

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
Board Meeting Minutes  
September 12, 2013**

**Present:** Board members Laureen Blakemore, Jim Flowers, Linda Powers, Margo Walter, Kristine Reid, David Burr, Ann Norris, Beth Lyman; ex officio members Dara Olandt, Lisa Evanylo, Karen Hager; Parliamentarian Frank DuPont; UUC member Brigitte Flowers

Frank provided the reading, the chalice was lit, and Dara provided some thoughts on gratefulness and asked that all say something they are grateful for. Linda Powers served as Process Observer.

I. **Agenda** – Jim moved to accept the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

II. **New Business**

A. **Creating a new Board Covenant** – Kristine suggested that some ideas come from the handouts (“idealism grounded in realism”) from the Board retreat. Ann found an example of a mission and vision statement for a board but not a covenant. She will send the link. Beth had an article from the UUA website for writing covenants (<http://www.uua.org/safe/handbook/leadership/165735.shtml>) and the actual covenant from UUC of Montclair (<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B8A7XeF0R8IfNjU5ZDFIMDYtYWUzNy00NmQ3LTgzOTEtMmE2ZjcyOTQwZmNj/edit?pli=1>). The plan is to finalize a covenant at the October meeting which will be in place for the November meeting. Our current covenant is more behavioral, while the new one should have vision included.

B. **Expectations of behavior for attendees** – a Covenant of Behavior for Board meetings is needed. Our Policy Manual should include a policy on behavioral expectations for all meetings. Send suggestions to Jim as liaison to the Fellowship & Governance Council. The CREC is working on guidelines for their meetings which Karen will bring to the Board. It is the job of the president or committee chair to keep the business of the meeting on track, visitors should not disrupt that work.

C. **Communication between congregation, committees, councils and Board** – what exactly is the role of the council’s Board liaisons? How does information travel back and forth? Dara suggested holding a caucus for all in leadership. This would serve to get information out so that it isn’t just within the Board. It was suggested that council chairs and Board hold a one-hour meeting. Therefore, liaisons need to get their councils together to elect a chair if this has not already been done. At this meeting, Jim would explain the organizational chart, and the info can then be passed along by each council chair at their next council meeting. Dara, Beth, Jim, Laureen, and Margo will get together to draft the agenda for this hour. The meeting may take place after a service in late October.

1. A suggestion was made to change Policy Maintenance Committee to Program Documentation Committee on the organizational chart.

D. **President’s term of office** – Board members serve 2 years while the President serves 3. Perhaps the President should not serve on the Board as past-president to keep the term at 2 years but should serve as chair of the Past Presidents’ Council.

III. **Consent Agenda**

A. Dave moved to accept the August minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

B. **Administrator’s report** – Lisa highlighted her report and elaborated on the lack of volunteers to help with monthly potlucks. Sign-up sheets will be put out, and if not enough volunteers sign up, potlucks will take a hiatus.

**C. Minister's report** – Dara highlighted her report: 1) the Connections Committee will hold monthly informational gatherings following the service (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month). Dara suggested that a Board member participate each month. Kristine volunteered for Sept. 15; 2) a new member recognition will be held during the service on Nov. 17; 3) the LPCM retreat led by Dara went well; 4) at the Start-up on Oct. 26, Dara will clarify priorities for worship. She is working to build a more robust Worship Associates program (WA) and Worship Services Committee (WSC). She hopes the WSC will work with her to collaborate on the monthly themes. See attached addendum to Dara's report with more information on the roles of WSC and WA.

1. **Managing sex offenders** – Dara has reviewed the policies (UUA Safe Congregations policies, UUC's policy on managing convicted sex offenders) as provided by Karen. Dara found that our policies agree with those of the UUA, but that we are missing pieces. An example of a legal piece: what happens when a social gathering takes place at a person's home with mostly UUC members in attendance, and the host wants to invite the convicted sex offender? Do our policies extend to a person's home, and would the church be liable? If the event is an auction dinner or event, it is a church function and UUC policies apply. It was suggested that a Board member research this topic. Peer Segelke can be called on for legal advice, and Church Mutual is a good resource. Laureen, as liaison to the Facilities Council (where the Safety Committee resides), will work with Dara on this. Dara has already spoken with a UUA rep about this. There is a reference in our policy to the Child Abuse Task Force which is not currently in place. It should be formed with people having a professional background and placed under the Safety Committee.

**D. DLFD's report** – the chair of the LFD Council has requested a Board response concerning convening a forum about meeting process, as the Board committed to facilitating in May. Reminder that a temporary policy was put in place until the end of August when Dara could advise. Our bylaws call for all meetings to be open (opposite of Sturgis), but we do have to give the Board and committees the ability to have private meetings. However, the congregation voted to use Sturgis at the Annual Meeting (overrules the temporary policy). The bylaws do state that the Board can close any meeting. The LFD Council is working on language for a policy to bring to the Board next month. However, this policy will only apply to LFD.

**IV. Treasurer's report** – see attached report. Linda reported that the \$20,000 member loan has been repaid. We currently have \$103,000 in member loans remaining.

**A. Finance Committee** – the Fundraising Policy was discussed. There is now a Vanco donation button on our website. An article in the newsletter will encourage people to use their checking accounts rather than credit cards to keep our costs down. The annual audit was done in August with a report coming shortly. All was found to be in order. Linda is going to push for the deposit box on the administrator's door.

**V. Member's forum** – anyone can address the Board for up to 3 minutes. Debate is not permitted, but one can ask for clarification.

No one addressed the Board.

## **VI. Council Reports**

**A. Facilities Council** – written report provided by Mike Skinner, Council chair. The Safety Committee along with Lisa, Karen and Dara recently met with Sgt. Workman of the Blacksburg Police Dept. in regards to keeping all safe while in our building. The police can

provide a full security assessment with the possibility of very costly recommendations. (Note that this report goes on file with the town, and that we could be liable for recommendations that are not remedied.) They can also just provide a checklist that we review annually (with results not known to the town thereby decreasing liability). Keys were also discussed, and rekeying the locks every few years was brought up. A suggestion was made to have a book at the main door for people to sign in and out when entering the building. This would enable someone to see if they are the last person leaving and to be sure to lock up fully. Sgt. Workman did comment that we are very far along with our policies. Jim suggested key cards if we go to new locks as it is easy to turn off a card, and they are cheap to replace. The police are looking for Edward Dove, former Building Facilitator, as he has a master key. If he cannot be found, we may need to replace the locks.

**B. Fellowship & Governance Council** – no report

**C. Finance & Administration Council** – no report

**D. LFD Council** – no report

**E. Membership Council** – no report

**E. Pastoral Services Council** – no report

**F. Social Action Council** – Ann called the council together. They are trying to reactivate the Social Justice Committee. They discussed holding a Social Justice Summit and inviting the congregation, with a meal and childcare provided, to explore social justice at UUC. Dara is exploring what it means to be in “Wilderness” together around social justice. A date will be set for a “welcome table” to discuss this.

**G. Worship Opportunities Council** – no report

**H. Staff Reflections** – no report

## VII. Action items

**A. Committee on Ministries (COM) members** – Dara presented names of candidates. Jim moved that Isabel Berney, Jane Keppel-Benson, Molly Lazar, Dick Luke, John Kelso, and Eric Thomas be approved subject to willingness to serve. The motion carried unanimously.

## VIII. Old business

**A. Start-up:** Saturday, October 26 from 9-3. Kathy McGowan will lead at no charge to us. Others in leadership will be invited. Board funds will be used. A suggestion was made to hold a potluck or all bring their own lunch. Dara will check with Kathy for her preference.

**B. Installation** – Sunday, November 10. Rev. Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry, minister at Boulder Valley UU, will be the main preacher. Dara is working on getting other colleagues to participate. The installation will take place during the service or later in the day. A planning committee is in place. Jim suggested that the regular service could be held at a different time that day to include the installation.

## IX. Information items

**A. SED calendar** – Margo stated that the district puts out a monthly calendar, and that it would be good for us to be more involved. There are 63 congregations in our district.

**B. Donate to the auction!**

X. **Process Observer** – Linda observed that we started on time, some discussions ran over the allotted time, all felt free to share and sharing was balanced, and we need to speak loudly enough for all to hear. She had no corrections but suggested that all come prepared.

XI. **Next meeting** – October 10 at 6:30 PM. Kristine will provide the reading, Beth the refreshments, and Margo will serve as Process Observer.

The Board went into executive session.

Dara gave the closing.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

Ann – send link to vision and mission statement for a board

All - send suggestions to Jim for behavioral guidelines at meetings, get assigned council together to elect chair (if not already done)

Dara, Beth, Jim, Laureen, and Margo - draft the agenda for meeting between Board and council chairs

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

Finalize Board covenant

Move LDC from Membership Council to Fellowship & Governance Council

Review LFD policy on meeting process

Lisa Evanylo, Administrator

**UUC BOARD MEETING AGENDA**  
**Thursday, September 12, 2013, 6:30 pm**

6:30 – 6:45	<b>First Time Period</b> Chalice Lighting & Reading- Frank Du Pont Check-in and offering- Rev. Dara Process Observer- Linda Powers	15 Minutes
6:45 – 6:50	<b>Review and Accept Agenda</b>	5 minutes
6:50 – 7:20	<b>New Business</b> Creating a new Board Covenant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectations of behavior for attendees</li> </ul> Brainstorming- communication- Congregation, Committees, Councils, & Board President’s term of office	30 minutes
7:20 – 7:40	<b>Consent Agenda</b> Previous Board Meeting Minutes Minister’s Reports Administrator’s Reports DLFD’s Reports	20 minutes
7:40 - 7:45	<b>Treasurer’s Report</b>	5 minutes
7:45 - 7:55	<b>Break</b>	10 minutes
7:55 –8:10	<b>Members Forum</b> Members are invited to address the Board. Please keep your comments to 3 minutes	15 minutes
8:10 – 8:20	<b>Council Reports</b> Facilities Council Fellowship & Governance Council Finance & Administration Council Lifespan Faith Development Council Membership Council Pastoral Service Council Social Action Council Worship Opportunities Council	10 minutes
8:20 – 8:30	<b>Action Items</b> Committee on Ministries vote for approval	10 minutes
8:30 - 8:35	<b>Old Business</b> Start-up dates Installation dates	5 minutes
8:35 – 8:40	<b>Information Items</b>	5 minutes
8:40-8:50	<b>Process Observer Report Back</b>	10 minutes
8:50 – 8:55	<b>Reading, Refreshments &amp; Process Observer</b> for next meeting	5 minutes
8:55- 9:00	<b>Closing-</b> Rev Dara	

**Request Board members research some UUC Board covenants and bring along**

Report to the Board – Rev. Dara Olandt

September 5, 2013

Greetings UUC Board, the following are highlights and updates for this month:

RE: NEW MEMBERS

I have been working with Connections Committee to develop a clarified “Pathways to Membership” approach which consists of these components:

- Monthly Informal Meetings at the Dias with Rev. Dara, Connections Committee Member and (possibly) a member of the Board. The next 3 will be: September 15th, October 20th, and November 17th.
- Intro to UU Course option in September/October (see dates below)
- Members and Newcomers Orientation (for folks who have just joined or will be joining) Saturday, November 2nd.
- New Member Recognition in Sunday Service, November 17th

RE: LPCM

I will be leading a LPMC Retreat on Sunday, Sept. 8th

RE: ADULT RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

This fall, I plan to offer 2 Adult Religious Exploration opportunities:

- Saturday, September 7, 1-4:30 PM: “Exploring Our House: Unitarian Universalist Theologies and Sources.” An advanced study of Unitarian Universalism. Offers deeper engagement with our Unitarian Universalist identity. The class is open to long-time UUs as well as newcomers.
- 6 Wednesdays, September 18 through October 23, 7-8:30 PM: “A Chosen Faith” (based on the book of the same name by Rev. John Buehrens and Rev. Forrest Church). This class is an introduction to Unitarian Universalism and is open to newcomers and long-time UUs.

RE: WORSHIP

A key ministry priority for me this year is developing a more robust Worship Services Committee and Worship Associates Program approach.

\*Basic components and timeline are attached as “WSC and WA Nuts and Bolts”. I am working with the former Worship Support group to create this program. More voices will be added to this program as it unfolds.

\*My Sundays out of the pulpit will be: Sep. 29th and October 13th

RE: CONGREGATIONAL POLICIES

I have been reviewing the congregation's Managing Convicted Sex Offender & Safe Congregations policies.

RE: COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY:

Names will be confirmed at our next Board Meeting.

RE: BOARD RETREAT – Enjoyed the Board Retreat with you on August 31st.

ADDITIONAL UPCOMMING KEY DATES:

\*Start-Up: Oct. 26th 9-3pm, UUC \*Installation: November 10th, UUC

Addendum to Minister's Board Report.

Towards... Worship Services Committee & Robust Worship Associates Program

In a nutshell, there are two main components:

### **I Worship Services Committee**

Works closely with the Minister to reflect upon and develop the year's worship calendar around broad monthly theological themes. Members should have willingness to collaborate, create and engage in theological reflection.

What does the Worship Services Committee do?

- Participates in brainstorm session and Worship Services Committee Retreat with Minister to develop the monthly themes and overall worship calendar.
- Meets regularly for Worship Reflection with the Minister and specific Worship Associates.
- With Minister, oversees and coordinates the Worship Associates Program, including developing the Worship Associates application process.
- In conjunction with Minister, coordinates Worship Associates for services when Minister is not leading on a Sunday

### **II WAs & Worship Associates Program**

Worship Associates play a visible, active role in Worship on Sunday mornings with the Minister.

What do Worship Associates (WAs) do?

- Meets with the Minister in advance of the service for which they are the WA in order to discuss the theme of the particular service and develop role for the WA in the service.
- Attends post-service Worship Reflection with the Worship Services Committee to reflect upon the service
- Provides feedback to the Minister and Worship Services Committee on highlights and challenges of being a WA on Sunday mornings.
- May lead a service when Minister is not present
- May support a guest Minister or speaker when the Minister is not present
- Commits to serving as WA for \_\_\_ number of services (number TBD)
- Attend 1-2 Worship Associates Retreats or Trainings with the Minister each year to maintain a continuous quality of worship and to build skills including liturgical creativity and Sunday morning WA presence.
- A WA may also serve on the Worship Services Committee yet all WAs do not need to do so to serve as a WA.



**Administrator's Report to the Board** – Lisa Evanylo  
September 12, 2013

**Building Facilitator:** Joe Parrish has been hired and has started working. He is working as an independent contractor and will be paid \$500/month for a total of \$6000/year. Let me know if you see anything in the building that needs attention.

**Recording Board Meetings:** I received instructions and the equipment from Wayne Neu and plan to record meetings for posting on the website.

**Annual Timeline:** The timeline not been fully updated, but will be sent to the Board and posted online when ready.

**Organization chart in Elarth:** I plan to add sticky notes with the names of chairs and liaisons, hopefully this week.

**Communications:** Karen, Dara and I will be meeting this week to begin discussing communications and will then hold a meeting for the entire committee.

**Board info for bulletin insert:** The request for info went out late last week and so didn't get into the bulletin this past Sunday. If you have not sent me a short bio and picture, please do so ASAP. Once I have all the info, there will be a bulletin insert.

**Online donations:** Karen and I will be working this week or next to get the donations logo and info up on the website. Reminder that this will be a 1-year test to see if people use it.

**Printers and computer:** There are currently 2 printers and an old desktop computer sitting in my office. Not sure where they came from, possibly from Chris Brownlie's time with us. I am thinking of offering them to members, and then donating them if there are no takers as they are taking up too much space.

**Monthly Potlucks:** There has been some email dialogue this past week on the lack of volunteers willing to coordinate the potlucks, particularly regarding clean-up. This past Sunday, piles of dirty dishes were left on the counters as both dishwashers were full and running. People coming in for the LPCM retreat kindly (but not happily) emptied and reloaded the dishwashers, but should not have had to do this. Although this was partly due to the washing of pitchers from the service, clean-up is in need of a coordinator. The lack of enough food has also been discussed as those at the end of the line often do not get much of anything. This discussion has focused on fewer people actually bringing dishes and the plates being too large enabling people at the front of the line to pile on too much. Let Margo, liaison to the Membership Council, know of any suggestions you may have.

Get your auction donations in!

**Attendance chart:**

Finance Committee Report  
Sept. 11, 2013

The Finance Committee met tonight with Darrel Clowes, Monte Hager and Linda Powers attending. The treasurer's report was given first. Darrel asked about paying Rev Dara's health insurance and retirement. Because the details had not been worked out in August, we included the health insurance money in Dara's paycheck. However this month we have paid her health insurance for both August and September and her September check will reflect this payment. Retirement has not been arranged for us to pay yet.

Darrel reported that there may be some unexpected expenses for our building if we cannot locate a master key that the former Facilities Manager had. We will know more in another month.

We now have the Vanco donate button available on our UUC website. Monte will write a newsletter article explaining our decision to put one there and it's use.

Because Pat Traynor was out of town, we tabled the audit report. Dennis Moody, Pat Traynor and I met to audit FY 2012-13 in August. Pat will send out the report when she gets back. She will also report on her investigation of putting an Amazon button on our website.

We then discussed the fundraising policy document that Darrel and I drafted a year ago. Since we first wrote it, our governance policy has changed and so discussion was held as to the procedure of allowing/disallowing fundraising requests. Attached is the revision from our discussion tonight. We will discuss it again at the next Finance Committee meeting before sending on to the Finance/Administration Council.

## **DLFD Report to the Board – September 2013**

Submitted by Karen Hager, Director of Lifespan Faith Development

### **Registration Numbers**

Registration is off to a strong start, with:

- 94 children registered in Children's RE
- 20 youth registered in MSYG
- 17 youth registered in YRUU
- 3 adults have registered for Rev. Dara's first ARE class

All registration is now offered online, with online registration the choice of 98+% of all registering.

### **LFD Council**

- LFDC will meet to review guidelines for visitors to CREC meetings on September 11, per the request from CREC. Frank DuPont is being consulted in his role as parliamentarian.
- The chair has requested that I relay that the council would appreciate a response from the board concerning convening a forum about meeting process, as the board committed to facilitating at their May meeting.

### **Children's Religious Education Committee (CREC)**

- RE Fall Teacher Training was conducted on August 24. Classes begin September 8.
- MSYG advisor training was conducted on September 8.
- Nicole Napolitano joined the CREC.
- Plans for the year were reviewed and portfolios assigned.
- CREC has drafted guidelines for visitors to meetings and has forwarded them to LFDC for review.

### **Youth Adult Committee (YAC)**

- Erika Reid has accepted our invitation to become a YRUU advisor.
- YRUU advisor training was held on September 1. Kickoff is September 8.

### **Adult Religious Education Committee (AREC)**

- Two classes by Rev. Dara were added to the AREC curriculum offerings.

### **OWL Committee (OWL)**

- Liz Shooltz has moved, necessitating the recruitment of an additional teacher for 8-9 OWL.

### **DLFD**

- Rachel Craine was hired as LFD Assistant and began working August 24.
- In preparation for the start of the year, I have just completed my fourth week working over 40 hours a week. To compensate, I will working lighter hours in September and October.

## **Facilities Council Status Sept. 11, 2013**

The Facilities Council is currently composed of six committees: Building Committee, Grounds Committee, Memorial Committee, Playground Committee; Committee on Visual Arts and Safety Committee.

Three committees are well established with leadership and actively functioning:

- The Grounds Committee – chaired by George Lally
- The Memorial Committee – chaired by Bobbie Littlefield
- The Safety Committee – chaired by Darrel Clowes

The Building Committee is actually actively functioning, with me as de facto chair. I wish and intend to shed that responsibility ASAP. I am actively trying to recruit a committee chair and have had my request denied by two persons. One person is willing, but tentative and would prefer not to take this responsibility. I am continuing my effort to find an appropriate and willing volunteer. The efforts of this committee will be significantly enhanced by the addition of Joe Parrish as paid Facilities Coordinator (as a contractor) which I will discuss later in this report. Should I find a willing committee chair, this committee will be on solid ground.

The Playground Committee is chaired by Chris and Charlotte Valluzzo, who volunteered for this role during the last fiscal year but were prevented by work and family constraints from getting the committee up and running. An existing Playground Sub-Committee of the Buildings and Grounds Committee under the old structure dissolved last spring (2012) due to member burn-out and issues about decision-making authority on the playground. Chris reports a few other members willing to serve on this committee and an intention to get the committee active this fall.

The Committee on Visual Arts (COVA) is currently leaderless and non-functioning. I have contacted previous committee members on a couple of occasions to try to reinvigorate the committee. My impression is that member burn-out and a perceived tension concerning appropriate use of our space for incorporation and display of art, within the larger congregation, prevents interested persons from being willing to serve on this committee. The Minister's voice in resolving these perceived issues may be beneficial. One previous committee member has generously offered to perform significant committee functions but is unwilling to take a leadership role.

A significant event in the Council's realm last fiscal year was the hiring of a Facilities Coordinator to relieve the pressure on volunteers to respond to the myriad and recurring demands for building maintenance. We (the Building Committee, in cooperation with the Personnel Committee and the Administrator) hired an 8 hour per week employee to be responsible for recurring and routine maintenance. Unfortunately, the person we hired, after serving quite satisfactorily for several months, disappeared. He stopped showing up

for work and did not respond to our attempts to contact him. There are safety issues involved (although they do not seem dire) and Darrel Clowes and the Safety Committee are now involved.

The up-side: our UUC member Joe Parrish has accepted a position as *contractor* for our building maintenance needs. Joe is a licensed general contractor and established small business owner. He will provide for our building maintenance needs, not as an employee, but as a contractor, similar to the way our custodial, lawn mowing and snow removal needs are met. Joe has committed to a 6 to 9 month trial basis for this relationship. The cost of his services will be in line with the budgeted funds for an employee to perform the same functions. A written agreement with Joe is all but finalized. I own that task and apologize for not having it complete for this Board meeting. But Joe is already performing the necessary tasks.

Lauren Blakemore, as board liaison the Facilities Council, has indicated plans to convene a meeting of the Council in the near future. I will be happy to attend that meeting and contribute to the furtherance of the council's responsibilities.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mike Skinner  
For the Facilities Council

## Committee Reports – September 2013

### Connection Committee Report – August & September 2013

The information in this report comes from two Connection Committee meetings (Aug 12 and Sep 3) and a meeting by some committee members with Rev. Dara (Aug 20).

#### 1. Membership Information Sessions

The Exploring Membership sessions (Oct, Jan, May) will be replaced by

- a) informal "Get to Know UUC" information opportunities at the front of the sanctuary after the third Sunday service each month. Dara and a member of the Connection Committee will moderate, and
- b) periodic half-day "orientation" sessions for new members and potential members. The first one will be Nov. 2 from 8:30 am to noon.

#### 2. New Member Recognition

Recent new members will be formally welcomed, covenanted, and "ingathered" as part of a worship service two weeks after the half-day "orientation" sessions. First one will be Nov 17. Will include reading of bio (by Isabel). Book signing will not be a part – that will be done after the orientation or in a private session with Rev Dara.

#### 3. Paths to Membership Flyer Update

With the new sessions and other changes, the flyer will be updated.

#### 4. Sharing Your Gifts Survey Form

Barbara Taylor has been working on a "Sharing Your Gifts" survey form for "matching passion and interests between congregants and the UUC community. We plan to have her sit down with new members for a face-to-face completion of the form. We will also mention the availability of this process at the "Getting to Know UUC" sessions for newcomers who want to participate immediately. Later, this process/form may be expanded to the existing community.

#### 5. Placement of Photos and Bios of New Members

Currently the rolling bulletin board panels for various groups (including "membership") are not being placed in Elarth Hall (along with the name badge holder panels). This is one of our ways of connecting the community to new members. This information needs to be viewable on a regular basis.

##### Action Items:

-- *Contact the appropriate committee(s) (Worship, Facilities) to either ensure that the bulletin boards are brought out, or seek space for a permanent bulletin board in Elarth Hall.*

#### 6. Future Topics

- a) Revisit connection options for Virginia Tech and Radford students incorporating input from Dara.
- b) Changing regular meeting day from second Monday.

### Outreach Committee Report – August & September 2013

#### 1. Steppin' Out

Wayne Neu coordinated the volunteers and worked with Mike Skinner to set up and take down the booth tent and table. Twenty volunteers staffed the booth over the two day period. Gene Gardner designed a new handout (including information on Rev. Dara), a "spiritual journey" conversation activity, and an evaluation form for attendance and level of interaction. It is recommended that this activity be continued next summer.

## **2. Order of Service Cover**

Lisa Evanylo and Gene Gardner updated the color cover for the Order of Service to reflect Dara's arrival and changes to various activities.

## **3. Publicity for Dara's first Sunday**

Lisa Evanylo sent a news release and photo to the Roanoke Times newspaper. Gene Gardner reworded the WVTF announcement to announce Dara's arrival and sent releases to other area news outlets.

## DRE Report to the Board – March 2011

Submitted by Karen Hager, Director of Religious Education

### Policy Revisions

The REC has completed the review and revision of all policies that affect the religious education program. Policies fell into two categories:

1. Those currently listed within the *UUC Policy and Procedures Manual*, last updated August 2008. Changes are proposed in the following sections:
  - a. Multi- Age Childcare Procedures – REC recommends that UUC adopt guidelines recommended by the state of Virginia for childcare facilities
  - b. Child Abuse Prevention Policy – proposed changes detailed below
  - c. Building and Grounds – revisions in the use of the Nursery and Playground that reflect changes made at UUC since 2008
2. All other internal RE policies - as there is no one document today that details every current policy, and, since many policies are so old that they predate the existing building, REC has assumed that all prior policies are null and void (except as indicated in the *UUC Policy and Procedures Manual*) and that the attached document will serve as the reference for all additional policies. The Board may determine whether or not Board approval is necessary for implementation of these, and all future, policies.

#### Proposed Changes to Child Abuse Prevention Policy

The changes proposed by the REC to this policy are, for the most part, minor and all changes stay within the original intent of the policy.

The current policy provides the following rule regarding the supervision of children by two adults:

“It is the policy of the UUC that on-going activities and classes for infants, children and youth shall be supervised by two screened and approved volunteers.”

This policy, which was intended to apply to “on-going activities and classes” such as regular Religious Education (RE) classes, Middle School Youth Group (MSYG), Coming of Age (COA), YRUU/YAC, and other future UUC-sponsored classes or activities in which minors would be involved, has been interpreted to mean “any activity”. A policy requiring two background-checked adults in every circumstance in which a child is present is not feasible.

The intent of the policy is to serve as prevention of child abuse through the screening of adults who are involved in ongoing relationships with children. Revisions recommend that the current policy be amended to clarify this intent.

The REC recognizes two levels of volunteers with children.

Level 1: This level applies to adults, age 18 or older, who are in a position to form an ongoing relationship with a child or children, due to proximity over a span of time. Adult volunteers at this level would include those who are volunteering to:

- Teach a RE class for the fall or spring term
- Agree to serve as a regular substitute teacher for the RE school year
- Serve as a Youth Advisor for MSYG, YRUU, or YAC
- Provide on-going Nursery care during Sunday services

Level 1 adults are required to fill out an application, submit to a background check, and submit to a reference check.

Level 2: Level 2 adults are adults who are asked to volunteer for a particular task or event. Examples include:

- Teaching a one-time, one-day Summer RE class
- Assisting teachers or the DRE in a class event
- Serving as a one-time substitute assisting teacher



Level 2 adults must be accompanied by a second adult in these situations. However, Level 2 adults should not be required to submit to a background or reference check (and we should not have to pay for one), since the activity is for a one-time task or event. At this level, one background-checked adult, such as the DRE or regular teacher, is available and attending the class or event with the Level 2 volunteer(s).

The intent behind this level of approved adult is to allow the DRE the option of using a parent as a last-minute substitute assisting teacher, if regular substitutes are not available. It also allows non-background checked adults to teach a one-time summer class, as long as the DRE or another background-checked adult is also present. The current policy, interpreted very strictly, does not allow for either scenario.

### Addition of a Policy for Managing Convicted Sex Offenders

The UUA now recommends that congregations also have a policy regarding how they will handle visitors or members who are convicted sex offenders. The REC recommends that UUC establish such a policy and have used the guidelines provided by the UUA to craft our recommendation. The UUA also recommends the drafting of a Limited Access Agreement that will be used as the basis for determining contact, or lack of contact, between convicted sex offenders and children. At the end of this report are excerpts from the UUA Guidelines which provided a basis for the establishment of a policy for managing convicted sex offenders.

### **Resources Consulted**

In arriving at suggestions for revisions, many resources were consulted, including the UUA, State of Virginia, material from Church Mutual and Christian Ministry Resources, and several UUA churches. A complete listing of resources is at the end of this report.

### **Review Process**

After all policies passed through an initial revision process by REC, policies were submitted to the following groups for comments and approval:

- A parent task force, consisting of Mark Benson, Molly Lazar, Christina Mathai, Terri Nichols, and Eric Thomas. This task force has completed their work and has now disbanded.
- Church Mutual, our insurance company
- The Safety Committee at UUC

The final revisions were approved by the REC at the committee meeting on March 2.

### **Board action requested:**

- Approval of changes to the current *UUC Policy & Procedures Manual*
- Approval of a new policy for Managing Convicted Sex Offenders
- Determination of which remaining policies require Board approval
- Approval of these other policies

### **Attachments:**

- *Policies and Procedures-uuc\_Mar\_11\_revisions* – tracking changes will show where revisions are recommended
- *Limited Access Agreement* – referenced in recommended policy for Managing Convicted Sex Offenders
- *RE Policies – March 2011* – all other proposed RE policies

## UUA Guidelines on Managing Known Sex Offenders

From *Balancing Acts, Keeping Children Safe in Congregations*, by Rev. Debra W. Haffner; full text viewable on the UUA website at: <http://www.uua.org/leaders/safecongregations/balancingacts/index.shtml>

*Excerpt<sup>1</sup>*: As religious communities, we can provide compassion, support, and reconciliation to those who truly have indicated that they have changed and have taken responsibility for their actions. We believe in the healing power of involvement in a spiritual home. . . Sex offenders who have completed prison sentences and mandated treatment as well as registered with the state have according to the court system complied with their punishments. As faith-based communities, we can provide support and compassion with awareness and vigilance so that all are safe as those who have sexually offended return to or join our church community. . .

In many ways, the person with a history of sex offenses has the same needs for a faith community as the rest of us. But the sex offender needs more to assure that his involvement doesn't pose risks to the congregation and that standards are in place for protection against false allegations and suspicions. "Such involvement needs to include helping him manage his behavior and not get into situations which in the past led to offences...an offender who truly wishes to participate in the life of the church, who realizes the extent of his crime and the difficulty his presence may cause to survivors, and who is truly committed to a new life will understand and accept the need for the imposition of restrictions..."

But in order to do so safely, we must assure that the convicted sex offender does not have the opportunity in our congregations to re-offend again. This includes avoiding situations where they can be accused falsely. **The fact is that a person with a history of sex offense against children should never be allowed to be with children, work with children and youth, or socialize with children at the congregation.** No person who has been convicted of, or with an unresolved accusation of, any sexual misconduct can be permitted to be involved in any religious education or youth group activities.

**The core response of the congregation to a convicted or accused sex offender is a Limited Access Agreement.** This agreement invites the person with a history of sex offenses to participate in certain aspects of congregational life, setting clear boundaries including what the individual will not do. Typically a Limited Access Agreement will specify participation in adult worship services, coffee hour, committee meetings, adult education, all-adult social events, and well-supervised intergenerational events as acceptable. It asks the person to avoid all contact with children on congregation property or congregation-sponsored events. **This includes not talking with children, volunteering or chaperoning children's events, including children's religious education classes, talks with children during worship, and children's activities during intergenerational events.** It generally requires the person to remain in the presence of an adult who knows their situation at all times when children are present, including in some cases, asking the person to suggest a group of people to act as companions at church events where children may be present. It denies the person access to keys to the building and asks them to avoid being in the building unsupervised when activities involving children are in session, such as nursery school or youth group. . .

**The message to the sex offender should be that they are both welcome to participate in adult worship, adult social, and adult educational activities and that they must covenant with the congregation to avoid all contact with children.**

*Excerpt<sup>2</sup>*: It is beyond the scope and experience of congregations to assess the risk or probability that a sex offender will re-offend. According to the Center for Sex Offender Management, even therapists with special training in treating sex offenders can be wrong.

### *Excerpt<sup>3</sup>*: **Reasons for Excluding a Person from All Congregation Activities**

- Refusal for the minister to contact the treatment provider and parole officer.
- Refusal to go for a risk assessment with a qualified therapist.
- Report by a treatment provider that the individual is at too high risk for recidivism.
- Refusal to sign a Limited Access Agreement.
- Refusal to comply with the requirements of the Limited Access Agreement.

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1 : <http://www.uua.org/leaders/safecongregations/balancingacts/involvingoffenders/index.shtml>

2 : <http://www.uua.org/leaders/safecongregations/balancingacts/involvingoffenders/23454.shtml>

3 : <http://www.uua.org/leaders/safecongregations/balancingacts/involvingoffenders/23456.shtml>

## Resources

To determine what recommendations would be made for revised policies, many resources were consulted for advice.

UUA Safe Congregations: <http://www.uua.org/leaders/safecongregations/>

*Balancing Acts, Keeping Children Safe in Congregations*, by Rev. Debra W. Haffner; full text viewable on the UUA website at: <http://www.uua.org/leaders/safecongregations/balancingacts/index.shtml>

*Reducing the Risk and Reducing the Risk II – Making Your Church Safe from Child Sexual Abuse*, Christian Ministry Resources

State of Virginia:

- Licensing Standards for Daycare Centers: <http://daycare.com/virginia/>
- *CODE OF VIRGINIA, Effective July 1, 2010, TITLE 63.2:*  
[http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/licensing/recdc/intro\\_page/code\\_regulations/code/2010\\_code\\_of\\_virginia.pdf](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/licensing/recdc/intro_page/code_regulations/code/2010_code_of_virginia.pdf)

Other UU Churches – reviewing similar policies at other churches was very helpful, as it was obvious that the most recent documents reflected the same type of changes that we are proposing; other churches have apparently had the same experience in implementing the recommended policy and have sought to make it more achievable. Church policies reviewed include:

- UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ROANOKE, CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES <http://uuroanoke.org/re/ChildAbusePolicy2006.htm>
- HEARTLAND DISTRICT OF THE UUA, CHILD AND YOUTH SAFETY AND PROTECTION GUIDELINES [http://www.heartlanduu.org/documents/Policies/safe\\_cong\\_policy\\_youthchildren\\_apr06\\_copy1.pdf](http://www.heartlanduu.org/documents/Policies/safe_cong_policy_youthchildren_apr06_copy1.pdf)
- Safe Congregation Policy, Unity Church of North Easton <http://www.unity-church.com/documents/safe.pdf>
- Pacific Central District, Unitarian Universalist Association, Safety Policy <http://www.pcd-uua.org/policies/safety.pdf>
- WESTSIDE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY [www.westsideuu.org/Church%20Business/Policies/9-RE.doc](http://www.westsideuu.org/Church%20Business/Policies/9-RE.doc)
- First Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Hunterdon County, Safe Congregation Policy <http://hunterdonuu.org/wpmu/files/2010/06/safe-congregation-policy-redraft11.pdf>
- POLICIES & PROCEDURES, Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of Laramie <http://www.uularamie.org/Policies%20and%20Procedures%2010-08.pdf>
- Safe Congregation Policies and Procedures for Children and Youth, Unitarian Universalist Church of Manchester <http://www.uumanchester.org/re/SafePolicies2082007.pdf>
- Safe Congregation Policy, First Unitarian Universalist Society of Exeter [www.uusat.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/ChildSafety.pdf](http://www.uusat.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/ChildSafety.pdf)
- FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF HOUSTON, SAFE CONGREGATIONS POLICY [www.firstuu.org/pdfs/draft\\_safe\\_cong\\_policy.pdf](http://www.firstuu.org/pdfs/draft_safe_cong_policy.pdf)
- UU Church of South County, Child and Youth Protection Requirements [www.tapestryuu.org/documents/child-protection-policy.pdf](http://www.tapestryuu.org/documents/child-protection-policy.pdf)
- BUUF SAFE CONGREGATION POLICY [www.boiseuu.org/resources/SafeCongregationPolicy.pdf](http://www.boiseuu.org/resources/SafeCongregationPolicy.pdf)