

**First Unitarian Church of Oakland**  
**Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**August 25, 2015**

*Present:*

*Board Members:* B Avalon, Laurel Egenberger, Dan Goss, Micheas Herman, Jaki Lee, Claudia Morgan (Chair), Kenji Oshima, Lisa Rosene, Emily Stoper, Kris Wedding Crowell (*Absent:* Chris Sutherland)  
*Visitors:* Cile Beatty, Joani Blank, Linda Hodges, Jill Miller, Dennis Rowcliffe, Bev Smrha, Rev. Abbey Tennis, Kem Tetlow

1. The meeting was called to order promptly at 7:15. The chalice was lit and Kris offered an opening reading.
2. The consent agenda consisted of 3 items: approval of the minutes of July 2015; approval of housing allowances for the Revs. Jacqueline Duhart, Abbey Tennis and Sheri Prud'homme; and approval of Micheas Herman's candidacy as a Board member. It was moved by B, seconded by Lisa and passed unanimously.
3. Jill Miller and Cile Beatty, representing the Journey Toward Wholeness Transition Team (JTW), made a presentation explaining the history and purposes of the Board's use of anti-racist tools.

Jill explained that Multicultural exercises, process monitoring, and caucusing are key anti-racist, anti-oppressive tools for reaching the church's goal of increased inclusivity. The multicultural exercise focuses on deepening us as a community; process monitoring helps us to be accountable to each other and our goals. (Actually, both accomplish both purposes.)

The Board's use of the multicultural exercise began in 2011. Jubilee 2 (2011) highlighted that there was a wide range of perceptions among Board and church members about the church's position on the continuum of anti-racism. The board of 2011-2012 decided to take on these disparate perceptions as an annual priority.

Multicultural exercises grew out of the Board's active commitment to an anti-racist/anti-oppressive congregation. These exercises were intended to offer an opportunity for Board members to address, practice, and underscore their commitment and to discuss from the heart the issues relating to the church's goals in this area. It was decided that a multicultural exercise (an article discussion, or reflection question, or activity) would be done at every meeting. Unfortunately they were not institutionalized and so not consistently done. They were most often done by the same one or two members or by Rev. Kathy Huff. At different times we did spread out an activity or discussion over the course of one or two meetings, or we had discussions that built on previous ones. There were times when two people led an activity with the hopes of building comfort, confidence, and skill level across the Board members.

Jill explained that there are tasks of the privileged and tasks of the subjugated. In any interaction, a person may be either privileged or subjugated, depending on the power dynamics within the discussion

or the topics at hand. She read aloud an excerpt from Dr. Kenneth Hardy's presentation "Managing Hot Moments and Interrupting Isms at Work." And from the article: "African-American Experience and the Healing of Relationships." See article of Ken Hardy:

<http://www.dulwichcentre.com.au/kenhardyarticle.html>

### **"Tasks of the Privileged"**

1. Draw a critical distinction between intention and consequence/impact.
2. Resist false notions of equality and the equalization of suffering in the discourse between the privileged and the subjugated.
3. Develop a thick skin in order to create and continue the discourse.
4. Be mindful of conversations that may be designed to negate the subjugated person's experience.
5. Resist the temptation to ignore the historical perspective. It's tempting to avoid history because it benefits the privileged not to go back into the past, but it can be liberating for the subjugated, if they choose so.

### **"Tasks of the Subjugated (Oppressed)"**

1. Reclaim one's voice, it's been socialized out of body, or lost or stolen. Practice it, recognize the power of it. You have to say it, even if you believe no one's listening because it gets infused into the atmosphere and then it changes the atmosphere.
2. Overcome the addiction, transfexion, and/or obsession of taking care of the privilege. \*It is to our/their detriment\*.
3. Engage in a process of exhaling, and then exorcise the toxins of internalized oppression- whatever that oppression is- racism, sexism, ageism, classism, ableism, anti-Semitism, whatever the oppression is. In the process of exhaling and exorcising- think critically about yourself, the layers of yourself, and examine the layers of shame existing within your subjugated self and put it to rest."

**Source:** Hardy, Ph.D, K.V., 2001. *African American experience and the healing of relationships*. D. Denborough, ed. [Http://Dulwichcentre.Com.Au](http://Dulwichcentre.Com.Au). Available from: <http://dulwichcentre.com.au/articles-about-narrative-therapy/african-american-experience/>

Jill suggested the following books as resources for Board members to use in developing effective multicultural exercises:

110 Experiences for Multicultural Learning by Paul B. Pedersen

Experiential Activities for Teaching Multicultural Competence Counseling edited by Mark Pope et al (includes authored and co-authored chapters by Jill Miller)

She also recommended these books:

Accountability and White-Antiracist Organizing by Bonnie Cushing and Kimberly Richards

The Power of Stories: A Guide for Leading Multi-Racial and Multi-Cultural Congregations by Jacqueline J. Lewis

The social justice training section of UUA.org is also a good source of information.

Jill offered these three additional comments:

1) A goal of process monitoring is to attend to power/privilege dynamics, and for all of us to become so aware of process that we can call things out as they occur. On past Boards, process monitoring was done by Board members only. It'd be good for more of the board to do the process monitoring (2 different people in the 2 halves of the meeting or even a quick round of everyone at the end). It would be useful to use the approach of each-one, teach-one and pair a Board member with a JTW member, if Board feels they need support.

2) Early in the term of new Board members, there should be yearly training on tools for the entire Board.

3) Caucusing involves separating the group into shared identity sub-groups either as a planned activity or called impromptu. The group with privilege should share what they discussed. The marginalized group can share or not. Caucusing can be called by any member of the Board.

Cile offered a series of questions and recommendations:

**Questions:**

What does it mean when the Board doesn't prioritize process monitoring, multicultural exercises and caucusing? (Some Board members said they are unclear on the purposes of caucusing.)

What does it mean when members of the Board do not have anti-racism training? (as is the case)

What are the opportunities for using these tools to build anti-oppressive leadership?

How does the Board provide training for those who don't have these skills?

**Recommendations:**

Have members sign up in advance for the multicultural exercise – not at the end of meetings. (This is already being done.)

Share resources and create a catalogue of multicultural exercises to create institutional memory.

Provide training for Board members on multicultural exercises, process monitoring and caucusing.

Have Board members do process monitoring, matched with a member of JTW, in order to create "each one teach one" opportunities

4. Bev Smrha reported for the ad hoc Committee on Church Sponsorship of Ministerial Candidates that Sarah Kaine, one of the 4 seminarians applying for sponsorship, has withdrawn her application. Two others have not yet completed their applications. Kevin Mann has completed his application, and the Committee is pleased to recommend him.

Board approval of church sponsorship of Kevin Mann's ministerial candidacy was moved by Emily, seconded by Kris, and passed unanimously.

Emily will prepare an official notification on letterhead, to be signed by Claudia.

5. Kris reported on plans for this fall's annual stewardship campaign, which will take place between Oct. 4 and Nov. 15. The goal will be to raise \$420,000. (Last year \$418,000 was raised.) Every member will be asked to submit a pledge form. The process will be automated as much as possible. The intention is for this campaign to be as inclusive and multi-culturally sensitive as the capital campaign.
6. The item "Discuss Public Meeting of Members who Attended General Assembly" was deleted from the agenda, because we were running beyond the time limits for the items in the meeting. Alternatives will be sought to handle this item. After some discussion, it was decided to make several adjustments so that the meeting could end by 9:30, its announced time of closure.
7. Dennis offered a process monitor report.
8. After a shortened break, Dan offered a multicultural exercise.
9. As part of the Board's ongoing effort to develop a Work Plan for carrying out the recommendations of the Transition Team, Emily Stoper offered asked the Board to prioritize the creation or filling of a series of committees. After discussion, Board members had an opportunity to vote on their personal priorities by attaching colored stickers to large sheets of paper posted on the wall. The results are below, listed in order of the priorities selected. (The pink stickers, representing Board members' personal willingness to work on the committee or on its creation, were assigned 3 points each. The yellow stickers, designating high priority, were assigned 2 points each. The teal stickers, representing medium priority, were assigned 1 point each. Low priority issues had no stickers.)

Appointment of new members to Leadership Development Committee: 16

Two pink (Claudia and Laurel), five yellow, no teal

Creation of a Nominating Committee: 14

One pink (B), five yellow, one teal

Creation of a Committee on Shared Ministry to monitor the work of ministers and lay-led programs: 14

One pink (Dan), five yellow, one teal

Creation of a Property Committee, which would draft a building and grounds maintenance and improvement plan (working with the Facilities Manager) and assist staff in implementing the plan: 12

Two pink (Lisa and one blank), one yellow, four teal

Creation of an Outreach (or evangelism) Committee to actively seek new members in diverse communities: 11 – under membership

One pink (Micheas), two yellow, four teal

Creation of a Financial Development Committee to work on bequests, legacy gifts, endowment, etc.: 10 – responds to the Board

No pink, three yellow, three teal

Creation of a Committee on Right Relations: 8

One pink (Lisa), one yellow, three teal

Creation of a Human Resources Committee: 5

One yellow, three teal

10. After a final process monitoring report by Dennis and closing words by Kris, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Stoper, Secretary