

Standing Committee Meeting Summary

On Sunday, June 11th at 6:00 p.m. the Standing Committee met in the Brooks Room for our regular monthly meeting. We heard our regular reports and reflected on the annual meeting that occurred earlier in the day. We welcomed Treasurer Michelle Fortier to the committee and said farewell to Mark Russell Prior, outgoing member-at-large and Jan Hutslar, outgoing ministerial intern.

Black Lives Matter Update:

After the congregational advisory vote and discussion at annual meeting, the Standing Committee voted to continue hanging the Black Lives Matter Banner and a companion banner through January 2, 2018. We agreed to solicit input from the Race Conversations group to help come up with preferred language for the companion banner and decided that both banners should be hung to the left of center to prevent the wind damage that occurs in the right corner.

Sanctuary Level 2 Status

Members of the Immigration Justice Task force asked the standing committee to consider making First Parish in Concord a Sanctuary Level Two Congregation in support of First Parish in Bedford. A vote in favor of this motion would publicly state that our congregation will rally and support the needs of those being housed by First Parish in Bedford. The presentation emphasized the moral imperative for helping those families currently at risk throughout our region and illustrated the current climate with recent stories of deportations and near-deportations. Many members of our congregation have already signed up as individual supporters, and if this is something that you are seeking more information about, please contact Tony Rodriguez.

Standing Committee Self Evaluation

Lora Venesy, Mark Russel Prior and Kate Svrcek presented the results of our self-evaluation using some of our best practices as a template. Overall, the Standing Committee is completing the appropriate work in a responsible manner and continues to improve. The group did present five recommendations for next year. They are:

- The Standing Committee should revisit the “Best Practices” list on a regular basis.
- The SC and the Senior Minister should develop a plan for the upcoming 5-year visioning process.
- The SC should begin a member education process so that members understand the meaning and significance of strategic leadership and planning.
- The SC and the Senior Minister should assess the expertise required to execute the strategic visioning process and begin to organize resources for the project.
- The SC should add new leadership development activities under our Leadership goal.