

Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association
Annual Meeting of the Membership
Thursday, June 19, 1997
Phoenix, Arizona

The Annual meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m. on June, 19, 1997, by President Paul Johnson in the Regency Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency Hotel. The minutes of the annual meeting of June 20, 1996, were approved as submitted.

Aaron Payson was appointed as parliamentarian. David Sammons was appointed time keeper. Paul discussed the rules for procedure: a. No person may speak for more than three minutes on any one item. b. No person may speak for more than once on an item as long as anyone wishes the floor. c. After initial presentation, debate time for each item requiring a vote shall be ten minutes. After ten minutes, a motion shall automatically be put, "Shall debate be extended for ten minutes?" Anytime that a majority shall fail to extend the time debate shall be closed and the question of the floor put to a vote. d. Any proposal by the Executive Committee shall automatically come before the body. The standard rules of procedure were accepted with one additional new rule - "e. Items to be submitted under No. 10, Other Business, must be presented in written form to the Secretary and/or President before Noon today."

President Paul Johnson gave his annual report. Paul listed the accomplishments of the UUMA this past year. Listed were implementation of the UUA's Compensation Report, increased administrative support, and the start-up of a web page. Paul introduced the members of the Executive Committee and gave thanks for the hard work of the Executive Committee this past year. He also thanked all the volunteers on the various committees and those appointed representatives as printed in his report.

Paul noted that we have 1384 members as of now. The budget will hold the dues at \$175. He mentioned some of his travels on behalf of the Association. Paul mentioned the need for the UUA to keep the UUMA Exec apprised of major changes in the Department of Ministry. John Gilmore was thanked for his service on the Exec as he goes off the Executive Committee. As was the case during '95-'96, the number of negotiated terminations of ministers has been high by historical standards. There seems to be a good deal of minister/congregational conflict. Paul asked: Are our chapter programs and continuing education offerings helping us to understand and to address the dynamics behind the conflict? Are we fully using the insights of our denominational staff? Are we providing sufficient emotional and professional support for our colleagues in stressful, conflictual situations?

The other area for attention next year was the area of ministerial finances. We need to promote greater knowledge of ministerial finances issues by candidate, regular and retired ministers. He asked: How might we deliver this vital information in a helpful, timely fashion, especially to candidate members and those just beginning their careers? How might we assist each other in negotiating with our congregations or agencies? How might we best use the services of the UUA's compensation consultants and the Office of Church Staff Finances? Paul will be working with a sub-committee of the Council of

Church Staff Finance to develop material for educating ministers and students about this issue.

At 10:40 it was moved and seconded that the meeting move into a Committee of the Whole for the previously announced informal plenaries: Code/Guidelines Amendment Proposal, Retired Ministers/Ministers Emeriti/ae; Code/Guidelines Discussion - Confidentiality; UUMA Finances - 1997-98 proposed budget; Compensation Issues; MFC Issues - Regionalizing the Process for Candidate Review, Ministry Tracks, Report on Settlement of Ministers of Color; Issues of Community Ministry; CENTER's Priorities on Continuing Education; Student Concerns; Bylaws Change on Number of Executive Committee Members and Terms. Paul reviewed the morning schedule stating that the mini-plenaries would last until 11:45 with the annual luncheon to begin at noon, and the annual meeting to resume at 1:15.

The motion to rise from the whole was made at 1:37 p.m. and approved by the membership.

a. Action on Bylaws - David Sammons presented the proposed bylaw change to allow nine members of the Executive Committee. The motion was made and seconded. Procedural question - Wayne Robinson asked how the position of the secretary/treasurer would be split and if the bylaws addressed this aspect. Paul answered that the position would be split by the respective duties. The question was called and the motion passed unanimously.

Article VI, Section 1

"The officers shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, four Executive Committee Members-at-Large, and a Representative to the Standing Committee on Continuing Education."

Article IX, Section 1 (Relevant portion)

"Every three years, beginning in 1998, the Nominating Committee shall choose candidates for President, Vice President, and a Member-at-Large for three year terms. Every three years, beginning in 1999, the Nominating Committee shall choose candidates for Treasurer, Representative to the Standing Committee on Continuing Education, and a Member-at-Large for three year terms. Every three years, beginning in 2000, the Nominating Committee shall choose a candidate for a one-year term as President-Designate and candidates for Secretary and two Members-at-Large for three year terms. In 1998, the Nominating Committee shall choose candidates for Secretary and a Member-at-Large for two-year terms. In 1999, the Nominating Committee shall choose a candidate for a one-year term as a Member-at-Large."

b. Nominating committee report - Judy Mannheim introduced the nominees for new offices of President Elect - Gary Smith, Publications - Aaron Payson, and the Nominating Committee - Linda Hart, Dennis Hamilton, and Jonalu Johnstone. Ballots not already mailed in were collected by tellers from the Harvard Divinity School.

c. Mark Belletini was nominated to the Ministerial Conference in Berry Street Committee. No further nominations were received from the floor. Mark Belletini was elected to the Ministerial Conference in Berry Street Committee unanimously.

d. Written Reports - Paul Johnson urged the members to read the reports. There

was no action taken.

e. CENTER Report - Kenn Hurto reported on the past year's activities of the Center Committee. He stated that it has been more difficult to develop a program for anti-racism training than first thought. The presenters program has not been as well used as in the past. The Center Comm. still has a bias toward a colleague-based programming for chapters although outside speakers are approved on occasion.

Kenn mentioned that two chapters went together to offer a preaching seminar last year as a new wrinkle for offering this program. He mentioned that the UUA has additional funds available to be used for continuing education. The UUA will provide a third of the cost if the minister and congregation fund the remainder.

The Center Committee is wrestling with the limited funds available and the needs for chapters. They are trying to develop educational activities for community based ministers acknowledging the differences between this type of ministry.

Center is planning a convocation for 2002. No theme has been chosen as yet. Center is excited that Center Day activities have continued to grow in popularity. Next year the GA will be in Rochester, NY, and will be celebrating the 150th anniversary of the women's movement. This time Center is developing a program on the impact of women in our ministry and our association.

Beth Miller reported on the selection of Gretchen Wood and Helen Cohen as the leaders of the program next year. Gretchen Wood came to the podium to describe the preliminary shape of the program. It will engage a lot of people in the development of the program. Jane Boyajian, Diane Miller, Michelle Bentley, Betty Jo Middleton, and others were listed as a part of the planning team. Additional funding will be sought to underwrite this program from a variety of sources. There will be a survey sent to all ministers and congregations to elicit information on how they have been affected by women in ministry.

Kenn introduced the members of the Center team. He thanked Jay Atkinson who is rotating off the committee. He thanked the other members - Jane Boyajian, Fred Keip, Suzanne Meyer, Beth Miller, and Michael Schuler. He introduced Kirk Loadman-Copeland and Dillman Sorrells as new members of the Center Committee and Michael Schuler as the new chair. Kenn was thanked for his six years of service on the committee with the last two years being chair of it.

f. Code of Professional Practice and Guidelines - John Weston, chair of the Guidelines Committee, mentioned the names of the other committee members and thanked them for this past year's work: Alan Egly, Kate Rohde, Gail Seavey, and Charles Stephen. He introduced the suggested changes to the Code of Professional Practice in Section 2, Paragraphs 7 and 9. Fred Gillis voiced concern from the floor with the language in Paragraph 7. This Paragraph was skipped for the moment while Fred Gillis worked on suggested new language. The membership approved the proposed changes to Section 2, Paragraph 9 without any changes.

Code of Professional Practice
Section 2, Paragraph 9

"If I am a member of or a participant in a congregation served by a colleague, I

will in all ways honor the priority of his or her call to the ministry of that congregation, and I will avoid influence which other members may tend to yield to me in the light of my experience, status and prestige. If I serve a congregation of which another minister is a member, I will be generous toward my colleague in word and spirit. I will extend these courtesies to all colleagues in multi-staff situations.

If I am a member of a congregation which I previously served, I will be welcoming to the settled minister, and seek to be useful in ways my successor may request. If I serve a congregation of which the retired minister is a member, I will recognize the continuing value of her or his presence in the congregation. I will extend these courtesies to all colleagues in multi-staff situations.”

John Weston discussed the suggested changes in the Guidelines. The membership approved Guidelines Article IX, Section C, Paragraph 3, Sentence two, as submitted.
Guidelines

Article IX, Section C, Paragraph 3, Sentence Two

“The incumbent minister(s) should endeavor to make the other welcome and valued in the life of the congregation.”

The membership discussed Article IX, Section C, Paragraph 3, Sentence Three. Sue Spencer proposed an amendment: insert after “The Minister emeritus/a should” the words “publicly respect the call of the incumbent(s) and.” Seconded. Discussion as to appropriate wording. Brandy Lovely suggested the alternative wording of “honor” in place of “respect.” Seconded. Amendment to the amendment approved. The suggested additional wording now read “publicly honor the call of the incumbent(s) and.”

Lynn Strauss spoke in favor of the amendment and wanting to preserve her relationship with the minister emeritus in her congregation. John Weston spoke against the amendment saying that the point of the amendment wasn't in keeping with the proposed changes. Time allotted for debate was reached and the vote to continue debate failed. The amendment to the article under discussion was passed.

There was discussion about continuing debate for the remaining articles of the guidelines. A motion to add ten minutes of debate passed.

The membership returned to Section 2, Paragraph 7, Sentence 1 for discussion. An amendment was proposed by Fred Gillis and seconded. After debate, the amendment failed to pass.

Discussion on the original change continued. John Weston gave a clarification as to the intent of the change. Time for debate ran out. The vote to continue debate failed. Wayne Robinson moved that the entire remaining changes be accepted. This motion was seconded and passed by a wide margin.

Code of Professional Practice

Section 2, Paragraph 7

“I will inform my colleague in advance of any public engagement I may accept in the church he or she serves, and I will inform my colleague in advance of any public engagement I may accept in his or her community, which might bear upon congregational issues or policies. In a multi-staff situation I will see that all colleagues serving that church are informed.”

Guidelines

Article IX, Section C, Paragraph 3, Sentence Three

“The minister emeritus/a should publicly honor the call of the incumbent(s) and should not offer solicited or unsolicited advice or criticism of the minister(s) or the workings of the congregation to members of the congregation.”

Article IX, Section C, Paragraph 4

“The lives of the congregation, the incumbent minister(s), and the minister emeritus/a may be enriched by the continuing participation of the emeritus/a in congregational life. The relationship among these parties should be discussed early in any new ministry, and a covenant should be agreed to and published.”

Article IX, Section C, Paragraph 6

“If problems arise in achieving a smooth transition, they should be addressed quickly and forthrightly. Should intervention from beyond the congregation be desirable, first the Good Offices Person should be consulted, and then, if necessary, the District Executive.”

Article IX, Section D, Paragraph 1b

“The minister should not offer solicited or unsolicited advice or criticism of the minister(s) or the workings of the congregation to members of the congregation.”

Article IX, Section E

“Retired ministers who join or participate in a congregation other than the one they have served should exercise particular care to avoid influence that other members may tend to yield to them in the light of their experience, status and prestige.”

Max Gaebler thanked the UUMA on behalf of the UURMAPA for passing the changes which improved the relationship with ministers who are retired. Jan Eller-Isaacs requested an overhead projector next year for ease of seeing proposed changes of bylaws.

g. Report of the Office of Church/Staff Finance - Ralph Mero reported the Office had negotiated increasing the amount of life insurance that can be purchased by ministers. The health insurance program is in deep trouble. New compensation guidelines will be announced at GA for the next year. Student debt is an increasing problem. The Ministerial Fellowship Committee will be establishing regional sub-committees which will address this aspect as well as others. Several ministers have had to declare bankruptcy this past year. The Department of Ministry is preparing a booklet on finance for students which will go to all students contemplating ministry.

Sheldon Bennett came to the podium and thanked Ralph Mero on the hard work he has been doing on the behalf of the UUMA. Sheldon also talked about the retirement program and how well it has worked. He urged churches to make contributions early and often to guarantee a healthy amount for retirement. He reported that many colleagues have not participated in the retirement program. A majority of ministers age 55 and over seem to be facing a bleak future due to low participation in the retirement program.

Ralph Mero returned to the podium and discussed a 403B plan for those who are maxed out in contributions to a 401 plan. You can submit up to 25% of salary to this type of plan, but not including housing allowance. His department is willing to help ministers with making the proper deductions and clarifying financial questions for

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colleagues.

h. Treasurer's report - Richard Speck presented the Treasurer's Report. The UUMA is in very good shape financially. He stated that all checking and savings accounts have now been rolled into the Schwab Account and that \$75,000 was in a higher interest bearing fund with Schwab. There is no need to increase dues because of our strong situation.

He discussed the proposed Budget for 1997-1998 noting modest increases are in account #210, #301, and #305. Chapter subsidies will be sent automatically this year without any requests being made. A motion to approve the proposed budget was made and seconded. The budget was approved as submitted.

Receipts	1997-98 Budget
101 Dues	\$140,000.00
102 Interest	\$5,000.00
103 Miscellaneous	\$0.00
104 Restricted Funds	\$0.00
105 Transfer from Spirituality Reserve Fund	<u>\$5,000.00</u>
Total Receipts	\$150,000.00

Expenditures	
202 Council Church Staff Finances	\$8,800.00
203 Good Offices, Exec Committee	\$1,100.00
204 Good Offices, Chapters	\$2,300.00
210 Chapter Subsidy	\$6,900.00
211 Chapter Visits	\$7,000.00
221 Newsletter - Printing	\$4,500.00
223 Newsletter - Mailing	\$1,500.00
226 Publications - Other	\$7,500.00
230 Executive Committee Meetings	\$26,000.00
231 Guidelines Committee	\$1,200.00
232 Nominating Committee	\$500.00
250 President's Travel	\$2,330.00
253 Office/Postage/Telephone	\$8,000.00
254 President's Secretary	\$1,000.00
260 CENTER Committee	\$26,650.00
261 CENTER Presenters	\$5,800.00
270 Membership Coordinator	\$15,520.00
280 Miscellaneous Expense	\$500.00
290 Bonding Insurance	\$300.00
293 Audit	\$250.00
300 UUMA Compensation Advocacy	\$7,500.00
301 Grants	\$5,000.00
303 Computer/Fax Equipment Reserve	\$500.00

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305	Chapter Leaders Training Reserve	\$6,000.00
306	Consultations/Special Meetings Reserve	\$1,500.00
307	Task Force I	\$100.00
308	UUMA Liaisons	\$1,500.00
309	APF Sermon Award	<u>\$250.00</u>
	Expenditures	\$150,000.00

i. Report of Election Tellers - All nominees were voted into office. Paul thanked outgoing member John Gilmore for his service on the Executive Committee.

9. Other Business - a. Resolution of Support for Dan Hotchkiss - David Sammons moved the following resolution of support for Dan Hotchkiss as the former Director of Ministerial Settlement at the UUA:

“The UUMA expresses its deep and heartfelt appreciation for the years of caring work by Dan Hotchkiss as Settlement Director in the UUA Department of Ministry.” The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Dan thanked everyone for his vote of support.

b. Resolution of Support for the Prague Unitarian Church - Darrell Berger moved a resolution of support for the Prague Unitarian Church. The motion was seconded. Discussion ensued. A motion to delete the third paragraph of the resolution was made by Frank Robertson. This motion was seconded. Discussion continued on the suggested deletion. The deletion passed. John Weston moved to strike the final sentence of paragraph two “and this possession . . .”. Seconded. Discussion ensued. Time for debate elapsed. The members did not vote to extend time. The motion was defeated to delete the additional sentence. The resolution as amended was approved.

Resolution of Support for the Prague Unitarian Church

*WHEREAS we recognize and honor our professional and spiritual debt to Dr. Norbert Capek and his rightful religious heirs of the Prague Unitarian Church; and
WHEREAS the institution of the Prague Unitarian Church is currently in possession by a few usurpers under the leadership of Vladimir Strejcek, and this possession has been mistakenly allowed to stand by the Czech government;*

*THEREFORE we, the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association
RESOLVE to support the Unitarian Universalist Association, the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Churches in Great Britain, the International Association for Religious Freedom and the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists in their efforts to return the Prague Church to the rightful religious heirs of Dr. Norbert Capek.*

c. Proposed change to the Guidelines - Kim Crawford Harvie moved that “gender expression” be added to the guidelines. The motion was seconded. Discussion. Barbara Whittaker-Johns spoke in favor. John Weston suggested that these guidelines should be referred to the Guidelines Committee. Peter Luton moved that the proposed guidelines be referred to the Guidelines Committee. The motion was seconded. The motion to refer failed to be approved. A division of the house called for a show of hands on the previous vote. The motion failed again. It was moved by Robbie Eller-Isaacs to refer the proposed changes to the chapters for discussion. The motion was seconded and passed

by the membership. The Chair ruled that this motion be referred to the chapters. The Chair received a motion to challenge the Chair's ruling. By a show of hands the motion to challenge failed.

A motion to reconsider the previous action to refer to chapters was made and seconded. The motion was ruled out of order by the Chair. There was an in-depth discussion over the finer points of Robert's Rules of Order by the Parliamentarian, Aaron Payson.

Robbie Eller-Isaacs amended his motion to refer the motion to the Guidelines Committee in dialog with the chapters. The motion was seconded. This is a non-debatable motion. The motion was passed overwhelmingly by the membership.

Liz McMaster moved that a straw vote be taken of this body in regard to the sentiment toward adding the proposed language. The motion was seconded and the motion passed. Tellers counted 151 yea, 2 nay, and 6 abstentions.

Proposed Change to the Guidelines

In four places in our UUMA Guidelines, there appears a list of attributes on the basis of which discrimination is founded. This list currently includes, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or ethnicity.

We propose an addition to this list be made; that the words gender expression be added, so the list would read:

“race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, disability, or ethnicity.”

We propose to amend page 14, section IV, to read:

“Because respect for the worth and dignity of every person is fundamental to our Unitarian Universalist ministry, I will work to confront attitudes and practices of unjust discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, [gender expression,] age, disability, or ethnicity within myself and in individuals, congregations, and groups I serve.”

Similarly, we propose to amend: page 15, Section I, A; page 27, Section IV, D, numbers 1 and 2, to include gender expression.

Rationale: Transgender individuals are not legally protected from discrimination in employment, education, public accommodation, housing, or credit in any state in the United States or any province in Canada. Transgender individuals have been and continue to be targeted as victims of violence in our local communities.

Because we, as Unitarian Universalists, respect the inherent worth and dignity of every person, we will intentionally work towards eradicating discrimination of all kinds, including gender expression, in all aspects of our religious communities.

d. Motion in Support of Ministers in Negotiated Settlements Having Their Names Sent at Own Request. The following motion was moved by Paul Sawyer. It was seconded. The motion was passed by the membership.

“Whereas negotiated settlements for a minister's leaving are a professional way of handling a change of ministry without compelling congregations to go through an injurious process of turmoil and conflict,

Whereas churches are rarely put on hold in terms of re-engaging ministerial

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leadership,

So too ministers in good standing with the UUMA (unless there is a pattern of such terminations) should not be prevented from having their names sent forward to open pulpits at their own request,

There should not be a limbo status that interferes with their exercise of their livelihood unless grievances have been filed against them for unprofessional behavior.”

A few brief announcements were made by Paul Johnson. A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. Passed at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Speck
Secretary/Treasurer