

## USH Board Meeting - April 17, 2018

Present - Sherry Manetta Joe Rubin, Hank Murray, Phil Gardner, Chris Wilt, Sarah McKenzie, Judy Sullivan; Revs Heather Rion Starr and Cathy Rion Starr, ex officio members

Guests - Rayla Mattson

6:36 - Sherry called the meeting to order

Joe read the opening words from D. Hotchkiss

6:38 - RevHeather lit the chalice

6:39 - Judy read Board Covenant

6:41 - changes to Agenda? RevHeather pointed out that RevCathy not here yet, might need to move Stewardship update until RevCathy arrives. Passed around a thank-you card for Virginia deLima for organizing the council fair on April 8.

6:42 - Motion to approve consent agenda Sherry seconded by Joe

Aye - 7

Nay - 0

Abstain - 0

6:43 - Sherry announced that Stephanie has stepped down from the Board. Sherry will alert John Brancato to add a nominee to the Board slate to fill the open Spiritual Life Council Chair

6:45 - Went over open committee and council positions - establish a task force. Nominating is responsible for nominating people to the Board. Joe will head up a task force to brainstorm about finding people to fill open positions in Board Committees. Joe would like at least a board member and perhaps one of the ministers to join the task force, to meet a few times to discuss. Sarah McKenzie, Brian Harvey will participate, one of the Revs will join, they will discuss and get back to Joe. Joe will reach out to see if John Brancato or Diana Heyman will be able to attend, he will also reach out to Virginia. Open list could be potentially shared with the congregation on May 20 service. Hoping to be able to vote on new positions at June Board Meeting, so would want to have names to contemplate at the May meeting.

7:00 - RevCathy stewardship update - Caron Lanouette is stepping up to chair Stewardship Committee. Stewardship is going well, currently up 15% over last fiscal year. Many members have increased their pledges over last year, and we have 27 new pledging donors. A meeting will be after the 4/29 service for all the people who hosted/spoke/etc... at all the neighborhood gathering. Thank you notes will be going out to all pledge units, Board will write personalized thank you notes to high level donors, as well as to members who increased by >20%, as well as find these members during coffee hour and thank them personally. Sherry and Joe will divide up the high \$ donors, the increased donors are divided up amongst the Board for personal

thank you notes. Stewardship would like those notes to go out by the end of April. Judy - wants to know how many people went to the neighborhood gatherings? Did attendance return a higher percentage of pledging? RevCathy will pull together that info. Neighborhood gatherings did seem to have a positive effect.

7:16 - Phil G - Budget review (see attachments). '18 year end is estimated to be short by about 13K, we could increase endowment draw up to max of \$47,150, which would make that shortage to around \$9K. Finance is looking at people who are under-fulfilling their prior-year pledges, and have forwarded that list to Sherry and Joe. In September, the Board voted to make M. Ewert's fee be paid as a budget variance.

Board reviewed two different options for FY 2019 budget

The way that the UUA contribution is calculated is changing. Going forward, It will no longer be based on the # of members, but rather based on a fixed percentage of the previous fiscal year operating expenses. There may be options for allowances/reductions based on specialized situations. That would be a significant increase over what our current UUA dues are. Further deep dive discussions were had regarding projected income and expenses.

8:26 - Rayla - Safer Congregations - reviewed draft policy and discussed issues and concerns. Is there a difference between CT background checks? Rayla - we use the background check form that our insurance requires. What do we consider a "clean" background check? Will ANY conviction automatically exclude people, or will they be looked at on a case-by-case basis? Should there also be annual training for staff/volunteers who work with children? Overall communication to teachers is to follow up on anything with Rayla, actual training requires resources, requires time from volunteers, what if volunteers don't want to/have the time, what are repercussions to not going through training? Joe has volunteered to be the Board member on the safer congregations team.

8:48 - Board responsibilities for Annual Meeting (attach Sherry's sheet)

8:56 - Hank M update on the roof - contractor is waiting for 5 days without precipitation in the forecast so they can do the work. Hank will talk to David Newton to make sure that someone on B&G notifies staff as to when the roof work will happen. Lighting - Hugh called a meeting at 8:30 am Thursday April 19 to discuss phases of Lighting upgrades/updates. One of the lighting designers will come to bring preliminary ideas, hopefully will have a better sense of whole view, so they can bring a formal proposal to the board.

9:03 - Board retreat - June 2 - Judy can't be there, July 21, Hank Murray, Chris Wilt and Sue Tenorio can't be there. Sherry will see if Mary Heafy can come back on June 2, possibly at Sherry's house again.

9:05 - Ministers' Report - April 28: There is a talk at Martha Bradley's house from 2-4pm with alumni from the Starr King School, and on April 29: Rev. Adam's installation is at 4:00pm at the Universalist Church of West Hartford, 433 Fern Street.

9:06 - Executive Session

9:50 - Board came out of Executive Session and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sarah McKenzie  
Secretary

## USH Board Meeting Timing Agenda--April 17, 2018

Shaded items are in every meeting

### Materials/Discussion

6:30 PM	0:04 Opening words (Joe)	
6:34 PM	0:03 Board covenant (in board manual)	
6:37 PM	0:01 any changes to agenda	

### Discussion Items

6:38 PM	0:01 Thank you notes (Rev Cathy)	
6:39 PM	0:03 Consent agenda--Motion required	consent agenda
6:42 PM	0:05 Stewardship update, next steps (RevCathy)	report
6:47 PM	0:40 Finance report (RevCathy, Phil)	
	<i>FY2018:</i>	FY2018 projections
	Feb ytd and projections for FY2018	
	Action items to achieve break-even (All)	
	<i>FY2019:</i>	FY2019 projections
	Operating budget	
	Building and grounds budget (operating and capital)	
7:27 PM	0:05 Open committee and council positions--establish a task force (Sherry)	report
7:32 PM	0:15 Safe Congregations policy--preliminary review (RevCathy)	framework & policy document
7:47 PM	0:10 Co-ministers' report	report

### Short Items

7:57 PM	0:15 Review decisions and follow-up actions, under the stairs, other matters (All)	advance materials
	Retreat --FY2019 planning, semi-annual cong mtg next steps (Sherry, Joe)	as appropriate
	Council Fair debrief (Council chairs)	
	Roof, lighting (Hank)	
	Annual Report (RevHeather)	
	Annual Meeting (Sherry)	
	General Assembly (RevHeather)	
	Other (All)	
8:12 PM	0:05 Guest comments (if time allows)	

### Closing Items

8:17 PM	0:10 Executive session	
8:27 PM	0:03 Closing words (Joe)	
8:30 PM	Adjourn	

### Deferred

learning & exploration: discuss *Ministry & Governance* ch. 9 & 10  
(summarize/facilitate--Stephanie ch. 9, Chris ch.10)

### Parking lot items

#### New

Mar mtg Retreat to be scheduled in June for FY2019 planning

#### Carried forward

Feb mtg Sabbatical--begin dialogue w/ Joe Sullivan, finalize 10/2018  
Feb mtg Follow up from RE dialogue--board action priorities  
Feb mtg Follow up on semi-annual meeting  
Feb mtg Security, Healthy Congregation, Safe Congregation (policy, committee appts), Strat Plan goal #2  
Jan mtg Revised reforecast--action items to get to breakeven  
Jan mtg Comprehensive lighting plan, initial funding CY2018--in process, last bd update 3/20/18  
Dec mtg Hartford Foundation funding of sound system (Sam, MHP, B&G)  
Dec mtg Other Hartford Foundation grants or other funders available?  
Dec mtg Council fair late March, early April  
Nov mtg Quarterly Council reports to the board--why and how to restart  
Nov mtg Meeting House security--comprehensive exploration  
Oct mtg Complete conversations about the Big Why  
July mtg Rev. Cathy recruiting people for volunteer audit--changed to spreadsheet audit for short-term  
July mtg Fundraising -need to fill gap from last year  
FY2017 Additional parking lot items from June minutes

#### Ongoing

Nov mtg Board governance and dynamics--ongoing  
Dec mtg How to stay on time at mtgs, specifically how to time guest presentations

#### Completed or carried forward

## Consent Agenda

USH Board meeting April 17, 2018

1. **March 2018 board minutes:** Approve March 2018 board minutes

# Open Positions—Committees of the Board and Various Sub-Councils

Considerations for FY2018/19

List as of April 17, 2018

## Committees of the Board—Open Positions

### Nominating and Leadership Development Committee

- Chair—currently John Brancato—will need to reappoint or replace for FY2019
- All NLDC members for FY2019—currently Will Anderson and Diana Heymann; 2 open positions; consider two 3-year rotating terms

### Endowment Committee

- Need to appoint a new Chair
- Possibly 4 open positions: 3-year term to replace Tom Richardson; 1-year term to finish Steve Noble's term; determine if Jean Groothuis wants to serve another term; determine if Steve Basche will move to Planned Giving and if his remaining 2-year term will need to be filled
- Must be nominated by the Nominating Committee (chair is appointed by the board)
  - Chair: Jean Groothuis (2015-18),
  - Tom Richardson (2015-18),
  - Steve Noble (2016-19), [appoint for 1 year to complete term]
  - Steve Basche (2018-21), [incorrect in directory]
  - Derek Slap (2018-21)

### Planned Giving Committee

- New committee; need chair (Steve Basche willing to chair); need additional 4 committee members; suggest staggered terms—3 members for two 3-year terms; 2 members for two 2-year terms

### Audit Committee—chair and members need to be appointed annually

- Chair—need to replace Tom Richardson
- Other members—need to reappoint Lisa Galinski; need to replace Sue Tenorio

### Safe Congregation

- 2 open positions, one should be a board member
- Do current members need to be reappointed? Barbara Fraher, Rayla Mattson, Joan Nicoll-Senft

### Intern Committee

- At least 5 members, including a chair, staggered terms; some expressions of interest during intern discernment process but want to assure diversity of membership; decide if a committee of the board
- Guidelines (from UUA manual):
  - Depending upon the setting, the intern committee might be appointed by the governing body or the minister or nominated and elected by the congregation, often with recommendations from the minister. The intern may be invited to select one or two members of their committee. *The intern's supervisor is not a member of the intern committee*, but often participates in the first

meeting in order to help clarify the distinctions between the supervisor's and committee's roles and to review mutual expectations and schedules. The supervisor and intern committee may want to meet again at the middle and end of the internship.

- The number of intern committee members **must** be at least five. Internship sites are urged to have in place an ongoing committee whose members have limited, staggered terms. There also should be a plan for replacing members who leave the committee before their terms have been completed.

#### Healthy Relations Committee—reinstate committee?

- Martha Bradley, Peter Meny, Diana Heymann and others developed guidelines for conflict resolution in 2011; Martha Bradley has volunteered to lead; others in the 2011 group are interested in re-starting a conflict resolution process but have agreed to wait for direction of the board and tie-in to planning for Strategic Goal #2
- How does this tie into Safe Congregations, Security, possibility of a Committee on Ministry, etc.
- When does the board want to re-engage and how?

#### Strategic Planning Committee—would need to be reconstituted if needed

- Is a separate committee needed or does planning fall to the Councils and a process directed by the board and ministers?

#### Capital Planning Committee—a new committee to be established in FY2019

- Objective is to present plan options to the congregation in Spring 2019
- Includes building, endowment, program initiatives

### **Other new committees—to be considered**

- Communications--??
- Security--??

### **Other leadership roles—considerations**

- Adult Programs Sub-council—delay until intern minister gets settled?
- RE sub-council—consider RE holistically during board planning
- Membership—consider structure and succession planning; chair is Brian Harvey, members are Ginny Allen, Zean Gassman, Brian Harvey (chair), Esther McKone, Yakhonda Mwenelupembe, Bruce Robbins, Judy Sullivan
- Stewardship—needs for FY2019? Current members: Carolyn Carlson, Tara Cote, Kate Gervais (chair), Ginny Hedrick, Caron Lanouette and Kim McLain
- Worship Associates, Music??

## **Considerations overall**

- Diversity
- Rotation
- Succession planning
- Process for nominations and discussion of candidates, e.g., Nominating and Leadership Development Committee involvement, Council chairs and sub-council chairs involvement
- Congregational communications, e.g., postings



### Analysis of 2018-19 Pledges as of 4-9-18

Number of donating family units	126	\$299,291.00
Number of family units that did not pledge	63	
Number of family units that might still pledge	38	
<b>High Donors: What is definition</b>		
10 k or more	5	
\$2,500 - \$9,999	31	2 went down in %
\$1,000 - \$2,499	52	
	88	
<b>High Percentage of increase</b>		
More than 50%	12	
25% - 49%	8	
10% - 24%	24	
1% - 9%	19	
	63	
<b>Number of new donors</b>		
\$1,000 or more	14	5 are members
\$50 - \$999	13	6 are members
Total number of new donors	27	
<b>Number of units who lowered their donations</b>	9	
<b>Number of People Who Pledged Last Year but not this year</b>		
More than \$1,000	11	
\$1 - \$999	22	
	33	

**USH Budget Review  
Through Feb '18**

<b>Income</b>	<b>Actual Yr End FY '17</b>	<b>Budget FY '18</b>	<b>Actual 2-28-18</b>	<b>Yr End Estimate</b>
Endowment--Operations	43,002	47,150	28,667	43,000
Endowment--B&G Small Projects	13,850	5,000	0	5,000
Total Endowment	56,852	52,150	28,667	48,000
Fundraising	23,800	15,000	7,012	7,012
Prior year carry over	0	9,675	250	9,495
Rental contributions	19,115	22,496	11,062	18,000
Stewardship	284,078	289,000	215,297	281,110
Sundry contributions	5,626	6,000	3,186	4,700
Solar panel income--ZERC & rental	2,817	4,000	3,890	4,000
Community Within	16,211	8,100	18,767	18,791
Social Justice	1,745	4,000	1,679	4,087
Spiritual life	3,735	3,300	1,498	3,300
Other income	6,083	0	1,025	1,025
Total Income	420,062	413,721	292,333	399,520

**Expenses**

UUA National and Regional	15,744	16,686	11,261	16,892
Stewardship	2,001	2,075	869	2,075
Building & Grounds	69,515	50,160	33,717	50,160
Office	21,527	19,993	15,981	20,827
Insurance	18,757	20,650	12,019	19,009
Administration Other	3,587	3,696	1,876	3,701
Community Within	15,647	10,900	13,004	16,318
Social Justice	699	2,500	321	2,500
Spiritual Life	7,078	10,802	3,641	10,802
Compensation	259,492	276,221	173,129	270,538
Other Expenses	6,016	0	0	0
Total Expenses	420,063	413,683	265,818	412,822
Balance	-1	38	26,515	-13,302

### **FY '18-'19 Draft Budget Comments**

1. Draw on the Endowment remains at \$43,000 for operations and \$10,000 for B&G Small Projects. Unchanged from current draw on the Endowment.
2. Fundraising reduced from \$15,000 to \$10,000. So far this year we have raised \$7,012 to this line item
3. Rental income reduced from \$22,496 in this year's budget to \$19,000 which appears closer to this year's results.
4. See the bottom of the page for Stewardship details. Current have received \$299,291 from 126 pledges. Brian Mullen estimates there will be 161 pledges totaling \$327,700 to \$331,900. We are being conservative at this time with pledge of \$310,00 and \$315,000 for the two options respectively. We budget for a 95% completion of individual pledges.
5. Community Within council increase is due to counting Meeting House Presents income and expenses. Also have used numbers for Adult Programs that match past experience (both income and expenses)
6. The increase in the UUA annual program fund is 10% of last year's contribution.
7. The Stewardship expense item includes cost estimates for the participation of Mark Ewert to support our Stewardship campaign and future capital campaign.
8. Other income is the UUA grant to cover half the salary of the intern minister
9. The increase in B&G expense items comes from budgeting closer to recent experience for B&G General Maintenance at \$15,000 for Option 1 rather than \$10,000 as in past budgets.
10. Compensation—we still have a fair compensation goal of paying \$15/hr for childcare and similar positions. Option 1 moves a step closer to that goal and Option 2 achieves that goal. Compensation includes the cost of the intern minister as well.

## Unitarian Society of Hartford Budget Summary

<b>Income</b>	<b>Actual Yr End FY '17</b>	<b>Budget FY '18</b>	<b>Option 1 FY '19</b>	<b>Option 2 FY '19</b>
Endowment--Operations	43,002	47,150	43,000	47,000
Endowment--B&G Small Projects	13,850	5,000	10,000	10,000
Total Endowment	56,852	52,150	53,000	57,000
Fundraising	23,800	15,000	10,000	10,000
Prior year carry over	0	9,675	5,000	7,000
Rental contributions	19,115	22,496	19,000	19,000
Stewardship	284,078	289,000	299,500	305,500
Sunday contributions	5,626	6,000	6,000	6,000
Solar panel income--ZERC & rental	2,817	4,000	4,000	4,000
Community Within	16,211	8,100	21,500	24,100
Social Justice	1,745	4,000	1,500	1,500
Spiritual life	3,735	3,300	3,500	3,500
Other income	6,083	0	3,625	3,625
Total Income	420,062	413,721	426,625	441,225

### Expenses

UUA National and Regional	15,744	16,686	18,581	18,581
Stewardship	2,001	2,075	4,600	5,500
Building & Grounds	69,515	50,160	59,600	61,600
Office	21,527	19,993	20,000	22,000
Insurance	18,757	20,650	22,000	22,000
Administration Other	3,587	3,696	3,700	4,000
Community Within	15,647	10,900	18,750	20,100
Social Justice	699	2,500	1,500	1,500
Spiritual Life	7,078	10,802	11,000	11,000
Compensation	259,492	276,221	295,838	309,411
Other Expenses	6,016	0	0	0
Total Expenses	420,063	413,683	455,569	475,692
Balance	-1	38	-28,944	-34,467

### Stewardship details

	<b>FY '15-'16</b>	<b>FY '16-'17</b>	<b>Option 1</b>	<b>Option 2</b>
Total Pledge recvd	254,107	271,846	295,000	300,000
Total amt pledged	254,000	273,000	310,000	315,000
% of pledged amount	100.0%	99.6%	95.2%	95.2%
Prior year pledge	3,848	5,941	4,500	5,500
Total Stewardship	257,955	277,787	299,500	305,500

Phil Gardner, Treasurer  
Rev 7, April 14, 2018

### Sexually Safer Congregations Team

The Unitarian Society of Hartford will have a standing Sexually Safer Congregations Team, which will include one of the ministers, the Director of Religious Education (DRE), a member of the Board of Directors, and at least two members of the congregation recommended by the Ministers and the DRE and appointed by the Board. This policy, related procedures, and the current members of the Sexually Safer Congregations Team will be regularly shared with the congregation.

### Background Checks for Staff

All staff, including the ministers, will have Connecticut background checks on file. All new staff hiring will be subject to Connecticut background checks and completion of the screening form and annually thereafter. New hires will be contingent upon clean reports about sexual offenses. All records relating to background checks will be kept confidential.

### Background Checks for Volunteers working with Children and Youth

All volunteers who work regularly with children and youth in any capacity will be subject to a Connecticut background check before they begin working with children and youth and annually thereafter. Volunteering with children and youth will be contingent upon clean reports about sexual offenses *and agreeing to our RE Code of Conduct*. All records relating to background checks will be kept confidential.

### Two Adults in any Activities with children and youth

Two unrelated adults, *at least one of whom has passed the background check*, must be present at any church activity with primarily youth under age 18 (including, but not limited to, classrooms, worship, youth group, youth outings, picnics, and potlucks). No child should be left in a room alone with a non-guardian adult. *(with possible exception of ministers for pastoral conversation – need to check into this)*

### Social Media & Electronic Communications and Youth

Any social media group where the congregation has an official presence is only open to congregants grade 9 (or equivalent) and above. Any electronic or social media communications with children and youth must include the parent or guardian as well, except as specified in our procedures. All parent/guardians will be asked annually to give consent for (or opt out of) sharing of photos of their children.

### People with a history or active accusation or conviction of sexual misconduct

Congregants, staff, *regular renters* or any other adults using the building with a history or active accusation of sexual misconduct/abuse/sexual offense, may participate in the life of the congregation only if they 1) inform the minister 2) agree to and sign a Limited Access Agreement created with the Sexually Safer Congregations Team limiting their participation for the safety of both children and the person, following the best practices recommended by the UUA.

Any person accused, convicted, or with a history of known sex offenses who will not sign or abide by their Limited Access Agreement will be denied access to all programs and services at the congregation.

In all cases, we are committed to taking great care in respecting individual privacy concerns and *detailed information* will be shared only with the Sexually Safer Congregations Team.

*Italics indicate things that need further conversation and/or research*

## April 2018 Co-Ministers Board Report

(which we are also using to draft our Co-Ministers' Annual Report)

Board members, this month we specifically want to lift up **Rev. Dr. Adam Robersmith's Installation** at the Fern Street Universalist Church on Sunday, April 29, at 4pm. Please plan to attend and celebrate this new chapter for this congregation and for our Greater Hartford UU community. All are welcome, so if a spouse or friend would like to attend with you, by all means--this is an opportunity to show up in support of our close UU neighbor and cheer them on.

Connected to Rev. Adam's Installation, which is bringing in several alumni connected with Starr King School for the Ministry, there will be **a gathering at Martha Bradley's home on Saturday, April 28, from 2-4pm** to highlight Starr King, give you all information about this school that is one of only two Unitarian Universalist seminaries in the country, ask for your support and also your help in spreading the word about our beloved, progressive religious alma mater.

Also this month (April 10-12), both Revs. Rion Starr attended a combined **UU Minister Chapter Gathering** (Mass Bay & Clara Barton Chapters), held at Craigville Retreat Center in Centerville, on Cape Cod. The program focus was "Where Leads Our Call?" and there were also presentations from our UU Ministers Association President, Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer, and from Rev. Vail Weller, Congregational Giving Director at the UUA. There were four worship services co-led by regional colleagues and, perhaps best of all for us, the UUMA Chapter Coordinators arranged and provided on-site childcare of our baby so that we could both be fully present for the programming (progress in our professional institutions!).

Moving more into **Annual Report mode**, as we're wrapping up our fourth year as your Co-Ministers and preparing for our fifth year, we marvel at all that has been accomplished this year and in the past four years, and we are grateful for the continuing deepening of our relationship with each and all of you.

Our theme this year has been **Collaboration and Joy**, which has been enormously helpful in keeping our hearts and minds focused on the positive in our community, our country, and our world. We also continue to lift up the most succinct version of our USH Mission Statement by focusing this report on the themes of "Nourishing Spirit, Building Community, Working for Justice."

### Nourishing Spirit

We began trying out using **monthly theme materials** this year, gathered and produced by the Unitarian Universalist group "SoulMatters" ([soulmatterssharingcircle.com](http://soulmatterssharingcircle.com)). It has been neat, given how little pushy effort we've put into it, to see our USH Worship Associates, Small Group Ministries, and Religious Education program already all

drawing upon these materials over the course of the year. We are excited to continue using SoulMatters materials in 2018-19 and seeing how we can connect more meaningfully to the themes within our congregation and within our denomination with the over 600 worship leaders also using SoulMatters.

**Worship services** are our weekly spiritual practice, our opportunity to be together as a community and to welcome and get-to-know newcomers, visitors, and one another better. The Sunday service is truly essential to our congregation, and so we want to highlight the worship services we have created together with you:

[Ingathering] The Well Is Deep, It Will Provide!

Imagine That / on empathy

Re-encountering Anne (Frank, in tandem with the 50th Anniversary of *The Diary's* publication and the Fall 2017 Playhouse on Park production)

Resist & Rejoice Together

Habits of Humility

Facing Our Fears with Help from Harry Potter

All Souls Day

Looking Backward, Looking Forward: Supporting BLUU  
(Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism)

"Oh We Give Thanks"

"The Paradox of Embodiment," a service on disabilities

December Winter Solstice & Misrule service

450 Years of Religious Tolerance: The Edict of Torda

The Words We Keep--(in tandem with Hartford Stage's production of  
Sharon Washington's story and one-woman play, *Feeding the Dragon*)

The More of Less--annual releasing ourselves of stuff service

Hunting the Good

annual Share the Love Sunday

Let's Talk About Sex

Sweet Honey in the Rock-infused Easter Sunday service

RevHeather has put some time into supporting the weekly **Meditation** group after its central leader, Jan Bennett, died in January. There is new leadership with Amanda and Brandyn Bonertz and support from Fred Louis, and this is a group and practice that RevHeather hopes to continue to support as time permits.

### Building Community

The revamping of the **Stewardship Committee and the Annual Pledge Drive** this year created a whole bunch of opportunities for building community. The Fall 2017 Service Auction generated a myriad of ways to connect more personally with one another. And the Annual Pledge Drive effort galvanized 14-17 Neighborhood Gatherings in congregant homes--really a treat for the Revs to get to visit and spend time with so

many members and friends of the congregation in a condensed and structured way. Working with the Stewardship Committee has been a significant area of focus for RevCathy and thus far the strengthened relationships and increased pledging are all conveying that this was time very well spent.

Our **Membership** effort continues to be strong with several core programs--First Sunday Connections, the twice-yearly Path to Membership series UU, USH, and You, the Newcomer & New Member Potluck, New Member Ceremonies, and our every Tuesday afternoon Newcomer-followup meetings, among other programs. These programs rely upon USH member and volunteer Brian Harvey and we talk regularly about how to plan ahead for a time when Brian isn't able to make all of this happen. This February (2018) we certified with the UUA at 209 members.

In February 2018 we participated in a dinner for USH members and friends who identify as **people of color** and/or non-white ethnicity/heritage. This gathering resulted in some rich connections and conversations and also sparked some ideas about how to increase connection and conversation among people in the congregation that we'll be continuing to discuss and support in the months to come.

**Communications** / We now send **our Weekly E-news** out to more than 600 e-mail addresses. How many people read it is an ongoing question. The E-news is our central hub for sharing and communicating news of the congregation and larger community, so please try to make it work within your life and various e-mail systems to receive, open, print if that works for you, share and savor this important weekly communication. We also continue to improve and update our website (which was completely overhauled in 2015).

### **Pastoral Care**

Given RevCathy's increased financial responsibilities for USH (Finance, Stewardship), RevHeather has tried to take on more pastoral care this year, and that has been meaningful and rewarding. It is such a joy to get to visit with you in your homes--we can't emphasize enough how profound it is to get to see your family photos and learn more about you through the context of your most lived-in space. If you would like to schedule a visit, please reach out to RevHeather anytime.

We have celebrated a number of births and grieved many losses this year. Naming them here would inevitably cause us to later realize we'd forgotten someone, so for now let us simply marvel at the continual cycle of life with all its coinciding mystery.

### **Working for Justice**

Overall, 2017-18 feels like it's been "a normal year in a messed-up time." The whiplash of ministry to and with a progressive religious community under a Trump presidency is real. There is constantly more clamoring for our attention and response than we can



possibly attend and respond to. At the same time, it's been good to feel a groundswell of engagement all around and beyond us. We have been to the Capitol for rallies and protests so many times that we have our favorite parking places. We hope that everyone continues to think of ways to keep our collective attention on the long view, and to collaborate rather than trying to reinvent the wheel. Just one example is that we have gotten numerous calls to inquire about USH serving as a sanctuary for an undocumented immigrant, but when we try to organize people to look into this more deeply or support the UU congregation in Meriden that is currently providing sanctuary, there is only very minimal response. We are all moved in the moment by certain issues and situations; how can we organize our efforts to be effective with others and over a sustained period of time?

### Administrative

Some building highlights of this year have included **improvements to building security**. We changed the locks for the first time in years (maybe decades?) and that went smoothly! Due to some problematic building intrusions (Fall-Winter 2017-18) we installed one security camera in the ambulatory (outside the Ministers' Office) to no ill effect. We have had no further building intrusion issues. And we are all looking forward to the **roof replacement project** being completed and have our hopes up that this will address the longstanding roof leakage problems.

### Appreciations

We greatly appreciate **Rev. Erica Richmond**, USH's Affiliated Community Minister, and all that she brings to our USH community. Rev. Erica is a full-time Palliative Care Chaplain at Hartford Hospital. Through her work there she has visited countless USH members and friends during their hospitalizations. She has led worship for USH twice this year (as planned, yearly, in her Affiliation agreement) and also led a post-service Advanced Directive workshop (Fall 2017).

**Staff** / Our stable staff team makes everything else at USH more possible and manageable. In particular, we appreciate Rayla Mattson (Director of Religious Education), Linda Clark (Office Administrator), Sam Moffett (completing his first year as our Director of Music Ministries), Brian Mullen (Bookkeeper, and with thanks for his longstanding service to USH), Briana Bittel (Custodian), John Bengston and Kevin Girouard (Sextons), Crystal Cruz-Acevedo (Sunday Sexton), and all our other supporting staff, Nursery Care Providers and Choral Scholars. Not including the half-time Co-Ministers, we hover around 16-18 all part-time staff, a number of people which continually surprises those not on our staff team. Thanks to all who keep this community running, who help take care of this Meeting House and all the people of all ages within it, and all of you who support this organization of people caring for one another.

**Board** / We are so grateful for the strong and engaged Board leadership this year. A particular highlight was our January 2018 retreat at Sherry Manetta & Brian Harvey's home, ably facilitated by UUA Regional Facilitator Mary Heafy. We continue to improve our communication, governance clarity, and long-range planning practices. Huge thanks for all your work, time, heart, thoughtfulness, and dedication, to Board members Sherry Manetta, Joe Rubin, Sarah Harmon McKenzie, Phil Gardner, Chris Wilt, Stephanie Briggs, Judy Sullivan, and Hank Murray.

Over the past two years there has been a request for more data-sharing to the Board, and we now have a practice of including the following monthly attendance numbers in our monthly Board reports. These numbers are annualized for the Annual Report.

Overall Attendance trends--

Average	Worship Attendance	RE	Visitors	Total Attendance
Total 2018	118	35	6	153
Total 2017	115	32	7	138
Total 2016	111	35	8	146
Total 2015	118	34	not tracked	152

Looking ahead to 2018-19

We're so excited about bringing on a 2-year half-time Intern Minister, Mark Robel!

As mentioned above, we continue to work on balancing responsiveness to each moment, person, and issue, and deepening our steadiness and "staying-power" / consistency over time.

We continue to develop our own spiritual practices and are mindful about taking care of our health so that we can keep doing this work for the long-haul.

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Notes for other items to include in full Co-Ministers Annual Report:

[look at prior years

& review Neighborhood Gathering Board talking points]

Board members, if there are items you think we should consider including (or excluding) in our Annual Report, please let us know. --Revs. Heather & Cathy