

Minutes of UCGT Annual General Meeting

July 27, 2008 at 12:30 p.m.

First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto

175 St. Clair Avenue West, Toronto

Attendees:

Kalvin Drake, Toronto First (President)
Donna Halliday, Huronia (Vice President)
Carolyn Prentice, Toronto First (Treasurer)
Jane Affleck, Toronto First
Ellen Campbell, Toronto First

Judy Clark, Toronto First
Yvonne Greig, South Peel
Judy Magney, Northwest
Judy Newman, Don Heights

Opening Remarks

Kalvin Drake, President, called the meeting to order. It was noted that Neighbourhood and Durham were not represented, but apologies had been received.

The agenda was approved.

Minutes of 2007 AGM

The minutes were accepted as written.

Reports

Unitarian TV: Yvonne Greig reported on the work of the Horizons Interfaith Council and its TV program. She expressed appreciation for the participation of Germaine Kovary of Don Heights, which ensured that there was representation at the regular council meetings and the opportunity to consult on various matters. Germaine also provided fresh ideas.

Two programs were produced. The first, *Sexuality Education: What is Outercourse?*, was an interview by Tracey Szarka of Neal den Hollander and Sheila Bjarnason on the Our Whole Lives (OWL) program. It has been aired four times. The second, *Engaged Diversity*, was an interview by Wendy Shusterman of The Rev. Debra Faulk on this program, in operation at Don Heights. It was also aired four times. There will be repeats during the summer. A DVD including four programs from 2006-8 was produced and distributed to all the congregations. Donna Halliday asked whether the programs could be put on streaming video or offered as pod casts. Yvonne will investigate.

Horizon Interfaith also held its 30th Anniversary Banquet on June 3rd. Ellen Campbell was the keynote speaker and Sheila White was one of the entertainers. UCGT contributed a full-page congratulatory ad to the glossy booklet distributed at the dinner,

which also included a tribute to Gil Gillespie of Toronto First, who represented UCGT for many years at Horizon.

Mid-winter Retreat: Jane Affleck reported on the retreat, which took place at Cedar Glen in February, with the theme “Say Yes to Life: Living the Seventh Principle.” Frances Deverell made the keynote address. Sixty people attended the full weekend and an additional 12 came on Saturday. The Lay Chaplaincy Committee met during the retreat, and the Chaplains held their program. The Cedar Glen Conference Centre has been booked for February 6-8, 2009.

Jane expressed appreciation to the other members of the Mid-winter Retreat Committee: Sue McLeod, Kathy Thompson, Ellen Jamal, Margaret Rao and Rod McLeod. Steve Watson and Peter Brydon have joined the committee.

Toronto Area Interfaith Committee: Ellen Campbell reported on the Toronto Area Interfaith Committee. This is a new organisation; its launch took place at an interfaith breakfast in 2007, and held its second breakfast this past May. Between 150 and 200 people attended each of the breakfasts. UCGT is one of a handful of faith groups that has formally joined and paid its annual dues. TAIC’s program priority during the past year has been curtailing youth violence, and this was the theme of the second breakfast.

Ellen Campbell has been the UCGT representative to the Council. She worked on developing a pamphlet about opportunities which now exist for education on interfaith matters. She will provide copies to UCGT for distribution to our congregations.

Sustainability Fair: This project was spawned at the Mid-winter Retreat in response to information from the UU Fellowship of Ottawa about a similar event there. “The Judys”—Magney, Clark and Newman—organized the event at Northwest Fellowship, with seed money from Toronto First, Don Heights and Northwest and financial and marketing support from UCGT. The objective was to involve all the congregations in a project to encourage “living the seventh principle,” and introduce UUism to new people. The team approached about 80 potential exhibitors and visited all the shopping areas in the surrounding geographic area to solicit products and services for a silent auction and bake and plant sales, as well as to publicize the event. Despite a very hot day, about 200 people attended. A full crew of volunteers assisted. The event broke even. Interest in our community was expressed, particularly by exhibitors.

There is a lot of interest in seeing the event repeated, if there are volunteers to work on it. This year’s committee recommended that there be a larger committee, and that a more central site, perhaps indoors, be found.

Treasurer’s Report: Carolyn Prentice presented her report. Last year the meeting decided that UCGT should use some of the surplus it had accumulated over several years to provide seed money for projects like the Sustainability Fair. Because the books closed before the Fair was really underway, none of its expenses show up in this year’s accounts, and expenses were again below income. However, those expenses will appear

in the 2008-09 year. The budget for 2008-2009 was presented, proposing Expenditures of \$2,600, drawing down the accumulated surplus to support our participation in community events. Moved by Donna, seconded by Carolyn, that the budget be adopted as presented. Carried.

Role of UCGT: Calvin initiated some discussion about the role UCGT should play, continuing the discussion from last year's annual meeting. The Sustainability Fair was an example of the way that UCGT can use its resources, both financial and volunteer, to support a project carried out by several congregations. At this point, this approach is seen to be more productive than trying to organize meetings or programs, particularly since CUC's regional meetings fill that need. It was agreed that a message should go to congregations and their presidents that UCGT has a mechanism and funding to support your passions. Donna and Calvin will work on this. A list of volunteers who are available should also be compiled.

Donna mentioned a community event in Barrie—a kind of one-day “Welcome Wagon,” in which she has staffed a table with information about our faith community. Several people expressed willingness to help with this, particularly if it could be planned to include some fellowship with the Huronia group.

Yvonne asked whether the provision of the constitution that allows ministers to be ex officio members could be seen as discriminatory toward the congregations without ministers. Donna pointed out that those groups are smaller than the others, and are not bothered by this provision.

There was some discussion about the low attendance at the meeting. It has been difficult to schedule in an appropriate time after UCGT's year-end, because of conflict with other meetings. However, holding the meeting earlier would result in better attendance. One possibility is moving the year-end back.

Election of Officers: The President, Calvin Drake, Vice President Donna Halliday, and Treasurer, Carolyn Prentice, are all completing terms. There is no secretary, and no volunteers were forthcoming. Donna would be willing to take that role when she finishes her current term as VP next year.

Announcements: Calvin announced that the Fall Gathering of the CUC Central Region would be held in Guelph from Friday, November 14 until Sunday, November 16, with the theme, “Filling Body and Soul: Being UU in a Time Of World Hunger”. Jane announced that the Midwinter Retreat would be from February 6-8, 2009.

Adjournment: Donna Halliday moved that the meeting be adjourned, Jane Affleck seconded the motion, and all agreed.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Campbell