

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, NH (UUCN)
Meeting of the Board of Trustees**

Jan 3, 2019

Final Minutes by Jodie K. Holway, Clerk of UUCN, as of 29 Jan. 2019

Reviewed by Steve Hedges, Pam Jordan, John Burkitt, Lindsey Hedrick, Rick Spitz, Brenna Woods, Carol Houde, Lindsey Sylvester

Meeting Attendees:

John Burkitt, Steve Hedges, Lindsey Hedrick (Treasurer), Jodie K. Holway (Clerk), Carol Houde (President), Pam Jordan, Rick Spitz, Lindsey Sylvester, Brenna Woods (Vice President)

Excused: Rev. Allison Palm

Full Agenda: see APPENDIX A

1. Consent Agenda

1. **MOTION** to accept [December's Board of Trustees meeting minutes](#)
MOVED by pam, **SECONDED** by Steve Hedges, **MOTION CARRIED**

2. Minister's Report, Rev. Allison (see APPENDIX B)

1. Church building had a small break-in, during the night
 - i. Our old windows cannot be locked well
 - ii. One thing was taken: Rev. Allison's iPad!
 1. Board feels strongly that UUCN should pay to replace it
 2. Loss of the iPad was not due to Rev. Allison's negligence in any way
 - iii. Alarm system sounded, but intruder was gone by the time police came
 - iv. Property committee has now fixed all the ground-floor windows
2. Alarm system has some issues we've seen over time
 - i. Alarm goes off too frequently, sometimes doesn't accept the disarm code
 - ii. Discussed a time when the company didn't even receive the alert
 - iii. Property's Steve and Barbara Pugh considering a whole new alarm system
3. Ceiling in walkway between sanctuary and parish house has a leak
4. Rev. Allison has provided good interpretations, in this month's report

3. Simple Gifts Coffee House Proposal

1. Meeting with Nick Pangaro, interested in reviving Simple Gifts Coffee House
 - i. Date of meeting: December 19, 2018
 - ii. UUCN attendees: Rev. Allison Palm (via Zoom), Anya Zakiewicz, Steve Hedges, Carol Houde

2. Nick Pangaro sent a detailed proposal for how to staff it successfully
 - i. He's run a coffeehouse in Massachusetts for a long time
 - ii. This plan is a close partnership with UUCN, several roles filled by church
 - iii. Anya Zakiewicz was at meeting, would stay a bit involved to help out too
 3. Nick likes the option of running the coffee house as a church program
 - i. That was our first option from last month's discussion in this Board (other options were letting it run at arm's length, or just letting it disappear)
 - ii. Nick likes the idea of raising contributions for UUCN's Outreach collections
 - iii. Some performers may be so aligned with our mission that they can stay overnight after a Saturday performance, to perform in our Sunday services
 4. Rev. Allison suggested by text we give it a try (she's out for holiday leave this week)
 - i. Since he's proposing 3-4 shows per year, this seems very doable
 - ii. (We don't want to "try" to commit for e.g. 10 shows but bail in the middle)
 - iii. Meeting in Dec. inspired confidence about his intentions, abilities, dedication
 - iv. Nick has put a lot of thought into integrating the church with the music
 - v. He seems to want the church to be a closer partner with the music, beyond what he has experienced in his prior church, Haverhill, Mass.
 - vi. He's retired, wants this as part of his own creative and social outlet
 5. Any special investments would be needed in our space?
 - i. No renovations needed, no capital outlay needed
 - ii. The existing equipment all belongs to church
 1. Anya Zakiewicz was at the meeting, raised no problem with this
 2. Nothing else is needed to do the shows
 6. How to handle money matters
 - i. In Nick's plan, all working with money is assigned to church roles, not him
 1. This is great for transparency, to see all inflow/outgoing funds
 2. He does want the coffee house to be positive cash flow for UUCN
 3. Eventually, knowing that proceeds will go to support the community could become a draw for attendance
 - ii. Simple Gifts will continue having its own checking account, but part of UUCN's larger bank account
 - iii. Simple Gifts will continue to share UUCN's Tax ID
 7. Simple Gifts team would report back periodically to Rev. Allison about how it's going
- 4. Minister Evaluation, Rick Spitz and Monitoring Sub-Team**
1. Online form is now ready to be sent out to evaluators
 - i. Rick updated it to display only the right forms, based on your team
 - ii. Teams to receive requests: Board of Trustees, Pastoral Care, Worship Associates, Stewardship, Social Justice Leadership, CWG-WWS Board, and two groupings of Staff
 - iii. Rick will email out the invitation URL to a few people in each of those groups

1. **ACTION: Jodie** to send Rick names of each group's chair(s)
2. Note, the UUCN website's list of contacts per group is out of date
2. Rick will send out the invite on Saturday
 - i. Draft the explanation now, for forwarding the URL
 - ii. Rick, Pam, Lindsey will phone team leaders to give the heads up
 - iii. Schedule:
 1. Inform participants that they can fill in the evaluation over two weeks
 2. Plan to send a reminder if not done, 3 days after those 2 weeks are up
 3. Hope to get feedback by next UUCN Board meeting, Feb. 7, 2019
5. **Linkage Report**, Steve Hedges and Linkage Sub-Team (see Appendix D)
 1. Right now there are several big projects and decisions about to occur with the Board
 - i. The congregation doesn't know what we're working on, they should know
 - ii. They've given lots of input recently, and not getting much back as of now
 - iii. Wonder whether they're feeling frustrated, giving feedback into a "black hole"
 2. From where does the UUCN Board of Trustees get its moral authority? Who are our "owners"? Another way of saying this, to whom is the Board accountable?
 - i. The congregation, but perhaps not only that – we could consider broadening?
 - ii. Unity broadened what they consider to be their source of authority:
"The moral owners of Unity Church-Unitarian are those who yearn for the Beloved Community and see Unity Church as an instrument for its realization. The Beloved Community is engaged in the work of the spirit. It is community at the highest level of reality and possibility, where love and justice prevail."
 - iii. Makes some of us think of the Seven Generations tradition of Native Americans: we're the ones in the middle of three past generations and three future generations
 3. Knowing this enables us to validate what we're doing – and Linkage is key to this
 - i. This requires an ongoing process of communication
 - ii. We're finding other congregations that are grappling with this
 - iii. "What does it mean to you personally to connect, grow, and serve in connection to the church?"
 4. Unity's Five reasons for Linkage: use these as a report card on our performance
 - i. See PPT, these initial grades aren't very good
 - ii. Discussion of "Educate the Owners", with a proposed grade C-
 1. Better communicating about the Board's role will get us better input:
 2. After we can educate the congregation to know we're not operational, then they'll give more-strategic input – which is exactly what we need!
 5. How to track our accountability? What to measure?
 - i. What does it even mean to do well, what is the metric
 - ii. Just decide NOW what we want to communicate
 1. Then we can evaluate whether we did it, at end of the year

2. Afterwards we can determine whether it achieved the desired effect(s)
- iii. This is a good question for Unity Consulting
 1. And by the way, Unity is about to give us a lot more great info
 2. This means more to share with the congregation: so it's good timing to beef up our communications and linkage planning
6. Brainstorm ideas for how and when to communicate back to congregation
 - i. FaceBook post for Board Minutes
 1. Accessible summary of here's what we just did, and what we'll do next
 2. FB group has 216 members, the most-popular posts get 50ish views
 - ii. We held open Board discussions when Harry Purkhiser was president
 1. The Board generally presented a topic, e.g. White Wing School
 2. Everyone said their piece, holding the floor by passing an object around
 3. People did attend, they wanted to interact with the Board
 4. This would help Nominating Committee find future Board members
 - a. Show that today's BoT does interesting thought-provoking stuff
 - b. In casual conversations today, we find many people are astonished at the cool stuff we work on
 - c. Even if or especially if they had served on the Board themselves in past eras – now Policy Governance makes our work shorter hours, less operational, and more exciting,
 - iii. Social media
 1. Past presidents Harry Purkhiser and Dave Hudson did a monthly blog for a while
 2. Timely topics included Stewardship, White Wing, etc.
 - iv. Consider one week per month, "Trustees Corner"
 1. Five minutes' announcement during service, just a teaser
 2. Invite everyone to a conversation after Fellowship Hour that day
 3. "Deeper than Coffee" is occasional, usually on the service's theme
 4. Can plan this the 2nd week of each month, right after BoT meeting
 5. We have to present back out to the congregation, not only listen
 6. We have to make it fun, don't want to give impression of standoffish
 - v. Board recommends we should follow this plan, starting on February 10, 2019
 1. Give 5 minutes teaser during the service about the work with Unity
 - a. Worship Associate that week is Lindsey Sylvester
 - b. Board Welcomer that week is Jodie K. Holway
 - c. Unity offsite is that weekend, so no real time to process!
 2. Hold a "Trustees Corner" 1-hour discussion after Fellowship
 3. Need to have "guiding questions" like in LRPC meetings, to prevent it from going off rails, just in case there's any possibility of this
 4. Do it again 2nd Sunday in March, gives us more time to better present the Unity work

7. Unity Consulting offsite is confirmed, the “Nested Bowls Retreat”
 - i. Dates Feb 8, 9th: Friday from 4 -8 pm, Sat all day 9-4 pm
 - ii. All their travel arrangements are made to visit us
 - iii. Carol Houde found the location: house in Nashua from summer retreat

6. The Board’s Role in Hospitality, Carol Houde

1. All of us on the Board need to consciously and carefully welcome newcomers!
 - i. Sherri Woolsey was and is so phenomenally good at making people feel welcome, having her on staff had allowed the rest of us to abdicate a bit
 - ii. Carol noticed a newcomer last week, standing around expectantly during fellowship hour, holding a mug of coffee by himself, nobody approached him
 - iii. Everyone was in little groups with their friends, not reaching out to others
2. It’s easy to spot newcomers during the service – they don’t know the words etc.
3. We as leadership can better model the welcoming we want to embody!
 - i. We should be sure to watch for new folks, and approach them
 - ii. Take the Kathy Grossman approach, pause your conversation with friends when you see someone to greet – excuse me, I need to go welcome someone
4. And don’t overwhelm the newcomers either!
 - i. After a couple of exchanges, give them an “out” of the conversation
 - ii. E.g. “I won’t take up all your time, but I just saw you and I wanted to say hi.”
5. Physical space: is there any way to change the room, to make it more welcoming?
 - i. Different model of how to line up to get coffee, to use space better?
 - ii. Possibility to offer different mug colors: self-selecting take a yellow mug if you want to be talked to? it’s totally optional
 1. This would apply to members too, not just encourage newcomers
 2. If I need to be approached today I’ll take a yellow mug too
 - iii. Could we catch people for fellowship before they head out the door, in the back of the sanctuary too?

7. Questionnaire as to Dissolving the UU Northern New England District, led by Carol Houde (see Appendix D)

1. Propose to collect questions for Rev. Allison, discuss via email
2. Section A.1. which services by the Region do we consider the most valuable?
 - i. Support for transitions in congregational religious professional staff
 1. #1 Expert help in navigating the UUA ministerial search process
 2. #2 Coaching during staff transitions
 3. #3 Religious educator credentialing
 - ii. Support in development of good congregational governance
 1. #1 Counseling and guidance in times of crisis
 2. #2 Leadership development workshops or start-ups
 3. #3 Leadership development webinars (on line)
 4. #4 Staff specialists in small and rural congregation
 - iii. Specialized congregational support
 1. #1 Staff support for issue-based social action networks

2. #2 Capital campaign support
 3. #3 Counsel around joint ministries
 4. #4 Continuation of Chalice Lighter Program
 - iv. Communications Concerns Raised
 1. #1 Connections with other congregations facing similar issues
 2. #2 Better communication about staff support available to congregation
 3. #3 Having a staff contact person who knows our congregation
 3. Section B. Financial Concerns around Dissolution: we reached no conclusions tonight:
 - i. Restrict beneficiaries to NNED congregations in perpetuity,
 - ii. Restrict beneficiaries to NNED for a period of years (e.g 3-10 to be determined)
 - iii. Restrict beneficiaries to New England Region for a period of years (3-10; TBD),
 - iv. Allow our UUA staff to benefit congregations as they deem best serves our faith, ensuring donor intentions are honored.
 4. Discussions around Section B:
 - i. What services does UUCN get? Not many, we're pretty self-sufficient
 - ii. Don't make it more complex for the dispersal organization
 - iii. Seems like this is a referendum on whether we trust the UUA to spend wisely
 - iv. Why is there no option to put it all into the Regional budget in perpetuity?
 - v. What was the expectations of the people who donated? How to honor those?
 1. Was it more than just "Help our geographic area"
 2. Where did the money come from? Impression that it's donors from their will, not fees from various churches.
 3. But still the donors cannot reach into the future to control it forever
 - vi. What happened when other districts dissolved, is there a precedent?
 1. No they didn't have as much money, so not a similar model to follow
 - vii. So many UU locations within New England; maybe give to help other regions?
 - viii. How to resolve this:
 1. Carol Houde will pose these questions by email to the NNED
 2. We will discuss and vote by email over the next week
- 8. Input from New Church Members and Friends, Carol Houde**
1. Ask these folks "What does the church do now that's filling you spiritually?"
 2. Instead of only accepting written input, we can give them a few people to talk to:
Carol Houde, Jodie K. Holway, Steve Hedges volunteer to be listed in this invitation

9. Closing – Meeting Adjourned

APPENDIX A: Agenda

APPENDIX B: Minister's Report

APPENDIX C: Linkage Report

APPENDIX D: NNED Questionnaire

FINAL AGENDA

Board of Trustees, Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua
January 3, 2019 at 6:30 pm

The mission of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua is to engage people in a search for truth and meaning within a supportive liberal religious community that encourages personal and spiritual growth, embraces diversity, and promotes social justice.

6:30 [15] Admin: Chalice Lighting (Jodie Holway)
Check-in

6:45 [5] Admin: Consent Agenda
•December BoT Minutes

6:50 [10] Monitoring: Minister's report (Allison in absentia)

7:00 [20] Executive: Simple Gifts Coffee House Proposal

7:20 [10] Monitoring: New Minister Evaluation Process and Format: last questions (Rick)

7:30 [20] Linkage Subcommittee: Communication with the Congregation: a bidirectional arrow ←→ (Steve, Jodie, and John)

7:50 Break

8:00 End of break

8:00 [10] Visioning: Unity Consulting Update (Carol and Brenna)

8:10 [20] Admin: Questionnaire as to Dissolving the Northern New England District (Carol)

8:30 [15] Linkage: The Board's role in hospitality (Carol)

8:45 [10] Admin: Upcoming Subcommittee topics and rotation schedule
Personnel to present in February on new formulation of Personnel Team/Committee
March and April presentations: Monitoring and Visioning

8:55 [5] Admin: Covenantal check-out

9:00 [5] Admin: Closing words (Carol)

Visioning: Brenna Woods, Carol Houde, Lindsey Sylvester

Monitoring: Lindsey Hedrick, Pam Jordan, Rick Spitz

Linkage: Steve Hedges, John Burkitt, Jodie Holway

Parking lot:

- Articles of Agreement Changes--required 501(c)3 revisions, approved but not submitted
- Removal of hyphen from official name of congregation
- Board job descriptions (Are we officially done?)
- Knowledge management
- Examine oversight of committees of the congregation--Nashua Cemetery Assoc., et. al.

Minister's Report to the Board of Trustees
Rev. Allison Palm
UU Church of Nashua, NH
December 28, 2018
Covering December 6 – December 28, 2018

1. WITHIN

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua is a spiritual home where members and friends experience personal transformation by:

- *Participating in varied and meaningful common worship that nurtures, challenges, and inspires;*

Interpretation: Worshipping together is central to who we are as a congregation. Our worship draws from a wide variety of sources and does not look the same every week. We seek to engage all ages in our worship. Worship connects people to their Unitarian Universalist faith, offers hope, encourages deeper reflection on individual's beliefs and values, and motivates people to live out their values in the world.

- Average attendance so far this year: 148 (numbers for December not included)
- We held two Christmas Eve Services at 5pm and 7pm. Both were well attended, as was the fellowship time in between services. Our Christmas Eve choir sang beautifully at both services.
- On December 23, our children and youth presented a service that they had been working on all of December in their classes. They did a wonderful job! Thanks to Sadie for all the work organizing that service.

- *Exploring religious values and discovering individual truths;*

Interpretation: We are a learning community, and we value learning with and from one another. We understand our spiritual lives as a journey, in which we are always growing. We are a theologically diverse community, and we support one another in finding our own spiritual path.

- Our children spent December preparing for the December 23 service in their classes and learning about putting together a worship service.
- Youth Group held their annual Holiday Sale on Dec. 16 and raised over \$200 for their trip to the Youth Revival in Maryland in March.
- Young Adult Group has moved their meeting time to directly after church. They had a great time baking cookies together in December.
- Current Adult Faith Formation programs include: UU History Video & Discussion series; Book Discussion series on *Honest, Direct, Respectful*; Monthly Poetry Writing and Yoga night, monthly Racial Justice Discussion Group, several Covenant Groups, Starting Point, and the three support groups listed below.
- *Joining in fellowship with other members and friends.*

Interpretation: We value connection and community. We understand relationship as one of things that helps us grow both personally and spiritually. We provide opportunities for members and friends to connect with one another and build relationships. As a result, both members and friends feel a part of the community.

- We had about 50 people at our All Ages Holiday Gathering on December 15, with a carol sing, potluck and service project (packing bags for community Dinner guests).

2. AMONG

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua is a welcoming religious community for all ages where we live our mission by:

Interpretation: Being a welcoming community means opening our doors and hearts to new people and new ideas. People of diverse backgrounds, identities and experiences feel welcome in our congregation. Being a religious community means that we are a part of something larger than ourselves. Our community is based in our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values. Being a community for all ages means that people at every age and stage of life are welcomed in our church, and people of all ages feel that this is their religious home.

- *Creating a beloved community where we minister to one another;*

Interpretation: We care for each other during difficult times, offering emotional and spiritual support and sustenance. Pastoral Care is not just the work of the minister, it is the work of the congregation. Members and friends feel cared for by the congregation and feel empowered to care for others.

- We have 6 Pastoral Care Associates this year, who are serving as ongoing buddies for 11 individuals or couples in the church. We had 4 official contacts logged for this month and many unofficial ones.
- We have three support groups running this year: a Grief Group, Caring for Aging Loved Ones, and a Parenting Group.

- *Supporting and respecting one another in our daily lives and our religious journeys;*

Interpretation: Each of us has our own life experiences and spiritual journeys. We respect one another's differences and offer one another support as continue to explore and grow. We share our stories with one another, knowing that this is a community in which those stories will be respected and held.

- Most of our Covenant Groups have gotten started for the year. We have 7 groups with 39 participants.
- *Generously giving of our time, talents, and money;*

Interpretation: Everyone in the congregation is a part of doing the work of the congregation and supporting the congregation both financially and with time and skills. Members and friends are inspired to give generously out of a sense of gratitude for this community and all it has given them. We nurture a spirit of abundance and generosity.

- The Stewardship Team held the first in a series of Grateful Gatherings this year. These will be house party style events, hosted by members of the congregation, to engage people in thinking about Stewardship in smaller groups. About 12 people attended, and we received 2 pledge increases as a result of the event. We have 8 more hosts signed up for events in late January and throughout February.
- As you have heard by now, we are shifting to a model for Greeting and Fellowship Hour that asks each person in the congregation to do each of these tasks once a year. We have released the full schedule and instructions. There are some holes in the schedule due to members who have indicated they are unwilling to participate. However, we have also had a number of friends who hve signed up and anticipate that we will be able to fill those holes in various ways.

- *Being good stewards of our church resources in pursuit of our mission.*

Interpretation: As we allocate time, money and space, we are mindful of how our allocations do or do not further our mission. We align our spending, our staff time, and the use of our space with the values, mission and ends set by the Board of Trustees.

- We have received 4 official application our Internship for next year. Burns Fisher, Allyson Jutras, Eileen Herring, Sadie Kahn-Greene and I will be the Intern Hiring Team. We will be conducting 3 interviews with candidates in mid-January.
- The Property Team continues to work on their 20-year maintenance plan.
- We had a small break in the first week of December. Someone came into my office through the window at night and left through the Chapel door. One item was stolen. Our alarms did go off as they should, but the intruder was gone by the time the police arrived. The Property Team has fixed the windows in my office so they can now be locked, and they inspected and fixed any other broken windows in the Faith Formation wing as well.

3. BEYOND

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua is a beacon of liberal religious thought and action, making a positive impact in our neighborhood and in the world by: Promoting our values and programs so that others will hear our voice and have the opportunity to join us; Welcoming people who are seeking a spiritual home and personal transformation; Partnering with other congregations and institutions in advocating for and promoting social justice; Actively participating in regional (Northern New England District) and national (Unitarian Universalist Association) Unitarian Universalist programs and activities.

- We continue to have a number of visitors this fall and are working on getting folks connected to the people and programs in the congregation. We plan to have a couple of Membership classes this winter.
- We put together 80 bags for Community Dinner guests and handed them out on December 16.
- I participated in the following community, denominational and justice events this past month:
 - attended the NH Voices of Faith 2019 planning meeting
 - attended an NAIC Exec Board meeting and the monthly NAIC meeting
 - attended an online Northern New England District Board Meeting
 - attended a New Hampshire Council of Churches Board meeting
- We had 8 regular weekly outside groups use our building in November : Overeaters Anonymous, 4 Narcotics Anonymous Groups, Alcoholics Anonymous, a yoga class and a Spiral Scouts troop.

4. CHILDREN’S WINTER GARDEN WITH WHITE WING SCHOOL

- Enrollment remains steady at 77. Afternoon enrollment has been increasing as the year goes on.
- The Board did not meet in December.
- I was invited to read a holiday story to the kids at the beginning of December. It was a lovely way to build connections between the church and the school.
- The pea stones from the parking lot play space have been removed and replaced with playground mulch. Hopefully this will make the parking lot safer for both children and adults. The school and the church split this expense.

5. Schedule

- a. The church office will be closed December 25-January 1.
- b. I will be away both December 30, 2018 and January 6, 2019. I will be on vacation and out of the area December 30-January 7.



Linkage Update

Linkage Sub-Committee

John Burkitt

Steve Hedges

Jodie K. Holway



Where We Are



- Actively engaged in Visioning / Long Range Planning
- About to engage Unity Consulting on future of our Governance
- Poised to Revisit our Mission, Values, and Ends (Nested Bowls)
- Developing new Ministerial Evaluation / Accountability process
- Reassessing ownership of Personnel Manual
- Moving toward a Vision-Guided Capital Campaign
- First-Gen Policies under consideration for review & refresh

Major issues and decisions before the Board
within next twelve months



What Will Guide Our Decision Making?



- On whose behalf do we do our work? Who is our “Moral Owner”?
 - Currently UUCN Congregation = Source of our authority & accountability
 - Unity Church-Unitarian has broadened their definition of their “Sources”
 - Should we?
- How do we know if our decisions will serve the Congregation?
 - What’s in the best interest of our congregation as a whole?
 - How will we evaluate if our decisions achieve the desired results?
- Who validates the governance work that we do?*

Linkage is the key enabler for Guiding and Validating
Decisions made by the Board

**From “Nested Bowls”, Laura Park, Unity Church-Unitarian Publishing, 2018*

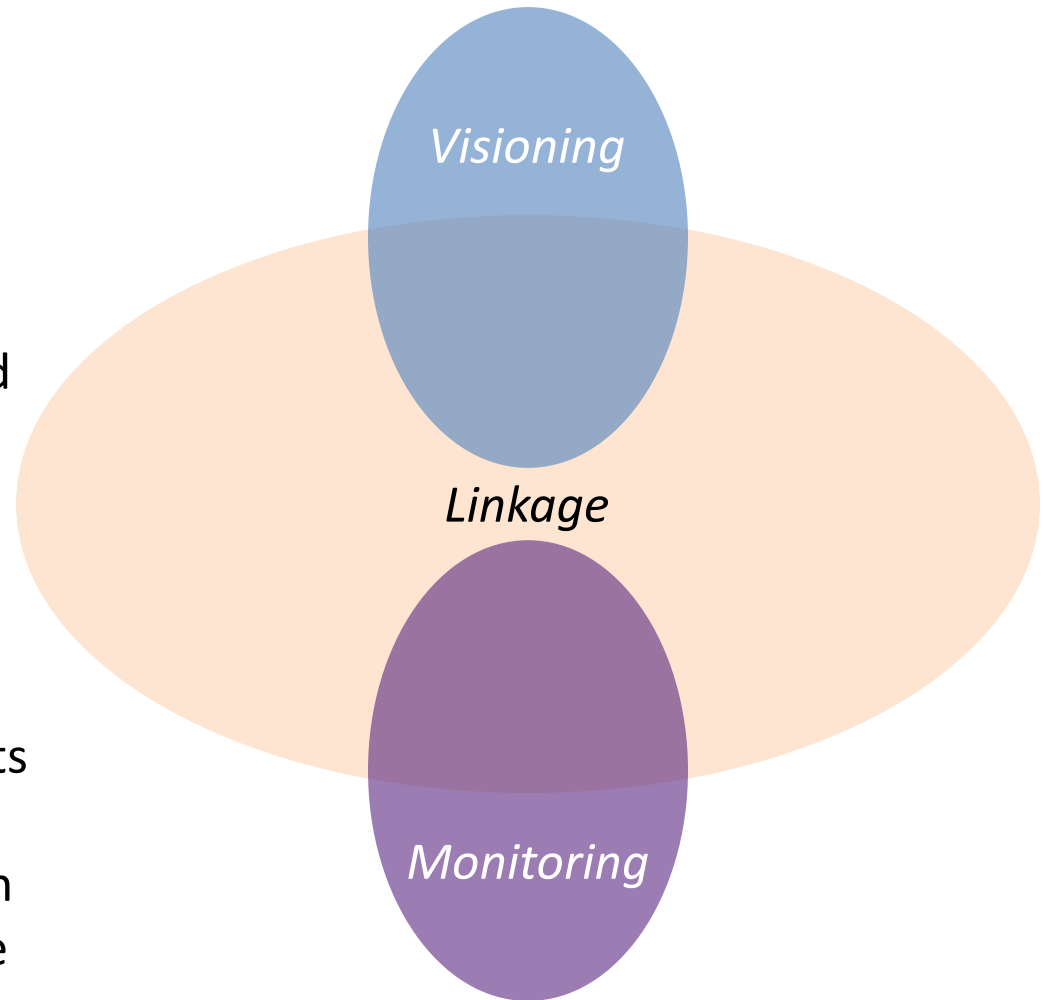


Linkage: Critical to Both Visioning & Monitoring



- Visioning requires listening to the values of the Owners
- Linkage is literally a **Means** to defining our **Ends**
- Results of Visioning of the Board must be communicated back to the Owners

- Monitoring requires soliciting feedback on the degree to which the church is fulfilling its Mission
- Linkage is the means by which we measure and demonstrate our accountability





Purposes for Linkage

Excerpt from Unity Consulting's "The Flame of Informed Connection"



Five Reasons for Linkage



Boards engage in linkage to:

1. Build a relationship
2. Create the future
3. Clarify values
4. Be accountable
5. Educate the owners

Policy Governance Fieldbook, Caroline Oliver, Editor; Mike Conduff, Susan Edsall, Carol Gabanna, Randee Loucks, Denise Paszkiewicz, Catherine Raso, and Linda Stier, Authors

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A Subjective Score Card

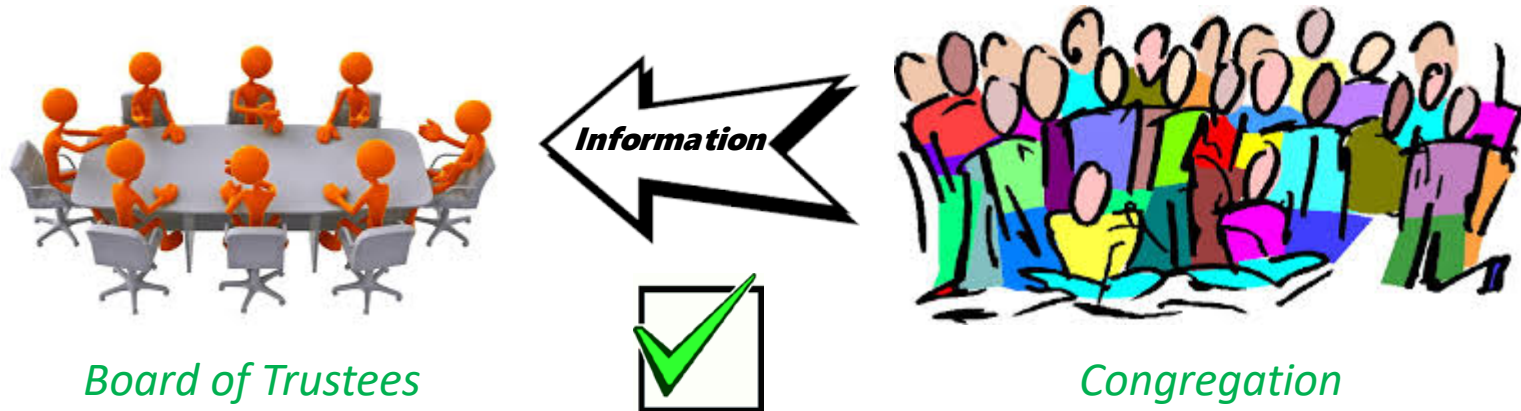


- ***Build a Relationship:*** C+
 - Budget, Bylaws, and Brownies sessions
 - Our Governance pages on UUCN website, including bios of BoT members
- ***Create the Future:*** B+
 - LRP Surveys of Congregations, Teams, and Staff
 - Cottage Meetings
- ***Clarify Values:*** D
 - Limited Track Record. Nested Bowls work will likely expand this work.
- ***Be Accountable:*** D
 - Solicit feedback for Ministerial Evaluations (not really BoT accountability)
- ***Educate the Owners:*** C-
 - Policy Governance presentation during Budget, Bylaws, and Brownies



Strengths

- Considerable focus on ***Soliciting feedback*** from the congregation:
 - General congregational health (MSC Survey Reassessments)
 - Operational accomplishments (Ministerial Evaluation)
 - Visioning support (LRP Surveys)



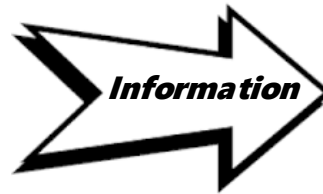


Opportunities to Improve

- Improvements in **Informing** the congregation about:
 - Big issues under consideration by the Board (Pre-Decision)
 - Big actions recently made by the Board (Post-Decision)
 - Sharing our thoughts on Ends, Missions, and Values (Nested Bowls)
 - Sharing Monitoring Observations that we've made



Board of Trustees



Congregation

By doing more **informing**, we are likely to get feedback that better fits the Board's charter (i.e. Strategic rather than Operational)



What Might This Look Like?



- **More frequent in-person Focus / Discussion Groups:**
 - Board hosts 3-4 Deeper Than Coffee sessions each church year
 - Budget, Bylaws, and Brownies serves as a past exemplar
 - Some focused on specific topics coming up before the board
 - Others configured more as listening sessions on Board-relevant topics
- **More accessible summaries of recent & pending Board Business**
 - Accessible via the Church Website
 - Supplements our posted BoT meeting minutes
 - Greater focus on future topics on which the BoT will be deliberating
- **Interactive online communications**
 - BoT Blog
 - Explore our own presence on Social Media

NNED Congregational Board Survey
From your NNED Board of Directors; January, 2019
*(please provide your responses on the answer sheet included,
and return by email or US Mail; addresses are on answer sheet)*

Introduction *(please read to your Board)*

As you may know the dedicated staff of our 4 New England Districts united to become the UUA staff of our New England Region of UU congregations in 2015. Since then, the Clara Barton and Mass Bay Districts have dissolved, meaning they voted to give up being individual districts in favor of being part of the New England Region.

Last April, at our NNED Annual Meeting, our District Board recommended we also dissolve our district structure. Their primary reason was that the Board's mission, to serve the needs of NNED congregations, was already being better served by our regional staff than our volunteer Board, with only one part-time administrative assistant, was able to do. Concerns articulated by our NNED Board and our NNED congregations around the possibility of dissolution focused, primarily, on how the needs of our congregations would be met if the District were to dissolve, and what would become of our NNED invested funds, most particularly those having restrictions.

These issues were brought up at the 3 assemblies (one in each NNED state) and one zoom meeting our NNED Board held last spring, which were open to all NNED congregants. 63 dedicated UUs from all 3 states participated in those meetings, and the questions below reflect their questions and concerns.

Your District Board is hoping to learn, from this survey, which of the concerns raised last spring you think are most important to your particular congregation. Your answers will ensure your concerns will be addressed as the NNED Board and UUA staff discuss whether and how dissolution could best serve our NNED congregations.

A.1. Importance of Congregational Services Provided *(Please record your responses on the answer sheet provided)*

Each of the following services, currently provided by New England Region staff and volunteers, was mentioned as important by folk participating in last spring's meetings. They are grouped into four areas:

**Support for transitions in congregational religious professional staff,
Support in development of good congregational governance
Specialized congregational support
Communications Concerns Raised**

Please rank order each of the services in each of these groups, with #1 being the one you think is most important, and #3 or #4 being the one you think is least important. *(Please rank each service in each grouping and record your responses on the answer sheet provided.)*

Support for transitions in congregational religious professional staff

Coaching during staff transitions
Expert help in navigating the UUA ministerial search process
Religious educator credentialing

Support in Development of Good Governance

Counseling and guidance in times of crisis
Leadership development workshops or start-ups, geographically nearby
Leadership development webinars (on line)
Staff specialists in small and rural congregation

Specialized Congregational Support and Outreach

Capital campaign support
Counsel around joint ministries
Staff support for issue-based social action networks
Continuation of Chalice Lighter Program

Communications Concerns Raised

Having a staff contact person who knows our congregation
Connections with other congregations facing similar issues
Better communication about staff support available to congregation

A.2. Concerns of Your Board Not Raised Above *(Please record your answers on the answer sheet provided.)*

If your Board has important concerns that you have not seen in the responses from the spring meetings above, please describe that/those concern/s briefly in the answer sheet attached.

B. Financial Concerns around Dissolution *(Please record your answers on the answer sheet provided.)*

Many of the funds administered by the NNED and by the UUA on behalf of the NNED are unrestricted, meaning the income can be used in whatever way the Board and staff think best to strengthen our congregations in northern New England. However, some are restricted regarding how the income can be used. Law requires that not-for-profit organizational bylaws include a dissolution clause stipulating the “successor organization” to which the funds should go upon a vote to dissolve.

As our faith has evolved, these successor organizations have changed. Unitarian and Universalist organizations became Unitarian Universalist organizations with the 1961 merger. The Northeast District (Maine) and New Hampshire-Vermont District became the Northern New England District in 2008.

Our NNED bylaws state that “without successor organization(s), there will be a transfer of the investment of assets to our UUA with language guaranteeing that “such transferred assets be held and used exclusively for the congregations within the former District, wherever within that area, and however those assets and their income are determined to be most needed by our UUA.”

Our history of denominational and geographic consolidation suggests we might want to offer the UUA more generous guidelines than currently stated in our bylaws, and some folk in the spring discussions agree. Others believe the existing bylaw should be strictly respected. Please record on the answer sheet the possibility listed below that your board thinks is the right thing to do, should our congregations vote to dissolve the District:

- Restrict beneficiaries to NNED congregations in perpetuity,
- Restrict beneficiaries to NNED for a period of years (say 3 - 10; to be determined),
- Restrict beneficiaries to the New England Region for a period of years (3 - 10; tbd),
- Allow our UUA staff to benefit congregations as they deem best serves our faith, ensuring donor intentions are honored.

C. Your Congregation’s Use of Regional and District Resources *(Please provide answers on the answer sheet.)*

Finally, our New England Region staff and volunteers and our NNED volunteers offer many trainings, webinars, district or regional gatherings, and specialized services to individual congregations. Please list on the answer sheet, under question C all the events, trainings, or consultations your congregation, or members of your staff and congregation, have used (that you’re aware of) in the past 2 years.

Please return answer sheet a) by email to nnedadmin@comcast.net; or b) by US mail to NNED, POB 91, New Ipswich, NH. 03071.

Your NNED Board is deeply grateful for and appreciative of your taking the time to complete this survey. Thank you very much.