

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

## *Key Activities*

Collected all known policies – not just Board policies from the past 2 years – and sent them to Ken and MJ.

Attended the TUCW Player's presentation of *An American Daughter*.

Attended the Wake and the Memorial Service for William McEvoy.

Wrote and submitted a networking session proposal to the GA Planning Committee for the 2018 UUA General Assembly in Kansas City, Missouri. The proposal entitled **A Faithful Response to #MeToo** has been selected and is on the agenda for Friday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Prep for April BoT meeting – agenda etc.

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## *UUA News*

The UUA Board's Appointed Commission on Institutional Change worked for six months conducting interviews, collecting data, and deliberating on what it learned about the turmoil in the UUA last Spring following a hiring decision that was perceived as racist. The resignations of UUA President Rev. Peter Morales, COO Rev. Harlan Limpert, the Rev. Scott Tayler who made the hiring decision, and UUMA Executive Director Don Southworth were followed by the death of Moderator Jim Key. All of this took place in a time of great turmoil in the nation as well and added to a sense of damage and decline for the UUA. *Without clear leadership and process, social media became a source of judgment and condemnation.* This is truly ominous.

The Commission's Report has just been published [Commission on Institutional Change Findings](#). From where I sit, knowing all of the people involved, I wish I could say these Findings offer hope for a roadmap toward better health for our Association. I was and remain troubled and concerned.

## *'Second Time' Conversations Come First*

Before they hear the first note of music, before they hear the first word of a sermon or before anyone stands up and says "welcome" in the service, most first-time guests have already made a conscious or subconscious decision about whether they're coming back. **Only 1 in 10 first time** guests to a church **ever return**.

When Boards start intentional outreach [aka linkage] to their congregation's owners, there are also some caveats about not turning their guests off in 10 minutes or less.

### **1. Don't Plan a Coffee Hour that has an Agenda**

"Share coffee with members of the Board" does not set an expectation that there will be a presentation to listen to. Lose expectations about what conversations will cover and don't have an agenda. It's false advertising if you invite folks for a conversation 'with the Board' and then turn coffee and conversation into a Town Hall in a small space. A coffee is the most intimate setting for getting to know what the owners of the congregation are thinking and why they are invested in TUCW. It is the wrong place for Board-centric messages and policy discussions.

### **2. Second Time Conversations Come First**

After greetings and settling in with coffee and croissants, ask the attendees if they remember the first time they came to the church and then share, if they wish, why they decided to come back the second time. Then the third. That will tell Board Members in attendance a whole lot about what the returnees found at TUCW that they were looking for and, frankly, we still don't have a clue.

### **3. Listen like a Thief**

It's all about listening, really listening, so that you can absorb, understand, react and build. Take in every word, gesture, emotion. **Listen like a thief** because what they have to share with you is more valuable than gold and silver. It is the very stuff of what Ends Policies should be about – the stuff that the 1 in 10 visitors, the ones who came back a second time, found of greatest importance. This is not just one thing. That's why doing a lot of the most important things right is key.

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*Regarding our guests at Coffees and Gallery Walks, being intentional means thinking through the best ways to invite a group, follow up the invitation, interact and then follow up after the event.*

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I am looking forward to our exploration of how we practice the balancing of Ministry & Governance and boundaries and accountabilities at TUCW at our April meeting - my penultimate one as President. I have a sense of impatience to get on with other projects I have already committed to at the same time that I am wishing there were more time to address topics of good governance that I believe is vitally important to congregational health.

*Lynda*