

PRAIRIE STAR DISTRICT ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Local Planning Committee
Annual Report 2003-2004

ALL SOULS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI
Report prepared by Anne McCleery

The theme of this year's annual conference was "Growing Season" and was held April 23rd-25th, 2004. The site of the conference was the Marriott Country Club Plaza Hotel. Several events were held at All Souls Church, located across a residential street from the hotel. Approximately 210 adults and 20 teens registered for the conference.

Volunteers:

Co-chairs: Anne McCleery and Barbara Griggs (Gaia)

Core planning committee members: Dori Bader, Joan Olsen, Allison Hartnett

Registrar: Dori Bader

Youth program coordinator: Allison Hartnett

Specific activity coordinators:

Exhibits: Alex Westerfelt

UU Bookstore: Addie Dietrich, LeeAnn Googe

Friday evening opening ceremony: Bruce Wiggins

Friday evening service: Barbara Griggs and Gaia volunteers

Labyrinth and meditation room: Barbara Griggs and Gaia volunteers

Photography: Joan Olsen

Table topics: Walt Wells

Banner parade and display: Walt Wells, Bruce Wiggins

Registration form: Lynisa Robinson, Andrea Jonson

Packet assembly: Art Collins, Jim Grebe

Packet inserts composition: Anne McCleery

Home stay arrangements: Bob Baker

Aide to Tracey Robinson-Harris: Michael Nelson

Aide to Peter Morales: Art Dewey

PSD Board meeting food & beverage: Jean Patterson

All Souls history poster: Sharon Blevins

Saturday afternoon RE teachers reception: Peter Griggs

Saturday evening entertainment: Walt Wells (Rain Dogs performed)

Audiovisual: Lee Ann Googe, Jack Phillips, Mike McKelley, Walt Wells

All Souls office and custodial support: Terry Wiggins, Chloe Mason Seagrove, Elsaft Ahmed

Decorative banners at registration table and church: Barbara Griggs

Saturday awards luncheon flowers: Anne McCleery

Sunday conference choir and music: Graciella Kowalczyk, Mike Mathews (included some of his original compositions)

Events held at the Marriott:

Friday evening opening ceremony and banner parade

Friday evening service

Judy lecture and keynote address

All adult workshops

Saturday and Sunday breakfasts, Saturday lunch and evening banquet

Exhibits

Events held at All Souls:

Friday evening optional barbecue dinner, hosted by All Souls Demeters (this allowed us to charge a lower fee than the Marriott)

Labyrinth

Meditation room

PSD Board meeting and reception

Nutrition break late Saturday afternoon

Annual meeting late Saturday afternoon

Sunday morning services

Youth program and sleepover

RE teachers reception

Income and Expenses

There were approximately 200 paid adult registrations and 11 waived registrations (9 award winners and keynote speaker and Judy lecturer), and 20 paid teen registrations. Registration income also included a few people who paid just for the awards luncheon or the Saturday evening banquet. Total registration income, net of cancellations, was \$24,474. The exhibits generated \$120, the bookstore \$318 (net), and the Friday night optional dinner \$1,260 (gross). The most expensive part of the conference were the meals at the Marriott. With the mandatory 20% gratuity included, the four hotel meals cost \$84.06. Hotel costs also included the Saturday afternoon coffee break. We were not charged for exhibit tables. The total expenses were approximately \$22,000, resulting in a positive balance of \$2,162.24.

There were several workshop presenters who did not register for the conference or pay any fees. I contacted those for whom I had phone numbers or e-mail addresses to ask if they planned to pay anything, or at least if they had eaten a meal at the conference if they planned to pay for the meal. None intended to pay and none said they had eaten a meal.

The printing and mailing of the registration brochure was handled by the PSD office in Minneapolis, which was a tremendous service. We e-mailed a brochure copy to the PSD office who in turn e-mailed it to the printer. A mailing service sorted the brochures and mailed them out. Total printing and mailing cost was \$1,975.22.

Among the highlights was the youth protest in favor of gay marriage. The youth made posters and walked to Nichols Fountain on the Plaza Saturday afternoon. It was a peaceful, successful event.

Notes for future conferences:

- For buffet meals, make sure people have tickets or information on their badges indicating they have paid for the buffet. Several people got in the Saturday lunch buffet line who shouldn't have; the meal was free for them but the hotel counted noses and charged us. Also, the extras strained the seating capacity in the ballroom. We had three buffet meals -- Saturday and Sunday breakfast, and Saturday lunch.
- Remember to budget for credit card fees. On our budget they show up as NFG fees. We paid \$223.44 in NFG fees.
- Make a more determined effort to get the workshop presenters to register/pay for the entire conference. At the time of this report, that had already been addressed.
- Many volunteers who help with the conference also attend the conference. Make sure there are enough local volunteers who are not attending the conference; they can take care of details so that the volunteers signed up for the conference can attend the activities and workshops. As an example, our registrar was dutifully at the registration table almost the entire time it was open and missed a few events.
- It would be good to have some guidance on requests for reduced registration due to partial conference attendance. There are not supposed to be any exceptions but this does come up.

The dreary skies threatened a downpour, but the weather held. The overall feedback about the conference was favorable. More people attended than had been anticipated, a pleasant surprise. The energy of the local volunteers and the support of the PSD office and the PSD planning committee ensured the success of the Kansas City conference.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne McCleery
9/10/04