

UUCA Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

23 Edwin Place

6:30 p.m. July 5, 2016

Present: Kay Aler-Maida, Tom Blanford, Michelle Gregory, Kate Hartnett, Bruce Larson, Wendy Seligmann, Dale Wachowiak, Mark Ward (ex officio).

Opening: Wendy

Visioning Discussion: The first hour of the meeting was spent in open-ended discussion with the goal of determining a course of action for the year. The Board was asked by Kay to focus on UUCA's future in light of increased secularization ("Nones"- on religious affiliation checklists) nationally. With increasing numbers of congregations struggling to stay afloat, how do we not wither and die? Resulting conversation consisted of several strands:

Congregational core values

Initial discussion focused on clarifying our core values. While some felt our core values are pretty clearly embedded in our mission statement and U.U. history, Mark felt that we had never articulated our "burning ember" core values when we moved into policy governance. As described by Carver in his "nested bowl" model of governance, this should be the first step, and we skipped it. The most successful congregations have a clear message as to what they stand for.

A small group process for identifying core values, developed by the Unity congregation of St. Paul, was described and discussed as a possible vehicle for clarifying UUCA values. It was decided that the

Board should experience the exercise themselves before rolling it out for other groups. **The September Board meeting was suggested as the next best time to have this workshop.** The possibility of consulting with Unity about the process and even bringing in a consultant from Unity to facilitate was discussed.

Asking the “nones”

The possibility of conducting a kind of focus group with various constituencies out in the community was discussed. The goal of the groups would not be to recruit participants to UUCA but to have them address the question, “what matters to you?” Understanding what “nones” care about and find meaningful can assist us in interfacing with and presenting ourselves to those constituencies. We brainstormed various possible target audiences, e.g., leaders of unaffiliated activist groups, UNCA students/faculty, members of other congregations, to name a few.

Social media presence

The continued enhancement of our social media presence was emphasized if we are to reach millennials. If feasible, the possibility of podcasting services was suggested.

Wednesday evenings

Michelle again raised the possibility of regular Wednesday evening congregation-wide get-togethers. Possible formats, e.g. spaghetti dinners/potlucks, presenters, open mike, were discussed. Mark pointed out that implementing such a program or not would be an Executive decision and would depend on whether a “critical mass” exists to support it.

Year-end Report on Achievement of Ends: Mark presented a summary of data stemming from a year's worth of congregational Ends surveys. While results were strongly positive, Mark pointed to the small sample size and the unrepresentativeness of the sample. There was discussion of the "squishiness" and subjectivity of such surveys, as well as the challenge of identifying more objective benchmarks.

Minister's Review: It was determined that the performance review of the Lead Minister should be every three years, meaning that the next one is due in Spring of 2017.

Consent Agenda: The consent agenda, including the June 7 minutes, the setting of the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. as the regular meeting time, and the reception of Mark's monthly minister's report, was approved.

Closing: Wendy

Executive Session

Minutes submitted by Dale Wachowiak, Clerk