

## **Saturday Afternoon Business Session:**

Margie Manning: All other districts have also approved regionalization.

Regional Advisory Council members have been selected to advise Scott Tayler and Rev Kenn Hurto. These will reach out to congregations on a regular basis to provide feedback.

## **Whose GIFT is It Anyway?**

Bill Clontz

Whenever we re-balance contributions, some people will pay more and some people will pay less. The transparency and simplicity of the new program are compelling, as is the fairness.

Two visions of UU-ism: Candle in the darkness. Problem if you're still in the darkness, not close to the candle. Or can think of it as a smart grid with multiple power sources learning to cooperate.

What keeps us from getting there?

- 1) Not enough of us
- 2) We choose our leaders and start mistrusting them immediately
- 3) We have a hard time talking about money

#1: About same number of UUs as at the time of the merger. About 160k, think four football stadiums. Just under 1100 congregations. For every 1 affiliated, 4 in alignment.

State with the highest percentage and number of UUs. 0.59%. Across US population, .007%.

If you're ok with those numbers, we can keep doing things the way we have been doing.

#2: Not unique to UUs, but very prevalent among UUs. No power, no money in Boston. Just people trying to do good work.

#3: Bill is a stewardship guy. Became a stewardship consultant because his congregation hired one, and it was a transformational experience. Don't want to chase last 5% to pay their bills. Money is ministry, just like time and talent (not exchangeable). Do the best you can across all aspects.

We carry baggage from past experiences, denominations. We see as debt/obligations, not as investments or celebrations. We are shy about thanking our donors, in particular Fair Share donors. Fair Share a social justice tool. We need to be comfortable thanking people. We should be comfortable saying to people that we appreciate large donations. People who have the ability to give large gifts to lay a foundation. Small gifts also necessary.

We sometimes dilute the meaning of membership, at both levels. Need to give both time and money.

Getting much more intentional with new members, serious discussions about contributions.

What do we get from those dues to the UUA? What do they do for us? A fair question, but an insufficient one.

Some of the benefits:

- Professional clergy/staff credentialing
- Interim ministers
- Hymnals
- RE materials, incl OWL
- Stewardship, giving, endowment support
- Learning libraries, archives, resources
- Scholarships
- Education/Training for All of Us
- Mediation assistance
- Crisis ministry team
- Standing on the Side of Love brand
- Community of people to help
- Representation in Washington and the UN
- Forums for church gatherings
- Support for seminaries
- Church of the larger fellowship
- Military chaplain support
- Chalice lighter programs.
- SUUSI and summer programs.

Lessons learned:

- Keep telling the stories
- Facts are important, but aren't enough.
- Be less concerned with winning than with converting.
- Support leaders

If we're not willing to put in resources, none of the rest of it will happen.

Stewardship elevator speech: If everything we've said is true, and this is important, why is it struggling so hard to be funded adequately.

Join clusters and learning circles. Remind all we gain by being in Association.

Spread the word—what we cannot do as one congregation we can do together.

Review "So What Do They Do For Us!" On the Southern Region web site.

Treat our gifts to the UUA and the Region not as an externally generated debt but as an investment in our future and as a gift to future UUs.

This is seed corn for the future, a mark of solidarity with each other.

Encourage a mindset that “us” means ALL of us, not just our congregation. Do NOT be satisfied that only about 60% of us are Honor Congregations. We all have challenges, but have a hard time believing that 4/10 congregations are in that dire of straits. That number bothers me a lot.

Be at least as committed to the growth and well-being of UUism at regional, national levels as in our own congregation.

Know that membership means something and that stewardship and shared generosity part of that.

## Climate Justice

Irene & Bob Keim

In 2006, we passed statement of conscience wrt climate change. Florida needs us.

How do you feel about the environment?

What are you doing about it?

Who are you doing it with?

Partnering is important. Multiplies influence.

Greening GA started with volunteers in Ft Worth. Greenest conference now. We should feel good about UUs and what we have accomplished together.

Commit2Respond a grass roots campaign. Not top-down from UUA.

UUSC water bottle says “Water is a Human Right.” Should use re-usable water bottles.

Handout “Principles of Environmental Justice.”

Environmental Justice frequently involves working with people of color. Things like where we put landfills or waste sites.

Climate Justice about people who are impacted by climate change. Temperature in Central America has been increasing, gradually higher temperatures higher up the mountains. Eg coffee will not produce beans above a certain temperature.

Ecological Justice refers to dealing with animals who share planet with us. Plants and animals play a role in our quality of life. We need to have respect for interdependent web of life.

Commit2Respond a framework where we can announce what we are working on or get ideas what to work on. If we don't know how, maybe our first commitment is learning how to engage. Shift to a low-carbon future, advance human rights, grow activism.

Commitments can start small and become larger and longer-term over time. "Our Place in the Web of Life" is a class exploring the issue. It is a high-level survey course.

## Youth Ministry

Almost Christian

How to create devoted UU

Building houses of hope

Youth Ministry Adivsing

Youth group is a place for affinity- youth ministry involves the entire congregations and starts with adults who step back as youth step out

2015

Healthy boundaries define how healthy your youth ministry will be

It needs to be developmentally appt.

Youth specifically 14-18 because we want to meet youth where they are at.

Should be in the,middle not in the RE wing

Churches are the last multigenerational space

How are church involved in the life of the church? Attending worship keeps them involved

Youth who connect with non re/advisers are more likely to rank their churches higher

How do we get familial commitment to church life?

Whole week faith program

How are parents invested in the,life of our programs

Come share a song with me

What is the mission of your church, what is a conegant?someone who pays the bills or shares space?

Slur of multigenerational service, why isn't it just worship?

Sometimes the youth equate the symbol of the sacred with the sacred. The event rather than what it is, we need to translate the spirituality into congregations life

Safe-

Set a highbar of covenant not rules- how they want to be together in the highest level of being together

Developmentally appropriate leadership development (for 14-18 without code switch)

Multigenerational is not a worship style

Jr. High rallies

Middle school is in faith development office

Boy scout explorer post- insurance stuff

Kathy McGowan: There are arms of community to hold us even as we struggle

### Identity Formation

Dynamic youth ministry supports youth in their journeys to figure out who they are as spiritual beings, relational beings, racial/ethnic and sexual beings, and people of faith. Youth ministry helps youth develop a healthy identity by providing programs like *Our Whole Lives: Sexuality Education* that explore and affirm diverse identities, by offering mentors and role models, by providing opportunities to participate and to lead, and, ultimately, by accepting and respecting them as they are and as they grow.

### Pastoral Care

Youth have age-related pastoral needs that are met in communities where people know how to listen deeply, where everyone works together to create a religious community that provides pastoral care with youth. This includes creating safe congregations, supporting youth who are in crisis, and celebrating their joys and accomplishments. Pastoral care with youth is strengthened when ministers have a direct relationship with the youth.

**Beth Dana** is a lifelong Unitarian Universalist and a graduate of Union Theological Seminary in New York. She has served as a youth leader, religious leader, and minister in a variety of contexts, and is committed to building multigenerational faith communities.

### For Further

Gail Forsyth  
*Handbook of*  
Universalist

Jennifer M.  
*the Spirit*  
*Youth*. Boston  
2010.

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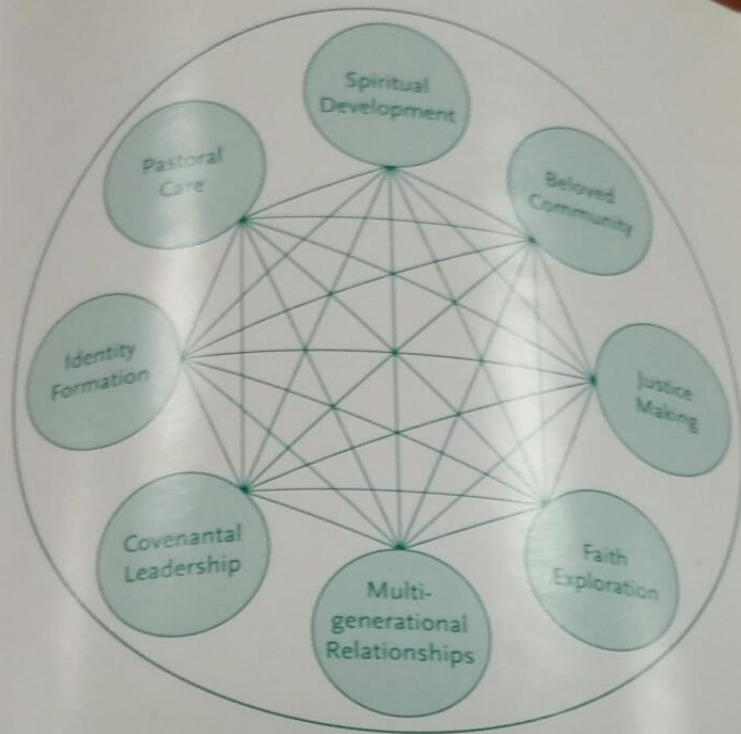
... on the Youth Group as the primary model for ministry with youth. However, a truly multigenerational community welcomes and affirms the voices, gifts, and journeys of every person of every age. This pamphlet is a tool for congregations to go beyond the one-size-fits-all youth group approach to nurture a more vibrant, inclusive faith community in which youth are encouraged to grow in spirit, service and leadership.

### **Spiritual Development**

As spiritual beings, youth experience awe, gratitude, wonder, appreciation, and "at-one-ness." Youth ministry should encourage spiritual awareness and offer both individual and group experiences that nurture and enliven the spirit. Creating worship, singing, expression through creative arts, experiences in nature, and such disciplines as meditation, prayer, and yoga are some examples of activities that nurture spiritual development.

### **Beloved Community**

Being held in the arms of a beloved community is an essential part of being a religious person of any age. To be acknowledged and affirmed for just who you are is especially important in adolescence. A youth ministry that is seen as the responsibility of all adults in the congregation, that knows and includes its youth in many aspects of congregational life, and that appreciates the gifts that each youth brings, grounds youth in authentic UU community and faith. From this grounding, youth can connect with the wider Unitarian Universalist movement and with the



### Justice Making

Youth answer our faith's call to work for justice in their own lives, in local communities, and in our larger society. Service trips, whether local or far from home, can open youth's eyes to social inequities and inspire them to work for justice. Organizing a social justice project within the congregation can connect youth with others and demonstrate their leadership. Whether serving food, marching to witness for justice, or leading workshops, youth engage in social justice issues that are important to them.

### Faith Exploration

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development. Faith exploration takes place when youth engage with workshops in the congregation and at camps and conferences. The UUA's Tapestry of Faith programs for youth are designed to be highly engaging and adaptable for different groups. Topics explored include ethics, interfaith leadership, theology and bridging to adulthood. Unitarian Universalist religious education acknowledges that we are all both learners and teachers; when youth facilitate education programs, it is a learning and leadership development opportunity.

### **Multigenerational Relationships**

Multigenerational faith communities offer opportunities for all ages together (for example, an all-congregation retreat), for multiple age groups (for example adults and teens working together on an immigration justice project), and for peer groups (for example, a youth group or women's crowning ceremony). Diverse programming can both meet the specific developmental needs of an age group and bring people together across age groups for the benefit of everyone. Dynamic youth ministry connects youth with people of all ages through religious education programs, mentor relationships, multigenerational choirs, worship and workshop leadership, celebrations of life passages such as Coming of Age and Bridging into adulthood, and fun outdoor retreats open to all families and ages.

### **Covenantal Leadership**

Youth leadership is a covenantal practice in which youth are safe, recognized, and affirmed as full and vital participants in the life of our shared Unitarian Universalist faith communities. Adults