

**PSD Program Planning Committee ~ Virtual Meeting via Conference Call
Saturday, January 12, 2013**

NOTES

Participating at 10 a.m.:

PPC: Kathy Bowman (Davenport, IA), Rev. Lisa Doege (Nora, MN), Julie Enersen (Lincoln, NE), Robin Taylor (Rochester, MN), (Roger Upham (White Bear, MN), Ben Wallace (Omaha, NE), Maria Wilson (Omaha, NE)

LAC 2013: Robyn Miessler-Kubaneck and Rev. Tom Capo (Cedar Rapids, IA)

LAC 2014: Joanne Roudebush (Topeka, KS)

PSD Staff: Sarah Greene (Administrator) and Nancy Combs-Morgan (Coordinator of Emerging Youth & Young Adult Ministries)

10 AM – Robin began the meeting with a quick check-in to find out if everyone had a good holiday. If we were giving prizes, which we aren't, Ben & Maria might win for Most Christmases Celebrated; Joanne would win for Most Miles Traveled, and Tom would win for Most Dramatic Holiday, closely seconded by Sarah the DRE, who couldn't participate in the phone conversation because she gave birth the night before!

LAC Youth Update – Filling in for Sarah, Robyn reported that the Youth decided against doing their own branding for the Youth track at the conference, and have decided to go with the conference theme, "Inspire the Future." Several of the youth attended Def Con in Des Moines, and came back full of ideas. They are planning an optional lock-in for Saturday evening in the hospitality suites upstairs, in addition to their youth-only workshops on team building and alternative energy, and one workshop to be integrated with adults. Robyn said that Kyle Hill would be filling in for Sarah while she is on maternity leave. Adult supervision at the lock-in will be provided by Sarah, Kyle, and youth sponsors. Ben expressed concern that the youth get enough sleep to be present at the Sunday worship service, because their presence would be expected.

Nancy said she and Ben are working with youth in Wayzata and White Bear on a cluster conference in May, and they hope that will create some energy for this conference as well.

Nancy pointed out that the age guidelines for the youth track were for 7th-12th grade. There may be students coming who are younger than that, who would not be allowed to do the lock-in. She also wanted to make sure that any adults who are supervising the lock-in (i.e., staying up all night) would not be drivers the next day.

Tom said he is willing to support the youth in any way he/his congregation can.

Nancy suggested that the video-making was an interesting component to the conference last year, and suggested offering them access to a place where they can blog, share images on Facebook, etc.

Sarah said that part of conference registration was an agreement to allow images to be shared, and there had to be a way to identify those who couldn't have their pictures taken by the official conference photographer (but there was no way to control what photographs youth took).

Robyn said they would provide a place where the youth could hang out and bond. They expected to do most of their worship planning in their unstructured time.

Nancy hopes to have a table with information about the Youth Leadership School and the MidAmerica Leadership Conference—Roger suggested putting it right in the youth room.

Sermon Contest Update – Ben reported that the three judges had chosen a winning entry out of the 4 submitted, but he did not know who submitted it, only the promising title: "Bumper Sticker Theology: The Loving Future of Our Faith." {Sarah G. was able to crack the code on Monday, and reported that the winner is Karen Van Fossan, a seminary student.} Ben thanked Sarah for her help in running the contest, will thank the three judges for their help: Meg Barnhouse, a UU minister in Texas, who is active in Camp Star Trail; Brian Eslinger, former minister at the UU Fellowship of Ames; and John Blevins, a former trustee in Kansas City.

Robyn asked Ben if he could ask the judges to advise us how to run the contest next year, while this one was fresh in their minds. Ben reported that there was a little ambiguity in the process: he asked the judges to rank each essay on a four point basis. Although two of the essays tied for points, two of the judges had voted the same one as "first," and so that is how it was decided.

*Ben will notify the winner and let her know about the time slot for her workshop—AND ask if she can be a back-up speaker, if either the keynote or the Judy lecturer don't show?

Sarah will make the winning sermon available to different congregations to be given on Conference Sunday.

Robyn & Sarah will figure out how to waive the registration fee for the winner.

(I am gratefully going to use Maria's notes for this portion)

10:45 Rest of the LAC update ~ Robyn

Cedar Rapids is planning a Pool party for school-aged kids. The childcare worker is a certified lifeguard. Although the pool cannot be reserved, Robyn did not think this would be a problem based on the tiny number of kids who came last year and the fact that we will have most of the hotel this time.

Worship planning- Worship committee is meeting this week.

Choir: Robyn hadn't budgeted for choir music, and Maria noted that it was extremely important for singers to have it in advance. Julie suggested that it could be downloaded electronically ahead of time, or sometimes there is a You-tube link of the piece. They could distribute physical copies of the music at the conference.

Registration update Website is almost ready. Sarah said she would post info through the district's Facebook page, but that it takes time to build up an audience. May want a page for all district conferences in the future. Status of the form is unknown. Release date was originally Jan 15, but Sarah said it would not be up until the end of January, which should be plenty of time. Roger urged making sure registration was tested before going live!

Budget- Preliminary budget has been approved. Rev Robinson only staying one night, which helps offset the AV cost increase.

Publicity- Robyn has submitted blurbs for the district newsletter. A script for a video ad has been approved and will be finished by the end of the month. Will be posted on FB and links sent out.

Reflect & Connect Time- Robyn is hoping to put Stefan in the coffee shop for "Open Chat with Stefan," which she thought the hotel would like—they would sell more coffee. They are thinking of tai chi in the park, an arts and crafts room, and a labyrinth. Options will be listed on the website and when people arrive..

Party planning- band, cake, singing Happy Birthday. History of Midwest UUs in the talk. Recognition of district leadership. Banner parade, and a cash bar. Joanne urged a sensitivity to nonalcohol drinkers, especially recovering alcoholics. Rapids will plan a welcome segment, and Carol Jackson is planning a five-minute appreciation of past PSD leaders..

Young Adults- possible event Saturday afternoon during flex time. Still possible Friday night. Maria thought the most likely time would be to meet at breakfast.

Exhibits- In the atrium there will be 25 tables. Can set up and be open for business Friday evening, but if people are concerned about security, may set up Saturday morning. Tables are free for district vendors. Congregations pay \$20, outside vendors \$40. How will it work to sell Rev. Robinson's books? Does Rev. Jonasson have any books to sell?

Robin will contact both speakers to find out.

No more meetings before the conference. Will discuss survey monkey. Will meet briefly during the party and after the keynote to support Robyn if needed.

Break for lunch

Afternoon session:

Attending: Robin, Kathy, Lisa, Julie, Ginny, Roger, Maria, Sam, Sarah, Robyn, Phil & Joanne.

Robin took attendance by asking people what they were excited about for the 2014 conference, and there is palpable enthusiasm for the theme, the city, and the new connections.

1. Contract-

Sarah Green was concerned about internet. Joanne assured her that the whole hotel has high-speed internet, free in rooms. We will re-evaluate, but that has been part of the conversation from the start. Will try to reach out to Mark Gibbons who is in KS now, who has the experience of AC 2012.

Phil- concern is connectivity in real time. One concern I have is that the budget should have that built in.

Wherever this meeting is, the registrants for that meeting are underwriting the costs of connectivity... I'm wondering if that is truly a local cost. I can see that \$5-10 is in essence an AV surcharge to bring it to everyone in the region...?

Roger: the broadcast we came up with last year, Mark came up with a free service. I think our cost was \$250 for the whole conference to have internet access in the conference area.

Robyn: Phils' point well-taken for the future: important for site selection.

Joanne: I think we are in great shape. Hotel not charging anything for conference rooms. If we need more rooms, is more a question of availability. Great rate of \$93/room. In process of signing contract with no contingencies or requirements (i.e., no minimum, no outside food or liquor to be brought in). Minimum

requirement of 125 rooms for Friday & Sat, only 25 for Thursday. Will have to pay for AV. Includes buffet in atrium. Every room gets breakfast, pay extra for those who aren't staying. No free airport shuttle. There are airports in Manhattan and KS City, and there is a roadrunner or limo service. Hosts will go and get speakers. 85 miles on shuttle...\$35-\$50 per person via commercial shuttle. Amtrak comes in from Chicago and Davenport. Great way to come! Interstate

Visitor's Center of Topeka getting involved. Helping with registration, rides. Send the contract to Sam to archive the contract.

2. Logo-

Krissy Spencer is from the Lawrence church created the logo Have had several submissions from her and another artist,

Roger-looks great

Sarah - concerned about using it smaller

Logo Lite - something more smaller, with fewer lines for smaller spaces

Julie - looks like three men

Maria - no diversity, different heights?

Kathy - image - food instead of people

Lisa - lovely dove, maybe baby birds being fed on the other side

Joanne- do we go too far on addressing diversity

Maria - I don't think we have to go too far with putting skirt on it

Lisa -I'd go to artist and say these are some of the concerns: cost of more colors, Hunger for justice is more than just hunger

Joanne

Robyn- would you like me to show it to my husband the graphic designer?

Joanne - we will consider all these comments

Robin- bathroom men won't sell T-shirt

3. Child care

Joanne: We went back to the hotel and reserved a series of rooms that should accommodate the child care very nicely, and a room to be used for the youth retreat. Will coordinate on the local level with our own child care people. Sarah: you have to do a background check on everyone.

Roger: we had some people who did paid child care. That was built into our costs. That was a very long day for people in the child care room. Either you have volunteers who relieve someone, or pay

Joanne: there is a children's discovery center here, which would be perfect for 4-10 year olds. Plan to use Brown vs. the Board of Ed site in programming.

Sarah: Youth sponsors should go on field trips. Make that clear that sponsors must be together off site.

Sarah: Check in with Nancy Combs-Morgan to make sure they are following guidelines for taking away from a hotel.

Sarah: Make it clear that there must be child care for younger kids, and child PROGRAMMING for older kids.

Joanne: Around the social justice program, have arranged for a hotel room for that.

Our church can't manage the meeting and the food. Take the pre-conference workshop out of church and put to hotel. Can cater lunch, or walk 3-4 blocks to a restaurant. Nice room downstairs for the Social Justice Workshop. The Regional Board will meet at the church, and have host hospitality provide the lunch.

Roger: The Social Justice Meeting just needs the space, and will do their own planning. The SJ coordinator is Shawna Foster.

Sarah: MN UU Social Justice Alliance...

Joanne: we have space reserved, if we need it, at the Ramada Inn.

4. Regionalization

Nancy put us on alert for her vision of what 2014 might be. Got the message loud and clear to be sure that we can live stream. Will be as technologically edgy as we can for speakers and business meeting.

5. Program Ideas

Kathy: Fantastic choices. Keeping in mind your ideas about social justice, I think **Paul Razor**--especially with the impact of his new book--I think people in the PSD and region might really respond to. I'd like to hold him up as a possible speaker. (Lisa --I went to school with him!)

Phil: Paul was a member of the Topeka fellowship while on law faculty, and sent him off to seminary. When he was back here 4-6 weeks ago, he gave a lecture on his latest book, *Reclaiming Public Witness: Liberal Religion in the Public Square...* (<http://www.amazon.com/Reclaiming-Prophetic-Witness-Liberal-Religion/dp/1558966765>- Amazon calls it a "clarion call to action")

We asked Paul about speaking, and he was positive, but hadn't checked dates. The other two people **Tom Averill**--UU in spirit, spoke many times from pulpit, writer in residence at Washburn....U Great speaker and writer. Longtime commentator for NPR (over 20 years). In talking to him, a Midwestern poet...William Stafford's 100th anniversary...such a good speaker...

Wes Jackson and the Land Institute...trying to breed perennial crops. Rather than plant each year, go back to the idea of perennial crops. Wes speaks all over the world, speaking about food from an environmental perspective. He is a good speaker. In his mid-70s "IF I'm still here..."

Ann Zimmerman--a KS singer and songwriter, did an internship at the Land Institute. Got a law degree from Harvard, but is married to a cowboy. She was asked to write the theme song for the national Quaker meeting about 15 years ago. We asked if she were invited, would she write a song for our conference. Maybe \$500-\$1000 appearance fee.

Emma's Revolution - heard them at GA, a group that spins a lot of justice and activism songs. Would be a fantastic fit, but charge a \$2,500 appearance fee. They have done this for conferences. Phil suggested asking them to appear at the church service on Sunday and do a workshop as well.

Still on the Hill -from Arkansas, active in their center for peace and justice...third choice

Robyn: for Emma's Revolution, do you know if they would charge additional fees for workshop and Sunday. Joanne said if we guaranteed the \$2500, they would negotiate the rest. Davenport also sold tickets to the greater community.

Julie: I was drawn to Ann, as it was somebody from KS. My gut on that.

Ginny: Emma's is from Des Moines. Do you want a rally-the-troops feel, or a background music? Emma's has a different feel than other musical groups--a call to action.

Julie--it is great, but may not work after a long day of workshops.

Maria--Emma's Revolution songs are fantastic, but maybe whatever feel you are going for...

Still on the Hill might be more of a party entertainer...

Joanne -Paul can be dry as toast, but when he talked at Topeka, he made this topic very relatable. I can't tell you...he is not a rally the troops speaker. His message in this book is for us to claim our place in the world as UUS practicing social justice. He has a name, because of his publications.

Kathy B heard Paul speak at GA and the topic was his lost book on faith without certainty, highly intellectual. I thought he had a gift for explaining some of these intellectual ideas with clarity. I left with something of real value... If we are thinking about a regional conference, it would be great to have someone with Topeka roots and far reach

Julie-agrees

Marie-agrees

Roger-Judy lecture

Sam-don't have a good enough reason to say yea or nay.

Joanne-when I heard Paul talk on this subject, I thought this would make a great lecture for HfJ. I thought it was a good message

Roger-I think you could also set it up so that he really understands what we are after.

It was agreed that Phil would invite Paul to speak at 2014. Roger suggested inviting the public to the evening entertainment, and supplementing the budget with those ticket sales.

Going forward:

Robin: If Regionalization happens, we will have to determine if we will have more representatives on our committee? Sam: We should continue to plan conferences, remain flexible

Next meetings will be:

Immediately following the Friday night keynote formal program, let's gather at the back of the ball room to see if Robyn needs any help.

We will meet immediately following the Sunday workshop service with the LAC chairs to debrief the conference

See you all then!

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Taylor, Chair
2-20-13

