

## Recap of the USH Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting February 12, 2018

The USH Board conducted an informal semi-annual congregational meeting after the service on February 12. Over 70 members and friends attended.

President Sherry Manetta welcomed everyone and shared her appreciation for all of the positive developments of recent months.

Stewardship Chair Kate Gervais shared her subcouncil's plans for an exciting new approach this year. The Stewardship campaign, from February 25 to March 23, will be centered on neighborhood meetings in members' homes, where everyone will have a chance to meet and talk about the Meeting House in a comfortable small group. Please respond promptly and graciously to the invitation you will receive, probably by email, this week.

Board member and Spiritual Life Council Chair Stephanie Briggs shared news that the Board is exploring the possibility of hiring a part-time ministerial intern for 2 years beginning this fall. If this plan works out, the intern could provide additional diversity on the pulpit and possibly also much needed support for the development and coordination of adult programs.

Board member and Social Justice Council Chair Judy Sullivan touched briefly on some of the many ongoing congregational social justice activities, including Green Sanctuary's work on the holiday regifting sale and the new book discussion group about the Community Resilience Reader, accessibility work including the new hearing loop in the sanctuary, our new accessible playground and teacher training about accessibility, an upcoming community program at USH with the National Alliance on Mental Illness and Unified Theater Hartford, tutoring at Noah Webster School, helping supply the Bushnell Food Pantry, Race Matters group's upcoming meeting for the Revs to hear concerns of members and friends of color, ongoing family refugee resettlement work, working with the Village for Families and Children, and opportunities for advocacy and assistance for displaced families from Puerto Rico.

President Elect Joe Rubin outlined some current Board priorities, including completion of the new Strategic Plan (done), support for the new approach to Stewardship (in progress), development of a long term capital plan (in early stages), provide clarity about the endowment (in progress, with report expected by Fall), imminent major and hopefully game-changing roof repairs, and study of possible lighting and sound improvements for the sanctuary (under active study).

Joe then invited everyone to share (in writing) their ideas about where congregational focus should be for our future and which of those ideas members wanted to help with, and asking that all ideas be tied to one of our 5 strategic plan goals. There were many enthusiastic suggestions. The Board will compile and review all of the thoughts collected, share them with the congregation, and consider how they will help the Board formulate future policy development.