

St. Lawrence District Board of Trustees

Friday, November 9 - Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst

Cluster Conversation - with representatives from the Western NY Cluster of churches, included an update of the status of the radio ad campaign and a discussion about the possibility of hiring a full-time consulting minister for the district. A meeting was set for January 10 to further discuss what needs this minister might help to meet.

The Board convened its meeting at about 8:45 PM.

Attending: Tom Chulak, Debby Herman, Ernie Hall, Jerol Kent, David Friedman, Robb Smith, Nancy Reed, Karen Palmer (by telephone)

The Board approved the nomination of Frances Manley as the new Ministerial Representative to the Board.

President's Report: Ernie Hall gave his report (attached), which described some of his recent activities, and a review of the District Presidents' Association meeting in Boston in November.

Liaison Reports: Liaison reports describing activities of congregations in various clusters were given by Board members (attached).

Saturday, November 10 - Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst

Attending: Frances Manly, Tom Chulak, Debby Herman, Ernie Hall, Jerol Kent, David Friedman, Robb Smith, Nancy Reed, Linda Friedman, Roger Thielking, Karen Palmer (by telephone)

Opening Words: Nancy read about the history and challenge of being a UU organization from a sermon of John Brigham.

Ernie opened the meeting by reviewing the covenant and the goals that were developed at the Board Retreat for us to keep in mind as we worked today. The roles and responsibilities of the Board and of the District Executive and staff were discussed as they were outlined at the retreat. There was agreement that our style of governance works well for our group.

Reports:

District Executive Tom Chulak added to the discussion of governance the idea that the relationship between the DE and the Board is good and is a model which permeates the system.

*Tom reviewed **the staff and their roles**. Sara Clavez's job description will change from Fund Raising Coordinator to Fund Raising Consultant. The search process will begin to replace Deb Herman, Lifespan Faith Development Consultant, and Jody Brown, Youth Coordinator.

*With the developing of the liaison role of Board members to the clusters of congregations, information on the needs of congregations will come from the Board to Tom - a good shift.

* There have been some **ministerial transitions**: David Grimm was installed as the minister in Ithaca. Jean Wahlstrom is the new minister at May Memorial in Syracuse.

* The **4 district experiment**, a three year collaboration between SLD, Metro, Joseph Priestly and Ohio-Meadville districts, has several new initiatives. There will be some shared ministry, including our sharing a district executive during Tom's sabbatical. The Leadership Institute was a success last summer. It brought together UUA staff, District staff, and congregations to learn from each other. It will be done again. Financially, it came close to breaking even despite the start-up expenses. There will be a coordinated effort around young adult and campus ministries, and youth staff. There will be a large church conference every three years. A Growth Consultant for the 4 districts has been proposed. (See attached proposal). The annual meeting of the 4 district group will be in NYC this year.

* Our district is looking into using **distance learning** to meet our goals better congregation/staff relationships. There will be report from the consultant by February.

* Tom discussed the thinking of the **Chalice Lighter's committee** which is committed to supporting growth proposals.

Lifespan Faith Development Acting consultant Debbie Herman discussed her recent activities and submitted a comprehensive report. (See attached) There is also a report attached from Robbie Brydon, the new **campus ministry/young adult** consultant, who was unable to make this meeting.

Debbie submitted a draft of the **Safety policies** that are being considered for district events. These will be distributed to key people for review and a final draft submitted for approval at the February meeting. These policies will not apply to individual church activities but could be helpful guidelines for churches that haven't put Safe Congregation policies in place.

UUA Trustee David Friedman's report included:

*The UUA Board is discussing a celebration of 50 year anniversary of the Unitarian/Universalist merger.

* Improvements in the insurance offered by UUA .

* The national ad campaign.

* Some concerns about the security at Ft. Lauderdale at the sight of next year's GA. It is an international port and picture ID's will be required to enter the convention space.

* Concerns about funding for our UUA theological seminaries.

Details will be submitted in his written report.

****Minutes of the August Board Meeting – MSP (Motion Seconded and Passed)**

Financial Reports Treasurer Roger Thielking submitted final statements for 2006-2007, and for the First Quarter reports for 2007-2008. (See attached).

Roger said that the transition to a new bookkeeper has taken a little longer than expected but that Patrick Roach is doing good work. Ernie added that the balance sheet is healthy.

District Assembly. Linda Friedman reported on plans for the 2008 DA - "Sustainable Earth - A Call to Action" - in Owego, hosted by the Binghamton Church. There will be a dinner before the Gould Lecture, Friday, April 26. So far, the structure for Saturday is still flexible. Linda has started to promote DA around the district, hoping to attract people interested the theme of the environment, not just church committee people looking for some "how to's". Flyers will go out as early as February.

A dinner is planned for Saturday night after DA. Awards will be given out at the dinner rather than at the business meeting. This will shorten the business meeting, encourage people to stick around and give the dinner a celebratory flavor. There are several good suggestions for possible a keynote speaker and/or a major lecture. There will be slots for district committees to promote their activities. The possibility of a Poster Session was discussed. There will be a bookstore from Metro-NY. The Board reiterated its commitment to supporting the DA and Linda in her new position as Coordinator. Linda will submit a budget for DA at next Board meeting, but the Board gave her the go ahead to set the registration fee.

****Motion to approve setting the registration fee for DA at up to \$60 for ontime registrations. - MSP**

In 2009, the DA will be the same weekend in April, the 24th and 25th. Albany will host.

GA Workshops. We have 2 slots for workshops at next year's GA. It was decided to explore the possibility of submitting applications for workshops on the **Leadership Development Institute** and on the **Greater Good Program**. Applications need to be in by Feb. 1.

The NYSCU Grant Application is due the end of December. Karen Palmer agreed to work on that application. And it was decided to ask for \$18,000 this year. This is a modest cost of living increase of \$1000 over the amount that we have requested in the past and is not a request to support any new initiatives.

Programs: Tom on the Programs of the district:

- * Social Justice - Dick Gilbert's program has attracted good support for conferences.
- * RE, Youth and YACM program reports are in Debbie Herman's reports attached.
- * Leadership Development - There will be a Worship in the Arts Conference on April 5, Coordinators are Suzie Farrell and Alexa Carter.
- * UULTI - Doug Zelinski is the new Director of the Institute. It will be held at the same time, in the same place, next year. Staffing UULTI will be done by the people who have been involved in the past. This brought up the question of the staffing of other district committees and how to get broad representation on them.
- * Growth - There will be a Growth Conference at the beginning of March for the eastern congregations.
- * Communications - Christy Multer will do a communications workshop for the Central Cluster in March.
- * Fundraising - There will be a stewardship conference May 10 in Rochester with Wayne Clark The charge will be a minimal one of \$99 for a team from a congregation.
- * Ministerial Settlement : ** **Motion to approve Priscilla Richter as the new Ministerial Settlement Representative. - MSP**
- * Chalice Lighters - There were two applications for this grant. One was from the church in Chautauqua to help purchase a building on the Chautauqua Institute grounds. The Committee felt that our grant would not be much help towards the

purchase price. The church will be encouraged to come back another year for help in promoting this resource if they are able to acquire it.

The Chalice Lighter Committee recommended the awarding of a Chalice Lighters Grant to First Unitarian Church of Rochester to pay for a 1/4 time youth coordinator. The Board feels that this is supporting the idea of staffing for growth.

****Motion to accept the recommendation of the Chalice Lighters Committee - MSP**

Search Process for a Program Consultant for Lifespan Faith Development, to replace Debbie Herman. This will no longer be a shared position with Ohio-Meadville District. We need someone to support our DRE's and Youth/Young Adult staff. Salary and benefits for this half-time position were discussed. Tom will investigate whether UUA would be willing to provide partial funding of this position. The search process will get going in January. Tom will be an ex-officio member of the Search Committee. Other possible members were discussed. The Job Description will be out by January.

****Motion to set the salary for the new Lifespan Faith Development Program Coordinator at \$20,800, plus Health Insurance of up to \$4000, Life Insurance of \$150, Pension of \$2280, Taxes of \$1560, and expenses of \$4800. - MSP**

Cluster Conversation update - The next step will include clusters in conversation about a visioning process to come up with some ends. A goal would be a long range plan in place by the 2009 District Assembly.

Additionally, Ernie announced that the Board Retreat for 2008 will be August 15 - 17. The first choice for a site is the Notre Dame Retreat Center in Canandaigua. Sue Tabone will look into its availability.

The Board discussed expanding the April Board Meeting and not holding it the evening after the District Assembly.

Closing words were given by our new Ministerial Representative on the Board, Frances Manly. She read the poem "Thanksgiving".

Nancy Reed