

Unitarian Society of New Haven  
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
June 13, 2019

Accepted July 11, 2019

**Board Members Present:** President - Peggy Myers, Vice President - Al Bosch, Clerk - Pamela Miller, Past-President - Dan Gelperin, Ex-Officio – Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner, At Large: Craig Machado, Bobbi Pace, Dan Wade

**Board Members Absent:** Treasurer - Linda Mehta, At Large: Jeannette Faber, Pat Trotta

**Others Present:** G. Heuss-Severance, D. Stagg

**Gather:**

P. Myers called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. G. Heuss-Severance lit the chalice and C. Machado read “The Future We Imagine” by Anthony P. Johnson. Attendees read the covenant. This was followed by a life event check in and a check in with each person answering the question, “What word (or 2-3 words) best captures your feelings about summer?”

**Changes to the agenda:**

Transfer of state property on Hartford Turnpike to Town of Hamden  
How to use 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday meetings in July and August

**Assess the Past:**

**Minister’s report**

The Minister’s report is attached at the end of the minutes. The report is filled with deep gratitude to all. Saying goodbye has been the most powerful piece of the meetings with people.

MT will talk to Mishkan Israel about making shared parking arrangements official. Pavers will be laid for a path between the parking lots. It must be a year-round solution.

Is the Mental Health task force aware of policies that apply to USNH? That will be addressed by the MT.

**Monitoring of policies**

MT report on Policy 1.4 is attached at the end of the minutes.

MT made changes to the interpretation: adding “**and the Congregation**” to 1.4.a, stating “**No interpretation required**” for 1.4.b, and replacing “**One of the reasons we haven’t hired additional staff is that we will only do so when our predicted revenues can cover those costs.**” With “**MT recommendations on compensation**”

and benefits are limited to a single fiscal year.” for 1.4.c. No changes were made to 1.4.d.

**MOTION – C. Machado**, to accept the revised interpretation of Policy 1.4; **SECONDED – D. Gelperin**;  
**PASSED** unanimously, 7 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions

#### **Approval of policy manual version 1.4**

**MOTION – B. Pace**, to accept policy book version 1.4, dated May 9, 2019; **SECONDED – A. Bosch**;  
**PASSED** unanimously, 7 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions

#### **Possible clarification of treasurer reports**

This may be discussed at a future meeting.

#### **Create the Future & Learning:**

##### **Board Rep and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Board Chats for the summer**

The Worship committee does not always remember to note who is the board rep on any given Sunday. Is it worthwhile having a rep in the welcome corner? Few board members have had congregants ask board specific questions. Is there an intangible value to announcing that a board rep will be available? Can it be printed in the OOS? Could a suggestion box be used? Could the president or other board member talk about it briefly in a service early in the fall? The purpose would be to explain why it is done. It will be on hiatus during the summer, resuming in the fall.

Should we continue the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday board chats? Attendance has tapered off. When people attended, there were always great conversations. It has merit, but we need to explain what it is and why people should attend. Perhaps that could be done in the newsletter. There is no other forum for the type of topics that were addressed in these chats. We need to follow up on the subjects discussed and inform the congregation of the results. Should the MT be included in these discussions? This will also be on hiatus during the summer.

##### **Request to be sponsoring congregation for Ethan Loewi**

**MOTION – A. Bosch**, that USNH act as the sponsoring congregation for Ethan Loewi in his preparation for Unitarian Universalist ministry; **SECONDED – D. Wade**;  
**PASSED** unanimously, 7 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions

E. Loewi's letter is attached at the end of the minutes. The sponsorship states that the congregation knows the candidate. He will be preaching on June 30, but that is not part of this request. This does not need to be voted on by the congregation.

The form requires the congregational president's signature.

### **Update on exit interview**

D. Gelperin discussed the exit interview process. He listed the people who will be able to read the exit document.

- Your congregation's Board leadership and departing minister
- New England Regional UUA staff
- The UUA Transitions Office specifically the Director of Transitions and your future assigned transitions coach
- The following interim and settled minister

It is not for our congregation's benefit. It is for helping ministers who are looking for congregations. It is "not important enough to do a good job." The way that it has been done has not been consistent. Exit interviews can be of value to organizations. The interview could be useful to the incoming minister. It is a snapshot of a specific time. It does not always make its way to the new minister. We can send the document in as is.

### **CRC proposal for modification of our goals**

The Themes and Goals and the proposed 5<sup>th</sup> goal are attached at the end of the minutes.

How we go about reaching our goals could be amended at any time. Does it belong in the themes and goals document? Does adding goal 5 do more than add clarification? It seems superfluous. Goal 3 addresses many of the same goals. Do we amend our goals based on input from others? The board can speak for the board. The preamble to the themes specifies the desire to strengthen our covenant. The examples are not all-inclusive. Can the MT delegate these tasks to committees? We will express gratitude to the CRC for their proposal. What happens to the themes and goals? The board should discuss it with the MT who will be responsible for its implementation. Do we evaluate whether we have made progress toward our goals?

D. Wade left the meeting.

### **Food planning for 6/25/19**

This event will be at J. Faber's house. We have \$40 available in the budget. We will add \$5 per person to cover food expenses.

Fourth Tuesday meetings could be devoted to discussion of The Spirit That Moves. An hour of one or both meetings could be spent discussing policy governance.

### **Consent Agenda:**

Minutes from Board meeting on 5/9/19

Minutes from Congregational Meeting on 6/2/19

**MOTION – B. Pace**, to approve the consent agenda; **SECONDED – C. Machado**;  
**PASSED**: 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

**Announcements:** None

**Thank you's:** A. Bosch for working on the interim minister search

**Adjournment:**

**MOTION – A. Bosch**, to adjourn; **SECONDED – C. Machado**;

**PASSED** unanimously, 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.

**Attachments:**

Minister's report

MT Report on Policy 1.4

Letter from Ethan Loewi

USNH Theme and Goals

CRC 5<sup>th</sup> Goal

**Minister's Report**  
**June 13, 2019**  
**Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner**

**State of the Congregation** (*recent successes, challenges, observations about the congregation's functioning in relationship to the mission, ministries, members, staff, or other Board concerns*)

The state of the congregation is strong. USNH is resilient and aware of growing edges. More people are engaged in activities and running of the organization. We are seeing a lot of new faces integrated into key roles.

Pledges continue to come in, and the Stewardship Committee is taking more responsibility for year-round stewardship-related tasks. Many members of the committee are committed to remaining on, except those taking on large roles in the congregation (Ministerial Search Committee).

The staff is deeply committed to USNH. They are ready to welcome John Marsh as interim minister. This staff is strong and capable.

I am so very grateful to the people of USNH and to the members of this Board for navigating this transition with me, for your steadfast support during the past four years, and for engaging this shared ministry with me.

I wish you all the very best in your next chapter and will be cheering you on from afar.

**Upcoming Time Away/Schedule** (*vacation, study leave, UUMA or UUA gatherings*)

- My last Sunday in the pulpit will be June 16<sup>th</sup>. I will be taking a few days of vacation the week of June 17-23 but will be in and out of the office that week and the next, June 24-30. My main focus is staff reviews, exit memo/interview and packing. I will be available for pastoral care emergencies.
- Claudia Elferdink, retired UU minister and member of USNH will work with the Pastoral Care Associates to provide pastoral care coverage for July until the interim arrives in August. I will contact other area ministers to make sure they are aware of our gap during July.

**Activity Report for Areas of Ministry**

**Counseling and Pastoral Care**

- Many meetings to discuss my departure and say goodbye
- The Pastoral Care Team is ready to regroup and reorganize with the interim minister.

**Practical Arts** (*administration, organizational development in and out of congregation, management of staff, attention to detail, support and leadership development, recognition and appreciation of others, delegation of responsibility and authority, follow through and completion of tasks, time management, attention to finances, fundraising, funding ministry, public relations and publicity skills, ability to work with boards and committees, clarity of roles, attention to long range plans, etc.*)

- The June 16<sup>th</sup> service will include a commissioning of the current Pastoral Care Associates as well as the Ministerial Search Committee.

**Organizational Ministry** (*integration of new members and clients, creates a welcoming environment, encourages a sense of community, encourages growth, supports broad variety of programs, involvement of others in planning and conducting programs, nurtures lay leadership, professional presentation of self, pastors to various age groups, etc.*)

- Members of the Mental Health Awareness Task Force will participate in a training for facilitators in Fall 2019 and will hopefully return to USNH with systems set up for oversight.

**Personal and Professional Growth**

- I am deeply touched by the outpouring of love that has come from the congregation in the past few months and especially the past few weeks. The goodbye celebration on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, was masterfully done and very special.
- I have grown a huge amount during this time both personally and professionally and, again, am grateful to USNH for engaging this leave-taking so faithfully with me.

**Worship**

*Sermons Preached/Services Led*

May 12 – Mother’s Day “She Will Lead”

*Multigenerational Services*

May 19 – YRUU Service

June 2 – CYRE Service

June 9 – Flower Communion “Beauty of the Blossoms”

*Lay Led Services*

May 26 – “Pride” Deb Pascale

*Guest Preacher Services*

April 14 – Dan Cayer (Buddhist Teacher) “Don’t Get Better”

*Attendance –*

**May 12 – 205 Total**

**May 19 – 190 Total**

**May 26 – 176 Total**

**June 2 – 216 Total**

**June 9 – 208 Total**

Respectfully Submitted by Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner

## **MT Interpretation and Monitoring of Policy Governance Section 1.4**

### **1.4 Compensation and Benefits**

With respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers, and volunteers, the Management Team shall not cause or allow jeopardy to the fiscal or institutional integrity of the Society.

Accordingly, the Management Team may not:

- a. Change any minister's compensation, benefits, or allocated professional expenses previously established by the Board.

#### **MT Interpretation:**

The management team includes changes to the minister's compensation, benefits, or allocated professional expenses only when staff-wide COLA or structural changes are recommended by the Personnel Committee as part of the new annual operating budget. When these changes are accepted by the Board and the Congregation we assume they replace the "previously established" numbers.

- b. Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.

#### **MT Interpretation:**

No interpretation required

- c. Recommend compensation and benefits that create obligations over a term longer than revenues can be safely projected.

#### **MT Interpretation:**

The Management Team is responsible for including compensation and benefit payments in the annual operating budget which projects sufficient income to make those payments. MT recommendations on compensation and benefits are limited to a single fiscal year.

- d. Establish current compensation and benefits that deviate materially from the non-profit, geographic, and professional market for the skills employed.

#### **MT Interpretation:**

The Management Team relies on the Personnel Committee for compensation and benefits advice. The committee has direct experience, is highly qualified and takes note of both UUA recommendations and general market conditions.

*Policy sections approved by the Board: October 9, 2014; revised February 12, 2015*

*Revised MT Interpretation submitted June 13<sup>th</sup> 2019*

### **MT Report**

The recommendations from the personnel committee for the current fiscal year were included in the budget and approved by the congregation in June 2018. There have been no variations to any of the salary and benefit provisions. At this point we are on track to finish this fiscal year within budget. We report compliance with all the sections of 1.4

*Report submitted by the Management Team June 13<sup>th</sup> 2019*

## Letter from Ethan Loewi to the USNH Board

### Ethan Gabriel Loewi

67 Mechanic Street • New Haven, CT 06511 • 720-226-6171 • [ethan.loewi@yale.edu](mailto:ethan.loewi@yale.edu)

August 28, 2019

The Board of Trustees  
Unitarian Society of New Haven  
700 Hartford Turnpike  
Hamden, CT 06517

Dear Members of the Board,

When I moved to New Haven last year to start at Yale Divinity School, I was sorely in need of a spiritual home. At USNH, I found one. I'm immensely grateful for the community I've found in the social hall, the inspiration I've found in the sanctuary, and the unfailingly warm welcome I've received from the congregation. It's with that gratitude in mind that I write you now, to request the Board's support as I pursue ordination as a Unitarian Universalist minister. The UUA requires ministerial candidates to obtain congregational sponsorship, and I would be honored to have USNH behind me as I work my way through seminary.

I became a member of the congregation this past November—the soonest I could, after moving here in August—and it quickly became a vital part of my spiritual formation. I began the MDiv program at Yale with the goal of pursuing UU ministry, and I've found my time at USNH to be as important to my professional discernment as anything I've learned in the classroom. Getting to be a part of the congregation—from its rich worship services to its incredible range of social justice work—has helped me understand the value of religious community in new ways, and fueled my commitment to this challenging, many-faceted work. As much as I love theology—and I do love it, from Spinoza to Emerson to Tillich!—what truly draws me to ministry is the chance to do hands-on work that helps people find meaning and connection in their lives.

In my time at USNH, I've had wonderful opportunities to do so as a member of the Membership and Pastoral Care teams. Spending a few hours with a congregant going through a painful time, or just chatting with a curious visitor in the welcome corner—these have been sources of real joy. What's more, being part of these teams has helped me understand the depth of commitment and generosity that the people of USNH give to their community. On the pastoral care team, I've been blown away by the level of hard work, time, and emotional labor that members put forth to help people in times of need.

A little about me, and the background that led me to UU ministry. I grew up in Portland, Oregon, where my two brothers and I had a happy, spiritually eclectic childhood. My mother is a church musician—a wonderful organist, currently working at St. John's Episcopal Cathedral in Denver—while my secular, Jewish, irreverent father never had much use for organized religion. My parents encouraged my brothers and I to find our own religious path, and so we did; we certainly had a lot of influences to choose from. Christianity, Judaism, atheism, humanism—our family, like a UU congregation, was woven from many different threads. And while my brothers have never been

especially interested in religion, I was drawn to it from an early age—captivated by its power to inspire, spark hope, and bring people together around shared ideals. I firmly believe that all people, no matter what religious identity they claim, are creatures with deep and varied spiritual needs.

I discovered Unitarian Universalism as an undergrad at Harvard, studying English, religion, and history. Right away, I knew it was the denomination for me—and after taking several classes at Harvard Divinity School, I was so drawn to the prospect of ministry that I considered pursuing an MDiv. But first, I would earn a master's degree in my first love—writing. After finishing undergrad, I earned an MFA in fiction from New York University. I see my writing background as a big part of the ministry I hope to cultivate. It's helpful for preaching, of course, and I also want to write fiction and essays where religion and faith are major themes. I really admire Emerson for this—or Marilynne Robinson, or the scholar Elaine Pagels. Writers who use the power of language to bring their faith to life, and share it with others.

After graduating from NYU, I jumped straight into my second master's at Yale. The past year has not been without challenges—the hard work of planting new roots, embarking on a new path, and figuring out where and how I can best serve. But the struggle, I'm happy to say, has catalyzed growth. I've found excellent classes and mentors at Yale, and top-notch classes in everything from pastoral care to UU theology. In addition to my professors, Rev. Megan has been the best ministerial role model I could hope for, and a great supporter all year long. In fact, she helped me earn my current summer job: I'm serving as an assistant chaplain in the CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) program at the VA Medical Center in West Haven. It's a fantastic opportunity to grow as a pastoral caregiver, and serve a (chronically under-served) population of veterans. Ministerial identity, I've learned, is a complex and demanding quality to cultivate. But I'm moving into year two at Yale with gratitude for what I've learned thus far, and mounting optimism for what's ahead.

Many thanks for your consideration, and please let me know if there's anything else I can provide! I'd be happy to answer questions about my ordination process, personal background, and/or ministerial goals. If the Board does choose to act as my sponsoring congregation, I've attached the official UUA form to the next page of this document—for you to review, sign, and email to the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. In the meantime, I look forward to a summer of big and small happenings at USNH—from co-leading a worship service, which I will hopefully do in the next few months, to helping move the old cabinets out of the kitchen.

Yours in gratitude,

Ethan

## **Statement of Congregational Sponsorship for a Ministerial Candidate**

Print this form, type or print your entries, and return form to: [mfccordinator@uua.org](mailto:mfccordinator@uua.org).

One of the requirements for Fellowship as a Unitarian Universalist minister is sponsorship by a Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregation. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure familiarity on the part of our UU ministers with UU congregational life, and encourage congregations to take a responsible role in the recruitment, preparation and assessment of our future ministers.

Sponsorship of a Candidate indicates confidence in the person's potential and suitability for UU ministry. The Ministerial Fellowship Committee and the UUA Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group will regard congregational sponsorship as evidence that the person seeking fellowship is actively committed to Unitarian Universalism and the institutions which uphold our faith tradition.

In most instances, sponsorship of a Candidate will be determined by vote of the congregation or its representative body.

**With the above in mind, we, the**

(name of Congregation)

**are pleased to sponsor**

(name of Candidate)

**as a Candidate for fellowship in the UU ministry.**

**Signed,**

(congregation president or board chair)

**Please Print:**

Name of Candidate:

Name of Congregation:

Address of Congregation:

## USNH Themes and Goals 2019-2020

### Overarching theme of the next congregational year: “Celebrating, embracing, nourishing and supporting our community”

We are very good at reaching out into the world around us and providing care and services. We also want to have the means to continue and enhance our support to our fellow congregants and staff. Therefore, in an effort to focus on and to strengthen our support of our USNH Covenant, we have developed the following ends or goals.

Specific ends to be achieved in the near term with clear and specific interventions:

- 1) Provide lively and frequent opportunities for developing closer relationships among the congregation: pot luck suppers, “family” groupings, neighborhood groupings, possible Thanksgiving dinner at USNH, etc.;
- 2) Strengthen structure of pastoral care ministry with the addition of increased clergy support to assist with pastoral support as increasing demand puts a strain on one minister and the lay ministry team;
- 3) Enable better connections among all congregants, including newcomers, people confined to their homes or nursing facilities, youth and young adults. Identify peoples’ gifts and interests. This might well require help from additional staff.
- 4) Support existing staff by strengthening committees – this would be a part of the follow-up to intervention #3 – using those identified skills and interests to better populate our committees. Develop clear descriptions of each committee’s purpose and authority

Under the direction of the MT, perhaps with an ad hoc committee. or committees, each of these interventions would have a person or working group responsible to develop strategies to achieve the ends. The MT would monitor the progress of implementation. The MT would then periodically report this progress back to the BoT. The BoT would provide moral support to the success of this implementation. The MT would report on how things were going at the year-end congregational meeting in 2020.

## CRC 5<sup>th</sup> Goal

5) Support and strengthen covenantal relationships and communication.

by providing intergenerational opportunities to engage in spiritual and self-awareness practices, such as: focused small groups, workshops, circle discussions, among other religious education activities.