

# All Souls Church, Unitarian

## Board of Trustees

Thursday, February 26, 2009

Eaton Room

### Board Members in Attendance

Goldia Hodgdon  
Erika Landberg  
Josephine Nieves  
Taylar Nuevelle  
Mary Rojas  
Fred Samuels  
Jones Thomas

### Absent Board Members

Fred Tipson  
Elizabeth "Libby" Turpen

### Others in Attendance

Kyla Bollens-Lund (Assistant Secretary)  
Jody Feldman (Moderator)  
Mollie & Bob Freeman (Caretakers of the Archive)  
Lynne Heltman (Membership Secretary)  
Barry Johnson (Treasurer)  
Eliza Klose (Secretary)  
Walter Le Flore (Intern Minister)  
Shana Lynngood (Associate Minister)  
David Reynolds (Assistant Treasurer)  
Kelly Young (Soulful Path)

### Summary of Actions

Board President Erika Landberg called the meeting to order at 7pm. Kelly Young lit the chalice and Shana Lynngood read from "Consider the Lilies."

We went around the table introducing ourselves and each person talked about positive experiences we've had recently in relation to All Souls Church.

### Investment Committee Report—Mark Flood

(a slight change in the agenda so Mark could leave before the Visioning session.)

Mark described the Symposium on Ethical Investing (often called Socially Conscious Investing), which the Investment Committee is sponsoring together with the Seventh Principle Committee. The conference, which will be promoted to the Joseph Priestly District congregations but will be open to all, is planned for Saturday, May 9 at ASC. The two committees are applying for a grant from the Beckner Committee and Mark shared the draft application with the BOT to describe the effort. He directed our attention to the summary description of the event, which intends to deal with the tension that often exists between the financial leaders and the social justice leaders in a community. The conference will cover questions like the basic fiduciary responsibilities

of financial leaders, the tools available to them to consider social justice issues, appropriate financial levers for social justice concerns and success stories in meeting the needs of both sides.

Mark invited the board to attend the all-day May 9 meeting, which will include speakers from the UU community as well as knowledgeable others. There will be a charge for the meeting, but not a large one. Mark asked the Board if it would be willing to have its name connected with the conference in its publicity, brochures, etc.

Discussion: Wouldn't "sponsorship" and "support" imply financial help, which the Church is not offering. Mark explained that ASC will be providing free space and some custodial support, but not direct financial support. Others mentioned that Socially Responsible Investing has been a topic of interest to ASC for years. Decision was to use the word "endorse."

Resolution: Taylar Nuevelle made a motion that the Church endorse the conference on ethical investment for UU congregations by Investment and 7<sup>th</sup> Principle Committees. Mary Rojas seconded . It was passed unanimously .

### **Deep Chair**

Erika explained that a 10-minute Deep Chair time had been added to the agenda for the evening. Joneis Thomas, the leader of the "Visioning" section of the meeting, took on the Deep Chair role, explaining that its purpose was to help us have a deeper grounding as we began our discussion of the visioning process the congregation plans to engage in over the next several months. During the Deep Chair Joneis and others spoke of issues important to them relating to endings and beginnings.

### **All Souls Visioning Process** Joneis Thomas, Goldia Hodgdon

Joneis introduced the discussion by saying the board needs more time to think out the process and timetable of visioning the role of the Church. She noted it is also important not to reinvent the wheel as a lot of wisdom exists already. It is necessary to incorporate the results of the End Statement review (People noted that they preferred the term Vision Statement to that of End Statement.) and the BOT retreat. Kelly Young joined us to facilitate the discussion and mention was made of the need to expand the visioning committee to include the many other facilitators in the congregation.

Tmeline. The fall is busy with the Generosity Campaign, during the summer not much happens so committee should try to complete the effort before the General Assembly at the end of June.

Process: We must learn from the shortcomings of the Ends Statement review, for example, asking people to give up too much of their time. What would be the best way to organize the effort? A one or two-day retreat? Surveys? We need feedback.

First step: We must know what the outcome of the effort should be. What would success look like? The specifics of getting to this agreed-upon outcome will flow from consensus as to what we seek.

Three potential outcomes:   New or revised set of Vision Statements  
  Measureable goals attached to each VS  
  Inclusion of the congregation at large in the process.

The Visioning process must be reflected in the Capital Campaign. There must be some link between the two.

The retreat discussion made the CC seem largely building oriented. If this is true, the CC is much more narrow than the Visioning process.

What do we want to do that will further the End Statements AND lead to positive results in the CC? Whatever we dream about will have a role in CC.

Kelly, as facilitator: The end result or Vision is for the world to become the Beloved Community. The Outcome for ASC can be more specific but not measurable, but we can set tests that will be measurable and that create context for anything that happens in the Church. ASC must look to outcomes and measurable results to see what it would like the community to be. Does our vision statement lead to what we want? The ASC mission is to drive toward becoming a diverse, spirit-growing, justice-seeking world.

How do we arrive at goals? Need to be given steps which we can take to achieve larger vision. We have the big picture and like it, but need some of the steps to get there. The various ministries at the Church reflect these steps. We can describe their activities as steps towards the big vision.

But what is the difference between our vision, our goals, the big picture?

Kelly: Vision is aspirational—the Beloved Community. Inside the larger picture there is the mission, which describes how you and your community can help reach the vision. Inside the mission are vision statements or outcomes (what were originally called end statements.) If we are fulfilling your mission, what does our community look like?

A measurable result is something we can measure. Must be clear. The process must have a large enough response to be valid. People need to be going in same direction. Not total agreement, just general.

The congregation can work towards Vision/Mission, but the focus of this process needs to be more on the concrete steps ASC can take.

Do we need new Ends (Vision) Statements? Not necessarily. Our job is to lead people to consensus since the Church has changed and added a number of new people to the congregation since the Ends Statements were arrived at in 2002.

It is important to arrive at consensus. We have good solid input but need to bring more people into the process. Can't dismiss either the Ends Statements or the people who weren't here when they were written. Let people generate their own stuff. Get the new ideas. Perhaps seven is too many? How can we get input from the whole congregation?

Kelly: We need structure and process in writing and rewording the Statements. And the process must be congregation wide. Group can start from scratch. It's better to start from 20-15-10-5 years ahead and work backward to the present, not the other way around. The thinking process is more effective.

How do we measure the success of the process?

We must get significant and diverse congregational involvement. At least half of the congregation should be involved. New, old, regular, irregular, black, white—as diverse as possible in order to get congregational buy-in. Must assure that the staff and congregation are sharing in the process so people do not feel the task has been given away to the staff, that we are going down road together.

Congregational ownership and diverse participation are more important than the calendar date. This is a priority. Need to dedicate time and energy to the process. The timeline is not as important as taking the time the process requires.

We need a process that can hold all these activities and discipline in the organization, a willingness to say no if it's necessary. If there's real ownership, people will be able to say no if they need to.

Kelly: The larger committee made up of board members and identified members of the congregation need to become leaders. They must help set the questions and the process.

We need to expand our committee now, not three months from now. Mustn't keep putting the process off. Do we want to devote the retreat to it? Can we get the process together by end of June or should we extend it into the next Church year?

We need more time. The outcomes and structure have to be clear. Is there enough guidance from this meeting to go ahead?

Many thanks to everyone. Particular thanks to Kelly for serving as Facilitator.

## **Reports**

Associate Minister—Shana Lynngood (See report)

Shana spoke about the successful New Orleans trip she led and about the new Neighborhood Souls groups that are being set up by the Caring Committee. Groups now exist in Mount Pleasant, on Capitol Hill and in Silver Spring. Ideally ASC would have 6-8 groups. Walter Le Flore, the Intern Minister, working with Meredith Higgins, who organizes Covenant groups, is setting up Chalice Circles. Both the Neighborhood groups

and the Chalice Circles respond to the Church's desire to build a sense of community through establishing small groups as the congregation grows larger.

Treasurer—Barry Johnson

No treasurer's report as Katie, Church CFA, is on vacation. Her financial report will be available on her return

Moderator's Report—Jody Feldman

The Council would like to offer more specifically social events and is looking at ways to do so. It is also pursuing its leadership training for the congregation. There were a few problems in the by laws, but Jody hopes to have a final version soon.

Membership Secretary—Lynne Heltman

ASC has 794 voting members in 2009. The number is based on those who have made a contribution of record in the last 18 months.

### **Consent Agenda**

The minutes of the January 22 BOT meeting were approved as amended. Mary Rojas made the motion. Joneis Thomas seconded it.

Resolution: Bill Wittig be added to the Beckner Committee.

The motion to approve was made by Fred Samuels. Seconded by Joneis Thomas. It was passed unanimously.

Resolution: Michael Milano be added to the Committee on Ministry.

The motion to approve was made by Taylar Nuevelle and seconded by Fred Samuels and passed unanimously.

Erika offered to serve as board member at the orientation on Saturday, February 28.

Meeting Evaluation: Joneis said she would prepare a new template for meeting evaluations. The group went around the table. People liked the big picture discussion. It was suggested that all reports be placed early on the agenda, be given succinctly and precede the general discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Eliza Klose, Secretary

Attachments:  
Meeting Agenda  
Associate Minister's Report