

**BCD UUMA**  
Business meeting  
October 29, 2003

Deb called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and shared agenda items with the group. Ralph Mero is with us representing the UUA and Ken Sawyer is with us representing the UUMA exec.

**I. Report from Ralph Mero**

- A. Thanked the chapter for providing him time on our agenda. He mentioned that the UUA does try to visit chapters at least every two years. Reminded us that he was here two years ago.
- B. The UUA's Dept. of Ministry is now the Ministry & Professional Leadership Staff Group. It has been for a little over a year now. It basically consists of the same people with the same concerns, but also provides services to Religious Educators and later will provide services for Administrators and Musicians. The idea is that teams work better than unconnected individuals.
- C. There is a new program for credentialing DRE's. Ralph mentioned a new book from LREDA which talks about the many times that credentialing has been brought up, and that it is now finally happening. The first 12 credentialed DREs will be acknowledged at the next SLT.
- D. The UUA has a new moderator since Diane Olson's resignation was received. Gini Courter has been elected to serve as the moderator for the current fiscal year, There will be an election for Moderator at the next GA.
- E. There is a new process for handling complaints about ministers. In the past, complaints were sent to the Director of Dept. of Ministry for evaluation of how to proceed with the complaint. Now they go to Director of Congregational & Extension services. The rationale is to separate judge and jury.
- F. Hotel contracts for GA-Boston were looking scary last May. Could have been penalties of as much as \$800,000.00. It was negotiated down to a \$80,000.00 profit! That money will be used to subsidize the cost of congregation presidents to attend GA. This is part of a larger conversation about "who owns the General Assembly."
- G. SLT in Long Beach will not be on Sunday, but on Friday evening from 8:00 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. Rosemary Bray McNatt will preach. There will be "seeker" services on Sunday morning. Bill Sinkford will preach.
- H. Still unable to offer a health insurance program for our professionals. Some consideration of getting into the Mennonite/Friends insurance plan, but didn't happen because they could not provide full reproductive services for women and domestic partner coverage.
- I. The Retirement Funds committee had a person from the Socially Responsible Investments committee come up to visit. Very concerned about retirement reserves for many of our ministers. Over the next 10 years this is going to make it very hard for retiring ministers to afford housing.
- J. Reminder that there is money available for Continuing education. Michelle Bentley administers the money from her office in Chicago. Ralph's office administers money for personal emergencies. Living Tradition Fund desperately needs more money. Some people regularly make charitable donations to LT Fund. Ralph said he can not over-estimate the importance of debt reduction grants. Four grants went to ministers with debts of over \$80,000 in student loans this year. Average loan balance was 33,000.00. Gave out a little over \$60,000 last year, and in

previous years up to \$200,000.00. Myke asked how shifting the SLT to Friday might will effect the fund? Ralph replied that this hasn't been discussed yet.

- K. Distributed "Fair Compensation: A User's Guide" - New job titles/descriptions are included along with duties so that we can compare apples to apples. Geo index is also included. Emphasize the "range" not the minimum. HR's expect 80% to be midway. Congregations should decide the amount for benefits, but should include insurance, 10% towards retirement, professional expenses, and "in lieu of FICA.". Ralph has a sense that in the future congregations in search will advertise salary, but with expectation of benefits.
- L. Should congregations expect employees to pay a portion of health insurance? This may begin to be a part of compensation conversations in congregations. Ralph mentioned that staff of the UUA pays for 20% of health insurance.

## II. Report from Ken Sawyer

- A. The first pitch is to make sure that everyone is a member of the UUMA. The UUMA has 900 basic members plus life members plus candidates with a total membership of 1500 people. The UUMA has a deficit budget this year. The UUMA's new administrator is fantastic. Find her contact info on website UUMA website. Moved office out of 25 Beacon St. She now works out of her home. Ken has books and computer disks available for sale @ \$10.00 each. The UUMA will be reprinting "Celebrating Christmas," and will publish two newsletters in print and one electronically. New membership cards will be different they will be laminated and include a photo. People will supply their own pictures.
- B. The Exec meets four times per year. At the October meeting they met with M&PL. Among other things they talked about ministerial categories. The Exec committee task force came back to the Exec saying we weren't ready to move to one track yet because there is no parity in the three tracks. After meeting with M&PL, the Task Force was asked to reconsider the issue which they did and ultimately suggested one track with 3 specializations. Remaining considerations are: Can specialization be removed from final fellowship and timetable for implementation by MFC and M&PL.
- C. Regional subcommittees are working out well. Career counseling centers, however, are struggling. Can we get services we need for candidates without career counseling centers?
- D. There was a community ministry summit after GA. Participating groups are going to coordinate services like Website/educational process/publications/relationships. It was mentioned that "Community Ministry" will be the topic at a chapter meeting later this year.
- E. UUMA Guidelines review are happening in PNWD chapter currently. They are talking about making recommendations to the sections about ethical behavior and honoraria.
- F. Conversations continue about interim ministry and ministry files. Tracy Robinson-Harris has a paper about file procedures. Some of the files or pieces of files will be made "electronic" through scanning. Trying to build in new accountability structures. Should Fellowship process information get into Search process information? This remains a lively issue. Ken will be meeting with John Weston and David Hubner this week and will raise the issue with them.
- G. John Weston is working on suggestions for Search committees about background checks. Search committees should be told that they are welcome to do criminal background checks - and can put you in touch with companies that do it. But, no check should be done without approval from minister, and you have to give minister a chance to respond.

- H. There is a UUMA Committee discussing the question of how to proceed when a minister is seriously ill? Two colleagues are putting information together about it. Trying to develop a helpful pattern of support.
- I. Members of the Exec are: Kendyl Gibbons, Ken Sawyer, Bobbie Nelson, Kathleen Ellis, Mark Christian, Roger Brewin, Bob Shyley, Wayne Walder, Patricia Jimenez, Wendy Fish, and Rupert Lovely.

### **III. Dorothy Borush talked about Doolittle Home and its UU affiliation.**

The Doolittle Home's by-laws have changed and it is no longer required that a majority of of board members be UUs. Dorothy has retained an attorney to sue. Beth MacGreggor says that the UUA is prepared to support the suit. Fayre Stephenson's chaplaincy at Doolittle has been cancelled by the Board of Directors. However, Fayre may be hired by UU members of the Doolittle home to be their chaplain. Donations toward this fund would be appreciated. The legal fund will be expensive as well. Can the chapter provide support. Judy suggests that the potential refund of \$55.00 per person be donated to the fund.

Voted - (Vivienne Chapman/Rachel Tedesco) that chapter donate a minimum of \$1000.00 to UU chaplaincy at Doolittle Home, the cost to be voluntarily deferred by refunds for chapter retreat. Passed Unanimously.

### **IV. Treasurer's Report**

Our balance is in good shape. At least \$2000.00 to spare in our account.

### **V. Meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Rev. Eric Cherry, Chapter Secretary