

Minutes of Zoom Conference Board Meeting – March 18, 2020, Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers and Partners Association

Board Members Present: Barbara Child, Phyllis Hubbell, Dave Hunter, Ginger Luke, Diane Miller, Art Severance, Cathie Severance, Jaco ten Hove, and Susan Veronica Rak

Attending for Part of the Meeting: Barbara Wells ten Hove

Note: Board decisions are in bold type. Action items are in red italic type.

FEBRUARY 17-18, 2020 BOARD MEETING MINUTES AND MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 21, 2020, BUSINESS MEETING DURING WINTER CONFERENCE

The revised February 17-18 Board Meeting minutes were approved. The revised February 21 Business Meeting minutes were also approved. They have been sent to Duane for posting on UURMaPA's web site under GOVERNANCE.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's report was approved.

Dave will send a draft fund-raising letter to Diane.

WEEKLY CHECK-IN GROUPS ON ZOOM

Barbara Wells ten Hove brought to us her proposal that she organize a program of weekly check-in meetings on Zoom for small groups of UURMaPA members who are interested to use this as a means of maintaining meaningful contact during this period of isolation during the coronavirus pandemic. She described the brief questionnaire she had in mind to be distributed by our Announce messaging system in order to discover who would be interested in being part of such a group and who else besides Judy Welles and herself would be interested to facilitate a group. She explained that she envisions the groups initially to be planned to last 6-12 weeks with the understanding that some may choose to continue for a longer time. She expects each group meeting to last an hour. **With gratitude, we approved Barbara's plan and encouraged her to go forward with it.**

Art volunteered to lead a group. He also will invite the Area Connectors to send the questionnaire about interest to the members in their Areas.

Susan will take care of Zoom arrangements.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Since we could not plan with certainty that there would or would not be an "in person" General Assembly in Providence in June, we worked up Plan A (in person) and Plan B (virtual) with the hope that we would be able to make trustworthy decisions at our April meeting.

Plan A (with in-person General Assembly in Providence) –

Phyllis will arrange for the luncheon meal to be with plates served rather than a buffet.

Phyllis and her selection team will go ahead to choose the recipient of the Creative Saging Award, with the understanding that if there is no in-person General Assembly in Providence, the award may not be given until the fall conference. Phyllis let us know who the finalists are for the award in case any of us had information the selection team ought to keep in mind.

Susan will represent us at both the UURMaPA luncheon and workshop.

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Since Jaco will not be in Providence, he expressed his need for someone to serve as UURMaPA photographer so that there can be General Assembly pictures in *Elderberries*.

Plan B (virtual General Assembly) --

Understanding that we will wait for our April meeting to make final decisions, we considered these possibilities:

- having some kind of virtual recognition of new retirees in conjunction with the Service of Living Tradition
- having what we would call an “ingathering” in place of the luncheon
- needing to address how many of our members by then will still not be completely at ease using Zoom technology
- not presenting the Creative Saging Award virtually but waiting to present it in person at the fall conference.

FALL 2020 CONFERENCE

We acknowledged that all our plans need to be tentative, understanding that the fall conference may need to be cancelled.

Ginger will bring us a full report from the conference planning team at our April meeting.

We committed to paying speaker Fred Small \$500 plus travel expenses, assuming the conference does happen. We deferred deciding what would be the source of the expenditure.

Ginger will investigate and report back to us what, if any, financial loss we will incur if we end up needing to cancel the Fall 2020 Conference.

WINTER 2021 CONFERENCE

Ginger reported that she has made no reservation to date. **We affirmed that based on evaluations of the Winter 2020 conference, we want to return to the Franciscan Center in Scottsdale, Arizona. We also affirmed that we would be satisfied to have a 3-day/2-night conference.** Ginger let us know the Franciscan Center is available February 22-24, 2021. **We authorized her to make a reservation there for those dates.**

Ginger will make the reservation.

WINTER 2022 CONFERENCE

Ginger reported that she has reserved the Franciscan Center for February 27-March 4, 2022, for the Winter 2022 conference.

APPOINTMENTS TO FILL UNCOMPLETED BOARD TERMS

We appointed Susan Vice President to complete the one remaining year of Phyllis’s term in that position.

We appointed Marni Harmony to fill the Board position now held by Susan for the year during which Susan will be completing Phyllis’s term as Vice President.

MATTERS REGARDING MINISTERIAL MISCONDUCT

We went into executive session regarding updated information related to our new policy on removal from UURMaPA membership.

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POTENTIAL UURMaPA ACTIONS RELATED TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Jaco presented us his analysis of the brainstorm of possible climate actions that grew out of his workshop at the Winter 2020 conference. He divided the actions into three categories: (1) easy, (2) worthy but harder, and (3) challenging. The color-coded analysis follows.

Brainstorm of Possible UURMaPA Climate Actions

by Winter 2020 conferees, Scottsdale, AZ Led by Jaco ten Hove, scribe (2/20/2020)

EASY

WORTHY, BUT HARDER

CHALLENGING

ABOUT CONFERENCES:

1. Reuse-able cups: encourage BYO, or sell at conferences
2. Convey conference site standards, as does General Assembly (Contact Jan Sneegas, director of GA and Conference Services)
3. Revise conference schedule: One a year? Regional? Zoom-connected?
4. Reduce paper use; send electronics ahead, more use of screens
5. UURMaPA action toward political change, e.g., letter-writing table
6. Trainings for lobby efforts
7. Carbon footprint offsets, including an option for such on registration forms
8. Monitor room temperatures more closely
9. Buy conference social hour drinks in bulk, e.g., wine in large boxes
10. Vegetarian advocacy; less food waste (clean your plate!)
11. Programming on climate issues
12. Playful competition; fun activities toward goals

OTHER ANGLES:

13. Statements made on behalf of UURMaPA
14. Online support groups (no travel required)
15. Area connections or other small groups activated on climate topics
16. Facebook development toward goals (offer instruction)
17. Encourage move from snail-mailed Elderberries to online version
18. Educate ourselves; see skepticalscience.com and 350.org websites

We agreed to do as much as we can to put the easy actions into effect as of our Fall 2020 Conference.

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Ginger will inform the conference planning team of this commitment.

MERGERS OF CONNECTOR AREAS

We affirmed the mergers Art presented to us as well as the new names of the merged areas, as follows: Bay Area Coastal and Bay Area Inland to become Northern California (and will include Hawaii); Central Mass and Mass Bay Inland to become Central Mass; and North and South Virginia to become Virginia.

Art will provide this updated arrangement and naming of Areas to Richard Speck, Membership Coordinator.

APRIL 2020 MEETING

Next meeting: April 15, 2020, Zoom conference, 1:00 Eastern Daylight Time, with individual members to adjust the time according to their Time Zone.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Child, Secretary

REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR JANUARY 15, 2020, ZOOM CONFERENCE BOARD MEETING

President: Diane Miller

Kudos to everyone involved with our person-to-person board meeting and Winter Conference! And that was every one of us, and most of the conferees as well. I got consistently good feedback during the conference. We had some suggestions that came up in our conversation with the Board on Friday morning. Evals were likewise very positive. We appear not to have an on-line eval, but I sent some comments to Lois and to Ginger via email.

UURMAPAns Count

According to the UUA, February 2020 UU Clergy data

UUA in ACTIVE SERVICE 2/2020	561 Women	308 Men	2 Queer/Trans	79 Unknown	950 TOTAL
All ministers in UUA Fellowship	977 Women	745 Men	2 Q/T	135 unknown	1859 TOTAL
UURMAPA	333 women	340 Men			673 TOTAL

UURMaPA ministers represent 36% of the total number of ministers in Fellowship. I've requested numbers from the UUMA for comparison.

COVID-19 (I wrote this a week ago and it sure is dated already)

I am breathing a sigh of relief that we are more than 14 days beyond the end of our conference and I have not heard of anyone who got sick from corona virus after returning home. I have been closely watching the news about the virus. I think most of us have concerns about how this will affect us directly as well as the clear national and global impact. I know one person who has this, and soon we will all have stories of our first and second degrees of separation from the illness. So let's think how it will impact UURMaPA and be proactive.

In addition to close quarters on cruise ships, travel, & nursing homes, much reported spread seems to emerge from conferences and meetings. (e.g. Conservative CPAC, Episcopal Conference, Biogen Conference in

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Boston). We hold two conferences a year, plus our annual gathering at GA. Our membership and attendees are virtually all 60 and up, the demographic that the CDC is now advising to stay home and prepare for being isolated. We face many imponderables and unknowns, which tend to raise anxiety. Will we face widespread restrictions on travel, as in Italy? (Who would have thought, a month ago, that it was risky to go to Milan? We may be facing their situation just weeks from now. Or perhaps not.)

We need to have a contingency plan for our primary gatherings. What questions do we need to ask? Can we look at each upcoming event, and shape a contingency plan, maybe a basic decision tree, note any deadlines for decisions? What else? GA may take care of itself, because it will be cancelled by the UUA or will be held with no doubt lower than anticipated attendance. Fall Conference? Is there a stiff cancellation fee? Will it be waived in light of CDC recommendations? Winter 2021, possibly April in Scottsdale.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/guidance-community-faith-organizations.html>

As of March 10th the following message was on uua.org GA page.

From UUA.ORG: COVID-19: General Assembly Update

The General Assembly and Conference Services Staff and GA Planning Committee are monitoring local and national news, as well as hotel and conference service industry organizations, for updates, protocols and advice about the spread of the coronavirus in the United States. Please be advised that General Assembly will take place as scheduled in Providence, Rhode Island from June 24 – June 28, 2020.

In the months ahead, we will keep you informed on relevant changes to this very fluid situation. While we have no crystal ball, we are cautiously optimistic and encourage you take good care of yourselves and one another even as we hold those who are directly affected by this crisis in our thoughts and prayers.

We need to prepare for our GA annual event, but the trend in conferences is definitely toward cancellations, not holding events. And current CDC advice to older people is to not travel or go out unnecessarily. In addition, I've seen predictions that put the peak of the infections in July with the mitigation efforts, and in April if nothing was done. As usual, conflicting and rapidly evolving information.

Reported deaths:

2-24-2020 Peggy Owen-Mansfield, surviving spouse is Rev'd Doak Mansfield

2-8-2020 Rev'd Richard W. Kelley age 93

People:

From Barbara Child – “Friends, I have just learned that our beloved colleague and friend **Fran Dew** has had a stroke this week. The Pastoral Care weekly report from the Ann Arbor church says that she is not accepting calls or visits, but that cards are welcome. Fran's address is 8212 Ann Arbor Rd. West, Plymouth, MI 48170. Let's show her lots of love.” I sent a card from UURMaPA

Gene Pickett is home after a hospitalization with viral pneumonia. I have sent an email note.

Earl Holt has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. He and Marilyn live in Phoenix. I have been in touch.

This month I have

- Sent notes of appreciation to Women in Ministry panelists and others involved in Conference
- Sent minutes notes to Barbara

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- Followed up with UUA Sarah Lammert about fellowship status of disciplinary cases; had long conversations with colleague who resigned fellowship. Planning to review with Susan to see what UUMA can verify.
- Had a wide range of emails, including two specifically thanking Elderberries and Jaco for key information.
- Had calls with Judy Welles and with Phyllis Hubbell about leftover Rainbow items.
- Communicated with Diana about announcing the book, and drafted a release statement
- Pursued the action item in the minutes to talk with Anne Spatola about future conference info, specifically having a team plan the winter conference instead of the Board. Essentially, she wants to work on Rainbow History until her term begins, but had already talked to some potential winter conference people.
- Reviewed GA 2020 plans with Phyllis and with Susan
- Drafted article for next Elderberries
- Drafted agenda for next meeting

Vice-President: Phyllis Hubbell

Rainbow History UURMaPA Workshops:

It appears to us that there will be limited workshops at UUMA but we've gotten no official word yet.

General Assembly UURMaPA Lunch: Mark your calendars. The lunch is now scheduled for Friday, June 26 from noon to 2:00. Of course, we all know that there is some possibility that G.A. in Providence will be a virtual luncheon but as of right now, I am planning to get in touch with the caterer and begin planning for a safe site for all of us.

Saging Award: Carolyn Owen Towle and Russell Savage are working with me to research the people recommended for this award. We have narrowed it down to two and are doing additional research. Even if we don't have an actual event, we plan to issue the award.

Rainbow History Conference Follow Up

Tom Mazarella, our Litchfield videographer, has sent us the revised Litchfield videos. I will begin reviewing them this week. I anticipate that they will go much more quickly than the New Braunfels videos. He has also agreed to review the New Braunfels video with our final edits and discuss making those edits himself for a fee. Since the New Braunfels videographer has offered to waive his editing fee, that may be possible. We want to do what is fair, but get the remaining work done as quickly as possible.

Treasurer: Dave Hunter

Sorry, I don't have a final financial report for you on last month's Scottsdale conference, and I haven't yet tackled the endowment challenge. But I have been busy. Recently I was preparing to preach yesterday at Pottstown ("Ask Dr. Hooker – the Perennial Problems of Congregations" CANCELLED) and to lead a three-session adult education class starting Wednesday at Main Line ("People Mistreated (by God) in the Bible" CANCELLED).

In any event, it's been a relatively slow period for UURMaPA finances since the conference. On the income side we received eight contributions, for a total of \$985. We also received two additional conference registration payments (one including a \$100 contribution) and made one refund, for a net conference income of \$570. Total income was thus \$1555.

Spending has been more vigorous:

Franciscan Center	\$19,326
Scottsdale travel	\$2,249

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Other conference expenses	\$1,039
Elderberries	\$1,002
Litchfield videography	\$750
Rainbow project transcriptions	\$726
Rainbow project website	\$509
TD Bank checks	\$47
	<u>\$25,648</u>

Our net deficit in the last month is thus \$24,093. (And don't ask how our endowment has fared lately; I haven't dared look.) There are further Scottsdale travel reimbursements to be made, and my credit card bill, which should arrive soon, will include further conference or board meeting expenses.

On January 19 I reported that our Rainbow Project fund stood at \$7076. Adding a recent \$50 contribution and deducting the expenses listed above (videography, transcriptions, and website), the fund now has \$5141.

Earlier today I mailed nine thank you letters for contributions.

Secretary: Barbara Child

After the February 17-18 Board Meeting, I sent the approved January 15 Board Meeting minutes to Webmaster Duane Fickeisen for posting on our web site under Governance. I sent draft February 17-18 Board Meeting minutes and reports along with draft February 21 Business Meeting minutes to the Board for corrections and other suggested revisions. On March 13 I sent the revised minutes and reports to the Board for review before the March 18 meeting. I also sent this Secretary's report to the Board on March 13.

During the winter conference, I facilitated the opening evening's small group introduction and check-in session, moderated the opening program segment on the impact of the Vietnam War on our ministry, and presented the Unsung URMaPAn Award to Lois Wesener. I also met with several non-clergy partners who were present as part of my on-going gathering of information for the guidebook I am planning to write as part of the Partners Project.

Also as part of the Partners Project, I designed a questionnaire and sent it to partners who responded to my call for interested consultants in the Winter *Elderberries*. I sent the questionnaire and cover letter to Joel Miller and Anita Farber-Robertson, my Partners Project liaisons in UUMA and the Transitional Ministers Chapter.

I wrote to the Vietnam program panelists – Jan Christian, Dave Hunter, Stephan Papa, and Robert Latham – to thank them for their fine contributions to the program and to let them know that I learned from the conference evaluations how well it was received.

Newsletter Editor – Jaco ten Hove

After the Scottsdale conference, I transcribed the climate action brainstorm list and sent it out to you. And I've been gaining ground on the next round of Elderberries material. (Still open to receiving any decent people pix you might have on your phones from that fine event.)

At-Large Member: Conferences – Ginger Luke

Thank you everyone for such wonderful help with the Franciscan Renewal Center retreat last month. I received the final statement from FRC, surveyed it and sent it on to Dave Hunter to pay. Dave assured me he would pay it the day after he received it.

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Anne Spatola and I met with the FRC representative and asked for dates for next year. It turns out the only dates available for us next year were April 25-30, 2021. (January 3-7, and April 18-23 was available with less rooms than we used last in 2020.) Especially since there was a request to talk about this during the March board meeting and there was the possibility that we might choose not to meet in the Winter 2021 for environmental reasons, I have not made any reservations for Winter 2021 at this time. I will check with the FRC tomorrow to see if these April 2021 dates are still available to inform our board discussion. Anne has asked me to stay working on this until she comes on July 1. She wants to focus on the Rainbow Project book etc.

However, I did reserve the FRC for February 27- March 4, 2022. I'm ready with plans for escorting people in the dark and delivering luggage like a cruise ship with tags and all.

Meanwhile, I have been unable to send the conference videos to Duane Fickeisen. Their size has become a serious obstacle. This morning I just got some more advice about how it might be possible, so still am trying.

I sent thank yous out to major participants in the Winter Conference. I am very grateful to Lois Wesener for calculating the evaluations. I have connected Lois and Anne Spatola with Barbro Hanssen as plans for the Fall 2020 conference keep moving along. I notice the Fall 2020 team has already been in contact with Jaco about the next Elderberries.

I have contacted Richard Speck to see if we could use credit cards with our next registration and if much of the registration could be done electronically so as to simplify the registration process for the registrar.

At Large Members: Connections Chair – Art Severance and Assistant Connections Chair – Cathie Severance

I sent Emails to AC of Mass Bay Inland Marta Niebanck about Merger with Central Mass and South Virginia AC Kim Beach about Merger with North Virginia:

"I hope this find you well and in good spirits. You missed a great UURMAPA Conference! At our Board meeting, we addressed the difficulty of recruiting Area Connectors, and after much discussion, decided to merge a few Areas, some of which are small and no longer have Area Connectors with adding Areas which do. We are merging (Northern VA with your Southern VA). What I'm hoping is that you will check the Directory and see if there is someone you know there who might be willing to help if you feel you need it. Let me know what you think. We're doing some rethinking about how the Area Connections are working overall. We would value your input. We appreciate the work you have done.

Shalom,
Art Severance"

Areas still needing Connectors; EASTERN CANADA, HEARTLAND NORTH, JOSEPH PRIESTLEY SOUTH, METRO NY/NJ

I sent Barbara about Minutes correction-

Minutes read-We affirmed Art's plan to merge the Bay Coastal and Bay Inland Areas and also the Northern California and Hawaii Areas. We also affirmed merging Central Mass and Mass Bay Inland Areas and also North and South Virginia.

Should read: We affirmed Art's plan to merge the Bay Area Coastal and Bay Area Inland Areas and also the Northern California and Hawaii Areas. We also affirmed merging Central Mass and Mass Bay Inland Areas and also North and South Virginia.

I'll contact Richard about changes once we decide what new areas should be named. Sent out 4 new retirements emails to ACs for Alison Eskidsen, Steven Epperson, Rosemary Lloyd, and Carol Haag.

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Assistant-Cathie's report: At the conference I met with Judy Gibson about my job. Richard Speck was going to put me on Announce List, that I believe goes out to members. Aastha Poudel handles the original Announce message. Judy Gibson sent me the latest Announce.

At Large Member: Good Offices – Susan Veronica Rak

- still trying to tie up loose ends on "removal from membership" questions.
- taking a stab at creating easier access to Zoom for UURMaPA (as you can see from the test emails... but that account is still linked to my Gmail, so it's back to the drawing board on this!)

And as for our conversation on Wednesday, an agenda item might be a conversation about any outreach we should do - at the very least a pastoral note/email to UURMaPAns checking in - in this pandemic? Melissa Carville Ziemer reached out wondering if there was any way UUMA can be of help or assist in anything we are doing. This may not be something UURMaPA has done in the past, perhaps not globally [more through areas perhaps?] but this pandemic and quarantines have presented a new (novel) set of challenges and worries. We've seen how our colleagues still serving have had to tackle this and develop new ways of doing and being "church". Does UURMaPA have a place in all this?