
MESSAGE FROM THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY TASK FORCE



The Task Force has worked hard for 18 months to up date the whole process for bringing resolutions to the CUC's Annual Business Meeting and for implementing them afterwards in our congregations, monitoring groups, youth programs and regions.

Our Chair, Marnie Girvan, is away for two months doing some exciting community development work in Sri Lanka. I will be away at the IALRW/IARF Congress In Taiwan but will be back in April. Hence any questions should be directed to the Task Force and one of us will respond.

This February the Board accepted the report with much appreciation of all the hard work involved. Many of the recommendations do not involve any policy change but clarify the details of the process since there was some confusion amongst even our most dedicated members as to the steps necessary to be taken when preparing a resolution to bring to the Business meeting. These recommendations will go into a revamped CUC SR Handbook.

Two policy changes did arise and will be presented as Motions this coming May. See below.

Please read carefully and send us comments or better still bring your questions to our Workshop at the ACM in Saint John.

Sincerely,

Christine Johnston, Social Responsibility Liaison for the CUC Board.

MOTION

That the CUC Board accept the report of the Social Responsibility Task Force and, in accordance with their recommendations:

- a) Bring to the Annual Meeting, 2006, a Motion to implement a SPECIAL RESOLUTION WITH NOTICE process, to be effective commencing with the Annual Meeting 2007.
 - b) Bring to the Annual Meeting, 2006, a proposal to implement a 2/3 majority voting process to replace the current 50% plus process, to be effective commencing with the Annual Meeting 2007
- There are five documents in the SR Task's Final report.
1. The resolutions process report written by Don McDiarmid assisted by Elaine Harvey, Scott Keeler and Christine Johnston.
 2. A flow chart of the above process for easy access written by Elaine Harvey.
 3. Implementation report written by Marnie Girvan and the Rev Steven Epperson and assisted by Ella Henry and Robbie Brydon.
 4. SR Handbook for Congregations (also known as "Finding Common Voice " edited but not changed by Sharon Flatt to a) core, b) exercises in an appendix (not included here).
 5. Guidelines for Monitoring Groups re. Coalitions and Fund-raising, written by Marnie Girvan including consultation with Mary Bennett.

Contact the task force at cuc-sr-task-force@cuc.ca or join an email discussion list by sending a blank email to cuc-sr-task-force-subscribe@yahogroups.com



IMPLEMENTATION WORKING GROUP

Report from the CUC Board Social Responsibility Task Force Recommendations for Implementation after a Resolution passes

BOARD:

- Replaces/appoints Monitoring Group (MG) Chairs
- Designates a Board member to be Social Responsibility (SR) Liaison
- Includes SR resolution issues on Board agenda whenever applicable
- Ensure media consultant is available
- Fund an Ottawa based CUC SR media/political Parliamentary monitor and lobbyist

PRESIDENT (OR DESIGNATE):

- Approves letters from Monitoring Group or initiates letters/press releases for public/ media or politicians; spokesperson on social justice issues
- Available to the media

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND STAFF:

- Says yes! Acts as a communication conduit: sends resolutions to Ministers, Board Presidents, RE, Youth Social Action Coordinator (SAC) following Annual Congregational Meeting; works with media consultant
- Ensures relevant stakeholders (e.g. media consultant, President, review press releases/ letters sign off before release.
- Creates/ maintains CUC/Congregation “directory” of Social Responsibility contact persons
- Allows time at each Regional Fall Gathering for a workshop from Monitoring Group on implementation of most recent resolution
- Creates/maintains CUC congregation “directory” of SR contact persons
- Develops and/or distributes media “How To” resources for Monitoring Groups, Annual Meeting delegates, Congregations, Board Presidents, Ministers, etc.
- CUC Annual Meeting; has news releases ready for delegates to take home.

MONITORING GROUPS (KEY TO PROCESS)

- Chair communicates with Board SR liaison
- Continually monitor relevant Social Responsibility issues
- When necessary, writes letters/news releases for public distribution over the President’s signature (Executive Director is coordinator of this process)
- Create “Implementation Kit” and make available to

Congregations

- Each Monitoring Group has a list of the contact person in every Congregation or works with/through Social Responsibility committee
- With approval of President and Executive Director, may seek alliances with coalition partners and communicate these to Congregations.
- Works to include a diverse group including young adults and youth.
- At Fall Gatherings, Monitoring Groups of most recent resolution may run “How to Implement” Workshops that include politics/congregational projects/media and may host a display table on aforementioned resolution.

MINISTERS:

- Are informed about resolutions/Monitoring Groups by the Executive Director in August, in order to plan Social Responsibility worship services, projects, programming.
- Dedicate a worship service, forum etc. to Social Resolution passed
- Are encouraged to create/work with his/her local Social Responsibility implementation group in congregations/fellowships

YOUTH GROUPS:

- Regional Social Action Coordinators (SAC’s) get resolution in June from Executive Director and create a “guide” for implementation
- National Youth Social Action Coordinator presents to youth at Regional Fall Gathering or youth Conference and distributes guide.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

- Executive Director communicates resolution to Directors (DRE’s) and Ministers of Religious Education (MRE’s) through Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA) etc.
- DRE/MRE conveys resolutions to RE Committees/teachers who then work it into lesson plans/projects

REGIONAL NETWORKING GROUPS (RNGs)

- Media training and congregation Social Responsibility training through RNG’s
- SR information from Executive Director can be communicated through congregational networkers.

Chair: Marnie Girvan; Apt.904, 19 Woodlawn Road East, Guelph, Ontario, Canada. N1H 7B1.



FUNDRAISING FOR SPECIFIC ISSUES

Report from the CUC Board Social Responsibility Task Force

This type of fundraising is a challenge. We do not want to put out a number of appeals in a year, and we do have a CUC Friends Campaign once a year. We have had individual contributions such as that of the person who supported our legal representation at a Supreme Court reference case.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend allowing individuals to earmark contributions for a specific CUC endeavour, but i) always to make this a targeted, not wide, appeal for contributions; and ii) always when there is guaranteed coverage, either from an individual or from the CUC budget, in case donations are not forthcoming. Thus approval of the Ed or President would be required to ensure that the donation can be used as requested and fits into the CUC mission.



Edmonton Annual Conference with Banner created by Marya Nyland

COALITIONS:

These are important and allow us to tap into something major such as the support we gave the same-sex marriage issue by teaming with the advocacy group, Egale, and with other faith groups.

We have also supported Project Ploughshares on a long term basis.

These coalitions can also take place if the CUC has made a statement about an issue and the Monitoring Group wants to support that statement/issue by joining or supporting another organization or committee, e.g. the Environment Monitoring Group's support of the Earth Charter. (A book was created which was a good resource).

The Choice in Dying Monitoring Group has on occasion chosen to work with the organization Dying with Dignity.

Any group which chooses to work in a coalition or with a fundraising committee must articulate clearly what the issue is and how they are going to address it.

Advertising is now available in the "Canadian Unitarian" for those who wish to take this approach. All work on these issues should be done on a voluntary basis.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend that whenever there is a coalition that an individual representing the CUC work in close connection with that other organization, and that this individual be on or liaise with a monitoring group on the broader issue.

We recommend CUC consider

- i) sharing generously non-financial-cost items that take little or no staff time, and
- ii) exchanging services such as notices in publications.

We recognize that usually there will not be funds available to pay for memberships or shared financial responsibility with others in the coalition unless individuals choose to donate their own money, such as happened with the Same Sex Marriage Supreme Court Hearing.



NEWS FROM OUR MONITORING GROUPS

The CUC Racial and First Nations Equity Monitoring Group is developing a program to encourage welcoming and celebration of multiculturalism and pluralism in our congregations. We expect to unveil the program at the CUC Annual Conference and Meeting in Vancouver in 2007. In the meantime, if you would like to contribute to a discussion on Racial and First Nations issues or have questions about the CUC resolutions in this regard, please contact the MG Chair Mac Elrod <mac@slc.bc.ca>, or ask Phil Strapp (phil@cuc.ca) to have you added to the Monitoring Group's email-discussion list.

CANADIAN UNITARIANS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Workshop and Annual General Meeting, Friday May 19, in The Gothic Arches, Saint John, N.B. 10 am, Workshop "Our Civil Liberties: How Can CUSJ be more Effective?" 1:30 pm, AGM keynote speaker: Nora Ward from a local First Nation, title to be announced. Workshop and AGM are open to members and non-members alike; we hope to see you there!

UNITARIANS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

by Rev. Fred Cappuccino

FIVE NEW PAMPHLETS FROM CUC

- Unitarians and Social Responsibility by Rev. Fred Cappuccino (excerpt pasted below)
 - The Lay Chaplaincy Program
 - Welcoming Congregation Program by Art Brewer
 - Our Vision of Lifespan Learning by Sylvia Bass West
 - Safe and Sound by Sylvia Bass West & Rev. Pat Webber
- They are priced the same as our current 4 pamphlets, \$25/100.
- How Do I Become a

Unitarian by Rev. Phillip Hewett

- What Unitarians and Universalists Believe by Rev. Charles Eddis
- 6 Sources by Craig Beam
- A Poetic Look at Being a Unitarian by Franci Louann

INTRODUCTORY OFFER (until March 31, 2006)

100 each of all 5 new pamphlets - \$100 (regular price \$125)

100 each of all 9 pamphlets; plus 100 principles and sources bookmarks or wallet cards (please specify) - \$200 (regular price \$245)

Postage costs will be added to the cost of your order. Unless you ask for expedited shipping we will choose the least expensive option.

Order form at: <http://www.cuc.ca/store/>

Pamphlets can be viewed online at:

http://www.cuc.ca/programs/pamphlets_cuc.htm

The main reason I am a Unitarian is to *do social action*. I believe we are called upon to show concern for "the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow." Back in 1957 the great Homer Jack was minister of the Unitarian Church of Evanston, Illinois. He also chaired a Peace Committee in Chicago of which I was a member.

I was a Methodist minister working hard to build a strong congregation, and to raise issues of peace and race. But it wasn't going well. The members were lukewarm in attending services. After a meeting of Homer's Peace Committee I was lamenting about this. He responded, "You can't build a church on social action. People come to church for comfort." I might have left the ministry long ago had I not heard that sage advice.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Rev. Fred Cappuccino is Minister Emeritus of Lakeshore Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Montreal and of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa. He and his wife Bonnie received the Order of Canada in 1996.