

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Fall Congregational Meeting
November 17, 2019
12 noon in the Sanctuary

Accepted by the Board on December 12, 2019
Approved by the Congregation on May 31, 2020

President Al Bosch called the meeting to order at 12:08 pm.

Clerk Becky Friedkin recorded the minutes.

Nancy Apfel, Emily McCave, and Amy Stevens counted for quorum and votes.

Peggy Myers handled the microphone for discussion

Quorum: With USNH membership of 365, 37 members (10%) are required for a quorum. Fifty-five (55) members were present at the beginning of the meeting, constituting a quorum. Additional members entered the sanctuary after the quorum count.

Gathering:

Interim Minister John Marsh read an invocation, adapted from Rev. John Buehrens.

Nancy Apfel, co-chair of the Covenantal Relations Committee, read the Congregational Covenant.

Approval of previous Congregational Meeting minutes:

One point concerning electricity savings related to CONECT was clarified.

MOTION by Dick Platt to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2019 Congregational Meeting; **SECONDED** by Bobbi Pace and **PASSED** unanimously with 70 voting in favor and 4 abstentions.

Proposed by-laws change to allow for a Youth Trustee:

Al Bosch provided background. The Board and Megan had discussion last year about increasing leadership opportunities for congregational youth, and specifically to allow for a Youth Trustee. This year's Board discussed the idea further, including with DLRE Jesse Greist, and unanimously endorsed the idea.

The proposed language was reviewed and edited by member and attorney Lisa Anderson and endorsed by Jesse and the CYRE Committee. The proposed amendments were approved unanimously by the Board on October 10, 2019.

Al walked through the proposed changes, as shown in the attachments. Note that the proposed changes are all additions to the by-laws; there are no modifications or deletions of the existing by-laws.

Jesse Greist noted that we want to open up the opportunity to as broad a group of youth as possible. For example, there are no age restrictions, no reference to school grades (to include homeschooled youth), and no requirement of participation in the YRUU youth group.

MOTION by Emily McCave to adopt the proposed by-law changes, as written, to provide for a Youth Trustee on the Board of Trustees. **SECONDED** by Linda Barrett. Changes to the USNH By-Laws requires a two-thirds vote of members present.

Discussion:

Carol Holloman asked if the youth is required to be a member of the congregation. Jesse clarified that youth have the opportunity to become individual members after completing the Affirmations Class and youth in member families are considered to be members.

Peggy Rae expressed concern about using the conditional language, which might lead to later conflict, should some decide they do not want a Youth Trustee. Discussion followed.

Jesse noted that we will be (if passed) changing the by-laws for generations to come, with different DLREs and different youth. Hopefully, we will see the spirit of these by-laws to be that we MAY have a youth trustee, but NOT that we will close the door to a Youth Trustee.

Fred Morrison **MOVED** to call the question, which requires two-thirds of those present. Dick Platt **SECONDED**. 62 voted in favor, 3 against, 0 abstentions, calling the question.

The motion to amend the by-laws **PASSED** unanimously with 68 votes in favor.

Report from the Management Team:

Management Team member Gwen Heuss-Severance reported on the Council of Chairs, which meets in the fall, winter, and spring. The Council met on October 30, 2019.

There are 17 committees and 18 task forces at the Unitarian Society of New Haven. The work of the congregation is being carried out by many, many people. The descriptions of the committees and task forces, their work and goals are linked in the most recent congregational newsletter and attached to these minutes. Paper copies are available from the office if needed.

Gwen expressed tremendous gratitude to everyone associated with the Council and all those doing committee work on behalf of the congregation.

Management Team member David Stagg noted that Jeremy Hill is the third Management Team member, then reported on the budget. David's written notes are attached to these minutes.

The fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30. The FY19 budget had a deficit of \$6,700, largely due to a \$12,000 shortfall in pledge income – about 3% of the \$444,000 in pledges. This is not unusual for us, and the UUA reports that this is typical.

For the current year (FY20) we are looking at a significant deficit. In June we expected a deficit of about \$25,000, to be covered with restricted funds and reserves. Due to changes in

staff benefits, we now anticipate a deficit of closer to \$40,000. This is not a disaster but could wipe out most or all of our cash reserves.

We have also been looking at the impact of the kitchen renovation project. Some have asked if the kitchen project dampened operating budget pledging. Analysis suggests that this is not the case.

Additionally, we had expected to fund up to \$30,000 for the kitchen from cash reserves. Careful project management and additional pledges means that we will be providing less than \$13,000 from reserves.

Planning for FY21, we need pledges of about \$500,000 to balance our budget. FY20 pledges are about \$450,000.

We hope to have a new settled minister next year and starting out with a balanced budget seems to be crucial. We are fortunate to have the Stewardship Committee now working year-round. Balancing the budget will be a challenge but, hopefully, one we can solve together in the months ahead.

Jason Kyle, co-chair of Building and Grounds, reported on the Capital Budget.

Recent accomplishments include:

- Recarpeted the minister's study, adding a sound-proof pad – \$1,100
- At no cost, B&G did some adjustments to the gender-neutral bathroom near the Children's Chapel. Those who requested the changes were satisfied with the adjustments.
- Leveled the bluestone patio in the rear and took care of a drainage issue – \$5,000
- Pursuant to a complaint from a neighbor, weeds were cleared and rocks (which had prohibited mowing) were removed at the back of the property above the play yard. That area can now be mowed regularly.

The following are either about to start or being investigated:

- The bluestone pathway to the Mishkan Israel parking lot is set to start this week. The path should be four feet wide and go straight back to the Mishkan Israel parking lot. The path could also be used for a bridal party to enter a small ceremony in the Memorial Garden.
- Waiting on an estimate for the stucco exterior, in which birds are living. We are planning to fix problems rather than replace the entire stucco. Preliminary estimates are in the range of \$10,000 - \$20,000, which is not in our budget. The committee may revisit an earlier proposal to borrow money from the endowment.

- Planning to replace brittle and broken vertical blinds in the library, classrooms, and offices.
- Need to identify and test suitable technology for a camera for the front door entry.
- Regarding replacement of the red chairs in the Social Hall: The purpose of getting new folding chairs is to increase our ability to host larger-count rental events. We are waiting to see if we get a request for a larger rental before purchasing more chairs. We are not advertising that we can host larger events and will consider doing so. There also may not be much room on the calendar to accommodate many more large rentals.
- We already have 16 of the chairs. They are lighter than the red chairs, have a certain steel gauge, a 300 pound weight capacity, and fire-retardant seating. They might not meet California standards but do meet Connecticut and B&G standards. A rack has been purchased (yet to be assembled) to store the chairs in the coatroom.

Jason noted that Michele DeMuis is co-chair of the Building and Grounds Committee.

Sally Connolly and Dan Gelperin, co-chairs of the Stewardship Committee:

Dan noted that the Stewardship Committee is now a year-round committee to permit more advance planning and continuity. Other members are Mary Donohue, Jeremy Hill, Laura Patey, and Sophie Tworkowski. Our aim is to keep the campaign short and sweet, look for it this spring.

Sally emphasized that we have a wonderful hard-working committee, but it is not just the committee, it is all of us, who are important. We are counting on all of us for our ideas, participation and generosity. We want to exceed our FY20 pledge drive and will have one gala event.

Dan noted that the Committee had consultant Liz Coit make three visits to USNH in FY20 to explore our stewardship processes. Her excellent report will be posted on the website and there will be a meeting in mid-December to explore the recommendations and other ideas to enhance our stewardship and financial position.

Adjournment:

MOTION by Greg Feeley to adjourn the meeting. **SECONDED** by Michele DeMuis and **PASSED** unanimously.

The Congregational Meeting adjourned at 1:07 pm

Submitted by Becky Friedkin, Clerk

Attachments:

- Draft minutes of the June 2, 2019 Congregational Meeting)
- Proposed by-laws amendments
- Council of Chairs descriptions and goals

- David Stagg's remarks about the operating budget
- *How Do You "Call the Question" in Robert's Rules* handout, made available at the meeting

NOTE: to see approved minutes of the June 2, 2019 meeting, please see the USNH website:
About Us > USNH Online > Minutes of the Congregational Meeting (Past years)

BYLAWS OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NEW HAVEN November 6, 2016

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Membership in this Society constitutes both benefits and obligations for the member and also for the Society. By joining, each member indicates a willingness to contribute time, effort, finances, and talents to the Society's life and work. The Society offers members the inspiration of its services and participation in its fellowship, organizational work, and activities. Participation is of direct and mutual benefit to both the member and the Society.

Membership shall be effective upon signing the Membership Book. Members are also required to make an annual financial contribution, unless the minister has granted an exemption consistent with the Membership Policy.

SECTION 2. Only members may vote at meetings of the Society. Only members age 18 or older may be officers or trustees. **This age restriction shall not apply to a Youth member. Please see Article VI – Board of Trustees, Section 1.**

SECTION 3. Membership shall be open to all whom, having attained the age of 14 years, and/or having completed the Society's Affirmation Program, are in sympathy with the Society's purpose and program and in agreement with the statement on members' entitlement and obligations expressed in Section 1 above.

SECTION 4. Any member may terminate membership in the Society by written resignation to the Clerk of the Society. Membership may also be terminated in circumstances of non-participation as stated in the Membership Policy with due notice.

ARTICLE VI – BOARD OF TRUSTEES

SECTION 1. The Board of Trustees shall consist of the Society's officers, the prior year's president, and five members at large, at least one of whom is to be elected each year and serve for a term of three years. Members at large shall not be eligible for reelection until at least one year has elapsed from the expiration of a full term of office.

In addition to the five members at large described above, there may be a youth member at large with full voting rights. To qualify for a Board position, the youth trustee must complete either Affirmation class or 8th grade. This youth trustee shall serve a term of one year, renewable each year to a maximum of three terms. After completing the Bridging Ceremony or high school, or turning 18 years of age the youth trustee may not seek an additional term as a youth trustee. The DLRE may refer a youth to the Nominating Committee only after consulting with the youth's parents or responsible adult, other USNH youth, and RE teachers and/or Youth Advisors.

Excerpts from USNH By-Laws, with proposed changes in red typeface

SECTION 2. The Board shall decide on matters of policy, within the limits of the bylaws. It shall be responsible for the full range of activities essential to the achievement of the Society's purpose and mission.

The Board shall have charge of the assets and business of the Society with the full power and authority to oversee the same.

SECTION 3. The officers of the Board shall constitute an Officer Committee, chaired by the president. The committee shall prepare tentative agendas and options for consideration at the Board. This committee shall be subordinate to the Board, and deal with other matters as delegated by the Board. The activities of the committee shall be reported at each Board meeting.

SECTION 4. The Board shall have the power to designate ad hoc Board committees as required and assistants to the officers as needed.

SECTION 5. The Board shall meet at least ten times a year. The president may call a special board meeting. Any three members of the Board may call a special board meeting.

SECTION 6. A majority of members of the Board shall constitute a quorum, and a majority of the members in attendance shall, in the presence of a quorum, decide its action.

SECTION 7. The Board of Trustees is responsible to the membership of the Society for conducting the affairs of the Society. At a duly constituted meeting of the membership, with advance notice that such issue is to be considered, an action of the Board may be overturned or modified by a majority vote of the membership present.

ARTICLE VII – NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

SECTION 1. The Nominating Committee shall consist of seven members. One shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees from its own membership. The other six persons shall be elected by the Society at its annual spring meeting as follows: each year the Society shall elect two members of the Nominating Committee who will serve for three years, beginning the July 1 following election. The Nominating Committee shall elect its own chairperson.

SECTION 2. At the annual spring meeting, the Nominating Committee shall present nominations to the Society for officers, trustees, including, if applicable, a youth trustee, the Nominating Committee, and the Endowment and Legacies Committee. The committee's report of said nominations shall be submitted to the clerk for inclusion with the notice of the meeting.

SECTION 3. The Nominating Committee shall present to duly called special meetings of the Society, nominations of any Board positions, excepting the youth trustee, or Endowment and Legacies Committee positions that become vacant

Excerpts from USNH By-Laws, with proposed changes in red typeface

before the term of service has expired. The committee's report of said nominations shall be submitted to the clerk for inclusion with the notice of the meeting.

SECTION 4. In the circumstances described in Article VII, Sections 2 and 3 above, members of the Society shall have the opportunity to make nominations from the floor. Excepting that nominations for the position of youth trustee may not be made from the floor.

SECTION 5. In the event of a contest, election shall be by secret ballot. A majority vote shall constitute election.

USNH COMMITTEES 2019-2020
CHAIRS, MEMBERS, COMMITTEE ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES,
CHALLENGES & CONCERNS

Adult Religious Education: PJ Deak (ch), Craig Machado, Maggie Goodwin, Jim Peters, Dan Wade, Ellen Greist, Becky Sandmann, Jesse Greist (staff).

Meets monthly (mostly).

Goals & Plans: see the ARE webpage for upcoming events and “what moves us”.

Challenges & Concerns: finding people to do boring committee management tasks (chairperson, secretary, etc.). Book Cart Warehouse has closed.

Buildings & Grounds: Jason Kyle & Michele DeMuis (co-ch), David Stagg, James Erard, Shirley Dion, Gordon Daniell, Al Bosch, and John Deming.

Meets monthly

Goals & Plans: purchase folding chairs, repair Dryvit (exterior siding), install walkway to Mishkin parking lot, 2nd floor bathroom accessibility, fall cleanup, pew repairs, Cuddletime door repair, install BLM banner.

Challenges & Concerns: money to do the work.

Covenantal Relations: Paul Trotta & Nancy Apfel (co-ch), Bruce Levison, Maggie Goodwin, Bernice Marie Daly, John Kennedy, Amanda Dettmer Erard, Ann Singer, Karen Swanson.

Meets monthly

Goals & Plans: collaborate with Board of Trustees and Management Team in achieving their goals; ensure the USNH covenant is a living document; integrate 4 new members to the CRC; Seek programs that increase covenantal awareness; assist Rev. Marsh as needed; establish Community Circles without Ministerial participation.

Challenges & Concerns: lack of full integration of covenant into congregational life.

CYRE: Patricia McChesney (ch), Vicki Seitz, Christine Berman, Manya Newton, Jesse Greist (staff)..

Endowment & Legacies: Fred Morrison, Vicki Seitz (co-ch)

Meets monthly

Goals & Plans: conduct activities to grow endowment to \$2.5mil by 2024; conduct an event to recognize members of the Legacy Society; monitor performance of endowment investments.

Challenges & Concerns: long term effect on endowment assets as current business cycle comes to an end; pressure to increase endowment support of operating/capital budget beyond current 2%.

Finance: Terry Durham (ch), Greg Seaman, Susan Godshall, Kathy Garner, Rick Weber

Meets monthly

Role & Responsibilities: Lead financial operations role and interfaces with Management Team (MT); coordinates closely with Treasurer; Advise MT on more efficient ways of managing financial operations. Provide interface between USNH and Citizen’s Bank; review bank services and make recommendations to MT for better products. Review and comment on financial reports prepared by bookkeeper; meet with accountant to review year-end financial reports (with Treasurer). Weekly check signing and bank reconciliations. Weekly offertory: counting and securing weekly offertory collections. Count and secure monies from fundraising activities. Prepare draft of annual operating budget. Manage short term cash investments. Manage stock donations. Review and sign annual Sales Use and Tax report. Propose changes to property/casualty insurance coverage. (Policies automatically renew every 2 years).

Goals & Plans: Temporary Restricted Funds: review recommendation made earlier this year to Management Team; continue recurring roles: counting weekly offering, check-signing, bank reconciliation, manage/advise MT on financial assets.

Challenges & Concerns: FY2020/21 1st draft budget to be balanced.

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History, Archives & Library: Jane Platt (ch), Toby Appel, Yvette Scharf, Kathy Lindbeck, Frank Jonnietz, Jackie Wadelin and James Platt. Joan Silverman and Peggy Rae are inactive for now. Dody Gall is an advisor.

Meets weekly

Roles & Responsibilities: Recruits committee members. Calls meetings. Writes annual report. Writes budget request. Attends meetings of Council of Chairs. Plans projects to organize, acquire and maintain materials in the archives. Authorizes purchase of supplies. Maintains the book collection in the Dorothy F. Harned Library, including acquiring and discarding books and other materials; Supervises borrowing of library materials-- check-out and return system; Organizes and maintains the archives of the society in an acid free storage system; Archived items include reports, notes of committees, membership directories, newsletters, orders of service, obituaries, naming ceremonies, memorial services, slides, prints, tape recordings, DVDs and CDs.

Creates records such as the Mortality List, to identify members whose remains are interred on USNH property. Included are name, birthdate, death date and place of death; Memorials include dedications (Shuttee Social Hall, names on chairs, plaques in Memorial Garden.); Creates computer files to preserve information on USNH and aid in finding information in the archives. Assists members in finding facts and materials on the history of USNH; Makes presentations on the history of USNH, for example, an illustrated talk for prospective members. In cooperation with other users of the room, maintains the Library in a neat, attractive, uncluttered condition, writes articles about HAL to inform and encourage use of Library materials

Goals & Plans: Archive closet shelves need to be rearranged for more efficient storage; closet needs waterproofing due to water damage to wall; continue to update the filing of archives; make folders for groups & programs that have been added since the filing system was devised; continue to maintain the Dorothy F. Harned Library and improve compliance with the Library's return policy; develop a list of purchased/donated books to enhance the Harned Library collection; make the Library catalog available on line; document art objects that are or have been in the building. Trace missing objects. Continue to work on a detailed Mortality List of deceased USNH members and friends.

Challenges & Concerns: The Library is used for meetings before and after services when people are in the building and most likely want to browse and take out books.

Membership: Kathy Haskins & Christine Durham (co-ch); Jean Bacon, Kevin Chapin, Patrick Korth, Joan Lane, Alissa Lisosky, Siobhan Pokorney, Deb Selden, Debbie Smith, Dan Wade; Anna Flores (membership coordinator)

Meets monthly

Roles & Responsibilities: Assist the membership coordinator. Set the agenda for monthly meetings and ensure all matters regarding the team are covered (schedule for greeters and welcome corner, attendance and substance of monthly welcome chat and visitor/new member information from the Membership coordinator as well as considerations that vary from month to month) and delegate tasks to team members accordingly. Encourage ideas from the team to build on current protocols. Oversee the yearly budget and allocate funds for informational materials for the lobby and welcome corner/chat, first Sunday barbecues and functions for new members (lunch for New to UU classes, new member breakfast, potlucks, game nights etc.). Coordinate with the minister and other teams/committees to facilitate congregational functions where needed. Be proactive in welcoming visitors and directing new members to areas of interest to them. Assist in New to UU classes and coordinate New Member Breakfast.

Goals & Plans: maintain the Welcome Corner for new visitors to chat/ask questions; outreach to new visitors with follow-up emails; offer First Sunday visitor chats; offer 3-part New-to-UU classes for Spring & Fall; integrate visitors and new members into congregational life through connection with USNH groups; connect new members to each other through potluck dinners.

Challenges & Concerns: new member activities have been sparsely attended and several have been canceled; there is a need to better time them; recruit new members to our team.

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Music: Jackie Trimble Shapiro (ch), Jane & Dick Platt, Ann Levison, Sylvia & Marty Lipnik, Carol Holloman, Toby Appel, Linda Pawelek, Jeff Douma, Erika Schroth.

Meets occasionally

Role & Responsibilities: The Mission of the Music Committee is to support the work of the music staff in bringing to USNH a music program that enhances worship and fosters an understanding and appreciation of the beauty and diversity of the world and all its peoples. We meet three times a year to discuss and assess finances, submit budget requests for the coming year, and attend to other pertinent business that may need our attention. A subgroup of the committee attends to and organizes our music files.

Goals & Plans: support the music directors and music associate and the music program including Sundays at 4; purchase new choir music; hire guest instrumentalists and explore possible new ideas for that else the committee would like to do;

Challenges & Concerns: possible increase music fund money.

Nominating: Robb Camm (ch), Jim Peters, Lurline deVos, Maggie Goodwin, Siobhan Pokorney

Pastoral Care Associates: Susan Meredith, Sarah Whitson, Pat Trotta, Pat Griggs, Cathy Jackson

Roles & Responsibilities: Associates are recruited and selected by the minister with the advice of the Co-chairs of the Pastoral Care Team. Associates are then trained in pastoral care work including listening skills, referrals, spiritual counseling, and such other skills as the team and the minister determine are needed. Pastoral Care Associates accompany members of the congregation through crises or difficulties. Often, PCA's visit with and maintain connection with members of the congregation who are no longer able to attend services because of age or infirmity. At other times, they offer companionship and listening to members through a temporary crisis. They extend the reach of the minister to offer care to the congregation. Members cannot volunteer to join the Pastoral Care Team, though people who believe they have the temperament and skills to join the team may contact the minister or the co-chairs of the Team.

Personnel: Jean Rosenthal, Carol Stockton

Meets quarterly

Roles & Responsibilities: Ensure USNH employees have appropriate salaries, benefits, and working conditions; Keep the personnel manual and other staffing policies up to date and implemented appropriately; Support [non-ministerial] search groups to hire the best people should an opening arise; Help the Minister, the Management Team, and the Board of Trustees develop a staffing plan that meets the congregation's needs **Goals & Plans:** Document and streamline hiring & benefits; document administrative duties; oversee annual performance review process; provide staff support; review & update job descriptions; conduct personnel file audits; recruit new committee members.

Challenges & Concerns: increase number of committee members; how or whether to provide leadership training.

Small Group Ministry: Leigh Powers (ch), Gwen Heuss-Severance, Jesse Greist (staff).

Stewardship: Sally Connally, Dan Gelperin (co-ch), Laura Patey, Sophie Tworkowski, Jeremy Hill, Mary Donohue.

Meets weekly during the campaign

Roles & Responsibilities have a commitment to and a passion for USNH's mission, longevity and financial health; be able to effectively communicate with the congregation and individual members the value of generosity, money, gratitude, and responsibility; work productively and enjoyably with other team members; plan with the committee the year round stewardship program; recruit stewardship team members and ensure that all members are actively involved, contributing and energized; possess an understanding of the financial and budgeting process, the individuals and groups involved and relevant timelines; develop activities and a schedule in conjunction with the minister, the administrator, Finance Committee, and the Endowment and Legacy Committee; consult and

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communicate closely with the above groups and the Management Team and the Board of Trustees; communicate with minister, administrator and caring committee members, any appropriate matters regarding status within the congregation; build upon existing donor relationships and form new donor relationships on a regular basis; leverage technology and social media where possible to improve fundraising activities; understand the data base, possibilities for improvement and reports to be developed; analyze the performance of events and other fundraising activities for effectiveness and to identify areas where money can be saved; provide timely updates & report on actual and anticipated pledges to guide development of budget for coming fiscal year; develop and/or review documents and materials addressed to the congregation; provide timely updates to the congregation on progress of the stewardship campaign; oversee training of new stewardship members; adhere to the requirements and ethics of confidentiality; monitor the committee budget; improve the USNH Stewardship website and simplify the donor process; produce an end of the year report and other documents as needed or required.

Goals & Plans: have a successful stewardship campaign that meets the goal; encourage a culture of shared stewardship, generosity and abundance in the congregation.

Challenges & Concerns: raising enough money during the campaign; getting a new co-chair (2-year commitment).

Sunday Morning Team: Becky Sandmann (ch), Pam Niles, Michele DeMusis, Theresa Childs, Dee Arneth, Kathy Lindbeck, Sally Connelly, Ray Zalinski, Karen Swanson, Laura Patey, Greg Feely, Barbara Orrock, James Erard, Mary Donohue

Meets monthly on the first Thursday at 6:30pm

Role & Responsibilities: We are responsible for many of the tasks on Sunday morning including greeting at the door, handing out programs at the sanctuary doors, ushering, and organizing/supporting coffee hour. We also plan and host first Sunday's potlucks (usually soup but in the spring, we host potluck salad and snacks). We also assist with other activities at USNH, usually involving food and kitchen use. We try to work with other committees and task forces to support each other and activities they are sponsoring.

Goals & Plans: we will probably go back to coordinating coffee hour; we coordinate Sunday morning activities outside of worship; collaborate with other committees/task forces on joint activities.

Challenges & Concerns:

Worship: Rich Stockton (ch), Jim Peters, David Jones, Deb Selden

Meets monthly

Roles & Responsibilities: Coordinate the work of the Worship committee, delegate as needed. Hold monthly meetings with the committee and the minister to Assign worship associates for each Sunday, discuss worship issues and new ideas, arrange for worship on Sundays when the minister is away. When possible, the chair attends the weekly worship team staff meeting (this includes the minister, the director of Lifespan Religious Ed, and the Director of music), make suggestions to the team, provide feedback to the committee. Attend (or send a delegate to) the council of chairs meetings; Write the annual report; Oversee the worship budget; Arrange for member training; Recruit new members, develop succession plan.

Goals & Plans: support the minister; orchestrate Sunday services; provide support for the Ministerial Search Committee.

Challenges & Concerns: need more members

Social Justice Council: Lurline DeVos (ch), Pamela Miller, Maggie Goodwin, Tisa Wenger, Claire Bien, Daniel Wade, Van Selden.

Meets monthly

Roles & Responsibilities: a collective aspiring to manifest the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism through our social justice work. The Ministry focuses on working collaboratively and making consensual decisions. A variety of work groups focus on specific issues, but also collaborate with one another. The variety of groups allows folks to

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live out their commitment to creating a more just world in a way that both feels spiritually meaningful and respects the constraints of their busy daily lives. The Social Justice Council is comprised of seven members currently serving on a task force or having a history of social justice involvement. It supports the work of the ministry through promoting the work of the various groups, encouraging collaboration between groups, and facilitating problem-solving including helping ensure funding is available for the various groups' initiatives. Folks interested in particular social justice issues are invited to visit the USNH Social Justice webpage (<http://www.usnh.org/do-justice/justice/>) where they will find brief descriptions of the various groups and contact information for those currently involved. The SJC is also available to answer questions and help guide the search for a great fit in social justice work at USNH Socialjustice@usnh.org . All are welcome; there are never too many in any justice group. Unitarian Universalists work to bend the moral arc of the universe toward justice. Since UU minister Theodore Parker, a 19th century abolitionist, first spoke these oft-quoted words, UU's have shown great courage and taken huge personal risks in order to "transform society according to the principles of justice, compassion, and love." At USNH, following this tradition, many express their faith through social justice work. We speak out against racism, tutor children, feed the hungry, stand-up for immigrant rights, support refugees, advocate to prevent gun violence and more.

Goals & Plans: increase collaboration between task forces; increase congregation's awareness of the CSAI: Undoing Intersectional White Supremacy; expand our efforts with CONECT and increase the congregation's participation in the various initiatives.

Challenges & Concerns: the interim year seems to have led to a decrease in participation across the congregation; the number of competing activities makes scheduling events and meetings challenging.

Task Forces Respecting Diversity

- **ANTI-RACISM: Naomi Polenetska:** Deepening congregants' understanding of white privilege and systemic racism, and working with community groups to create racial justice. antiracism@usnh.org
- **IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE: Nancy Brown, Sarah Forman, Sophie Tworkowski:** Providing practical support to refugees and immigrants through Junta and IRIS and working with state and local advocacy groups. irtf@usnh.org
- **MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS: Claire Bien, Karen Swanson, Letty McPhedran:** Creating a supportive environment for individuals with mental illness, their loved ones, and friends through ongoing support groups and education. mentalhealth@usnh.org
- **WOMEN EMPOWERED: Pam Miller:** Creating a woman-centered, supportive environment at USNH, examining issues from women's perspectives, and – as women's rights are increasingly challenged – empowering women in the larger community. womenempowered@usnh.org
- **LGBTQ:** Maggie Goodwin
- **WELCOMING CONGREGATION:** Maggie Goodwin

Task Forces Children and Youth

- **KIDS' SERVICE TEAM: Lurline DeVos;** "Having fun while doing good!" Folks six and older learn to live UU values by making Thanksgiving pies for the hungry, preparing refugees' homes ... Join us. KST@usnh.org
- **WAVERLY / USNH PARTNERSHIP: Sharon McBlain:** Providing Pre-school reading experiences, school-aged tutoring, and fun activities in partnership with teens and adults at Waverly Townhouses in New Haven. Volunteers welcome. waverly@usnh.org; [click here to see more](#)

Task Forces for Hunger and Homelessness

- **HEART: Robert Garskof, Liz Appel**
- **Columbus House Dinners** Donating prepared food and serving dinner to residents of Columbus House, a shelter for the homeless. Please contribute your food or time. heart@usnh.org
- **Abraham's Tent** Providing meals and companionship for twelve homeless individuals sheltered at

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USNH one week each winter. All are welcome to participate. heart@usnh.org

- **FOOD BANK:** Margaret Ariori: Collecting non-perishable food items for members and friends of USNH. Remaining food is donated to Hamden's Keefe Center food pantry. foodbank@usnh.org

Task Forces for Peace and Well-being

- **PREVENTING GUN VIOLENCE: Roye Anastasio;** Addressing the gun violence epidemic by sharing information on gun violence prevention initiatives and encouraging members to connect with like-minded gun violence prevention groups. nogunviolence@usnh.org
- **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE/Green Sanctuary: Maggie Goodwin;** Reducing the environmental impact of the congregation through sustainable use of the building, providing opportunities for congregants to reuse belongings, and through education and advocacy. greensanctuary@usnh.org
- **HEALTH CARE REFORM** Educating and lobbying for a health care system in Connecticut that covers everyone, eliminates health disparities, is affordable and sustainable, and is portable job-to-job. healthcare@usnh.org

Task Forces for Partnerships: UU and Interfaith

- **UUSC Unitarian Universalist Service Committee; PJ Deak, Pablo deVos Deak:** Partnering with grassroots organizations to support workers' rights, advance the human right to water, defend civil liberties, and care for those affected by humanitarian crises. uuscs@usnh.org
- **UU-UNO Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office: PJ Deak, Pablo deVos Deak:** Working within the United Nations to bring U.U. values to U.N. proceedings. Through the UU-UNO, Unitarian Universalists have a non-governmental organization seat in the UN. uu-uno@usnh.org
- **CONNECT: Kenny Foscue:** Participating in CONECT, a spiritually, racially, economically, and geographically diverse Congregation Based Community Organization. One-to-one relationships and House meetings are key to setting agendas for advocacy. CONNECT@usnh.org
 - [CONECT Clean Slate Info](#)
 - [CONECT Clean Slate FAQs](#)
 - [Rev. Megan's CONECT Assembly Prayer](#)
 - [CONECT FAQs](#)
 - [Evaluation Plan](#)
 - [Table of USNH CONECT Activities](#)
 - [Description of USNH CONECT Activities](#)
 - [Summary of USNH House Meetings](#)
 - [CONECT Highlights 2017-2018](#)

Stop & Shop and ShopRite cards: Ann Levison

I head a team of very dedicated and reliable sellers who sell these cards after every service acquiring 5% of the sale price for USNH. I ensure that all the slots for selling are filled. Having Mary Losee sending out a Sign-Up Genius each month is extremely helpful. I fill out a check request for the cards. We get a 5% discount if we order \$1000.00 or more of the cards. Usually I get \$10,000 of Stop & Shop cards (\$9,500) and \$2,000 of ShopRite cards (\$1,900). Having picked up the cards from the stores I log them in with Jamie or some other person and they go in the pouches in the safe. Routinely I keep track of the cards and the books we use to keep it all up to date.

David Stagg's Remarks About the Operating Budget

Our fiscal year runs from July 1st through June 30th. So our 2018-19 budget closed last June 30th with a deficit of \$6,700. This was largely due to a shortfall in pledge income. We budgeted for \$445,000 in pledges. By the time the fiscal year closed we were near that goal at \$444,000. However, we were only able to bring in \$433,000. That's about 97% of pledges promised. This is in line with what the UUA reports for other congregations.

This year we only have data for July through September. This is only 25% of the year and there's very little remarkable in the expenses so far. However, we are, in fact, looking at a significant problem with our operating budget for this year. At the June congregational meeting I reviewed the budget and showed a projected deficit of \$25,000 with a way to fund it. Rev Marsh not starting with us until August didn't give us time to fully anticipate costs back in June and that coupled with other changes in staff benefits will result in a significantly higher deficit than anticipated for this year, possibly as high as \$40,000. This is not a disaster in itself but will wipe out any unrestricted cash and other savings that we had hoped to preserve this year.

Another budgeting issue that we have been looking at is the impact of the Kitchen Renovation Project. A few people have asked whether pledging for the kitchen has significantly reduced our regular pledging this year. The answer seems to be no.

The 41 pledges to the kitchen project came from pledge units that increased their regular pledge this year by 4.4% over last year. The 157 pledge units that did not contribute to the kitchen project increased their regular pledge 2.7% this year compared with last year. While this is not statistically significant, the converse says there is no proof that pledges suffered as a result of the kitchen project.

What is more, when the congregation voted to increase the budget for the project to \$125,000 we were looking at having to provide as much as \$30,000 for the project from USNH funds. Careful project management coupled with extra pledging has meant that we will be funding less than \$13,000 from USNH resources for our splendid new kitchen.

Finally, turning back to the Operating Budget. Planning for 2020-21 presents a real challenge. As I'm sure you know, most of the money we need for our programs and our staff comes from our pledges. We need pledges around \$500,000 to balance our budget for 2020-21. Pledges for this year are just under \$450,000. This year we gained \$11,000 in new pledges but lost \$23,000 mostly from folks who moved away.

We hope to have a new settled Minister next year and starting out with a balanced budget would seem to be key for attracting our top candidate. We are very fortunate that we now have a Stewardship Committee that has agreed to work year-round. You will hear from them later this morning. Arriving at a balanced budget for next year will be a challenge, but hopefully one that we can all solve together in the months ahead.