

I am saddened by the trustee resignations announced this past week. I realize that the Board has been under tremendous pressure to complete its transition to policy governance and that transition has been hard to accomplish and harder to communicate. I take responsibility for not doing a better job seeing and acting on this struggle.

As I said in our check in meeting several weeks ago, after observing our leadership over the past six months I believe we are still very much in transition; a transition that may take several more years to complete. We are moving from a culture of a "pastoral" size governance system, largely dependent on key relationships and personalities, to a culture of a large "program" size church led largely by policy and procedure. This is important work and vital to our success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. You as a board have done a remarkable job, assimilating the material, and going after the tasks of writing policy and procedure. As I suspected in the candidating process, the transition has a way to go yet. Nothing we have done so far is wasted work. The policies we have in place are a foundation on which we will continue our work.

There are several areas that I see we still need to work on. The first is to complete the transition to policy governance. Rev. Roberta clearly had a preference for Dan Hotchkiss and his very modified form of policy governance. I agree with that model as far as it goes. The division between administrative and ministry committees is a sound model. The senior minister as chief of staff is sound practice. You have charters in place and policies written. All of this is good work. However, I believe we need to study and go farther in this work. I am not a believer in "pure" Carver based policy governance. I find it does not work completely with our congregational polity. While the UUA adopted this model successfully, the UUA is not a church. The pressures to involve more committees and the congregation as a whole in decision making are not always easy to achieve in pure Carver policy governance. I propose that in the next church year I design and present for consideration a policy governance curriculum 2.0, highlighting the good work we have done, and some suggestions on how we can improve our vision, ends statements and procedures to give the committees the autonomy they need to succeed and the board the confidence to let them do their work.

Another critical area is in understanding the complexity of a large program church and trusting in the professional staff to manage that complexity. I hope to demonstrate as the months unfold how the board can trust the staff to operate the church (with adequate financial controls) and free the board to vision our future and the committees to plan for that future. I hope this will result in an emerging understanding of the senior minister as the CEO of the church, in accordance with a revised policy governance model. I realize this takes time and trust. I understand that I and the staff need to earn that trust.

Finally, once our transition and understanding of policy governance is more complete, I am prepared to personally teach each and every committee what this means to them. I am committing to this personally because I think a consistent message is important for continuity.

We have come very far in a short time. Most congregations who make the shift to policy governance take four or five years to do it. Please do not abandon hope. The road is bumpy and feelings have and will be hurt but I think we are still very much on our way. One final observation: Confrontation is a normal part of being in community. In fact, confrontation indicates that there is a genuine relationship between parties. If we weren't confronting one another around these issues it would mean we don't care about the future of our church. We do care and it shows. The key is to move through confrontation in order to reach higher ground. As the word implies to confront is to bring a difference of opinion face to face. Our work next year around the covenant of right relations will help us realize how to respectfully but honestly disagree. I have great hope for our congregation and deep admiration for you our leaders.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Dr. John T. Morehouse