

**DRAFT**  
**PSD Program Planning Committee Meeting**  
**Saturday July 23, 2011**  
**UU Fellowship of Ames, IA**

**Attending for Program Committee:** Xenda Lindel, Ginny Malcomson, Ben Wallace, Robin Taylor (chair)

“ **for PSD Program Council:** Sam Wormley, Program Area Coordinator

“ **for PSD District Staff:** Phil Lund, Director of Faith Development and Congregational Growth

“ **for Local Arrangements Committee (LAC) 2012:** Roger Upham (chair), White Bear UUC

“ **for LAC 2013:** Travis Hess and Robyn Miessler-Kubaneck (co-chairs), Cedar Rapids, IA

**Special guests:** Ruth Appleton (Youth Advisor) and Lori Allen (Director of Youth and Children's Ministries, UU Fellowship of Ames)

## **Next Meeting – 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> 2011 – Ames, IA**

**Robin began the meeting** by reminding those attending of the Program Committee's responsibilities for choosing conference themes, arranging for Keynote and Judy Lecture speakers, selecting workshop presentations, and supporting the LAC of the hosting congregation. We set our collective intention to foster a meaningful experience for all attending.

**By way of introductions,** Robin asked everyone to recall where they had found meaning in past conferences. Robyn appreciated making connections; Travis found meaning in the worship service and looks forward to showing off his church and city; Xenda appreciated the connections and the chance to sing; Ginny liked watching her daughter make connections and appreciated the child-driven youth conference; Sam fondly recalled Ames 2002 and Des Moines 2010 as two of his favorite out of TWELVE conferences attended; Lori loved walking the labyrinth, learning new things, and making music; Phil noted that “April is the cruelest month,” recalling snow storms, tornadoes, and 90°-heat, but said, “Something wonderful happens.” {Note to committee: *Something Wonderful Happens*--possible theme idea for the future?} Roger found his first conference really interesting, enjoyable, and even admitted to “liking the Business Meeting.” Robin noted the quick connections and deep insights that were made in multigenerational groups when Mark Hicks had us write 6-word novels describing a time when we had played a significant role in our churches—it was an opportunity to listen to each other on a personal level. (*\*Ben was delayed by a hair-raising windstorm outside Des Moines, and missed this part of the meeting. We were all grateful he arrived right side up and in one piece.*)

**Roger gave an update from the LAC.** He shared the beautiful poster made by Karen Dahl, and said that they were looking for a minister with military experience or a military chaplain to give the Sunday service, which will be at the hotel, and not the church. His committee is in good shape, with all positions filled. Janet Hansen and Jill Schwendeman will be in charge of children and youth, and are eager for Roger to bring back ideas.

**Youth con involvement for 2012.** Robin introduced Ruth Appleton, who had brought several youth to Des Moines in 2011, and asked, via the “Survey Monkey” sent to all conference

participants, if she could help with planning . Lori Allen was also invited to share her years of experience.

According to DRE from Rochester – the Des Moines youth con went well, with youth having their own space, then leading evening service. Good experience.

Location of youth con is a challenge because of distance between White Bear and the hotel. Phil suggested involving Minnesota Valley UUC in Bloomington as the closest, or First Universalist, which has a bigger staff. First Universalist does have some staff, Katie Heaton, is the Youth & Young Adult Coordinator. E-mail [katie@firstuniv.org](mailto:katie@firstuniv.org) There is also a small church in Dakota county in Burnsville that could also be considered.

Lori noted that she appreciated how youth had been brought into the conference space intentionally. She thought it was important to solidify the youth around a cause, and have a service component. Ben said if we could find a way to plant a seed with youth, they could “whoosh in and create a movement.” Maybe the service project could BE the movement?

Travis is a trained facilitator for the *Awaking the Dreamer*, a guided 3-hour Symposium about waking up to the power we have to make a difference and create a world that is environmentally sustainable, spiritually fulfilling, and socially just: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MoXJZ\\_3-J9w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MoXJZ_3-J9w) Good, powerful, interesting material. When Travis registered on the website, he mentioned wanting to do it in UU congregations. It was done at a UU church in CA that was well attended.

Xenda mentioned Tom Robbins’ book, *Half Asleep in Frog Pajamas*—the point is “waking up.”

Other challenges (Robin) – PSD district board would like any Youth Con to have a similar or related theme. We talked about letting kids connect the conference theme themselves, and suggested getting the youth involved in a service project at the VA. It was pointed out that to be successful, however, it would have to be the youths’ idea. It was also suggested that the youth could create a movie over the weekend. Film contest?

Lori – Who needs to be on the ground level of the planning?? If Janet and Jill are working on something, want to make sure that they are open to getting help and input. Ben and Ruth agreed to work with Jill and Janet to coordinate efforts.

Roger – cause is important, topic is timely when it comes to the youth, who may have a different viewpoint. Good that Jill Schwendeman wrote a book, called “*When Youth Lead: A Guide to Intergenerational Social Justice Ministry (Plus 101 Youth Projects)*”  
[http://www.uua.org/documents/bookstore/ad\\_whenyouthlead.pdf](http://www.uua.org/documents/bookstore/ad_whenyouthlead.pdf)

Xenda, speaking for Sarah Karbelling, mostly youth in Des Moines planned the youth events.

Lori – there are many facets to this topic that includes the quagmire in the Middle East, looking at military presence, consequences of war in terms of budget, etc. Where are our priorities? There would be opportunities to volunteer at the VA or with veterans in Cities. Doesn’t necessarily need to be with it, but have youth aware of it.

Ruth, just got back from GA – at GA there is a youth staff that plans things, workshops specifically for the youth (10 total), had a youth workshop in 8 of 10 program slots. Left the others open for youth service in community. Youth that went with Ruth connected well, having a youth staff helped, had youth chaplains.

Phil – when we announced that we were taking applications, looking for multigenerational. Set aside spots for youth. Say when the spots are for youth sessions.

Ginny said people who have been away from their kids all week don't want to put them in babysitting—they want to be together. We need to solicit workshops for parents & children together. Maybe making origami peace cranes?

Why do we have workshop applications due so early? For youth, it is difficult to plan availability and details so far in advance. We want them to think of the application as a letter of intent – notice of what they want to do, who their sponsor is. They can work on the details later. We need to explain this to Directors of Community Life, DREs, Ministers, Congregational leaders – send it to various people.

Workshops will be planned for 3 sessions A, B, and C--depends on how many rooms we have available. Robin and Ginny gave presenters the option of a "double session" this year—a two-and a half hour workshop. They also let people indicate if workshops were adult only/youth only/ or parent and child (and different ages of children). In the past, certain workshop slots have been designated as multigenerational. Make the youth involvement the way youth want it – service project could be during workshop time.

Ginny - When you have youth present, people act differently. Don't see young adults with kids coming to the conference because they want to be with their family in their precious time off.

Lori – service project is a chance for the youth to find themselves, get out of the standard event content. What if service was an option for anyone? Those who wanted to be involved could. Youth are in such a different place as adults developmentally. We put expectations that they are younger adults. This is a time in their lives where they are testing themselves, what they have cause and effect over. Mentoring is key.

Figure out how to best communicate the youth "movement." Ben and Ruth will make themselves available as resources to Jill and Janet on whether/how to start a movement.

Ruth – Youth at DefCon sat in circle with candles and passed around a rock and took turns saying whether they had been at a conference, what they were excited/nervous about. Went around twice, did a good job of creating community. On Saturday, they split into service groups. Came together for dinner, and then prepared the worship service. Youth connected with each other deeply across the district.

In January Ruth went to training in Atlanta with youth, where they created community quickly around something meaningful. Many youth had a hard time leaving each other and ended up coming to GA in order to see each other again.

Ben – To create community, you need to sing and cry together!

GA, biggest crying happens at the bridging ceremony, marking the transition of high school seniors to young adulthood– why don't we have that at the PSD conference? Bridging takes about an hour. There is a space in evening before worship or near there where band has to set up or break down. Could build it in.

Is there a reason not to have a bridging at the district level? (Sam) Whatever we do, if we try it and get it started it will be a good thing. (Phil)

Roger – understands bridging – how does it fit into the conference theme? Phil – Doesn't have to fit in directly with each theme, would be a standing component. This decision would have to be figured into the schedule, if we want to do it. Adding something would require taking time away from something else.

Local arrangements – vs programming – who takes care of the bridging ceremony? Ben and Ruth will work with youth planners from the LAC to determine if a bridging ceremony would be feasible for this conference. Final schedule is a consensus between the LAC and Program Committee.

Youth could write six-word novels – have the words displayed on the wall as a scrolling presentation? Or a powerpoint? Could have a life-long Unitarian on other side of bridge to greet them? Should be given a small token to commemorate the ritual once they cross over. Youth could build the bridge during workshop time, or possibly borrow one from the Girl Scouts. Could have a very short speech for the youth from a young UU, such as Alex Askew (college student at the Uof M).

Start the movement small and build for April. Ben-could have live-streaming on the busses? Could have a Youth Committee for the PSD? Ben and Ruth will contact Jill in regards to having a landing zone / rally point

For Roger – Ben and Ruth will look at what options might be for Bridging/Speaker. Will get proposal to Roger before the local arrangements meeting on Aug 16<sup>th</sup>.

Final schedule is consensus between local arrangements/program planning and district.

Survey Monkey – one of the complaints – supposed to be multigenerational event, didn't see any youth because they were off doing projects. We need to provide ways for youth and adults to have meaningful interactions at the conference, in addition to time for themselves.

Ben will create Google groups list.

## Updates

**District Update** - Phil, everything is good with the district, and LAC is on track.

**Annual Conference Coordinator Update** - Sam – moving in the direction of youth involvement is great – Libby Starling, Sherry Warren and someone else (?) deserve credit for asking to focus on youth. Sam provided document that gives some information on past info, themes, speakers

Sam works with LAC to make sure that things are being pieced together during the process.

More than 10 years ago, PSD decided to start standing committees: Site Selection – find congregations to host the conferences, Archives committee, Awards Committee, and program planning committee, which works with local arrangements committee.

Report on Site Selection Committee – got Cedar Rapids committed for 2013 before meeting, awesome. Working on Topeka for 2014.

As conference coordinator, Sam's job is to coordinate committees for work and to help keep in alignment. Has 10 years of involvement with this conference.

Sam – usually asks for \$1600 from Annual Budget to help program committee offset costs. Usually don't spend all \$1600, but we may use a chunk sometime to bring up Lisa Schwartz. Money is available to offset travel expenses – form is available online, send to Sarah Greene, PSD office, to get reimbursement. Tom Lejudas from Platteville often stayed overnight prior to meeting and turned in as an expense claim. Ann McCleary flew from Kansas City. If members need financial assistance in order to participate, the fund is there for mileage, etc.

As the budget coordinator – Sam makes budget request to the board – not sure if it happened this spring. Sam is involved with Sarah to put together scholarship funds for request. Space is

available on the form to give. Scholarship preference for people going into ministry, living at a distance, and need.

LAC submits budget to program committee by October so they can review it before the November PSD board meeting. We like to see projected budgets for various attendance levels. Local arrangements have gone into last week sweating bullets about losing money, but 2001 was the last year that PSD lost money.

Sam – balance between having enough income to not lose money and keep costs low. Trend has been not to have too many pricing options. Roger and team are struggling with that.

Ben - Corporate sponsors can help offset costs.

If event loses money, PSD eats it. If they have excess, split 50/50 between PSD and hosting congregation.

Roger, just got a person on their committee that is an AV professional. Yeah!

### **Robin – Program Committee Roles:**

Robin will coordinate Publicity with LAC and PSD – how to market and communicate information. Robin will also handle speaker needs, contracts, and communication before the conference; Xenda – Speaker coordinator (will help with speaker needs and paychecks at conference), Ginny, workshop coordinator (will enter workshop data to spreadsheet and communicate acceptances and room assignments to presenters), Ben – Youth Advocate (will work with Ruth and LAC to ensure a meaningful experience for youth at conference), Lisa Schwartz-Ministerial Advocate (will provide a minister’s-eye view of proceedings), Mike Schwab-Denominational liaison (will help facilitate contacts within the district, like finding us our keynote speaker!).

**Program Committee Update** – Speakers have photos and blurbs on website. Jim Eller – Fri night speaker – minister emeritus from KC, he understands role of Friday PM, knows talk should be shorter, multigenerational, sets tone for conference. Says he understands, should be good.

Judy Lecturer – Tom Weiner – author of *Called to Serve*. How men and women were affected by the draft. He resisted the draft, suffered angst because others would have to serve in his place, how decision has affected his life. “The toll war takes on all who are called to serve” – Title of speech.

Opportunity to have conference-sponsored book discussion. Gina said he had agreed to do workshop. Clarify that it is on the topic of the book – Robin is going to submit that request to him. Might Jim Eller be willing to do a workshop also? Robin will contact him.

**Soliciting meaningful workshops** – offer a workshop on processing the lectures, sharing the stories– way to share structured discussion on topics. Find facilitator to handle it.

Xenda – put out call for a UU veteran to facilitating processing the follow-up discussion.

Maybe a workshop on “Sharing Our Stories.”

Robin – reiterate that workshop presenters have to cover their own costs.

Need chaplain resources identified.

Travis- Thich nact han – started organization on veterans healing.  
<http://cta.sas.cornell.edu/veterans.php>

Rev Meg Riley – Senior Minister UU Church of Larger Fellowship – has agreed to do a workshop on the Bridge Builder Kit developed by UU Military Chaplains that helps congregations be more welcoming to veterans, defense contractors, and military personnel and their families.

Rev David Breeden – has offered to do a workshop on poetry writing related to the theme – did one in Des Moines – well done. Goes to Minnesota Valley UU Church.

Karen Herring – literary minister from unity could do one. She did one on framing that was amazing.

Appreciative inquiry – Unity Church consultant-was excellent, and could be topical.

Ask Thomas Weiner if he has someone local that might be able to facilitate discussion of his book?

Do we have a list of the tracts for the conference? Tracts – need some other ways for people to participate, not all lecture. Have threads regarding how to engage different roles (ministers, DREs, youth, etc)

Come up with a Hit list of tracts or people that we want to cater to. (spreadsheet time!) Social Justice, Worship, Art-Music-Movement, Mediation, youth, etc.

For youth, help them figure out how they fill out forms for conscientious objector status. Do we need to make sure we have other side, how you sign up to serve?

Use for conscientious objector status– Create an OWL-like curriculum for decision of making a choice for registration. Someone who could help them flesh out their thoughts.

From Mike Schwab - hunger for content-driven workshops. Will be swamped.

Survey monkey – people wanted more of communications workshop. Also a request to invite back the church that is trying to be completely multigenerational (Julianne Lepp, Eau Claire)

Travis enjoyed non-violent communication workshop – *Nonviolent Communication a Language of Life, by Marshall Rosenberg*. (Note from Robin: Check out the amazing customer comments on this book! Sounds like a really perfect fit for this conference!)  
[http://books.google.com/books/about/Nonviolent\\_communication.html?id=nY4tDDO93E8C](http://books.google.com/books/about/Nonviolent_communication.html?id=nY4tDDO93E8C)

Mark Stringer did a sermon on “War & Peace in Our Own Congregations.” (?) Possible workshop topic.

PSD board usually wants a space.

**Finding a Backup Speaker** – are there any ministers in cities that would be willing to fill in? Possibly Lisa Freidman? Rob Eller Isaacs- was in Liberal Religious Youth program – related to Jim Eller, so could be a bad choice for a back-up if a catastrophe were to affect the whole family. Robin will talk to her minister, Carol Hepokoski, when she returns from summer vacation.

### **Themes and speakers for 2013/14**

Environment was the theme in 2008 with conference theme “blue boat home” – peter mayer, Judy lecturer.

Our dying earth – good to visit topic of earth

Cedar Rapids does have active and interested environmental task force (Green Sanctuary)

Xenda - UU Gold – Wisdom from Our Past; 50 Amazing UUs

PSD: still vibrant at 50

Bill McKibben possibility for a speaker: [www.billmckibben.com](http://www.billmckibben.com)

Erv Klaas - got up last year and talked about environmental issues for 3-4 minutes at Des Moines, possible speaker. He is almost singularly responsible for revitalizing areas in Ames

If he hasn't been sentenced – UU from Utah who bid on the federal lands to keep them from being sold to corporations -

[http://www.alternet.org/environment/149777/young\\_activist\\_faces\\_10\\_years\\_in\\_prison\\_after\\_trying\\_to\\_save\\_public\\_lands\\_from\\_oil\\_and\\_gas\\_companies](http://www.alternet.org/environment/149777/young_activist_faces_10_years_in_prison_after_trying_to_save_public_lands_from_oil_and_gas_companies)

Keeping our communities healthy to enjoy the next 50 years - Ghandi said "you must be the change you wish to see in the world." Said another way, you must inspire the future you hope to live in.

Inspiring the future we hope to live in –

Your Passions meeting the world's needs

May your passions meet the worlds needs – Fredrick Beakner

Starting with our Own Hearts

Beginning in our Own Homes and Congregations –

Xenda was inspired by Meg Barnhouse 's essay,

[uuworld.org : who says unitarian universalism's principles are easy?](http://uuworld.org/who_says_unitarian_universalism's_principles_are_easy?)

Nov 23, 2009 ... A Baptist friend says she and her friends added “**in the bathtub**. ... “We Three Kings of Orient Are” **in the bathtub**. ...

[www.uuworld.org/ideas/articles/153287.shtml](http://www.uuworld.org/ideas/articles/153287.shtml)

50 amazing UUs – workshop led by Xenda (one will not be Ghandi!)

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It was decided that the 50 years of the PSD would be a great theme to decorate around, but **Inspiring the Future We Hope to Live In** was chosen as the theme for 2013 with the unanimous support of everyone in the room.

**Beginning on the Side of Love** ...Keep in mind for 2014

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We voted to hold our next meeting on Saturday, October 8 at the UU Fellowship of Ames, Iowa. The morning will be devoted to hearing from the LAC and assisting them with any issues they need help with and reviewing the budget. In the afternoon, Ginny will present the workshop applications we have received, so we can determine final choices and see if we need to solicit anything further.

With grateful thanks to Ben Wallace, who took the notes,

Respectfully submitted on 8-1-11,

Robin Taylor

Chair

