

Regular Attendees		Present
Fifi Ball	Director of Operations	Y
Jeff Brainerd	Standing Committee member	Y
Howard Dana	Senior Minister	Y
Dave Elwood	Standing Committee member	Y
Kristin Haddad	Chair	Y
Peter Nobile	Clerk	Y
Patty Popov	Standing Committee member	Y
Toby Smith Ropeik	Standing Committee member	Y
Mark Russell Prior	Standing Committee member	Y
Lora Venesy	Standing Committee member	Y
Tom Wilson	Treasurer	N
Kate Svrcek	Standing Committee member	Y
John Lowe	Standing Committee member	Y
<b>Guests</b>		
Jan Hustlar	Ministerial Intern	Y
Rev. Amy Freedman	Director of RE	Y

Howard opened the meeting, lighting the Chalice with words from XJ Kennedy, titled "*September 12, 2011.*" Kristin also opened the meeting with a reading of our draft covenant, which was discussed later in the meeting.

#### **Chair's Report**

- Stoney Ballard has offered training on editing the new FP website format to any SC member that is interested. The training will take place on 9/22 at 2pm.
- The SC bulletin board area is updated.
- Roger Mattlodge will be sharing information re: events around the upcoming November trip to our partner church in Transylvania.
- Kristin will distribute information about an upcoming work session called "Tips and Tools for Cracking the Leadership Crisis" led by Doug Zelinski at the UU Church in Lexington, 9-3 on 10/22.

#### **Minister's Report**

See attached. A few committee comments included:

- An enthusiastic embrace of Adult RE as part of Howard's goals. Howard envisions a more coordinated/formal Adult RE program to be managed between himself, Marion, Amy and Jan.
- A suggestion to do goal setting at the end rather than at the beginning of the church year.
- A desire to focus on membership in the coming year, which Howard said will be met in part with a refined membership committee structure and approach.

Howard circulated a copy of a letter from the Concord Historic District Commission requesting that First Parish representatives meet publicly with the HDC to discuss the hanging of the Black Lives Matter banners. After discussion, Patty volunteered to lead an effort (with Peter) to craft a response to this

letter.

**Director of Operations report:**

We are currently one month into Fiscal Year 2016-2017(FY17 = 7/1/16-6/30/17). Coan House rental is lower than expected (by \$1,600), as we had been charging \$100/mo more than was deemed appropriate, resulting in this slight reduction of income. Assistant DRE Dawn Van Patten is being paid for professional development and some time left over from last year, resulting in a spending increase of \$1,750 (see line 5075 in the budget). That spending increase was moved by John Lowe and approved unanimously.

Fifi's July financial report summary also noted the following:

- Contribution Income—\$243,985 in July 2016—including pre-paid pledges, was down compared with \$244,421 in July 2015 and \$261,858 in July 2014.
- Final FY16 pledges totaled \$972,750. \$924,201 in FY16 pledge payments received during FY16. Prior Year Pledge Payments received July 2016 totaled \$4,234, increasing FY16 pledge paid percentage from 95% to 95.4%.
- Changes (from budget) in health insurance elections and premiums net anticipated \$3,817 FY17 savings.
- \$25,000 from the 2016 Auction was taken as income for FY17.

**Overview of RE**

The committee expressed gratitude for Rev. Amy Freedman's work with our youth. Amy reviewed the RE Council's four recently crafted program goals, which are:

- 1) Create opportunities for fun, friendship and belonging to community.
- 2) Learn to live the 7 UU principles and explore spiritual practices.
- 3) Gain an appreciation of world religious teachings.
- 4) Celebrate the conscious effort of our youth to learn who they are as Unitarian Universalists.

Amy then briefed us on the coming Fall activities and a lively discussion followed, which included the following observations and comments:

- Amy mentioned gratitude for Jan Power's leadership and for her recommendation of "The Spiritual Child". Jim Sherblom will be co-leading this fall's UU Explorers program with Jan.
- Amy reported that some of our First Parish youth attended COA at the First Religious Society in Carlisle last year, and as a result are not participating at First Parish this year.
- Christa Champion will be leading our youth programs including youth group and COA.
- Coordinating with Lora Venesy, in addition to OWL programs offered to 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, OWL will be offered to 5<sup>th</sup> graders this year.
- Additional social events and activities around RE families will be offered in the coming year.
- There are 170 registered children this year. Some COA youth have opted to go to the Carlisle church.
- Dave mentioned a good sense of health at the latest RE council meeting. Amy hopes that the RE council will be functioning more like a team to collaborate with rather than a board of overseers.
- Coordination with Membership efforts was discussed.
- Amy spoke a bit about how curricula are evaluated, given that some activities are not as "user friendly" as we might like.

**Member's Reports**

- Great turnout for the picnic, well organized and lots of fun.

**Group and Liaison Reports**

Fresh assignments are in the works – goal is to distribute the load and avoid member burnout. Patty could use some help on the Nominating Committee. Current reports included:

- Denomination Affairs: Lora reported that the Chair has stepped down, so that committee may need more support in the coming year especially around the upcoming GA forum. Some discussion about how this committee will function going forward.

**Approval of Standing Committee Covenant**

Our committee's covenant was approved unanimously, as follows:

*As we gather for our regular Standing Committee meeting, we covenant to remember our UU Principles and that we are here to represent the congregation of First Parish in Concord.*

*We will:*

*Be kind and supportive to others*

*Listen respectfully,*

*Assume best intentions,*

*Accept disagreement,*

*Welcome diverse opinions,*

*Welcome questions,*

*Ensure others are heard,*

*Consider others as we express ourselves,*

*Speak with truth and compassion,*

*Speak what is helpful and necessary.*

*We are aware that our words are for others to hear.*

*We are committed to the processes and principles of effective governance.*

**SC Goal Formation discussion**

Members had been asked to focus on three topics: Leadership, Supporting Social Justice, and Governance. We split into three brainstorming groups for 20 min to elicit SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) goals in each of these three areas. Each subgroup's note taker has been asked to post a Google Docs summary of its discussion, which then all members will comment on by the beginning of October so that comments can be put forward during our October 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, keeping in mind that these discussions are in service of the development of our 2-year goals.

The meeting adjourned at 830 PM.

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Attachments

**Minister's Report to the Standing Committee**

First Parish in Concord—August 2016

Rev. Howard N. Dana

***Director of Operations' Goals for 2016-17 (July 2016):***

**One—Continue to improve the smooth running of FP operations by modeling calm reactions to challenges, improving efficiency by use of technology, and streamlining processes with documentation and good communications.** Progress: We are researching our options for health insurance coverage from other companies. No decision will be made until we can offer high quality coverage to all applicable staff. Our internal Wifi coverage has been improved so that church members and groups can better use the Internet while at First Parish. We are working on ways to lower our property insurance costs for the First Parish buildings and grounds. Further work has been done to refine our wedding and memorial service policies. The new building use policy is nearly ready for implementation.

**Two—Train new church administrator to perform effectively—collaboratively *and* autonomously.** Progress: Sarah made much progress on learning the church administrator job in August. She kept taking on more responsibilities including updating the website, writing FP Announce, and checking the First Parish Facebook page. She has researched ways to reduce our copier/printer costs. Through her own initiative and curiosity she is up to speed with the running of the church office. She is ready for the church year to start.

**Three—Continue to “give (parts of) my job away,” soliciting appropriate volunteer assistance and encouraging First Parish groups to do their own work and solve their own problems without using additional staff labor.** Progress: There were not many opportunities over the summer to engage volunteers. As the new church year begins, I am sure there will be more.

***Proposed Senior Minister Goals for 2016-17:***

**One—Partner with the Social Action Council to launch a two-year pilot program at First Parish under the leadership of a new director or community organizer.**

Measures: The SAC Board, staff, and congregation further refine the scope of social justice work at First Parish.

A new job description for a director or community organizer is finalized.

The director search committee helps me screen applicants effectively.

The new director or community organizer receives good training and support.

The congregation deepens its social justice work in one or two areas.

Progress: I have met with both the SAC Board and the Director Search Committee to figure out next steps. The SAC Board is going to go to the full social action leadership (and then to the congregation) with three different options: 1. An administrative position, 2. A community organizer, or 3. A combination of positions with the possibility of co-employing one or more persons with Jericho Road and/or First Parish in Bedford.

**Two—Increase financial stewardship through targeted donor development.**

Measures: Ten households (or more) donating \$1000 to \$5000 significantly increase their giving to First Parish (50% to a 100% increase).

Five households (or more) are able to make a 5-year commitment of \$5000 or more per year.

We begin the Annual Pledge Campaign with more large donations in hand.

At least half of the large donors attend the large donor event.

Progress: No work has started on this goal.

**Three—Enhance Adult Religious Education at First Parish in Concord.**

Measures: Personally lead three separate adult religious education offerings.  
Support the Minister for Pastoral Care in her offerings.  
Support the Minister of Religious Education in her offerings.  
Support and supervise the Ministerial Intern in her offerings.  
Support ongoing Adult Religious Education offerings by members.  
Schedule and publicize all offerings for the coming year.

Progress: Amy, Marion, Jan, and I will be meeting in September to flesh out the offerings we would like to lead. We will try to schedule them with little overlap. Once the calendar is set, we will publish it for the whole congregation. I have been supporting Patrick Everett in getting the Forum up and running for the coming year. He has the overall worship calendar and will try to coordinate speakers with worship themes where possible.

**Updates on day-to-day ministry**

- I returned to work on Sunday, August 14 and have had two good weeks of getting everything ready for the start of the new church year.
- I met with Rodger Mattlage, Lillian Anderson, and Beth Norton to further plan to receive a delegation from our partner church in Transylvania. A group of six people, including the new minister and his wife, will travel from Kerestur to Concord the week after Thanksgiving. Many activities are being planned for this visit.
- I had an initial Skype conversation with Rev. Csaba Todor of the Kerestur church to introduce myself and to hear his ideas for the Partner Church trip to Concord.
- I began a formal, one-year mentoring relationship with two ministers in preliminary fellowship, Rev. Stephanie May of Wayland and Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom of Milwaukee, WI.

**Update on Staff issues and changes**

- Dawn Van Patten resumed her work in RE.
- Ministerial Intern Jan Hutslar moved into the Coan Cottage and began work mid-August.

**Senior Minister's plans for denominational work, study leave, and vacation**

- October 17-19, 2016—Cedar Hill Study Group, Cape Cod
- November 1-3, 2016—UUMA Chapter Retreat, Greenfield, MA
- January 9-23, 2017—Winter vacation
- February 20-25, 2017—Large UU Church Ministers' Conference, Santa Barbara
- May 8-15, 2017—Worship Planning Retreat
- May 22-24, 2017—Cedar Hill Study Group, Cape Cod

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