

UCGT Annual General Meeting – Minutes
Saturday, May 8th, 2004 at 1:30 pm
Unitarian Congregation of South Peel
84 South Service Road, Mississauga

1. Opening Remarks/President's Report

UCGT President Calvin Drake called the meeting to order. Calvin spoke of how he wanted to make the meetings more inclusive and hear from others. On that note he opened the floor up to questions.

An individual raised the question if there had been any growth in response to the open invitation to others to attend these meetings. Calvin replied that indeed there had been, and he was impressed with the many new faces at the meeting and the opportunity for a new focus for UCGT.

One concern was raised if the UCGT had reached out to other congregations. Calvin answered that undertaking joint activities is a real sign of success, and he hopes that this will build on that morning's conference.

Calvin then gave the President's Report. He spoke of how this year was an opportunity to reconsider the role of the UCGT in relation to member congregations. Calvin mentioned the format of people working together should continue and this is what people seemed to want. He thanked all those who had participated in the past year and concluded by thanking UU congregations for their hospitality hosting UCGT events.

2. Treasurer's Report

UCGT Treasurer Karyn Burney distributed the year-end financial statements for the period of May 1, 2003 and April 30th, 2004. In her report she indicated a balance in the General Fund of \$1,859.02 and a balance of \$681.62 in the Designated Funds (UCGT Booth, Display, Advertising), making a total balance or assets of \$2,540.64. Karyn also indicated that 2004/5 invoices will go out in the Fall.

A question was raised pertaining to the Mid-Winter conference. Karyn replied that the retreats were self-sufficient and no problem to cover the expenses associated with the Canterbury Hills Conference Centre.

3. Report on Unitarian TV

Yvonne Greig prepared the Unitarian TV Report for the UCGT Annual Meeting. Yvonne talked of the history of UU TV and what an effective tool it was. She spoke of the new programs for the past year and how they aimed to be efficient by recording so

that two programs could fit on one VHS tape. She spoke of the good job host Michael Hotrum did in asking questions and preparing the guests.

One need Yvonne communicated was that she needs contact person(s) to let people know when we broadcast and when there is the council meeting and banquet. In closing, Yvonne gave details for the upcoming Horizon Interfaith Council banquet.

4. Report on Mid-Winter Retreat

Tom Brown gave the report for the Mid-Winter retreat on behalf of Jane Affleck. There were 57 people for the full weekend with 105 in attendance for the peak time on Saturday (including chaplains). Tom spoke of how it was important for people to book early for next year. The last meeting had 105 people present and the attendance was higher than last year's due to an increase of lay chaplain's registering for the lay chaplaincy program. He thought people enjoyed themselves with the talks giving people something to discuss over the weekend.

Tom presented the plans for the next meeting, how it would be organized and who would be speaking.

A question was raised concerning safety issues involving the icy conditions on the road between the highway and the main lodge. Tom replied that it took all Sunday to clean up and hopefully the situation will improve for next year.

A question was raised about Cedar Glen as a possible alternate location for the conference. Tom replied that Cedar Glen was opening again soon and he would look into it.

5. Report on Growth Activities

Kalvin Drake gave his report on Growth Activities. The background of this report focused on three initiatives: image branding, key initiatives, and key promo materials. Calvin spoke of communications sent to all Toronto-area presidents and ministers to make sure everyone knows what is happening, to ask for feedback, to invite all to participate, and to help take the UU message to the GTA in the way of a road show.

Kalvin then handed out information on the UCGT Close Encounters project and asked that we take the material with us to our congregations. Calvin invited those with big ideas to add that which was unique and outstanding and how he was personally energized by what people are developing by bringing forth initiatives that have potential. He then opened up to questions about initiatives.

6. Discussion on Proposed UCGT Mandate

Kalvin Drake introduced the Discussion of UCGT Mandate as found in the back of the agenda, which was divided into three areas: UCGT Functions, Geographic Scope, and Relationship with CUC Central Region.

Kalvin thought there should be a discussion about boundaries, and thought it would be useful to use a model to show how the CUC and UGCT worked together. He then drew on the board a hierarchical structure consisting of National, Region, Cluster, and Congregation.

Kalvin then spoke of the increased CUC regional need for services in the past 12 months. He saw networking opportunities in regional gatherings, skill development, and workshops. The CUC regions were devised to deliver services to member congregations, and it made sense to offer workshops in the context of the larger region rather than just the Toronto area.

In answering the question: "What should be UCGT do and What should the CUC Region do?" Calvin said he wants to get away from the hierarchical model. He described UCGT as a "cluster", the centre is the individual, and through a kind of "sovereignty association", we should come together locally or regionally based on what makes sense for each given item.

He floated the suggestion that there could be just one "business" meeting of the UCGT (the Annual Meeting), and that smaller cross-congregational "Special Interest Groups" would get together more frequently to actually DO things together! Calvin concluded his comments by making this observation: "We don't have to look for reasons to get together, we look for what initiatives need to be done and for the best way they can be done."

Kalvin then opened the floor up for comments on the UCGT, should we get together, etc.

One comment was that the individual found he/she had learned a lot, found the contacts good and the e-mails useful, and thought it best to carry on a dialogue.

Another comment was that there was confusion about the meetings and this individual thought that the current four in a year was too much. Calvin responded that he thought we should come together more frequently in the Special Interest groups.

Someone else commented on the attendance figures at the meetings but felt there was a need to keep meeting to keep things going. This same person talked of success at Don Heights and of the e-mail discussion groups. Calvin agreed, saying that communication is important.

There was a comment that the UCGT should continue to send out invitation e-mails, explaining what UCGT is, and get people to come together on issues.

Kalvin agreed and said invitations would be made, especially pertaining to the next Regional Meeting in London on November 12 and 13th, 2004. He continued by saying that he saw interaction happening at different levels and thought it important to tap into resources at the regional level. Calvin saw the CUC as being challenged by growth and not seeing a lot of certainty on on-ground initiatives. He believed a good strategy was to help congregations grow and Toronto could lead in local initiatives before going national with certain ideas. Calvin said we couldn't dictate, but there could be an open door sharing our ideas.

A question was asked on how would you enlist people? Calvin replied that we need to keep people excited through their presidents and congregations and he would speak to them.

Another comment was raised that it would be nice to hear from the CUC in the media on National matters. Rev. Jeffrey Brown replied that our voice is heard in conjunction with other faith communities so that it does show up occasionally. In response to another comment on leaders and ministers being more outspoken, Jeff replied that the leaders are speaking out, it's how and where it gets picked up that makes the difference. K. Brown also added that CUC exposure would not be matter of if, but when.

7. Election of Officers

Karyn Burney (South Peel) nominated Calvin Drake (Toronto First) for the position of President for another term, and he was acclaimed.

Sylvia Andrews (Huronion) nominated Donna Halliday (Huronion) for the position of Vice-President, and she was acclaimed.

Calvin Drake (Toronto First) nominated Karyn Burney (South Peel) for the position of Treasurer for another term, and she was acclaimed.

Robert Knight (South Peel) was nominated for Secretary, and he was acclaimed.

10. Close of Meeting

Calvin Drake formally closed the meeting.