

Unitarian Society of New Haven  
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
November 8, 2021, Via Zoom  
Approved 12/9/21

Board Members Present:

President - Emily McCave

Rich Stockton

Clerk - Aimee Cotton Bogush

Susan Trotta-Smith

Bernice Marie-Daly

Tina Santoni

Becky Reeve

Others Present:

Rev. Lindasusan, Jesse Greist (left at 7:50 pm), Sandra Salazar-Hernandez (not present, shared remarks via Jesse), Nancy Apfel (left at 7:46 pm), Carol Stockton (left at 7:43 pm)

**1. Gather & Chalice Lighting**

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 p.m. and the chalice was lit. The covenant was read and check in took place.

**2. Future Planning**

**8th Principle Vote Discussion - Emily**

**Guest Carol Stockton - Request for Consideration of Resolution**

Emily reviewed the discussion from our last meeting as well as the provided input from the 8th principle working group. Bernice shared about the recent listening circle. An idea came out of the meeting that perhaps if the board wanted to make a more informed decision, to take a straw poll with a special email. Discussion took place.

**Guests from 8th Principle Working Group - Jesse Greist, Sandra Salazar-Hernandez, Nancy Apfel**

**Guest Carol Stockton - Request for Consideration of Resolution**

Representing the 8th Principle Working Group, Jesse spoke for himself and Sandra about why it is important to move forward with a vote in a timely manner. Nancy invited Carol to speak and Carol explained her reasoning for desiring a resolution rather than a vote. An excellent dialogue and sharing of ideas took place. Jesse gave a history of the process USHN has undertaken around the adoption of the 8th Principle. People of Color in our denomination and our congregation are suffering already because the 7 current principles have not been enough to address oppression and racism. Discussion was had regarding the possibility of pursuing a resolution instead of adoption of the 8th Principle. The board expressed appreciation for those who spoke at the meeting for having courage to share their perspectives and all present used UUA values of hearing each other and speaking truths. After more careful consideration the board affirmed their charge of reducing harm and decided to move forward with a vote at the congregational meeting on Sunday, December 12, and to not pursue a straw poll ahead of that. Meeting/voting logistics were discussed - a majority vote is needed, 10% of the members present is a quorum, and the

vote will not be anonymous. Emily, Aimee, and Reverend Lindasusan will work out the full process at their next officers meeting.

### **Congregational Meeting Planning – Emily -**

The meeting is December 12 at 11:45 am.

### **Nominating Committee Update – Sue**

Sue briefly reported on the Nominating Committee's progress on identifying a candidate for the vacant board vice president position.

### **Sponsorship Request - Jennifer Kapranov**

The board reviewed the sponsorship request from Jennifer Kapranov. No concerns were expressed. **MOTION** (Emily/Bernice) that the board support this sponsorship request from Jennifer Kapranov in her pursuit of aspirant ministry; **MOTION** approved unanimously. Emily will notify Jennifer.

## **3. Reports**

### **Minister's Report – Rev. Lindasusan (attached)**

Reverend Lindasusan mentioned the importance of beginning to talk about the congregational mission in partnership with talking about the covenant. That is what we are ultimately accountable to.

## **4. Closing**

The minutes from the October 14, 2021 board meeting were approved unanimously.

### **Process Observations – Sue**

Sue remarked that the opening poem about friendship and witness was beautiful. She was in awe the whole time the discussion about a resolution versus a vote took place. It was very productive and involved a high level of compassion, passion, dialogue, open listening, and respectfulness and went exactly as it was supposed to be even though it wasn't exactly as planned. This is a great group to be a part of. Sue also noted all the hard work everyone has put in.

Emily will follow up with Nance, Jesse, Sandra, the 8th Principle Working Group, and Carol.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Aimee Cotton Bogush, Clerk



# Minister's Report to the Board of Trustees

November 8, 2021

## What do you notice?

- My time away at the UUMA ministers' retreat was a much needed respite from the daily responsibilities of ministry. While I still needed to use some of that time to prepare for a memorial, I'm grateful I had a chance to gather with colleagues in a beautiful setting. My thanks go especially to the USNH staff, who kept everything humming in my absence.
- Excitement is building for the installation on November 14. Much planning is going into both the installation service itself (which will feature many beloved colleagues whom I know through Finding Our Way Home) as well as the 10:30am service (which will feature texts from all of the congregation's settled ministers). I encourage you to join the festivities, whether in person or via livestream!
- Beginning in January 2022, I will host an informal brown bag lunch for BIPOC members and friends on 2nd Sundays (assuming we're allowing food inside the building by then). The goal is to expand our sense of welcome by creating BIPOC space for newcomers and long-time congregants alike. This kind of caucusing aligns with recommendations in the UUA's "Widening the Circle of Concern" report and is one of my goals for the year.
- I notice that on the whole, USNHers have a difficult time talking about money. (Not surprising, since this is very common in US culture.) I spoke about the importance of shifting our relationship to money in my October 10, 2021, sermon about shame, and I'm going to keep talking about generosity as a spiritual value. I invite you to practice normalizing discussions of money. After all, the first item in our mission is to "inspire lives of compassion and generosity." How can we do that if money remains a taboo?

## Do you have questions?

- How can we hold ourselves more accountable to the mission of the congregation on a regular basis?

## What do you need?

- I need to find some time for study leave, which helps ministers refill our intellectual and spiritual coffers. I'm currently looking at November 29 — December 2 as possible dates.