

Since we don't have an Executive Director to prepare a report, I'm writing a Board Chair Report covering the period since October 4, 2014. The report summarizes many of the things we are doing together and my activities, meetings and calls in the name of UUSJ.

This is not a typical report. I started with a mention of program, events and activities that seem to be of more major importance, and things that the Board might benefit from by knowing more detail. Since we are missing many committee and task group reports, I started filling in a few blanks.

Then... I went to my calendar to remind me of what I was doing and when, and I started a journal of activities. I decided that would be helpful for various purposes like the annual report.

The Core Group has discussed the need to get a better handle on the amount of time the chair and a new executive director might need to spend on UUSJ work. I thought my calendar/journal would give us a good picture. So skim through, or read it all and I hope you come away with a better understanding about what many of the volunteers and your elected officers and core group team are up to. And you might see an area where you might participate to help move UUSJ towards its vision.

General Thoughts:

(See separate reports from the Program and Nominating Committee and the Immigration Task Group for more details)

These past months I've made a special effort to do "relational work" as they say in community organizing, working to meet with as many people as I can to talk about all phases of UUSJ life from our new vision and asking and learning from people with experience about what's reasonable and doable, and where to go for information. I highly recommend it. Get together with at least one person a month to talk about growing our UU voices and working together to advance our UU principles. Not just social justice folks but people who have expertise to help us grow our vision.

Based on my own experience and talking to a lot of people, it is a fact that volunteers in most organizations these days are not able to consistently carry out the work that is needed to maintain, none the less grow, the 21st Century non-profit organization. We need to hire more staff soon before we all burn out.

The Board instructed us at our June 22 retreat to focus on governance and continue to pursue our programming and advocacy efforts. That has been harder to do than anticipated. Major problems remain that we have too much work, for too few volunteers and staff. The Core Group believes we need to take the leap, even though our infrastructure and governance structure isn't yet where we would like them to be, and hire someone or two and develop our advocacy abilities and opportunities for engagement by our volunteers and donors.

We need to better reach out to our various community members. Our communications are a critical part of how we get our message out to large numbers of people. We need improved "messaging" to reach various target audiences. We have not yet used the power of social media to reach people. We moved in the right direction by seeking professional assistance to help us prepare a tailored communications plan and calendar. Now we have to implement it.

Mass means of communications like emails is most efficient, but it is least effective. Personal relationships, one to one meetings, are least efficient but most effective. Both are necessary. We all need to do our part in reaching out. Invite people to lunch, to have coffee or take a walk and talk about their and your passions and ways to make a positive difference in the world. We

believe there is more power working together than there is alone. That goes for individuals and congregations.

The full support of the Board is needed to make a difference - support in addition to moral support, that includes time, talent and treasure - at least two hours per month for a start, financial support, and sharing of your talents/and or finding the talent we need.

We have a grant of \$5,000 from the UU Fund, with a \$5,000 matching option (details are in the section below). The Core Group members have been talking about the next steps; chicken and the egg, hire someone or raise the matching funds. We need a plan and we want to expand beyond the Core Group to get more people involved in the decision-making and work that will need to be done over the next few months. I would like to jump start the Development Committee and find some of you who would like to work on this task for a couple of months.

There are many areas in which you can become engaged. If no one has reached out to you, please reach out to us to let us know where you'd like to participate, whether it's a short term task, tapping your expertise from time to time, or joining an ongoing committee or issue group. It's an exciting but challenging time for UUSJ. We've moved beyond just approving the strategic plan. We've looked at our infrastructure and are having the deep discussions necessary to take UUSJ to the next organizational level to carry out its vision and mission.

Lavona's UUSJ Work Journal

I am an active member of the Program Committee. This past year I have focused much of my time and attention to working creating a relationship with the UU Association and UU Service Committee staff to collaborate on joint programs and events. This has come with some frustrations, since the UUA has been going through structural and programmatic change for nearly a year. But I believe it is a mutually beneficial relationship. We were able to be of assistance, which gave us recognition, in working very closely with Susan Leslie, Congregational Advocacy and Witness Program staff, in Boston.

I was very disappointed that two events fell through, but we all gotten to know each other much better by working together! First, I'd been talking with Susan Leslie from the UUA since July about jointly holding a reception or luncheon with area ministers but it couldn't get off the ground. In early December, Pam Sparr, UUSC, joined in to support the idea of hosting a luncheon in conjunction with a Congregational Hill briefing that UUSC was hosting on February 26, sponsored by Representative Conyers office. Coordination, agreement on the purpose of the program, and extreme difficulty finding a room at the Capitol, caused us to postpone the event. John Gubbings, did a heroic job trying to find space working with two Congressional offices but to no avail, but then found a church across the street from the Capitol at the last minute. We'll keep it and several other venues we found in mind for future Hill events.

The second event was the repeat program from November, 2014 that we wanted to offer north of the beltway, "Inspired Faith, Effective Action." This program had an advocacy component that we are eager to share with area congregations. Due to limited staff availability and difficulty finding a date, we cancelled the program for this year. Rev. David Carl Olson, First UU Church of Baltimore, is willing to host the program at the Baltimore church.

Summary of UUSJ Programs, Events and Collaborative Programs:

October 4, 2014: first program of the year "Beyond the Partisan Divide," with Revs. Scott and Anya Sammler-Michael, at the UU Church of Accotink. About 30 people were present.

December 6, 2014: briefing on the new Congregational Study Action Issue, Escalating Inequality, held at the Washington Ethical Society, about 32 people were present.

January 10, 2015: meeting of the regional UUSJ environmental group. Over 35 participated.

February 26, 2015: UU Service Committee (UUSC) Capitol Hill Briefing, sponsored by Rep. Conyers office was a new experience for us. The briefing was on water affordability and availability. I worked closely with Pam Sparr, UU Service Committee (UUSC), to provide on-site support and to recruit ministers to "witness" and learn about the growing water problems in the DC area. Despite bad weather, five UUSJ members attended and provide onsite support to UUSC including taking photographs. We were able to turn out five UU ministers, with collars and stoles, to witness at the briefing; a sixth minister was unable to attend due to a family emergency.

March 14, 2015: "How to Make Your Climate Efforts Count." I worked closely with Pam Sparr to create a tailored program for our area UUs to launch the new Commit2Respond program and to conduct a strategy session with our area UUs. Pam became ill the week of our program and had to cancel her attendance but the program went forward with UUSJ volunteers. In spite of another day of bad weather, about 23 people participated. The location was downtown on Thomas Circle. We opted to pay \$250 for a conference room at a church across the street from where the Spring Lobby Weekend (SLW - for details see below) was taking place allowing us to take advantage of the kind invitation by Jose Aguto from Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) to attend the opening and hear the program keynote speaker at SLW. About seven UU young adults attended the SLW. One of the attendees from North Carolina, took us up on our invitation to join our morning meeting. Participating at the last minute and joining our UUSJ team of volunteer presenters was Kaeley Pruitt-Hamm, Advocacy Corp Coordinator from FCNL.

Co-sponsors: We have signed on to be sponsors of the UU **Commit2Respond** climate justice program, and the **Grandparent Climate Action Day** <http://www.eldersclimateaction.org/qcad2>. The support a national agenda to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and reduce use of fossil fuels. The Executive Committee believed this is a good intergenerational event to promote among our congregations and members.

Grant to UUSJ: UUSJ was awarded a grant in early December from the UU Fund for \$5,000 with an option for a \$5,000 matching grant. The purpose of the grant is to develop an implementation plan based on our strategic plan and jumpstart our advocacy agenda. We asked for \$20,000. Currently we plan to raise at least \$2,500 through the UU crowd funding site faithify.org and an additional \$2,500. We now are working on a plan to coordinate our funding appeals.

Special Contribution to UUSJ: We received \$1,000 from a foundation in Maryland that was supporting the New York Climate Action March, for our work with Interfaith Power & Light for our efforts in organizing efforts to mobilize the interfaith community to participate in the march.

Communications: Following Board OK at our November 22 Board meeting we hired a consultant, Monique Hanis, to work with the Communications Committee and Core Group to develop and write a Communications Plan. The plan was completed in January. The Communications Committee has met several times since January and has been working on

launching a new commentary blog for ministers and lay leaders. A letter was sent to many of the area ministers in March to invite them to write a commentary. The response to the letter to date has not been good. You can find the commentaries on the home page of our website. Also, a new website will be launched this summer. We will send out a survey regarding eNews. Currently we are sending out one regular eNews and a mid-month mini eNews each month.

Relationship Building with UU Organizations: As part of our relationship building and trying to move forward some program ideas, John Gubbings, Treasurer, Jim Alcauskas, BRUU, and I met on December 8 with UUA staff Susan Leslie (Boston UUA), Taquiena Boston, and Jessica Halperin from the UUA Washington office, and Pam Sparr, from the UU Service Committee.

On January 5, 2015 several of us, including Ed Kringer, Dean Wanderer, David Strauss, Cyn and I had a conference call, which included members of the UULM-VA Board, to learn from and explore common social justice concerns with Rev. David Pyle, JPD District Executive and Program Manager for Social Justice for the Central East Regional Group (CERG). Rev. Pyle said he and his staff are available to conduct training. Neither CERG nor JPD have a legislative agenda. They are available to support congregational and organizational efforts to but do not take a position on any social justice issue.

Immigration Steering Committee: See separate committee report.

On December 9, the Immigration Steering Committee (Dean Wanderer, Accotink, David Strauss, Rockville and I) met with Edgar Aranda-Yanoc, Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations (VACOLAO) to build relationships and identify mutual areas of interest. This was a follow up to a meeting I had with him nearly nine months earlier. A few months later, Edgar asked us to support offering DAPA clinics following the President's Executive Order. We had a volunteer willing to represent UUSJ at weekly planning meetings but within a few weeks the effort was put on hold due to the court case coming out of Texas. Note: There isn't a functioning Immigration Task Group at this time. We do have a immigration listserv.

Within the last two months we've launched our advocacy work on the Hill. We've made two Hill "relational" visits and attended a Senate briefing on deportation representing UUSJ. John Gubbings and I attended and we talked with Church Service United staff and made a connection with a minister from Phoenix, with whom we'll follow up.

Raising Money: We tried something new. The Core Group launched an end-of-the-year fund appeal following an appeal to Board members at the November 22, 2014 Board meeting. Nearly \$2,400 was raised during November - December.

New Task Group: Relaunching our Bylaws Task Force and Duties and Responsibilities Task Group that was formed following our governance retreat. The new combined group will be called the Governance Task Force. It will encompass work on general governance issues, development of board duties and responsibilities, bylaws review and changes (for September consideration), develop a covenant, consider a Board member engagement plan (recommended by Michela Perrone, our governance consultant) and create a policy and procedure manual.

Lavona's UUSJ Tasks Calendar/Journal:

Weekly Monday 11:30-12:30am **IT/website/communications** weekly PR conference call with Cyn and Bill. Not listed below. (I stopped participating in regular weekly calls in March.)

Weekly Wednesday night 6-7pm **Core Group** conference call meetings and once a month face-to-face meeting. Not listed below.

Monthly **Program Committee** conference calls have been discussed and agreed to, but we've not yet found a standing day/time for our call. When we have a program coming up, we increase the number of calls as needed. We always debrief within about two weeks following a program.

Bi-weekly (every two weeks) **Immigration Steering Committee** conference calls and periodic face-to-face lunch meetings. Next lunch meeting is scheduled for April 10.

Ongoing tasks include customizing **donor Thank You letters** to congregations and individual donors (print, sign and send Thank You letters about two times per month). I include a yellow sticky or other handwritten note on the letter, and often modify the letter for people I know personally. Most recent rewrite of the template for Thank You letters was in late March.

UUSJ meetings: I am a "member," for now, of all committees and task groups. Because I am also filling the role of the Executive Director, it's hard to withdraw from being the convener of meetings. My intent is to help jumpstart committees and task groups and then fade into the background.

Other meetings: When I attend social justice meetings in the community focused on UUSJ priority issues and organizing efforts, I attend as chair of UUSJ. If appropriate, I bring our brochures and I use my UUSJ business card when networking with participants and sponsors. Many conferences and events mentioned below are listed because I went in my role as UUSJ chair, and I registered with UUSJ as my affiliation and it appeared on my name badge.

October

- 09 - Attended the 5th Virginian Immigrants Advocates Summit.
- 10 - Program Committee conference call debrief on Oct. 4 program.
- 15 - Core Group meeting with Michela Perrone, governance consultant in preparation for our October 19 Board retreat.
- 17 - Meet and Greet lunch with UUCA new Board member as an orientation and Q&A.
- 19 - UUSJ Board and Governance Retreat with Michela Perrone at Cedar Lane.
- 24 - Program Committee conference call preparing for the December 6 program on the new CSAI.
- 24 - Attended (UUSJ co-sponsored) the "Get Out the Latino Vote" at UUCA.
- 26 - Relational meeting with UUC Fairfax member, I met at regional environmental meeting, who had concerns about the risk of engaging in advocacy work. Also discussed common environmental concerns and invited her to contribute an article to our eNews.
- 27 - Economic Justice conference call with co-chairs Ed Kringer and Paul Sturm (Paul resigned in November due to a new job and restricted time). Plans for forming a Steering Committee.
- 28 - Listened to a webinar "Try on Your Donor's Shoes."
- 29 - Call with Jose Aguto from the Friends Committee on National Legislation. Building a relationship to work more closely in the future.
- 30 - Outreach meeting at UUC Arlington with new Board representative, Frank Corsoro, and two ministers Rev. Linda Olson Peebles and the NEW senior minister Rev. Aaron McEmrys (one of two second follow-up meeting in March 2015)
- 30 - Communications and joint Core Group meeting at UUCA to meet with Monique Hanis, communications consultant to establish scope of work and expectations for development of a communications plan.

November

- 01 - SALT conference on inequality with Sr. Simone (Nun on the bus) and two nurses and administrators I've worked with from the Health Wagon free clinic in coal country in Southwest Virginia. Talked with State Sen. Marsden and with Anne Murphy from Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy with whom we partnered on "Paycheck to Paycheck"

- 02 - VICPP Advocacy Training.
- 07 - Program Committee conference call.
- 11 - Meeting with Pat Karslen, member at large; member of Cedar Lane.
- 14 - FACS/UUCFairfax partner meeting with Sierra Club, regarding environmental film series, at Unity Church, Fairfax.
- 17 - Lunch meeting with Chuck McLane, consultant on human resources and writing accomplishment records for job descriptions. He will speak to the Core Group at a later time.
- 18 - Meeting with Marsha White and Martha Ades to develop a Program Checklist for workflow leading up to and at our programs.
- 19 - Meeting at UUA Washington office with Jessica Halprin to discuss the new Congregational Study Action Issue on Escalating Inequality and her participation role in our briefing on the CSAI on December 6. Ed Kringer also attended.
- 21 - Program Committee conference call.
- 22 - UUSJ Board Meeting at UUCA.

December

- 05 - Immigration Steering Committee conference call.
- 06 - UUSJ Program on Escalating Inequality - the CSAI.
- 08 - Meeting with UUA staff Susan Leslie, Tequina Boston, and Jessica Halperin and Pam Sparr from UU Service Committee at Washington office (mentioned above in more detail).
- 09 - Lunch meeting with Edgar Aranda-Yanoc, Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations (VACOLAO) and the Immigration Steering Committee .
- December 15 - January 5 (medical leave from UUSJ)

January

- 05 - Conference Call with Rev. David Pyle, JPD District Executive and Program Manager for Social Justice for the Central East Regional Group (CERG). See notes above under "Relationship Building."
- 09 - Program Committee conference call preparing for possible ministers luncheon and the UUSC Hill briefing on Water and March 14 program meeting room space near the Spring Lobby Weekend hotel at Thomas Circle.
- 10 - Regional Environmental Activists meeting held at River Road. I was unable to attend but worked to arrange for the preparation of a PowerPoint presentation on Commit2Respond for this meeting. I worked with Pam Sparr, UUSC and Alex Kapitan, UUA.
- 15 - Communications Committee Meeting face-to-face at my house. Discussion of the implementation of the new Communications Plan. See notes above under Communications.
- 21 - Immigration: David Strauss and I met with staff from Farmworkers Justice to learn about opportunities for advocacy on comprehensive immigration reform. Learned about issue facing migrant workers with pesticides. This could overlap with environmental issues including food, water, land and human safety. We were given the name of staff and another organization to contact regarding pesticides and toxic chemicals.
- 22- Program Committee conference call in preparation for March 14.
- 22 - Conference call with Jose Aguto, FCNL and Pam Sparr, UUSC regarding coordination on the Young Adults Spring Lobby Weekend (SLW), which UU's are participating for the first time. UUSJ promoted throughout the region and we offered scholarships.
- 26 - Conference call with environmental "Compass Group," Doris Marlin and Eric Goplerud regarding planning for the UUSJ Program on March 14 and to resolve issue around having a separate regional group meeting on April 11 and the special program with Pam Sparr, UUSC. The focus of the March 14 program was to have a much deeper discussion (beyond the PowerPoint at the January 10 regional meeting) about the new UU Commit2Respond initiative and a strategy session to coordinate regional efforts. It was decided to cancel the scheduled April 11 regional meeting because it was too late to help coordinate for Earth Day events, and to bridge the March 14 program to allow for announcements and discussion of areawide events.

- 27 - Call with Pam Sparr to discuss above mentioned program developments and concerns around time allocations for the program vs the regional "meeting." Developed draft agenda in preparation with a conference call with Eric and Doris.
- 29 - Program Committee discussion about timing of the Gala for this spring or the fall. Martha Ades is chairing the Gala committee.

February

- 05 - Call with Susan Leslie, UUA regarding ministers luncheon plans.
- 09 - Conference call with Pam and Susan regarding program and luncheon for ministers. We still don't have meeting room space and will consider space at other locations including FCNL, and the Methodist Center and area churches.
- 10 - Program Committee
- 10 - Immigration Steering Committee conference call. I was asked by Edgar, from VACOLOA if UUSJ congregations would host DAPA clinics for the DAPA. I found a volunteer that would attend the weekly meetings, if the Steering Committee and Core Group would support the effort.
- 19 - Lunch with Lauren Glickman, area social media consultant and instructor at GWU. I met her via LinkedIn. She gave me some advice about the likelihood of finding people with the skill-sets we need at the rate we can pay for communications and social media talent. She gave us the sites where people look for social media jobs and that we might find some examples of job descriptions for various positions.
- 20 - Immigration conference call about DAPA clinics with Steering Committee members Dean and David, and Jacomina de Regt, from VOICE and John Sutton, UUCA.
- 23 - Program Committee conference call regarding February 26 Hill briefing regarding onsite arrangements.
- 26 - UUSC Congressional Briefing on Water sponsored by Rep. Conyers office. Despite of bad weather, five UUSJ members attended and provide onsite support to UUSC including taking photographs. We were able to turn out five UU ministers, with collars and stoles, to witness at the briefing. One minister was unable to attend due to a family emergency.
- 28 - Conference call with new Board member from Accotink, Bruce Griffin and Ed Kringer, who will now be the alternate. This was an "orientation" and opportunity to get to know Bruce, and answer any questions he might have as a new member.

March

- 04 - Communications Committee face-to-face meeting at my house. We discussed the commentary blog. Conducting a Google Survey about the eNews. Discussed the once-a-month eNews and mid month mini eNews, which covers only events between mid-month and the first of the month when the full eNews comes out. This started just about two months ago. We viewed the developing new UUSJ website and provided feedback to Bill.
- 05 - Program Committee preparation for March 14 meeting.
- 06 - Immigration conference call.
- 10 - Planning conference call with members of the new Governance Task Group.
- 13 - Briefing by UUA staff Alex Kapitan and Susan Leslie with Bob Denniston, John Gubbings and myself to prepare for the March 14 meeting without our guest presenter Pam Sparr (explained above in program highlights).
- 14 - Environmental Program "How to Make Your Climate Efforts Count." About 23 people attended.
- 17 - Immigration Sen. Kaine office, two of us met with Alvaro Zarco for 50 minutes. Interested in unaccompanied minors and emigration push factors and stories. My church has connections with Guatemalans who may be willing to tell their stories. We will follow up with Alvaro.
- 18 - Congregational Outreach: Followup meeting with UUCA ministers with Board member Frank Corsoro.
- 20 - Immigration Senate Briefing on Deportation.
- 20 - Immigration Steering Committee conference call.
- 23 - Immigration Rep. Van Hollen office, Steering Committee members met with Matt Kretman.

25 - Met with Leticia Corona, immigration attorney for a “relational meeting” to learn about mutual interests. She made introductions to staff at the VA Latina Advocacy Network, National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health. Leticia shared valuable resources regarding how current legislation being introduced would eviscerate protection for unaccompanied alien children immigrants and asylum seekers.

25 - Met with Sally Patterson, non-profit board expert through a connection with a Board member, Bruce Griffin. She is willing to give us some *pro bono* time as we move forward with our implementation planning. She has already made some recommendations including to focus on getting our advocacy work in place.

30 - Meeting to discuss how to capture the names of people and their relationships to people who have content expertise in various areas including UUSJ issue priorities and organizational expertise. John Sutton, UUSJ member from UUCA, has volunteered to help structure the data collection. David Strauss, Rockville, and Martha Ades, Fairfax participated in the meeting. Martha has fine tuned an existing spreadsheet, to capture all the Hill staff, committee assignments and congregations in Congressional districts.

31 - Worked with Frank Corsoro on draft UUSJ Board covenant.

April

04 - UUSJ Board meeting at Cedar Lane.