithful Conversations," for local lay leaders.
- + New social justice efforts include one or more congregations in partnership with the UU Service Committee.

Collaboration across district boundaries

- + Prairie Star District's online speakers/artists/musicians bureau is expanding to the Central Midwest and Heartland Districts in collaboration with the UU Musicians Network (UUMN).
- + St. Lawrence and Joseph Priestley districts are collaborating with the Annual Program Fund staff on joint requests for 2008 APF and district contributions.

Partnerships that cross traditional organizational boundaries

- + The Annual Program Fund Committee is creating new partnerships with groups including LREDA (the Liberal Religious Educators Association) and the Ministry and Professional

Leadership staff group. APF staff is consulting with Lifespan Faith Development staff about generosity and stewardship for children and youth.

- + In October 2008 the District Presidents Association and UUA Board of Trustees will work collaboratively to set ends (what good should be done for what folks at what cost) for our Association.
- + The Association-wide conversation on Excellence in Ministry is being guided by a new partnership that includes the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, UUA Board, Panel on Theological Education, the UUA Administration, and staff from Ministry and Professional Leadership.

Possible system-wide indicators of cultural change

- + Starting in 2004, increasing numbers of congregational presidents responded to Moderator Gini Courter and President Bill Sinkford's invitation to come to General Assembly (GA). A growing number of presidents consider their GA attendance to be part of their congregation's relationship to our Association.
- + Congregations throughout our Association stepped forward to create relationships in support of our Gulf coast area congregations that were affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, providing financial help, leadership support, chaplaincy, and pastoral care, as well as hands-on assistance – the spirit of our covenant moving among us.
- + Significant language changes are occurring:
 - + More Unitarian Universalist leaders are talking about “**our** Association” rather than “the UUA” or “Boston.”
 - + The UUA Board voted in 2004 always to describe General Assembly as “a meeting of congregations.”
 - + Conversations among UU leaders reflect a growing understanding that our Association refers to the member congregations, not the board or staff.

and yet....

- ✘ At General Assembly 2004, two-thirds of the more than 300 congregational presidents in attendance reported that they felt unconnected to neighboring congregations, the district, and our UUA; they felt isolated.
- ✘ When a large church partnered with our UUA to start a new congregation, some of the area churches worked to stop the initiative, concerned that a new congregation would compete for members.
- ✘ Congregations in one district were affected when a large congregation chose to pay its APF contribution but not its district dues after an unanticipated expense. A consequence of this choice was the unpaid leave of several district staff members.
- ✘ A congregational president knew a neighboring UU congregation, three miles away, was having difficulty with its annual canvass. The congregational president and his board discussed the neighboring congregation's troubles without any sense whatsoever that they might offer any sort of assistance -- not necessarily financial, but moral support or perhaps stewardship resources based on their own recent successful canvass. This is not an unusual story.
- ✘ While the majority of congregations contribute fully to our Association and their districts each year, some congregations pay only a portion of their APF contribution and still expect or need full services.

and we wonder...

- ? What is the quality of relationship in our Association of Congregations?
- ? Are our relationships covenantal or contractual?
- ? How could we strengthen our connections?
- ? What if we were an Association of Congregations in which all congregations embody our bond of connectedness with each other so that we advance our common purpose and no congregation is alone in its work?
- ? While the number of positive examples is growing, do they represent systemic collaboration, or do they simply rely on the personalities and preferences of our current leaders?
- ? How do we structure cooperation and covenantal relationships into our accountability?

What We Ask of You

- ✚ Consider and invite conversations about the questions raised in this report.
- ✚ Join the conversation at CCF workshops at the Large Congregation Conference and at General Assembly.
- ✚ Identify ways or methods by which we might live out our covenant more fully and with deeper meaning.
- ✚ Share your stories of how your congregation or district is addressing these values so that others might learn from your experiences.

Please send your comments to ccfcomments@uua.org.

The CCF Team:

- ▲ Gini Courter, UUA Moderator, Co-convener
- ▲ Rev. Harlan Limpert, Director for District Services, Co-convener
- ▲ Roger Comstock, UUA Trustee, Northeast District
- ▲ Nancy Heege, District Executive, Prairie Star District
- ▲ David Friedman, UUA Trustee, St. Lawrence District
- ▲ Rev. Bill Zelazny, District Executive, Ballou Channing District
- ▲ Joe Sullivan, District President, Southwestern Conference, a district of the UUA
- ▲ Elyse Reznick, District President, Joseph Priestley District
- ▲ Barb Brown, General Chair, Annual Program Fund Committee
- ▲ Laurel Amabile, Director, Annual Program Fund
- ▲ Rev. Mark Gallagher, Minister, Michael Servetus Unitarian Universalist Church, Vancouver, WA
- ▲ Rev. Stephan Papa, Special Assistant to the UUA President for Growth Funding
- ▲ Eva Marx (note taker), UUA Trustee, Ballou Channing District

The Development of District Services and Prior System Studies

(How did we get into the situation we have today)

Prior to the consolidation that formed our UUA, the American Unitarian Association (AUA) had district executives (DEs) in each district. The Universalist Church of America (UCA) was organized in state conventions – each had a superintendent. After consolidation, our UUA kept the AUA district organization and placed a full-time, UUA-paid district executive in each district.

In 1970, all district executives were terminated on the same day as the result of a severe budget crunch. Shortly thereafter six of the same men (they were all men) were rehired to establish the Interdistrict Representative system, with each staff member serving several districts. Four districts chose at that time to hire and pay for their own staff.

In 1982, the study referred to as “D2R2” was completed, calling for 12 regions of equal size and membership. It was not adopted.

In 1983, the UUA initiated a plan to install co-employed DEs in every district. Implementation was planned over a six-year period. Most districts shared costs with our UUA on a 50-50 basis. A few districts paid a greater share. Sharing percentages and the basis for the “other costs” figure were derived during negotiations and were inequitable.

By 1990, all districts had a district executive on a cost-shared basis. Most were fulltime. Some districts shared that employee with another district.

In the 1990s districts began co-employing additional staff referred to as program consultants. In most cases, the district paid 75% of the cost, while our UUA provided 25%. Duties varied according to district preference.

In about 1992, the District Presidents Association began agitating for a voice. They first asked to be given a vote at GA. The delegates did not approve this request.

In 1997, Moderator Denny Davidoff convened the first Summit meeting of District Presidents, Trustees and DEs. Subsequent summits were held in 1999, 2002, 2004 and 2005. The last summit authorized the effort now called Congregations Come First. During this period, several attempts were made to equalize services provided to the districts and to rationalize the “other costs” figure. The formulas for determining Fair Share and district grants were also re-evaluated regularly. None of the systems found for APF has been considered fair by everyone.

Three other studies addressed the question of how to achieve the most equitable and efficient delivery of UUA services to member congregations. These included Structure and Services (2001), mainly focused on the location of staff; To Be of Use (2002), an effort to codify District services to congregations; and a Leadership Development conference (2003) sponsored by District Services that resulted in UUA efforts to catalog trainings and fill the gaps. Rev. Harlan Limpert was hired to staff the UUA Office of Lay Leadership Development.

Commentary

Many efforts have addressed the perceived inequities in this system over the years, starting as early as 1982. These efforts have been ineffective in large part because our governance and service delivery are connected at the district level. No group within our structure has control over both governance and service delivery.

The structure of our UUA is complex. Districts were created at the time of the merger of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America through political compromise without regard to size, geography, and number of congregations. Those same districts were empowered to elect members of our UUA Board of Trustees and to share responsibility for service delivery by our UUA to their member congregations. Independently, the General Assembly was empowered to elect the UUA President, Moderator, Financial Advisor, the Nominating Committee, the General Assembly Planning Committee, the Commission on Social Witness, and Commission on Appraisal, and to reflect the will of our congregations in the governance of our Association. Although the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association is an independent organization, ministers serve on the UUA staff and Board and settled ministers have a vote at General Assembly.

The CCF Team was created to provide an eagle's eye view of the system. The team chose to focus on service delivery and funding and not address governance. Our view is long-term, extending back through seven administrations and forward for the next few. The problems we feel charged to address are the result of organizational decisions made many years ago and do not reflect on the work of any one of the past administrations. In fact, much good work has been done and continues to be done despite the organizational obstacles we face.

Attachment #4

Notes on our meeting of representatives from the Rochester Area Cluster of churches Maybe, in alphabetical order, the Clinton-Cooley-Park-Winton Connection?) First Universalist Church of Rochester, January 23, 2008

The four churches reported on some of their recent activities.

From Pullman, Albion –

- Working on becoming a welcoming congregation
- Hosting the local Chaplain's Sunday for the military veterans
- Searching for a 1/4 time minister

From First Universalist, Rochester –

- Searching for a full time minister – candidates down to 2
- A mini-capital campaign raised pledges of \$75,000 for repairs to their church
- RAIHN program hosts homeless families in the church 4 times a year in collaboration with other area churches
- Holding concerts featuring Eastman music students – “Eastman at Washington Square “
- Celebrating the church's 100th year
- Enjoying greater connections with First Unitarian Church
- Supporting the Southeast Ecumenical Ministries project
- Donating one of their Sunday morning plate collections to an outside agency

From First Unitarian, Rochester –

- Running 65 Small Group Ministries groups
- Giving generously – their Greater Good Program at Christmas Time, Grants, and donating many of their plate collections to worthy causes outside the church
- Sent a delegation of adults and youth to the Mexican border to learn about Free Trade
- Held a Growth Workshop with a consultant from the UUA
- Changed the times of their Sunday services to have them be more equal in size and resources
- Hiring a music coordinator and taking their music program out into the community
- Searching for a Youth Group coordinator
- Sponsoring the “Heretics Golf Tournament”

From Unitarian Universalist Church of Canandaigua –

- Raised money for a new door
- Established a scholarship for Unirondac
- In the process of becoming a UUA Green Sanctuary
- Working with a training project called Herb Haven, for young women in transition
- Sponsoring a CSA (Community Sponsored Agriculture) Program for the 5th year
- Beginning a Social Cinema night
- Starting Small Group ministries with the help of Intern Minister Peggy Meeker
- Sending cartons of children's hats, scarves and mittens, hand knit by members, to Pakistan and hosting the Pakistani coordinator when he visits later this year.

Ideas for some new collaboration.

Tom Chulak reported on what the other clusters in New York have been doing this year and then asked for ideas and wishes of how we four churches might begin to collaborate. The result was some wonderful sharing and brainstorming.

Some suggestions –

- Help with church-specific financial soft-ware.
- Sharing of youth programs so that there is a critical mass of youths to make them work, eg. OWL, volunteer opportunities, social opportunities, work on CSA farm
- Joint social justice projects – Habitat for Humanity, Greater Good Program
- A Greater Rochester ad campaign for UU.
- Ideas for Adult Ed programs
- Doing more with the UUA guidelines on Safe Congregations
- Sharing staff advisers on Social Justice, Youth Groups, Young Adult and Campus Ministries and Membership development

Some specific offers of help were made – First Unitarian offered a contact who knew about church financial software, Rev. Susan Daiss offered to help Pullman with some Adult Ed. Program ideas, and Mary Jones and Jan Gartner offered to open up their Radical Hospitality workshop on March 1 to the other churches.

Of the most interest to the whole group, were collaboration around youth activities, social justice projects, and ideas for membership/hospitality. Four teams were formed from those present, each with one representative from each of the four churches, to follow-up with some of the ideas brought forth. One of the teams consisting of 2 ministers and 2 lay leaders will get together to talk about organizing future cluster meetings.

Nancy Reed
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reenown@ix.netcom.com

Attachment #5

St. Lawrence Unitarian-Universalist District

Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2007

	Total 07-08	Total 06-07
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Bank Accounts		
100 Charter One Bank (Checking)	\$8,938	\$0
101 Petty Cash	\$200	\$200
102 Charter One Bank (Savings)	\$0	\$0
103 MBanx Canadian	\$0	\$0
104 MBanx U.S. Funds	\$0	\$0
105 Keybank	\$1,830	\$915
106 Citizens Bank - new checking	\$22,555	\$43,541
107 Citizens Bank - Money Market	\$20,279	\$19,260
111 Endowment Fund CD	\$55,556	\$54,815
488 not_understood_interest	\$0	\$0
Total Bank Accounts	\$109,357	\$118,731
Accounts Receivable		
1200 Accounts Receivable	\$0	\$0
Total Accounts Receivable	\$0	\$0
Total Current Assets	\$109,357	\$118,731
TOTAL ASSETS	\$109,357	\$118,731
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable		
2000 *Accounts Payable	\$0	\$0
Total Accounts Payable	\$0	\$0
Other Current Liabilities		
200 Accounts Payable	\$0	\$0
201 Payroll Taxes Payable - Federal	\$0	\$0
202 Payroll Taxes Payable - State	\$155	\$155
203 Payroll Taxes Payable - Disabil	\$0	\$95
206 Leadership Development	\$162	\$162
207 Long Range Planning	\$0	\$0
208 AGM 2002	\$0	\$0
210 R.E. Scholarship Payable	-\$300	\$100
2100 Payroll Liabilities	\$1,126	\$569
212 Free Books Special Acct.	\$0	\$0
218 Eagles	\$0	\$0
220 NYSCU Leadership Development	\$0	\$0
225 Special Projects	\$0	\$0
228 R.E.Training	\$15,189	\$11,337
229 RE training honoraria	-\$3,225	-\$950
Total 228 R.E.Training	\$11,964	\$10,387

230 R. E. Pilot Project	\$435	\$435
239 Chalice Lighters	\$5,881	
240 Chalice Lighter - AHF	\$17	\$286
241 Albany/Syracuse MM	\$595	\$0
242 Saratoga Springs/Cortland	\$15	\$7,010
Total 239 Chalice Lighters	\$6,508	\$7,296
250 Unirondack Capital Campagn	\$0	\$0
282 interest on endowment fund	\$0	\$0
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$20,049	\$19,198
Total Current Liabilities	\$20,049	\$19,198
Total Liabilities	\$20,049	\$19,198
Equity		
3000 Opening Bal Equity	-\$1,848	-\$392
3900 Retained Earnings	\$85,722	\$78,940
499 Net Worth Transfer	\$0	\$0
Net Income	\$5,434	\$20,985
Total Equity	\$89,308	\$99,533
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$109,357	\$118,731

Attachment #6

MEMO TO ST. LAWRENCE DISTRICT BOARD - CC: SOCIAL JUSTICE COUNCIL FROM DICK GILBERT, SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR RE: PROGRESS REPORT - February 9, 2008

The district Social Justice Council will give a workshop on *Democracy as a Religious Principle: UU Values in the 2008 Election* at the District Assembly, Binghamton/Owego, April 25-26. The program is: The “real rules,” what churches can and cannot do in the campaign (Robb Smith; Interfaith Impact of NYS Executive Director), voter registration (Dick Dana, Albany UU Society) and moral dimensions of political issues (Rev. Sam Trumbore, Albany UU Church).

Co-Chair Lynn Ashley, minister of the Barneveld congregation, and newly named co-chair of the Catalyst (anti-racist, anti-oppression, multi-cultural) Team Jacqui Williams of the Saratoga congregation, have announced the naming of a task force responding to a 2006 resolution by the UUA General Assembly. The Metro New York Anti-Racism and Diversity (ARDC) team has agreed to mentor the group.

The Social Justice Council has scheduled its third annual social justice conference for Saturday, October 4, at the Schenectady church. It will focus on the election of 2008, though our exact theme is not yet clear. Our thinking was to move the workshop out of Syracuse to enable other geographical groupings better opportunity to attend. The workshop date is earlier to move it further from election day.

As I said in a previous report my consulting work has fallen off, though I did do a training at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canandaigua following a sermon on January 27 for about 30 people. While I did several workshop/preaching gigs in the last two church years, I have few invitations this year. Whether this is a commentary on my work or whether I have already reached a goodly portion of the district I do not know. By and large my work has been done with the smaller congregations. Larger congregations have not been issuing invitations.

I continue to produce a monthly social justice newsletter, *Agenda for Change*, whose mailing list now is about 360. Newsletters go to this board, clergy, presidents, social action chairs, RE people, Interfaith Impact of NYS Board, and others who request them in the St. Lawrence District; and to clergy, presidents and social action chairs in the Metro New York District. My reasoning is that so many of our issues are state-wide issues and we want to cooperate with downstate as much as we can. Last summer’s UULTI enabled contact with Metro New York leaders.

Reaction to the newsletter is hard to gauge. I do receive occasional positive responses, no criticisms, but a general lack of incoming materials for the newsletter. My technological problem remains what it has been from the beginning – frustration in sending the newsletter over the internet. It is a cumbersome process from my home computer. Mark Jackson and Ellen Asprooth are working to move my mailing list to a UUA-sponsored list which will enable me to send out the whole mailing more efficiently. I am also eager to get the new district website up and running so we can post items, newsletters, action alerts, etc. to it.

I believe it is time for the Social Justice Council to think more strategically about our work. We have little sense of what kind of a job we are doing for the congregations. We also need to coordinate our efforts with the UUA and UUSC. Finally, we may need to think about cluster rather than district-wide programming.

While I have made no definite plans yet, I think it is time to begin to think about my successor and/or some reallocation of responsibilities. I have generally enjoyed the work, but it is very time-consuming and I have many other projects to pursue.

Attachment #7

Young Adult and Campus Ministry Report

Nov. 9, 2007

Launch of consultations:

As Debby mentioned in her report – and you likely saw in the district mailing – consultations are now available for congregations and clusters. I am a strong presenter, facilitator and worship leader and am comfortable taking on any of those roles, according to the congregations' needs. A consultation may take the form of a day-long workshop (half informational, half-strategy-building); a Sunday morning service and presentation on contemporary worship; or another format, as fits the goals of the day. I have substantial experience and training in young adult and campus ministry work and will gain more insight from the Consultants' Training in Metro New York this June, which will also be attended by Elayne Mosher (Oneonta), providing us with easier access to the entire District.

As I live outside the District, it is somewhat difficult to develop the social capital necessary to promote these services effectively – mass mailings tend to fall on deaf ears. So I would urge you, wherever it might be of use to a group or congregation, to stir up support. I'm looking forward to Please contact me if you have any questions.

Reunicon '08:

A group of former youth have decided to host a “Reunicon” for younger young adults who came through the youth program. If you know of young adults in this category (age 18-25, roughly) who are missing the community they once had, please send them to www.reunicon08.com. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first District-level initiative for young adults in the last 2 years or so and I hope that a precedent will be established that can be stretched to be inclusive of those who did not come through the youth program. Unfortunately, it looks like Reunicon will fall on the same weekend as the aforementioned training, providing an extra disincentive for folks to come to the latter event.

Robbie Brydon

stlawrence.doc@gmail.com

416-762-0496

Attachment #8

ST. LAWRENCE DISTRICT CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICIES

PREAMBLE

We, the St. Lawrence District, as an institutional body of religious communities, appreciate and recognize the intelligent, dedicated, caring, and generous adults who devote time away from their families and work obligations to minister to and with the children and youth of our congregations. District programs and events would not be possible without these committed persons.

We, the District, also recognize with sadness the reality of the physical, sexual, and emotional abuse of children and youth. We recognize its existence throughout all strata of society, including religious communities, and its potentially devastating impact on our children and youth, our families, our congregations and district and continental associations, and on our wider communities.

We recognize that religious communities, which should be sanctuaries in every sense of the word, can be particularly vulnerable to incidents of abuse because of the welcoming spirit, the ever-present need for volunteers, and the high level of trust and respect rightfully accorded those volunteers, especially in programs for children and youth. We seek to preserve that spirit of welcome, respect and trust in balance with our concern for the safety of our children, applying the test of “reasonable precaution” to any policies or guidelines we adopt. We further acknowledge that institutions operating in the best possible manner with all due concern still cannot guarantee an absolutely risk-free setting.

Though we recognize the painful nature of this situation, and realize that to address it adequately will mean change and a sacrifice of some convenience, our responsibilities to these realities and to the Seven Principles of our faith call us to do all we can to make our world a better place to live.

In this spirit, we adopt this policy statement and apply it to all events conducted under the purview of the St. Lawrence District. We urge our member congregations and individual Unitarian Universalists to confront the issue of abuse and its potential source in religious communities, to study this policy statement and other resource material, and to take appropriate action. We do so, not in the spirit of fear, nor in the spirit of denial, but from an affirming stance that we are doing all we can to create a true sanctuary for all the children and youth of our community.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This document contains the following overall sections:

SCREENING AND SELECTION OF WORKERS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

SUPERVISION

TRANSPORTATION

REPORTING AND RESPONSE PROCEDURES

IMPLEMENTATION AND EDUCATION

RESOURCES

- Code of Conduct for workers with children and youth
- Youth participation release and emergency medical authorization
- Information about mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect
- Incident Report form
- Application form for workers with children and youth (Parts I and II)
- Suggested script for reference checking
- Safe Congregations resource list

These policies will apply to all St Lawrence District sponsored events such as
District Assembly,
YAC (Youth/Adult Committee) meetings
YAC-sponsored youth conferences and events
Events sponsored by the Religious Education Committee which include children

**** Although this policy is binding only upon events sponsored by the St. Lawrence District, individual congregations are encouraged to develop their own local protection policies.**

I. SCREENING AND SELECTION OF WORKERS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

With the exception of parents assisting in their child's program as required or as requested, all other workers, both volunteer and compensated, who provide direct care or supervision of children or teenage youth at SLD events, including but not limited to adult YAC advisors and chaplains at youth conferences, must meet the following criteria:

- All adults must have been active and in right relation with a SLD congregation for at least six months.
- Adults working with high school aged youth must be at least 25 years old. Adults working with middle school aged children must be at least 21 years old. All other grade-level teachers, nursery workers and other childcare workers must be at least 18 years old.
- All potential workers with children and youth, and youth in leadership positions, must complete an application form and supply three references. These references should be people who have known the potential worker for at least three years, preferably in relation to previous work with children or youth. Government-issued photo identification, such as a driver's license may be requested. All compensated and volunteer workers will be asked to consent to a criminal background check and such check may be performed.
- All adults working with children and youth, and youth working in positions of leadership, must sign the St. Lawrence District Code of Conduct form.
- Candidates wishing to serve as adult members of the district Youth-Adult Committee (YAC) will meet guidelines and follow procedures as specified above, and will be interviewed by members of the YAC and the Program Consultant for Lifespan Faith Development (PC) or her/his designee.
- The minister, religious education leader and/or Board president of any member congregation has the right to contest the appropriateness of any adult or youth to participate in SLD youth programming. Disputes regarding appropriateness of attendees shall be heard and decided by a Board of Review consisting of six members, three of whom shall be appointed by the YAC and three by the District Board.

*Please note:

- The above screening requirements do not apply to congregational sponsors at youth conferences. However sponsors must sign the Code of Ethics and Rules forms as required by the district Youth-Adult Committee.
- Parents of participating children and youth are welcome as visitors at all district events with proper endorsement by a church official (e.g. minister, director of religious education, youth director, Board president).

Copies of the application form (including permission for background check) and code of conduct may be found in the Resources section of this document.

II. SUPERVISION

- A minimum of two adults must be scheduled to supervise groups. Exceptions may be made by the primary on-site adult leader. In particular, for events where youth are in leadership positions and that involve no children under the age of 12, such as district YAC conferences, one adult or one youth may supervise a group (examples include workshops and touch groups). However, both adults and youths must have completed an Application Form and signed the Code of Conduct. Because of the importance of the role of the touch group leaders, it is strongly recommended that youth and adults receive training prior to serving in this capacity.
- At no time shall one adult and one child/youth be alone together out of sight of other adults unless the adult is a parent or legal guardian of the child/youth.
- In addition to the two-adult rule, the minimum adult-child/youth ratio at all district events shall be 1:7. Youth who are attending a SLD sponsored event must have an on-site sponsor, with one adult sponsoring a maximum of 7 youth. It is the responsibility of the registrar of each event to verify to the best of his/her ability that each youth has a sponsor.
- Since drivers need adequate sleep for the trip home, the hosting institution of a SLD youth event will be responsible for providing adequate adult roamers to monitor the facility during drivers' sleeping hours. Roamers will be responsible for addressing inappropriate behavior, and for ensuring that fire exits remain free of obstructions. Visibility and accessibility shall be maintained into all activities rooms at all times, including sleeping rooms and movie rooms, via either an open door or an unobstructed interior window into the space. All doors must remain unlocked.
- Electronic and phone communication to children or youth initiated by adults in district leadership will only be used for the purposes of conducting the business of the group involved. Youth members of the SLD YAC or other district committees will be subscribed to a list-serve to facilitate the work of the district only after receiving written parental permission. Please find more details on this subject under "Electronic Communication" in the Code of Conduct in the Resources section.
- Corporal punishment will not be used under any circumstances

Fire Safety

Fire Safety will be a primary concern of adults responsible for district-level events.

- Prior to district events, adults responsible for programming shall exercise care to note the location of fire-safety equipment (extinguishers, etc.), to ensure the posting of evacuation-route maps, and to determine a safe place to congregate in the event of an evacuation.
- During opening gatherings at district-level events, the issue of fire safety and response to fire shall be addressed. Participants shall be cautioned about safe use of chalices, candles and other open flames. Location of fire extinguishers and evacuation-route maps shall be pointed out, and the designated place to congregate in the case of evacuation shall be announced.

- In the event of evacuation, adults responsible for programming shall take the attendance roster or registration list and Emergency Releases to the gathering site and take roll immediately.

III. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation To and From District Events

It is the responsibility of the local congregation or the parents to provide safe transportation to and from District events. The SLD recommends that all youth and children ride with adults who meet the requirements below. In particular, it is recommended that youth not drive themselves or ride with a youth driver to a district youth conference, due to possible sleep deprivation during the event.

Transportation During District Events

- All drivers must be at least 25 years of age, hold a valid driver's license, and must provide proof of automobile insurance. Drivers must sign the SLD Code of Conduct.
- At no time shall child or youth participants leave the campus of the hosting institution, except as part of planned and previously announced offsite activities under the leadership of the host institution. A minimum of two adults must accompany a group going off-site, and the appropriate youth or child to adult ratio must be maintained. Exceptions for exigent circumstances may only be made by the primary on-site adult leader.
- The vehicle must be equipped with seatbelts for all passengers, and everyone must wear a seatbelt. When transporting young children, the driver must follow the state's laws for the use of car seats and booster seats and its regulations as to where children should be seated in the vehicle. The need for seatbelts supercedes the need for two adults in each vehicle, however upon arrival at the destination, a minimum of two adults must accompany a group of children or youth when off-site.
- Written permission of the parent/guardian of all minor passengers will be obtained prior to being transported. This permission will include details of the event, such as date and location, time of departure and time of return. Emergency contact information including name of physician, health insurance information and consent to treat in case of an emergency must accompany all minors who are being transported by adults other than their parents. During travel, the forms will be kept by the driver of the vehicle, or the responsible adult traveling with a group using an alternate form of transportation, e.g. bus or train. See the Resource section for a copy of the SLD parental permission form.

- No driver may be sleep-deprived, consume alcohol or use any form of drug that can affect physical or mental performance during or before carrying out his/her duty as a driver.
- If possible, it is recommended that at least one person in the vehicle have a cell phone.

IV. REPORTING AND RESPONSE PROCEDURES

Definition of Abuse: Those who work with children and youth on a regular basis should recognize that child abuse is generally defined as the following:

- Physical abuse – bodily injury to a person. This includes, but is not limited to hitting, biting, scalding, burning and strangulation or suffocation.
- Physical neglect – the failure to adequately provide the essentials of life, such as food, shelter, clothing, and medical care.
- Sexual abuse – the exploitation of a child or youth for the gratification of an adult. It includes, but is not limited to inappropriate touching, intercourse, incest, rape and sodomy as well as exhibitionism, voyeurism and use of children in pornography. *In general, sexual contact with a minor less than 13 years of age, whether the age is known or unknown is considered a felony. If the complainant is 4 or more years younger than the sexual partner, a felony has occurred.*
- Emotional maltreatment – the failure to provide love, care, support and guidance necessary for healthy psychological development. This includes, but is not limited to verbal abuse, such as excessive teasing, belittling, and rejection.

Mandatory Reporters: See information on mandatory reporting laws in New York and Pennsylvania in the Resources section of this document.

Reporting Procedures

- All persons affiliated with a St. Lawrence District (SLD) event, including compensated workers, volunteers, adults, or youth, who acquire knowledge or a reasonable suspicion that one or more youth at a District event has been sexually molested or exploited, injured or been the victim of significant objectionable conduct shall:
 - ❖ immediately report the incident to the person in charge of the event
 - ❖ complete an “Incident Report” form found in the Resources section of this document
- The person in charge of an event to whom a report of molestation, injury, or objectionable conduct is made shall:
 - ❖ report the incident to the parent of the apparent victim (unless the parent is the abuser)
 - ❖ submit a copy of the completed “Incident Report” to either the District Executive and/or the Lifespan Program Consultant of the SLD.
- The District staff person who receives the report shall:
 - ❖ assist the person who reported the incident in notifying local authorities, if indicated – law enforcement, or in many cases Child Protective Services or the Department of Social Services.

- ❖ report the incident to the Minister of the congregations with whom the apparent victim and the accused are affiliated, unless there are good reasons not to do so.

Note: If notification of local authorities is indicated, reporting procedures must be implemented within 24 hours following the incident.

Response to Media

Only the District Executive may speak for the St. Lawrence District in response to media inquiries concerning an alleged incident of abuse, injury, or objectionable conduct. In general, the following guidelines apply for these situations with the public media:

- As long as the speaker has reason to believe that the incident has been reported to the District Executive serving the St. Lawrence District, the media should be referred to the DE for a substantive response to the inquiry. In particular, the District Executive can freely discuss the steps the District has taken to guard against abusive situations.
- Due to issues of confidentiality, specific cases should not be discussed in a public context. Particularly if litigation seems possible, it is important that we protect both the District and the interests of the child or youth. An appropriate response to further media inquiry is for the speaker to state that s/he wishes to protect the confidentiality of the apparent victim and cannot comment on the details of the situation for that reason.
- Please be cautioned that in any subsequent litigation, details provided by any person with even apparent authority of the St. Lawrence District or any of its member congregations may be used against those entities.

Removal of a Worker with Children or Youth

Should circumstances or events arise that indicate that an adult worker is no longer a suitable person for working with children or youth, said adult will be removed from involvement or contact with children or youth. If the worker in question is a minister, the UUA's Office of Ethics and Safety must be contacted (617-948-6462). Any person with concerns about an adult worker shall contact the District Lifespan Program Consultant or District Executive, who will assess the need for removal. The District staff then will consult with necessary parties, including appropriate leadership of the worker's local congregation and the St. Lawrence District Youth-Adult Committee (YAC) to determine whether such action is necessary. The District staff then will inform the SLD Board President and, if appropriate, shall also inform their supervisor in the District Services Staff Group of the UUA.

In taking any such action, the District staff will afford the affected worker an opportunity to know the charges against him or her, and to know the evidence, and source thereof, supporting such charges. The worker will also be given the right to reply to or rebut such charges. Our Unitarian Universalist principles, which call on us to apply fairness and compassion in our relationships with each other, will guide our actions and decisions.

It is understood that such action will be handled with due caution and discretion, and that the professional staff of the St. Lawrence District has the full backing and support of the district Board in implementing this policy. Because of potential exposure to charges of discrimination or other legal issues, the Executive Committee of the Board shall be promptly advised of the circumstances surrounding any removal action under this policy.

V. IMPLEMENTATION AND EDUCATION

Implementation Process:

- A draft of the policy will be presented to, and input solicited from, the SLD Board and District Executive, the SLD Religious Education Committee, the SLD Youth-Adult Committee and ministers in the Iroquois chapter UUMA.
- A revised proposal will be presented to the SLD Board for approval. Upon acceptance by the Board, the policy and a cover letter will be sent directly to the following parties:
 - ❖ SLD Board and Staff
 - ❖ SLD Religious Education Committee
 - ❖ SLD Youth Adult-Committee
 - ❖ Young Adult-Campus Ministry Committee
 - ❖ Ministers serving congregations in the SLD
 - ❖ Religious education leaders of congregations in the SLD
 - ❖ Youth advisors in SLD congregations
 - ❖ Leaders for upcoming district events
- The policy will be posted on the St. Lawrence District website in a format that permits printing by all users.
- Information about the new policy will be included in the SLD news packet mailed to all congregations.
- An electronic announcement will be sent via the SLD's list-serves.
- At least every three years the SLD RE Committee, or another committee appointed by the SLD Board, will review and revise this policy. Proposed revisions will be forwarded to the YAC (and to the RE Committee if they are not the reviewing committee) for review and comment. Recommended changes will then be presented to the SLD Board for approval and implementation.

Education:

- Training workshops on risk management will be offered on a regular basis in the district.
- Congregations will be made aware of the availability of training resources in the district's Gould Library and through the UUA. A resource list will be included in the Resources section of this policy, and in the handouts distributed during risk management workshops.

- When possible, it is recommended that adults in the SLD who will be working with children or youth take the online Balancing Acts course available free at <http://courses.neari.com>

ST LAWRENCE DISTRICT, U. U. A.

Code of Conduct for Adults and Youth in Leadership Positions

Who Work with Children and Youth

Adults and youth in leadership positions who work with children and youth at St. Lawrence District events are expected to always have the best interests of children and youth at heart. Adults are expected to nurture the physical, emotional, and spiritual growth of children and youth by fostering an environment of kindness, trust, respectfulness, and fun. No one's enjoyment should ever be at the expense of another person's health, wellbeing, or self-esteem. Our charge to children and youth workers is to encourage kindness and genuineness among the children and youth, and to discourage unkindness and falseness. The following are specific expectations that the District has for adults and youth in leadership positions who work with children and youth:

- **Sleep**—Workers at District events are expected to get adequate sleep during District events, so that they may be alert and clear thinking, and able to maintain good judgment and perform their expected duties in a competent and professional manner.
- **Sexualized Behavior**— Engaging in any manner of sexual behavior with a child or youth is never appropriate. This refers not only to explicitly sexual behavior, but also to sexually provocative behavior or language. It is not appropriate to tell jokes with sexual content, for example, or to make “double entendres.” Physical expressions of affection, such as hugs, have their place, but are best initiated by the child or youth and kept from being prolonged by the adult.
- **Confidentiality**—Effective relationships between youth and the adults and youth who work with them in leadership positions are established through trust, understanding, patience and the emotional bonds that develop. Confidentiality is an important component of this process, but there are limits to confidentiality and circumstances under which the confidential relationship must be broken. If you learn that a child or youth is the victim of abuse, is suicidal, has a serious drug problem, etc. **FOR THE SAFETY OF BOTH THE YOUTH AND YOURSELF, YOU MUST NOT KEEP SUCH INFORMATION TO YOURSELF.** For this reason, never give children or youth the impression that you will keep secrets for them. For the most part, a covenant of confidentiality will mean that you do not repeat information told to you in confidence. However, when information is of a major crisis nature, encourage the child or youth to seek help from a parent or other authority figure. In addition, you yourself **MUST** consult

with a person of greater authority in the district about an appropriate course of action. If in doubt, it is best to initiate this conversation. Adults and youth in leadership positions who work with children and youth under the aegis of the district are responsible not only to the children and youth, but to the district as well. Remember: you are acting both ethically and legally as an agent of the St. Lawrence District.

The following expectations are specific to ADULTS working with children and youth:

- **“Friendship” with Youth**—Although we hope that youth and adults will develop a genuine fondness for one another, any adult who looks to youth for “friendship” is not sufficiently mature to be in a supervisory position. A friendship is reciprocal, where neither person has more responsibility for the health of the relationship than the other. This is antithetical to the adult/youth relationship, where the adult is the one who assumes primary responsibility for maintaining appropriate boundaries and cultivating an atmosphere of health and trust. It is expected that relationships that an adult has with youth who have grown to adulthood will not become exploitative.
- **Unofficial Contact with Youth**—Sometimes a genuine mentoring relationship will develop between a youth and an adult. Such relationships can be not only healthy, but sometimes transformative for both. It is our concern however, that in some cases a “predator,” who does not have the best interest of the youth at heart, may try to disguise an unhealthy relationship with a youth as a mentoring relationship. Therefore, if you wish to be in contact with one of our youth outside the normal channels of district-sponsored events, it is imperative that your behavior both be and appear to be above reproach. Any relationship you develop with a youth outside of district-sponsored events must be with the knowledge and consent of the parents or guardians. Furthermore, you should let an appropriate member of the district know what you are doing (such as District Staff, a member of the Youth/Adult Committee or a member of the District RE Committee) and notify the youth’s minister, or religious education leader, or congregational president. This is for the protection of the youth, but also for your own protection. You will best protect yourself from false accusations of misconduct by keeping the district and the parents and guardians aware of your actions.
- **Electronic Communications--** Recognizing that the means for communication, especially electronic communication, are changing rapidly, the SLD upholds the principle that parents are the final arbiter of how and when their child or youth should receive communication from adults. Electronic and phone communication to children or youth initiated by adults in district leadership will only be used for the purposes of conducting the business of the group involved (e.g. scheduling of upcoming events, distribution and discussion of minutes, announcement of schedule changes, etc.). Youth members of the SLD YAC or other district committees will be subscribed to a list-serve to facilitate the work of the district only after receiving written parental permission. Adults responding to communication from a child or youth, or communicating in online communities, will maintain appropriate boundaries and use discernment, always acting in the best interest of the safety and wellbeing of the child or youth. Adults should not communicate with a child or youth via instant messaging or text messaging. Adults will not advertise, promote, or publish links to their own personal journals, blogs or websites to children or youth.

Accordance with this Code of Conduct

Any district worker with children or youth who disagrees with any provision of the code is free to discuss his/her opinions with the leadership of the district. However, until such time as the district chooses to alter any portion of its provisions, the worker must abide by the code as written. By signing below, the signatory indicates that s/he has read this Code of Conduct, and agrees to abide by it. By signing below, the signer indicates s/he has been informed of this code and agrees to abide by it before assuming work with children and/or youth involved in District activities. If a worker violates any of its provisions, s/he may be removed as a worker at district event.

Signed _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

Role/Title _____ Congregation _____

ST LAWRENCE DISTRICT, U. U. A.
PARTICIPATION RELEASE AND AUTHORIZATION
FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT OF MINORS

I, _____, the undersigned represent that I am the Parent/Guardian of _____. I grant permission for my child to participate in the following adult-supervised activity: _____.

The activity will take place at the following location(s): _____
_____ from (date & time) _____

to (date & time) _____, and I grant permission for my child to be transported to and from the location by reasonable and safe means.

I agree and hereby do release and hold harmless the St. Lawrence District, the hosting member congregation and/or any and all adult supervisors for the activity, from and for any and all liability which may arise for damages, loss or injuries, either to person or property, which my child may sustain while engaged in the activity conducted, including, but not limited to, any damages, loss or injuries that may be sustained through transportation to and from the activity.

Should any injury occur, I grant permission for my child to receive emergency treatment from an appropriate health care provider to be selected by the adult supervisor of the activity, when, in such supervisor's opinion, the need for such treatment is immediate, and when efforts to contact me (us) are unsuccessful. I also agree to pay and be responsible for all medical, hospital or other expenses which the St. Lawrence District and/or any and all adult supervisors may incur as a result of securing such treatment.

I further agree to assume responsibility for any liability which may arise for damages, loss or injuries, as described herein which may be caused or contributed to by my son/daughter to the person or property of others.

Name (printed) _____

Signature: _____

Relationship to Participant: _____ Date: _____

Home address: _____ Email _____

Home phone number: _____ Emergency phone number: _____

Family Physician/Practice: _____ Physician's phone number: _____

Health Insurance provider: _____ Policy/Group#: _____

Child's Allergies: _____ Physical limitations: _____

Medicine Child is currently taking: _____ Other needs _____

MANDATED REPORTING LAWS

Mandated reporters of child or elder abuse or neglect in all 50 states and the District of Columbia are medical personnel, school personnel, daycare providers, social service personnel, mental health care personnel and law enforcement personnel. The extent of the knowledge that triggers the legal duty to report is “a reasonable cause to suspect” abuse or neglect. The report must be made to a child protection agency or a law enforcement agency. Reporting only to a parent or relative will **not** satisfy the reporter’s legally-mandated duty to report. Every state and the District of Columbia has a law that absolutely protects any reporter of abuse or neglect from civil and criminal liability as long as the report was made in “good faith”. The following are laws specific to the states of New York and Pennsylvania:

New York:

Who Must Report

- . Physicians; registered physician assistants; medical examiners; coroners; dentists and dental hygienists, optometrists; chiropractors; registered nurses; hospital personnel engaged in the admission, examination, care or treatment of persons; or a Christian Science practitioner;
- . School officials; social service workers; day-care center workers; providers of family or group family day-care; employees or volunteers in a residential care facility; or any other child care or foster care worker;
- . Psychologists; mental health professionals; substance abuse counselors; or alcoholism counselors;
- . Peace officers; police officers; district attorneys or assistant district attorneys; or other law enforcement officials.

Circumstances

- . When they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child coming before them in their professional or official capacity is an abused or maltreated child: or
- . When they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is an abused or maltreated child where the parent, guardian, custodian or other person legally responsible for such child comes before them in their professional or official capacity and states from personal knowledge facts, conditions or circumstances which, if correct would render the child an abused or maltreated child.

Privileged Communication

- None

Pennsylvania

Who Must Report

- . Licensed physicians, medical examiners, coroners, funeral directors, dentists, optometrists, chiropractors, podiatrists, registered and licensed practical nurses, hospital personnel engaged in the admission, examination, care or treatment of persons, Christian Science practitioners;
- Members of the clergy, school administrators, schoolteachers, school nurses, social services workers, day-care center workers or any other child-care or foster-care workers, mental health professionals, peace officers or law enforcement officials.

Circumstances

- . When, in the course of their employment, occupation or practice of their profession, they come into contact with children who they have reasonable cause to suspect, on the basis of their medical, professional or other training and experience, that a child coming before them in their professional or official capacity is an abused child.

Privileged Communications

- . Except with respect to confidential communications made to an ordained member of the clergy which are protected under law relating to confidential communications to clergymen, the privileges communication between any professional person required to report and the patient or client of that person shall not apply to situations involving child abuse and shall not constitute grounds for failure to report as required by this chapter.

**Reports of abuse should be made to your local Children's Protective Services Agency or you may use these toll-free

numbers:

New York 1-800-324-3720

Pennsylvania 1-800-932-0313

The National Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline (1-800-422-4453 or <http://childhelpusa.org>) provides state-by-state information on how to report abuse in each community.

ST. LAWRENCE DISTRICT, UUA

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

- Date of incident: _____
- Time and place(s) of incident: _____
- Title of the event where the incident occurred: _____
- Name and position of reporter: _____
- Name(s) of persons involved: _____

- Brief description of the incident:
(Use the back of this form as needed, and attach any supporting materials when completed)

- Did you observe the described incident directly? (please circle) Yes No
- If not, who or what was your source of information? (Please be specific)

- Description of any action taken by the reporter. For example, to whom did you relay the information and what was reported? (please be specific)

Signature of Reporter _____ Date _____

**** Return this completed form with any supporting material to the person in charge of the St. Lawrence District event. A copy of this form must be submitted to the District Executive and the Program Consultant for Lifespan Faith Development as soon as possible.**

Application Form: Part I

For adults or youth who wish to serve in leadership positions with children or youth at St. Lawrence District sponsored events.

Role or Position applied for _____ Date _____

Full Name: _____ Date of Birth _____
 First Middle Last

Home Street Address _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

CONGREGATION HISTORY AND PRIOR WORK WITH CHILDREN AND/OR YOUTH

Name of congregation with which you are affiliated:

Length of affiliation:

Other congregations you have attended regularly in the past 5 years:

List all previous congregational work involving children and/or youth (for example: the name of congregation, names of advisors/religious educators, your role, and responsibilities performed during your service.)

List all previous community (non-church) work involving children and/or youth (for example: name of organizations, addresses, supervisors' names, your role, and responsibilities performed during your service.)

List any gifts, callings, training, education, experiences or other factors that have prepared you for work with children and/or youth:

For adults only:

Driver's License # _____ State _____ Social Security # _____

Automobile Insurance Co. _____ Policy # _____

Employer _____ Work Phone _____

Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a criminal offense related to sexual misconduct or child abuse? (circle one) YES NO

Has any civil judgment ever been made against you for reasons related to sexual misconduct or child abuse? (circle one) YES NO

Have you ever resigned from employment or been disciplined or terminated by an employer for reasons related to sexual misconduct or child abuse? (circle one) YES NO

Other than the above, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of children or youth? (circle one) YES NO

If you will be driving children and/or youth, please answer the following two questions: Have you ever been convicted of Driving-Under-the-Influence or Reckless Driving? (circle one) YES NO

Do you currently have any traffic points on your driver's license? (circle one) YES NO

If you answered YES to any of the above, please explain (attach a separate sheet).

Application Form: Part II

REFERENCE AND BACKGROUND CHECK AUTHORIZATION

For adults or youth who wish to serve in leadership positions with children or youth at SLD sponsored events.

Please provide the names and contact information for three references (including at least one congregational leader or professional staff person) who have known you for at least three years and can recommend you as appropriate for a leadership role in programs for children and youth. If you are applying to work with youth, please include one teenager and two adults as references. No relatives please.

1) Name _____ Role _____

Phone # _____ Email Address _____

2) Name _____ Role _____

Phone # _____ Email Address _____

3) Name _____ Role _____

Phone # _____ Email Address _____

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references listed in this application to provide any information or opinions that they may have regarding my character and fitness for work with children or youth. I waive any right that I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person identified by me in this application. I also authorize the St. Lawrence District to conduct a Criminal Background Check. In consideration of receipt and evaluation of this application by the St. Lawrence District of the UUA, I hereby release any individual, congregation, the St. Lawrence District including the record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, on account of compliance or any attempts to comply, with this authorization.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by these policies and the Code of Conduct of the St. Lawrence District. I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing release and know the contents thereof and I sign this release as my own free act. This is a legally binding agreement which I have read and understand.

Applicant's signature

Date

Witness Signature

Date

Do not write below this line; for office use only

Reviewed & Signed Reference Checked Background Check Copy on File Rejected

**SUGGESTED SCRIPT FOR REFERENCE CHECK OF CANDIDATES PROVIDING
DIRECT SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH AT SLD EVENTS**

Date:

Candidate:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Hello, I am _____ and I serve on the _____ (name of committee)

It is my understanding that (name of candidate) attends your congregation and I'm calling to ask you a few questions in order to help determine whether or not (name of candidate) is qualified to serve in a position which requires the direct supervision of children and youth.

This interview may take up to twenty-minutes. Is this a convenient time for you?
(If "yes", proceed; if "no", determine time when you may call again.)

How long have you known (candidate)?

How well would you say you know (candidate)?

*(If interviewee does not know candidate well, please ask ** directly below.)*

***I'd like to complete this interview and would also like to know if there is someone else on your staff, or in a position of lay-leadership, who may be better acquainted with (candidate). I'd like to interview them as well. Would you please share their name and contact information with me?*

Has (candidate) worked directly with children or youth in your congregation?

How long has (candidate) been involved working with children or youth?

Has (candidate) proven to be trustworthy, and able to set appropriate boundaries with children and/or youth?

In what other capacities has (candidate) served your congregation (chaired committees, served on task forces, served on Board)?

In your opinion does (candidate) understand programming for children and/or youth within the context of the strategic goals and/or mission of your larger congregation? Can you give me an example of ways (candidate) has exhibited her/his ability to see the "big picture"?

What do you believe to be the primary motivation behind (candidate's) desire to work with children or youth?

Does (candidate) exhibit ability to work well with other adults as part of a team? Can you give me an example?

Does (candidate) respect and adhere to your congregation's policies regarding safety and accountability?

Does (candidate) exercise good judgment and decision making? Can you give me an example of that?

Do you feel that (candidate) is someone capable of setting a good example for other adults working with children and youth and for the children and youth themselves?

Is there any reason that you can think of that (candidate) would not be an asset to the _____ committee/staff/board?

Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about (candidate)?

Is there anything of a confidential nature that would have a bearing on this interview that you do not feel comfortable sharing with me? (*if "yes" ask *** directly below.*)

***Would you feel comfortable sharing this with:

- a. the District Executive, _____ (name) _____?
- b. the District Program Consultant for Lifespan Faith Development, _____ (name) _____?
- c. the President of the SLD Board, _____ (name) _____?

Thank you so much for your time. We will consider your input carefully. Good bye.

Safe Congregation Resource List

1. The main UUA website for safety information may be found at www25.uua.org/cde/education/safecong.html.
2. Answers to frequently asked questions, including links to a variety of safety forms and resources:
<http://www25.uua.org/re/teachers/supportingteaching4.html>
3. *Balancing Acts – Keeping Children Safe in Congregations* by Deborah Haffner
 - written document available online at <http://archive.uua.org/cde/ethics/balancing/>
 - register for and take the new, free online interactive curriculum at <http://courses.neari.com>
4. *The Safe Congregation Handbook: Nurturing Healthy Boundaries in Our Faith Communities* by Patricia Hoertdoerfer and Frederick Muir.
5. A resource for free forms, booklets, DVDs, etc. is Church Mutual, which is the company that insures most UU churches. Their website is www.churchmutual.com Go to Safety Resources.
6. A great resource for advocacy, to “sell” the concept of a safety policy when a congregation is deciding whether or not it needs one, is www.reducingtherisk.com. The district library has the books and DVDs that are featured on this site.
7. The Ohio-Meadville District's "Child and Youth Protection Policy" may be viewed and printed from <http://omd.uua.geninfo/policies/OMDSafetyPolicy.pdf>
8. Three congregations who have posted policies online:
 - From the UU Society of Schenectady, NY:
<http://www.fussonline.org/Trustees/FUSSSafeCongregationsPolicy-10-16-06.pdf>
 - From the Northshore UU Church (suburban Chicago) go to www.nsuc.org and go to Religious Education and it will link to their policy.
 - From Live Oak UU Church (Austin, TX) go to <http://www.liveoakuu.org/abusepolicy.pdf>
9. The UUA’s own policy, “Responsible Staffing”, may be viewed at:
http://archive.uua.org/programs/ministry/staffing_guides.html

This site provides questions to use when checking references, recommends the following companies for use in **national background checks**, and provides much more useful info.

- Oxford Document Management Company, Inc.
655 West Highway 10
Anoka, MN 55303-1623
(800) 801-9114
<http://uua.oxforddoc.com>

Note: The UUA has contracted with this agency to conduct background checks at a reduced cost.

- Church Mutual Insurance Company's Screen Now program, with services provided by ChoicePoint
3000 Schuster Lane
P.O. Box 357
Merrill, Wisconsin 54452
(800) 554-2642
www.churchmutual.com
10. For criminal **background checks in the state of New York**, contact:
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
Sex Offender Registry
4 Tower Place
Albany, New York 12203
Phone Numbers:
Main Phone number, non-search, Monday - Friday 8:00a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
518-457-3167
For database searches available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year
800-262-3257
email: infodcjs@dcjs.state.ny.us
Website: <http://www.criminaljustice.state.ny.us/nsor/index.htm>
11. To report an incident of abuse: the National Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-4-A-Child or <http://childhelpusa.org>) provides state-by-state information on how to report abuse in each community.