

USNF CLARIFICATION DOCUMENTS

BACKGROUND

In 2011/2012 members of the Society's Board and committees engaged in a process of articulating their mission and responsibilities, and of identifying areas where the scope of their work needed clarification. Committees presented their drafts to the Coordinating Council for comments, and they were then read and discussed in Board meetings. We called these statements our "clarification documents."

The documents included here reflect the committees and groups as they were operating during that time. Some of the questions have been addressed, and new ones have emerged. We continue to ask ourselves how we can be faithful to our mission through the work that we do.

CLARIFICATION DOCUMENTS INDEX (click committee name)

Board of Trustees	Nominating Committee
Big Ol' Gay Committee	Partner Church Committee
Committee on Ministry	Pastoral Care Team
Communications Committee	Personnel Committee
Coordinating Council	RE Council
E-Team	Small Group Ministry Committee
Finance Committee	Social Justice Committee
House & Property Committee	Stewardship Committee
Newcomer Connections Team	Worship Committee

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence
Board of Trustees Clarification Document – Draft III

MISSION

To govern the Society in accordance with its mission.

TASKS

The Board monitors the work of the Society's programs and ministries and leads efforts in planning and visioning. It takes responsibility for acting in response to new opportunities and to difficulties. The Board ensures that the Society's assets are managed prudently and in accordance with the bylaws and with any actions approved by vote of the membership.

- a) Review, articulate and communicate the Society's mission and vision. Lead efforts at formulating our mission and vision and in strategic and long-range planning.
- b) Ensure that the Society's policies are adequate and appropriate.
- c) Set annual budgetary goals. Review and approve the annual budget, and actively support and participate in fundraising efforts including the annual stewardship campaign.
- d) Monitor operating results against budgets and goals and make adjustments as needed. Ensure there are plans in place for long range efforts to build the Society's financial base.
- e) Ensure that the congregation's staff and committees understand their mission, roles and authority. Review the work of staff and committees with consideration of their mission, goals and results, ensuring that the congregation's needs and priorities are met. Approve the appointment of committee chairs and the establishment of new committees and task forces.
- f) Promote and model values.
- g) Develop leadership.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH COMMITTEES/MINISTRIES

- a) Interact with the Coordinating Council through Council participation on the Executive Team and through a Trustee's attendance at Council meetings. Committees are invited to present at Board meetings. The Board has a representative (Treasurer) on the Finance Committee.
- b) Support Society committees in their work. Monitor the work of committees to ensure they are fulfilling their responsibilities in accordance with the Society's policies and mission. Evaluate the effectiveness of programs by consulting with and reviewing reports from committees and staff.
- c) Help to ensure that responsibility and authority are clear for all committees, task forces, and staff.
- d) Authorize the hiring and termination of employees. Work with the minister and the Personnel Committee to ensure that staff are properly supervised and are fulfilling their responsibility.

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence
Board of Trustees Clarification Document – Draft III

DECISION MAKING

The Board employs a deliberative process in making decisions to maintain a proper balance of authority, accountability and guidance.

- a) The Presidents' Team, consisting of the three presidents (past, present, and future), meets monthly with the Minister to discuss the work of the Board and set the agenda for the BOT meeting and address issues that may have arisen since the Executive Team meeting. It may also discuss issues confronting the Society and make decisions about how and with what individuals or groups those issues should be addressed. Notes are taken to help the President in preparing the agenda, but there are no minutes.
- b) The Executive Team (E-Team), consisting of the Presidents, Treasurer, Clerk, Minister and Coordinating Council Co-moderators, meets monthly to discuss the activities of the Board and Council and questions or issues that arise. The E-Team may decide an issue, determine that more information is needed, or decide that a committee, staff person, or Council or Board should take up the issue. Minutes are taken which provide a record of the issues raised and discussed. The minutes are distributed to the Trustees and Council Co-moderators.
- c) The Board of Trustees bases its decisions on what is best for the Society, using the mission and our values as a guide. Decisions are made by majority vote with an aim toward consensus, whenever possible. The Board determines when collaboration with other committees and groups are required for more detailed analysis.
- d) The Board makes decisions about:
 - 1) Congregational priorities and major new initiatives, short and long range goals, consistent with our Society's mission.
 - 2) Financial goals and the distribution of money according to the yearly budget.
 - 3) The hiring and compensation of staff, in consultation with the Minister and Personnel Committee and in accordance with the Society's Personnel policies. The Board may also prepare an evaluation of the Minister, in accordance with the terms of the Society's agreement with the Minister.
 - 4) Policies.
 - 5) Other matters that do not fall within the jurisdiction of staff, the Minister, a committee or other group.

AREAS THAT NEED CLARIFICATION

- a) What are the legal responsibilities of Board members? Should it be clarified that the Board is responsible for acting in accordance with the Society's bylaws and complying with legal contracts?
- b) What is the role of the Board regarding how the USNF is represented to the outside community?
- c) Who actually writes the policies? When an issue in need of a policy is identified, should policy recommendations be made by committees or a subcommittee of the board, which would then be submitted to the full board for approval?

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence Big Ol' Gay Committee Clarification Document

The Big Ol' Gay Committee intends this to be a descriptive statement of our mission, vision, tasks, decision-making and relation to the Society at large, rather than a prescriptive guideline that must be followed rigorously by future incarnations of our committee. As a committee not established by the bylaws of the Society, we appreciate and cultivate the adaptability of our committee to the needs of LGBTIQQA members of USNF and the local community.

Mission

Our mission is summed up in our Mission Statement, while more detail about our mission is provided in our Vision Statement.

Mission statement

The mission of the USNF Big Ol' Gay committee is to provide a focal point for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and questioning people and our allies (known collectively as LGBTIQQA people) to support one another, build a better community through education and dialogue, engage in political action, and have fun.

Vision statement

We will be like a tree with four branches. Rooted in our UU principles and purposes, we hope to grow strong and provide both shade and sustenance.

On one bough grow the congregational branches:

1. Education

The committee will sponsor and create programming (services, adult ed, workshops, etc.) for the congregation which will increase awareness, foster dialogue, and promote understanding of various LGBTIQQA issues. Programs will be designed to speak to people with varying levels of comfort & experience with these issues, and will bring home the idea that concerns of gender and sexual identity affect us all. We will also endeavor to review relevant aspects of the literature, policies, and R.E. courses we use, to explore whether we as a congregation are living up to our goals of right relations and compassion in these matters.

2. Support

The committee will hold events for LGBTIQQA people within USNF, to provide opportunities to uphold each other in our struggles and joys, to address specific concerns, (including those of children, parents, and friends of LGBTIQQ people) and to party! We hope to ensure that LGBTIQQA members and friends feel comfortable, respected, visible, and heard.

On another bough are the branches that lean out toward the world at large:

3. Outreach

The committee will reach out to the local community and show that we truly are a welcoming congregation. Through events, a consistent web presence, and partnering with schools and organizations, we plan to draw new people in to a place they may not have heard of, but find they love. A special focus will be on young adults, in college or otherwise, who often have a new and acute need for a supportive spiritual home.

4. Activism

The committee will be a force for political witness, generating ideas and organizing actions in which the congregation can participate. We will partner with other organizations, both religious and secular, to expand our impact. We will also be a group to which ideas for LGBTIQQA-

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence Big Ol' Gay Committee Clarification Document

related activism can be brought by interested parties, and we will strive to create an efficient process by which these thoughts can be borne out. Through these activities, we seek to live out our ideals of equity, compassion, and justice for all.

Tasks

Our tasks address each of the 4 major components of our vision: education, support, outreach and activism. Some of our tasks serve multiple purposes, such as events that are both educational to allies and create a supportive atmosphere to LGBTIQQA individuals.

- Bring awareness of issues and events in the larger LGBTIQQA communities to our congregation through email about upcoming events and community with Society leaders, such as the minister, the Board and Coordinating Council.
- Organize events for LGBTIQQA members of USNF.
- Organize workshops on LGBTIQQA topics, including but not limited to workshops developed by the UUA.
- Forge partnerships with local LGBTIQQA organizations (e.g. Noho Pride, LGBT Coalition).
- Participate in interfaith LGBT community activities.
- Promote visibility of USNF within the LGBT community both by hosting public events and by encouraging USNF members to participate in LGBTIQQA community events.
- Share messages about and for the LGBTIQQA population from the pulpit when possible, through services and supporting roles.
- Seek information about our “welcoming” challenges as they relate to LGBTIQQ people and their friends and family, in order to share that information so that our allies have a better understanding of those challenges.
- Suggest ways to address these challenges (e.g. placing rainbow flags visibly in and outside the building so that USNF is more gay-friendly in appearance).

Relationship to the Society

As noted before, we are a committee that is not established by the USNF bylaws. Previously, a GLBT Committee was part of Social Justice, before dissolving. Since 2009, we have been a stand-alone committee.

We work with numerous other committees and groups at USNF:

- Adult Education Committee – to coordinate adult ed programming, such as workshops
- Worship Committee – to coordinate LGBTIQQA-themed services
- House and Property Committee – to add tangible and visible signs of gay pride to our building, such as placing rainbow flags in strategic locations
- Social Justice Committee – to co-sponsor programming and to serve as a place for the Social Justice Committee to direct LGBTIQQA ideas and efforts
- Web Committee – to promote BOG events*
- Board – to seek feedback on and cooperation in promoting larger projects, to seek congregational buy-in and information about perceived needs
- Coordinating Council – to share information about our projects, request assistance, raise questions that pertain to the Society and its needs, as well as to keep the congregation up to date about LGBTIQQA issues.
- Minister – to request assistance, to seek support and ideas for projects/workshops and to share information about current issues affecting LGBTIQQA communities and encourage inclusion of LGBTIQQA topics and voices in worship.

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence Big Ol' Gay Committee Clarification Document

Our goals include working more closely with the New Member Connection Team to increase LGBTIQQA membership and to work with RE/youth and young adult groups to include younger voices and perspectives and to better serve those members of our community.

*Currently, working with the Web Committee and New Member Connection Team does not require formal cooperation because of membership overlap in committees.

Decision-making

Our decision-making process is largely informal. We brainstorm ideas, discuss options, do research as needed and make decisions by consensus.

Specifically, decisions have included:

- What to call ourselves
- Use of funds
- Theme of our service
- Speakers and music for our service
- Speakers to be brought in for other programming
- Partnering with community organizations (such as Noho Pride and LGBT Coalition)
- Tabling at Pride
- Creating workshops
- Creating LGBTIQQA visibility at USNF
- Allocation of limited time and energy of volunteers to fulfill our mission
- Kinds of cookies to serve at events (e.g. Barbara's Pink Triangle cookies)
- When to hold a meeting so that more people will attend
- Whether to use words such as "queer" that some feel are problematic, but others feel are crucial to inclusion
- Priority of topics to be covered by educational fliers, workshops, services, etc.

Areas that need clarification

There is some lack of clarity about the role of BOG in ensuring that USNF lives up to its commitment to being "Welcoming." For example, we believe it is not our responsibility to ensure that USNF as a whole is aware of and participates in Pride marches as a community. Similarly, our budget request for the coming year included a request for funds to place advertising in a local LGBTIQQA publication, similar to our weekly ad in the Hampshire Gazette, because this is a recommended step for Welcoming Congregations (per the UUA). In that effort, we are spearheading a step toward being more Welcoming, however we also recognize that it is problematic for LGBTIQ-identified members to become the ones responsible for ensuring the welcome of other LGBTIQ-identified people. We are glad to be conduits of information to the Society and to spearhead initiatives such as those relating to visibility and participation in Pride.

Goals

Long term -

Increasing LGBTIQQA membership at USNF.

Increasing awareness of USNF as a safe space for LGBTIQQA people in the larger community.

Increasing activism, advocacy and education outreach on the part of allies at USNF, on behalf of LGBTIQQA people.

Creating a community in which LGBTIQQA people feel welcome, supported and reflected in our congregation, its services and its activities.

Increasing funding for USNF through BOG events and increased number of pledging members/friends.

Hosting an LGBTIQQA retreat for UUs and friends (2012?)

Hosting sober, safe pre- and post-pride events (2012?)

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence
Big Ol' Gay Committee Clarification Document

Short term -

Presenting workshops – including trans 101 (in March) and other “Living the Welcoming Congregation” workshops on topics such as: bisexuality, lesbian identity, “queer” culture and identity, being an ally (both for non-LGBTIQ people and across identities) (Spring 2011)

Annual LGBTIQQA-themed service (April 2011)

Creating and publishing a pamphlet on why USNF is a good home for LGBTIQQA (similar to a UUA pamphlet but specific to our congregation) (Spring 2011)

Creating a survey of the needs and wishes of LGBTIQQA members and friends (Spring 2011)

Creating fun, social events – movie nights, book groups (Spring 2011)

Visibility at Pride (May 2011 – we have already registered and secured tabling space.)

Visibility at Trans Pride (? 2011)

Visibility at Dyke March (May 2011)

Visibility at LGBT Coalition’s Queer Carnevale (September 2011)

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence Committee on Ministry Clarification Document

Revised and approved by the Minister and COM Updated October 24, 2011

Purpose

The Committee on Ministry at the Society of Northampton and Florence exists to support the Minister and the ministries of the Society.

Goals

The Committee on Ministry serves as a sounding board, providing feedback, counsel, challenge and support to the Minister.

Functions and responsibilities

Committee members take responsibility for helping to make sure that the minister is aware of matters affecting relations between the minister and the congregation. They may also, along with the Board, help to ensure that the Minister is setting priorities in a manner consistent with the congregation's needs.

The minister and the congregation are mutually responsible for establishing and maintaining a relationship of open communication, respect and trust. Members of the Committee on Ministry are happy to speak with members of the congregation about the role of the committee, and will encourage and coach members who have feedback for the Minister to communicate directly with her.

The Committee may consult with Trustees on the Minister's compensation and other aspects of the Minister's agreement, including a periodic assessment of the minister's performance, in accordance with the letter of agreement between the congregation and the Minister.

The Committee on the Ministry advises the Minister and Trustees on matters of ministry. It has no policy-making authority.

Membership and meetings

Four to six members are appointed to staggered terms, by the Board, with the consultation and agreement of the minister. The Committee meets with the Minister monthly or as needed by the Minister.

2011-2012 COM members: Craig Dreeszen, Julie Kurose, Paul Foster Moore

Unitarian Society of Northampton and Florence Communications Committee

Adopted August 15, 2011

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Communications Committee acts as an oversight group in relation to the following communications entities:

- The Web Committee,
- The Pioneer newsletter editor(s),
- The Sunday Times announcements,
- E-mail communications to the Society membership,
- Brochures and publicity created to promote or enhance Society programs,
- Electronic social media, and
- any other organ or method of Society-wide communication.

GOALS

We want to ensure that all communications within our area of responsibility are effective and reflect the best of who we are as a Society. In order to accomplish this, we establish and monitor policies and protocols that address access, security, privacy and authority, as well as policies and protocols to help ensure that our communications are timely, relevant, consistent, and well-written or designed.

MEMBERSHIP AND MEETINGS

1. The Communications Committee consists of a small group of decision-making members. The chair is appointed by the Board of Trustees. A representative from the committee will attend Coordinating Council meetings. The minister is an ex-officio member of the committee.
2. Policies are proposed to the Board of Trustees for approval.
3. Members of this committee should have good communication skills, and be comfortable with both establishing and following guidelines. An understanding of several aspects of the Society's work is helpful.
4. The Committee meets on an as-needed basis and via electronic exchanges.

DECISION MAKING AND CONSULTATION WITH OTHER COMMITTEES:

The committee attempts to make decisions by consensus whenever possible, and if not, by majority vote. The committee consults with other communication entities such as the Pioneer editor, the web committee, or the BOT and/or the President as needed. Some responsibilities may be delegated to other appropriate groups or individuals.

FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Communications Committee develops and recommends communication policies, rules and guidelines; formulates procedures; monitors communications vehicles; resolves questions; reviews new content; and addresses issues that arise concerning USNF communications. It is responsible for ensuring that training and assessment occur for staff and volunteers.

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence
Coordinating Council Clarification Document

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Coordinating Council is to support and strengthen the work and ministries of the Society's committees. The Council will coordinate the committees and Society's programs to promote the Society's mission and to sustain the operations of the Society.

The Council will work to facilitate communication among the committees, develop and support leadership engagement within the Society and facilitate communication between committees and the Board of Trustees.

TASKS

The Council will hold monthly meetings for the purpose of sharing information, ongoing operational decision-making, and enhancing communication among the committees.

Create the calendar for the coming year, in collaboration with the minister, R.E. Director, and office staff.

Organize a forum for committees to connect/communicate with the larger society (committee fair), as well as to encourage new committee membership.

COMMUNICATIONS

The monthly Council meeting is the main forum for communication. This communication is for the purpose of sharing information in order to meet the goals and mission of the Council, the goals and mission of committees, and the goals and mission of the Society. This forum allows for collaboration among committees and minimizes duplication of services. This forum provides committees a deeper awareness of the many operations of the Society.

Attendees at Council meetings are: committee representatives, Council Co-moderators, the Council clerk, the minister, RE Director, a Board of Trustees representative, and Congregational Administrator.

Committee representatives report between the Council and their respective committees. The Co-moderators are members of the Executive Team, where they report and share information between the Council and the Board.

DECISION MAKING

The Council makes all decisions about Council meetings and activities through consensus. The Council makes operational decisions as they relate to committees in collaboration with the board, the minister and/or the office staff.

When decision-making relates specifically to one or more committees, the council may assign the question/concern to those committee(s).

In the process of decision-making, if questions or conflicts related to policy arise, they shall be directed to the board.

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence
Coordinating Council Clarification Document

AREAS THAT NEED CLARIFICATION

The Council vs. Board in roles and responsibilities

The Council oversees operations of the society

The Board oversees policy

The Executive Team helps to define roles when there is an overlap.

GOALS

The Council has identified 3 goals for the year. They are

1. Clarification
2. Communication
3. Education

The Council has agreed that committees will work to establish their mission statement and clarify their roles and responsibilities. This will first be communicated at the Council meetings and will be a way of providing clarification and education among the committees. We will then explore avenues of educating the larger Society of committee's roles and responsibilities, such as Pioneer and UU web page.

In addition, the council has the goal of 100% committee participation in the council, either through attending meetings and/or submitting committee reports and announcements.

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence Executive Team (E-Team) Clarification Document

Mission

The Executive Team is responsible for ensuring coordination and communication among the Trustees, Coordinating Council and staff and provides a triage function for discussing and referring problems, issues and opportunities that arise.

Membership

The Executive Team is comprised of officers of the Board of Trustees and the moderators of the Council. The Minister is an ex-officio member.

Tasks

- (Triage) Considers problems, issues and opportunities that arise and refers to the appropriate body: Presidents, Trustees, Council, Committee and/or staff. When appropriate, recommends action.
- (Coordination) Provides a forum for coordination of the agendas of the Board and the Council
- (Communication) Provides a forum for communication among the officers, minister and council.
- (Agenda-setting) At its monthly meeting, helps shape the agenda of the month's Board and Council meetings through discussion of the status of current problems, issues and opportunities.
- (Fiscal) Hears and comments on the initial monthly Treasurer's report
- (Advice) Provides a sounding board and advice for the Presidents, Council Moderators and others.

Decision making process

Most of the actions of the ETeam are suggestions to responsible parties, such as officers, the Council, staff or the board. In the rare occasions when a decision or action has been delegated to the ETeam by the Board or the Council, the decision-making process would be consensus.

Collaboration with others

The ETeam is an integral part of the functioning of the Board and the Council as it is comprised of the leadership of those bodies. Questions and issues that arise and are not capable of being immediately handled by a member of the team may be brought forward for discussion and then possible referral to the Board, the Council or an individual committee, staff person or congregant.

Areas that need further clarification

- There are four major leadership meetings each month: ETeam on the first Monday; Council on the second; Board on the third, and Presidents at a time to be arranged. Because of the number of meetings and the possibility of important discussions being repeated in a redundant manner, the question arises whether some simpler structure might accomplish the same results as our current one. The general consensus is that this structure meets our current needs.

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence
Executive Team (E-Team) Clarification Document

- The Bylaws say that the ETeam may “take action on behalf of the Board of Trustees or Council when authorized to do so”. This is not the way that the ETeam currently functions and is a candidate for change next time the bylaws are revised.
- The Bylaws describes the mission of the Eteam as “ Executive Team is responsible for coordination and communication among the Trustees, Council, and staff”. At the next bylaws revision, the mission should be expanded to be include the essential triage function, as above.

(Just for reference)
Bylaws:

VI EXECUTIVE TEAM

1. The Executive Team is comprised of officers of the Board of Trustees and the moderator(s) of the Council. The Minister is an ex-officio member.
2. Executive Team is responsible for coordination and communication among the Trustees, Council, and staff, and to take action on behalf of the Board of Trustees or Council when authorized to do so.
3. This Team meets regularly to consider problems and opportunities, set agendas and recommend actions, and refer issues to Trustees, Council, Committees, and/or staff.

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence Finance Committee Clarification Document

Mission Statement

To promote the long-term financial stability necessary for the achievement of the collective mission of the Society through oversight of the financial management of the Society.

Goals

Ensure the existence of the financial systems and controls necessary in order for governance to meet its financial stewardship obligations.

To give counsel to the Trustees and Treasurer on matters of fiscal policy, planning and decision making as needed.

Tasks

The Finance Committee meets at least monthly to engage in a variety of tasks to ensure the following outcomes are achieved:

- Maintenance and oversight of a full general ledger accounting system
- Preparation of monthly and annual financial statements
- Preparation of an annual operating and capital budget
- Management of investments in accordance with approved policy
- Maintenance of adequate insurance to safeguard the Society against loss
- Periodic review of financial systems and policies to maintain their relevance and integrity as changes in circumstance dictate.

Communications

- The committee communicates closely and regularly with the Treasurer, and communicates with the Trustees and the Executive Team as necessary through the Treasurer.
- The committee communicates with other UU committees through its representative on the Coordinating Council.
- The committee communicates with the congregation as a whole through an annual committee report presented at the annual congregational meeting.

Decision Making Authority

With the understanding that all fiscal policy and budget decision making authority resides with the Trustees and or congregational vote , the Committee's authority is restricted to those operational decisions necessary to achieve the outcomes listed in the Task section above. The Society's leadership has set as a major organizational goal for this year "to begin clarifying the scope of committee and staff responsibility and authority, including areas of joint decision making".

As part of that effort, the Coordinating Council has been asked to initiate a process for gathering information about committee responsibilities and decision making authority. At the September council meeting each committee was requested to submit a condensed set of statements from each committee stating the committee's understanding of how each of the following areas applies to their committee:

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence
Finance Committee Clarification Document

Mission
Goals
Tasks
Communication
Decision making
Areas that need clarification

The Finance Committee has agreed to submit their information to the Council for their November meeting.

Attached is a draft of a preliminary response for the committee's review.

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence House & Property Committee Clarification Document

MISSION

The House and Property committee is charged with the task of maintaining our building and grounds, via repairs and improvements, so that the monetary value does not diminish and so that the safety and usability is enhanced.

MEMBERSHIP

The H&P committee is composed of volunteers from the congregation. Per the bylaws the chair person (or co-chairs) must be a member of the Society. (See the attached excerpt from the bylaws.)

TASKS

- Weekly cleaning. These weekly cleaning tasks are performed by the society's sexton. These tasks include vacuuming carpeting upstairs and downstairs and mopping the kitchen and restrooms' floors. The sexton also shovels snow and cuts the lawn as the seasons dictate. He also trims hedges as needed. The trash and recyclables are collected and placed in outside containers by the sexton. He does not care for the flower gardens and he does not clean the kitchen.
- Setting up the social room. This task deals with the tables and the classroom walls. On a weekly basis the sexton sets up tables and takes them down. He also moves the classroom partitions around as required. This work is dedicated by the upcoming use of the social room.
- Routine maintenance. These tasks include painting and repairing. Lots and lots of things need repairing over the course of a year. The sexton handles most of these items. To name a few from the past: flush valves, exhaust fans, kitchen cabinet doors, emergency exit lights, etc. The sexton also replaces burned out light bulbs.
- Disposable supplies. All the restroom paper goods and the kitchen paper towels are ordered, stored and dispensed by the sexton.
- Special events in the building and the sexton. Special events that are held in the building often require extra effort from the sexton to setup and clean up. The timing and scheduling of this extra work is via the office.
- The fall and spring work parties. There are fall and spring work parties each year; on two Saturdays from 9am to noon. For these the H&P committee seeks to recruit volunteers from the membership to help clean the building inside and the grounds outside. Inside we usually vacuum carpets and clean the woodwork in the Great hall and sometimes in the balcony. Outside we rake and often spread mulch. Minor repair jobs or painting are sometimes part of this. In truth we only get a few volunteers. So much of the work is done by the committee members. (A few wonderful people volunteer very often and their participation is greatly appreciated.)
- Inspections. The furnaces and the elevator require annual inspections and perhaps service by outside vendors or agencies. The chairman typically schedules these visits.
- Repairs. These repairs are usually unexpected. These may be repairs to the building or to equipment or items in the building. Typically these require outside vendors to make the

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence House & Property Committee Clarification Document

repairs. Examples from the past years would be parlor carpet cleaning and edge repair, new floor in the office, fixing the furnace, repairing two of the front columns, replacing the door locks, etc. These types of repairs typically cost hundreds of dollars or a few thousand dollars.

- Building or equipment improvement (i.e., a Capital Improvement.). The new insulation in the attic several years ago was an example of such an improvement. The basement remodeling, from the 1990's, was such an improvement. These are major projects that require outside vendors and much planning and coordination by the committee (or as is usually the case, by the chairman.)
- Major repair work. Some repair jobs are so large that they fall into the capital improvement category. These cost thousands of dollars. These take much preplanning and coordination with vendors. Work to fix the leaky slate roof last year and work to paint the high trim (in the summer of 2013) are examples of this.

DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Long range projects are much discussed. It may take months to arrive at a plan and get the vendors/contractors scheduled. So for these decisions the process is consensus. The chairman typically deals with contractors himself.

There are many emergency repair situations that arise where the only option is to quickly repair or replace something. Think of the time one of the furnaces refused to work. The sexton and the chairman often handle these situations outside the committee framework.

COLLABORATION WITH OTHER COMMITTEES

As described above, about half of the sextons set up work is determined by the space usage calendar. So he and the office have lots of communications about this.

The H&P committee does not much routine committee-to-committee collaboration. The H&P committee has a lot of input from individuals about areas or problems that need H&P attention.

Major repair or renovation projects, that impact the usage of building areas, do require much collaboration with the office, the minister and the Board.

AREAS THAT NEED FURTHER CLARIFICATION

- The over-dependence on John Poirier is not fair to John or in the best long term interest of the society. For John, this volunteer work is like a second job. When he first volunteered for this he did not intend to be "CHAIRMAN FOR LIFE." We need a succession plan and a spread-the-work-around plan.
- We would like to fund more sexton hours per week.
- All the gardens on the UU property are maintained by one person, Sally Lawton. We are truly thankful for Sally's dedication to this work. However, we need to find a way to provide helpers.
- The budgeting process is a little garbled. At present the H&P budget has two lines; one is "Operating Expenses" and the other is "Capital Improvements." By necessity the operating

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence
House & Property Committee Clarification Document

budget has lots of cushions built in for the unexpected expenses. If the “unexpected expenses” are not large in a particular year, the appearance is that the H&P committee asked for more money than was needed. I believe that a third line is needed for “Contingency repair expenses.” Monies in this category would be used for small or large unexpected repairs. Unused monies would carry over from year to year. This would allow the “Operating Expenses” line to reflect real operating expenses. And more importantly it would allow the “Capital Improvements” line to reflect real capital improvements.

- If the Kitchen committee comes into existence, the care and maintenance of the dishwasher, the stove, the refrigerator, and the microwave will need to be decided. For example if the dishwasher has to be replaced whose budget will pay?
- The H&P committee needs a few more members. At present there are four members plus the chairman and the sexton.

Excerpt from UU bylaws:

1. The Board of Trustees, through the President, shall establish the following standing committees of the Society and appoint chairs or co-chairs, who must be members of the society, giving due consideration to the advice of the membership of the committee in these regards:
 - (a) A Finance Committee etc etc
 - (b) A House and Property Committee shall be responsible for the maintenance and protection of the Society's building, grounds, and equipment, including substantial programs of renovation when these are required, authorized and funded. This Committee shall purchase equipment as authorized by the Board of Trustees.

End

This text prepared by Bill Whitehill (H&P member.) 413-568-8027

August 6, 2012

Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence Newcomer Connections Team Clarification Document

Who We Are

Newcomer Connections Team, formed from the former Membership Committee, had its first official meeting January 10th 2010. Our mission draws from the bylaws (2009) and the Membership Committee Description (2004) and the recent annual report.

Mission Statement

Newcomer Connections Team believes that while everyone strives to be a good citizen of the Society by being welcoming, members of the Newcomer Connections Team take that on as their particular responsibility. We consider it our obligation to be welcoming and friendly, and in that way we are striving to build our caring community where children and adults can safely learn and grow. We assist new members and friends as they take their first steps toward participation in church activities, then to facilitate their integration into full participation in congregational life, the portion of our mission shared with Stewardship.

Functions and Responsibilities

This committee is heavily involved in working toward welcoming and therefore involved across most layers and levels of the Society. We may generate an idea and then proceed to the Coordinating Council or an individual committee or team. Our tasks include, but are not limited to:

- Welcome Team
 - Broad supervision of the Welcome Team, including the Pink Name Tag party in October which is a training and support activity.
 - Activities to encourage becoming a Pink Name Tag (adult) or a Blue Name Tag (youngster) holder.
 - Provide four greeters at the beginning of each Sunday service (Welcome Team needs an individual or individuals to shepherd them).
- Membership Journey
 - Class provided by the minister and Membership Journey coordinator for those thinking about membership, curious about Unitarian Universalism, the history of our Society and what it means to be a member. It is an opportunity for newcomers to gather and to meet members of our congregation to become better acquainted.
- Call visitors who provide information on a pew card.
- Maintain the Welcome Table, the literature racks (Great Hall, Parlor), and assist with the table in the vestibule. Maintain giant cork board in the Parlor.
- Produce name tags for the congregation, white or pink, to be placed in the basket in the vestibule/foyer. Place item in Sunday Times when basket is full indicating people need to pick up their tag.
- Continue the inaugural Newcomer Breakfast for those who are newer to the Society to connect with each other and longer-term members.
- Work with Stewardship toward activities designed to deepen newcomer connections such as potlucks and suppers.

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- Items in transition from the former Membership Committee include the Membership Journey Class and when needed the Photo Directory. These two responsibilities need an individual or individuals to shepherd them.
- Participate in congregational events where our team would be an asset. Examples would be the Passion Fest, and events with the Big Ol' Gay committee designed to enable the congregation to be more welcoming to a diverse group of visitors.
- Continue to generate new ideas to welcome and deepen the connections of people just visiting or those who have visited multiple times. Sponsored the idea that each committee or team should have a designated reporter to respond to their events and write a brief post event article for the Pioneer.
- Have updated the brochure "Making Connections" and "Our Congregation at a Glance". Working with House and Property to create pew racks to hold new tri-fold brochures and hymnals and pew cards comfortably. A new format for pew card is pending.
- Collect materials obtained from visits to other Unitarian congregations. Review the experience with the intention of adopting their ideas.
- A good portion of our work is generating ways to create small moments that matter. These are put into effect by our team or another committee we have connected with. Our group is trying to have someone near the street side of the Great Hall after the second service to speak to folks that linger.
- We also grapple with larger issues that affect the society as a whole. What makes a visitor/friend want to become a member?

Decision Making

Decisions are made by consensus after consultation with the members of the team. Decisions that require further review or additional input from another group are moved forward appropriately.

Clarification

Areas where our team overlaps another committee or team are numerous. Our team is charged with greeting and bringing in visitors in order to grow our congregation. Actions such as Membership Journey need an active leader and fall in the "newcomer" and "established" area simultaneously. Another area is the Stewardship Committee, which by design was intended to maintain congregational participation and overlap with our team as we draw visitors in and help them participate more deeply. We also plan to partner with the Big Ol' Gay group to create a truly welcoming atmosphere.

Goals

The team has both short term and long term goals. One immediate and continuing goal is educational, to spread the message among the entire congregation that welcoming is part of our mission and everyone's responsibility.

- Short term goals
 - Coordinator for Membership Journey
 - Team captain for Welcome Team
 - Coordinator for Photo Directory

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- White and Pink Nametag generator
- NCT team members from a wider congregational demographic
- Welcome Team needs greeters. Using four a service. Need 11:00am on the first Sunday and 9:15am on the Second Sunday.
- Repeat Pink Name Tag party in the fall and the Newcomer Breakfast.
- Assist Stewardship in welcoming events
- Long term goals
 - Leadership transition plan for chair/co-chairs once recruited
 - Constant consideration of visitors and friends moving from visitor to attending multiple times and ways for them to consider membership
 - Name tags that function, are fun and orderly
 - Newer or modified pew racks for existing and reformatted brochures and current hymnals
 - Change up the current activities of the monthly team meeting. Consider guest speakers, from our society, other ministers perhaps.

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Nominating Committee Clarification Document

- 1) The mission of the Nominating Committee is to select people who will be the leaders of the Society.
- 2) This committee gathers information about the roles people have in the Society. From our own knowledge, from information from others as well as a self-nominating process, this committee develops a list of people to fill roles that will be voted on in the Annual Meeting in May. We call/meet with these people and keep asking people until we have each position filled. We then present this slate to the Annual Meeting for a vote. The specific positions we are involved with are listed in the by-laws. We have developed a list of all the people who have been asked and their responses and use this list each year as we begin our work.
- 3) There is no formal relationship between the Nominating Committee and any other committee in the Society. We have informal contacts with people as we need to survey the entire congregation for potential candidates. It is agreed that beginning this year (2011-2012), we have a formal relationship with the "President Team" and Minister. The committee is sharing the list of potential candidates with the team and Minister and they in turn will share their thoughts about the suitability from their stand point of each of the people. They can also make suggestions about whom else we might consider. The final decision about who to ask remains in the hands of the Nominating Committee.
- 4) Decisions about who to ask is done on a consensus basis. As some members of the committee are more familiar with individuals who are mentioned, those who do not know someone accept the opinions of those who do. The decision of the Nominating Committee is final and except for the relationship with the presidents and minister as mentioned above, there is no other collaboration in this process.
- 5) The role the Nominating Committee plays in selecting the slate for the Annual Meeting is relatively clear. This year, we will be working more closely with the presidents and Minister to ensure that the people who we select have been vetted more carefully.
- 6) The short-term goal of this committee is to annually select the best candidates for the slate to be nominated at Annual Meeting. A mid-range goal is to develop job descriptions for each position with qualifications and time commitments. We will be asking people who have had these positions to help us create these documents. The long-range goal is to advocate a process or processes that the Society uses to develop candidates with leadership skills who the Nominating Committee could access.

PARTNER CHURCH COMMITTEE
MISSION STATEMENT AND CLARIFICATION DOCUMENT

MISSION:

The mission of the Partner Church Committee is to coordinate and facilitate the partnership of the Unitarian Society of Northampton and Florence and the Unitarian Church of Homoród-karácsonyfalva, Transylvania, Romania, a connection which has existed since 1990.

Vision

We will keep before us the original intent of the Unitarian Universalist partner church program: to work for the survival of the world's oldest continuing Unitarian congregations by offering moral and material support after decades of oppression and economic devastation in the region.

Fulfilling the vision

A. We will nurture the spiritual bond between our Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist communities and promote friendship between individuals, following shared tenets of love, respect and mutuality in all our dealings.

B. We will give financial support, depending on available resources, for church and village projects which strengthen the Unitarian community in Homoródkarácsonyfalva, contribute to the general welfare, or promote economic development. An example is repairing/maintaining/improving the Unitarian church building and parsonage.

Expanding the vision

We will use the framework provided by our partnership to increase the USNF congregation's awareness of 1) the historical foundations of Unitarianism in Transylvania, and 2) our place in global Unitarianism/Unitarian Universalism.

TASKS:

1. Meet five times a year, in the months of February, April, June, September, and November. (Frequency may increase as needed for major projects.)
2. Undertake fundraising.
3. Maintain our institutional membership in the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council.

4. Continue to pay the Partner Church minister's annual internet access fee (currently \$250), as it facilitates our communications.
5. Encourage travel to and from Karácsonyfalva.
6. Keep the congregation informed about our Partner Church activities and news from Transylvania through articles in the PIONEER, displays on the Partner Church Committee bulletin board, and holding special events such as our fundraisers.
7. Hold an annual worship service with a partner church theme.
8. Consult the minister, lay leaders, and/or other USNF members as appropriate.

LONG TERM GOALS:

1. Build on the interest generated by the April, 2010, celebration by encouraging personal contact.
2. Begin to plan for another visit from the Benedeks and/or other partner church members.
3. Increase direct communication and share cultural and theological events that may be of interest with a wider circle of members and friends in both congregations through the use of computer video, Skype, and computer projection devices, depending on the interest of our partners and the availability of the necessary technology.
4. Join with our partners in a continuous review of our relationship, with the goal of expanding our knowledge and deepening our understanding of Transylvanian Unitarianism, and sharing with them our practice of Unitarian Universalism.
5. Join with our partners in identifying ways to further develop the tourism industry in Karácsonyfalva, so that the village can gain greater economic security. (The Benedeks have expressed interest in our participation.)

INTERACTIONS OF THE PARTNER CHURCH COMMITTEE WITH OTHER USNF COMMITTEES AND MEMBERS:

1. We welcome the Minister's participation, and support her involvement in any way we can.
2. We work with the R. E. Council and the DRE
 - a.) to explore the possibility of travel to Transylvania by Youth Group members
 - b.) to encourage children to send greetings to youth in our Partner Church and form pen-pal relationships
 - c.) to assist in any way when classes are studying Transylvania.
3. We plan with the Worship Committee when the content of Sunday services includes Partner Church issues.
4. We advise the Social Justice Task Force on any social justice issue regarding our partners.
5. We support and communicate with members hoping to travel and have personal friendships with Partner Church members.

DECISION MAKING

Consensus or majority vote.

AREAS NEEDING CLARIFICATION

The relationship of the Partner Church Committee to individuals or groups in USNF, including society-sponsored activities, when a partner church theme is involved

How to retain institutional memory re the partner church relationship

How to orient prospective new committee members

Flora Majumder, Chair, and Jeanne Kocsis, Secretary, Partner Church Committee of USNF

Pastoral Care Program
(updated for changes in 2014)

Mission:

Our Pastoral Care Team helps us reach out to one another in times of celebration, and in times of sorrow and difficulty.

Tasks:

Members of the team coordinate visits, rides, meals and other forms of assistance for members of our community who are in need.

Our minister and other members of the team are available for hospital and home visits, and for short-term pastoral counseling. We also try to stay informed about and to publicize community resources and programs that may be of interest. In addition, the Pastoral Care Team may sponsor support groups around a common issue or theme.

The Pastoral Care Team keeps a list of volunteers (“Pastoral Friends”) willing to provide rides, meals, visits, and calls. The coordinators communicate with the providers and recipients to see how things are going and to express appreciation.

Coordination with minister, staff, and committees: The minister, staff, and members of the congregation contact the coordinators when a need is perceived. Team members meet regularly with each other and the minister. The RE Director communicates regularly with the minister regarding particular needs of RE families.

Decision-making: The coordinators confer with one another, with those who make recommendations, and with the minister regarding decisions to be made.

Personnel Committee Description

Purpose

The Personnel Committee crafts and administers personnel policies and related business on behalf of the Board of Trustees. The committee ensures that hiring, personnel policies, benefit packages, and staff evaluations are implemented according to the USNF Personnel Manual.

Mission

The Personnel Committee strives to foster a cooperative workplace environment in which staff members are valued for their strengths, encouraged to learn and grow, and inspired to reach their full potential in service to the work of our congregation.

Membership

The Board of Trustees appoints the Chair of the committee, who must be a member of the congregation. Other members (2 or 3) are selected by the Chair, contingent upon approval by the Board of Trustees. Members of the committee must be members of USNF who have no conflict of interest relative to employees. Individuals on the committee combine experience in personnel, human resources, supervision, benefit administration, mediation, or other education or experience relevant to the oversight of staffing needs of the Society. Organizational skills, maturity, and respect for confidentiality are essential attributes for members.

Meetings

Meetings are held monthly at a site mutually agreed upon by members. Meetings are held in executive session, meaning they are closed to other members and friends due to the confidential nature of information discussed and the privacy of employees.

Functions/Responsibilities

- Consult on matters of employment, including but not limited to: wages and benefits, personnel policies, job description, assignment letters, evaluation process, exit interviews, staff meetings, staff interactions and relationships;
- Review policies and procedures and make recommendations for change on an as needed basis;
- Gather information from current UUA guidelines, as well as from state and city resources, on staff compensation. Inform the Executive Team about fair wages and benefit programs, reporting at the start of the annual budgeting process;
- Serve on hiring committees and make employment recommendations in conjunction with supervisors and relevant standing committees;
- Ensure the confidentiality of personnel files by maintaining locked files;
- Periodically review staff hours, pay levels, and job descriptions and staff evaluations with supervisors;
- Participate in long range and strategic planning related to personnel and staffing needs, consulting with the Treasurer and Minister regarding the most economical way to meet those needs

Communication/Decision Making

The Personnel Committee confers with the Board of Trustees on matters of policy and procedure, the Treasurer on budgetary matters, and standing committees (Worship, Religious Education, House and Property) relative to employee job descriptions. The Chair consults with the Minister on all of these matters and attends the monthly meetings of the Coordinating Council, reporting on personnel matters.

Recommendations about personnel policies are communicated to the Board of Trustees, which has the authority to make decisions. Personnel Committee recommendations are made through consensus.

Hiring committees are formed as needed with participation by the Chair of Personnel. These committees include the Minister, supervisor, one or more of the officers of the Society, and other relevant employees or committee members.

Clarification

Areas that are somewhat unclear are as follows:

- Who is responsible for screening volunteers and Youth workers?
- Tax issues related to benefits – which benefits are taxable? How is that decision made?
- What is the Board's role in hiring decisions?
- Who is best positioned to recommend increases or decreases in staff hours? Who has the final word on recommended allocation of staff resources to the BOT?
- The Board has responsibility for approving the budget. At what level should that approval take place? Should the Board override a recommendation with respect to increases, for example taking \$\$ from one employee to allocate to another, or giving an increase the supervisor and/or personnel committee doesn't recommend?
- Who should initiate and approve changes to an employee's job description?
- Is the committee's role advisory, operational, or both?
- Lack of access to documentation on benefit packages – Where can the Personnel Committee access information on employee's life, dental and disability insurance, pension plan, liability insurance?
- Workplace injury – how is the decision made whether to report to insurance company?

Goals

Short Term

- Monitor the staff evaluation process, facilitating a 6 month review
- Clarify and implement CORI screening process
- Review personnel files and bring records up to date

Long Term

- Plan a process for bringing staff compensation levels up to UUA guidelines

RE Council Clarification Document

Mission

The mission of the Religious Education Council (REC) is to monitor and support the mission of the RE Program which is: To build a caring community where children, youth, and families can safely learn and grow, where we covenant with each other, value our community, and honor our mutual responsibilities; to foster understanding of UU principles and put them into practice; to encourage exploration of ethics, morals, values, religious and spiritual beliefs in ways that welcome and support the whole person; and to support the development of personal and social responsibility within our community and in the wider world.

Tasks, Roles, and Responsibilities

The RE Council implements its mission in several ways. The RE Council has responsibilities for setting policy, procedures, and standards for the RE program and also has responsibilities as a working body. Responsibilities are detailed below:

1. The REC establishes policies, standards, and general procedures for the RE Program. The Director of Religious Education (DRE) brings her professional expertise and experience to the REC to aid in decision-making, and develops and carries out specific procedures.
2. The REC develops strategic plans and sets long term goals for the RE Program, and yearly priorities for the RE Council.
3. The REC plans and coordinates RE events and activities outside Sunday morning classes and youth group:

The REC determines the feasibility of holding particular events or activities (outside of Sunday morning classes and youth group). For example, these might include parent gatherings, new family welcome programs, or events around Halloween or the Winter holidays. It recruits volunteers and oversees implementation of the programs. The REC also acts in support of events through attendance and having a presence downstairs after services to provide information to parents.

4. Teacher Recruitment:

The REC supports the DRE in efforts to recruit and support teachers and youth advisers for our programs. Specifically, the REC works at the welcome table to sign up teachers, makes recruiting phone calls in spring and fall, and communicates with parents and the congregation about the cooperative nature (and requirement) of the RE program.

5. Teacher Support:

The REC establishes and implements programs for teacher and youth adviser support and orientation. This may include calling, meeting with, or mentoring teachers, as well as orientation programs, and contact at the Welcome Table.

6. Communication:

Jointly with the DRE, the REC plans and implements support, outreach, and communication with families. The REC considers and decides what kind of communication about the program as a whole or in particular topics (in the *Pioneer* or elsewhere) is needed and writes it. The DRE writes and coordinates communication about specific events and issues.

7. Sunday DRE coverage:

The REC assumes the basic responsibility for running the Sunday morning program in the absence of the DRE.

8. The REC sets budgetary priorities and compiles budget requests.

Committee Procedures, Relationship to Other Committees and the Congregation

The REC operates under our covenant, which is appended.

The REC holds monthly meetings, which members are expected to attend regularly.

Members include a chair or co-chairs, several working members, a Youth representative (elected by the Youth Group), and the DRE ex-officio.

The REC makes decisions by working toward consensus. When necessary members take a vote.

The members communicate regularly with other committees by: Sending a representative to the monthly Coordinating Council meeting, sending representatives to Board of Trustees (BOT) meetings when requested, and participating in meetings/workshops for lay leaders when available. We also communicate and coordinate with other committees on an *ad hoc* basis around specific issues, such as Social Responsibility projects.

The BOT sets policy for the full USNF, including the RE program, and the REC upholds these policies.

Remaining Areas of Uncertainty and Challenge

The REC is still working toward clarification about which parts of the tasks shared between DRE and REC are the responsibility of which entity, and on procedures for sharing these tasks more effectively.

One area of challenge is time and our capacity to complete tasks. We are working on clarifying priority for tasks if we don't have the committee capacity to fulfill all our goals. We also are working to clarify our short and long term goals and looking at various models for better supporting families.

Another area of challenge is how to involve the larger congregation in the RE program and in working with children and youth.

May, 2012

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY PLANNING COMMITTEE

MISSION

The mission of Small Group Ministry (SGM) is to deepen our connections through shared spiritual exploration in a personal setting. The SGM Planning Committee's mission is to create the annual series of monthly topics, manage the logistics of the program and develop leadership for future group facilitators, topic writers, and committee members.

TASKS

Brainstorm and choose topics for the coming year.

Write and edit the session topic guides.

Recruit and train group facilitators.

Provide group sign-up each Fall and form the groups.

Provide program support or guidance to facilitators throughout the year.

Provide management for safe group environment through support to facilitators and possible consultation with the minister.

Provide articles as requested for the Pioneer and other Society communications.

Role in the larger community:

Provide the opportunity for SGM participants to come together in small groups but with a common theme or topic to connect deeply on a personal and spiritual level.

Participants who are not members of the Society have an opportunity to learn more about UU and become a Friend of the Society. Some have gone on to be members.

Interaction with other committees:

The minister is asked to potentially coordinate monthly topics with service themes.

The Committee is available to offer support to groups that want to use the SGM process in other settings such as the Youth Group.

The Committee collaborates with the Membership Journey Committee to let new members know about SGM.

The Committee sends a representative to Coordinating Council to offer general support to Society activities.

Decision Making:

The Committee makes decisions by thoughtfully listening to each other.

The Committee meetings are run in the same format as a Small Group, which transforms the "work" into spiritual work.

The Committee works together to edit the topic session write-ups and resolve and problems or issues brought to the Committee.

GOALS:

The goal of the SGM Planning Committee is to hold the integrity of the program, assure that meaningful topics are provided, that groups are successful in following the format and benefiting from the experience.

CLARIFICATION DOCUMENT SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Mission Statement

Social justice is work that affirms and supports the worth and dignity of all people, serves the purpose of justice, equity, and compassion in human relations, promotes the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all, and maintains and promotes respect for our environment.

The broad mission of the Social Justice Committee is to ignite the passion for service in our community by developing, encouraging, supporting, and coordinating social justice projects. These projects include work undertaken by small groups in the Unitarian Society and larger Congregational Projects.

It is our expectation that work on these projects will enrich the lives of our congregants and strengthen our congregation as well as connect us with groups in the larger community. We hope to increase our awareness of social problems and work to ameliorate them.

Tasks

It is our expectation that the tasks undertaken by the Social Justice Committee will change year to year, in an attempt to address our mission.

Currently, Social Justice tasks include:

- Working with the Minister to determine recipients of “share the plate.”
- Publicizing social justice projects in the Society and the larger community.
- Reaching out to individuals or groups both within and beyond USNF who are initiating or working on social justice efforts.
- Developing new groups in the Society dedicated to addressing social justice problems.
- Helping congregants to connect with old and new groups in the Society.
- Developing a series of social justice “testimonials” to keep social justice salient to the congregants.
- Working with our community to plan and execute social justice events.
- Canvassing the congregation to determine social justice priorities.

Communications

The committee communicates regularly with the Minister, Religious Education Program, Worship Committee, Coordinating Council, autonomous social justice groups, and congregation as a whole. At times, these communications are formal (the calendar, meetings, newsletters, and annual reports). At other times they are flexible and less formal.

Decision Making Authority

The social justice committee has the authority to undertake the tasks described above.

Areas that need clarification:

How can we promote and support the social justice work of our members efficiently?

How can we ignite the passion of our community?

Goals

1. To work in conjunction with the minister, director of religious education (including youth group), and worship committee to develop a calendar of intergenerational social justice projects that will reinforce the lessons and sermons communicated during the once-monthly multigenerational services.
2. To improve functioning of the committee so that it is project-oriented and efficient.
3. To find a breadth of projects so that all members of our community feel called to participate in at least one of our projects.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE CLARIFICATION DOCUMENT

1. Our mission is to promote member's sense of ownership and commitment to the Society. We work to improve the cohesiveness of our community through encouraging stronger connections and raising enough funds to support the work of the Society.
2. Our tasks are divided between the major fund-raising activity, the annual Stewardship Campaign, and the other activities which we work on throughout the year. The Stewardship Campaign encompasses the largest amount of our time, as we begin the process in the fall and it is not over until the final results come in some time in March.
Other connecting activities and other fund-raising events occur as we have the time and energy for. As there has been no direction in this area, this part of the committee's work has been sporadic and intermittent.
3. Our committee interacts with other committees. In encouraging social activities, we have teamed with the Social Justice Committee and the Partner Church Committee (for First Fridays). In raising money, we work closely with the Board of Trustees. In the past, we have utilized the committee structure of the Society to initiate pledges.
4. Our committee makes decisions mostly by consensus. As there are many tasks involved in the Stewardship Campaign, the chairs and/or their designees make some decisions on their own when necessary. We have complete control over how the Stewardship Campaign is run. We have the Treasurer of the Board on the committee which helps us make decisions in conjunction with the Board.
5. The biggest issue that we grapple with is how do we (meaning everyone) integrate people into the Society and deepen their commitment? We would like to see more connections between people such as house gatherings but we as a committee have not been able to take this on. However, no other committee has done this either. The Newcomer Connections Team has a role but does not extend to including everyone in developing these connections.
6. Our committee's annual goal is to raise as much money as we can during the Stewardship Campaign. Our long-term goals involve community-building.

The Worship Committee

Our purpose as set out in the USNF By-laws:

“to work with the Minister toward enrichment and variety in the religious celebrations of the Society”

What that looks like

- Meet once a month in the evening with the minister;
- Partake in email communication throughout the month;
- Support lay-led services by providing service leadership (approximately once per month, divvied among members of the WC throughout the year);
- Collaborate with the minister on special Sunday services, such as holiday services, rites of passage services, or multi-generational services;
- Accomplish tasks as agreed upon in our meeting or via email;
- Liaison with the summer services sub-committee and support their work that ensures our doors are open throughout the year;
- Have a WC member attend the Coordinating Council meetings; in 2010-11 this role is fulfilled by our minister

Our overall goal is to cultivate a positive and rich worship experience through our support of the minister, support of lay-leadership in the area of worship, support of guest speakers from outside our immediate congregation, and in our direct roles as part of worship.

Specifically, our goals are

- **Cultivate** lay participation in worship services;
- **Foster** lay leadership in regards to worship, which includes our continued commitment to lay-led summer services;
- **Strengthen** the presence (visible and behind the scenes) of our youth and young adults in worship;
- **Support and Sustain** a vibrant and welcoming worship experience for those both familiar and new to USNF, with elements that are grounded in tradition and elements that are experimental and dynamic.