

Internship Committee¹ Annual Report

Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua

June 2021

Current Committee Members:

Ruth Cannava
Burns Fisher (chair)
Jenn Morton
Emma Rearick
Vengerflutta Smith
Kim Steele

In the 2020-2021 church year, the church has continued to have Ben Atherton-Zeman as a ministerial intern. Ben was a seminary student at Boston University School of Theology (he is about to graduate); his two-year internship is up this summer, so he will be leaving us in June. While Rev. Allison is Ben's official ministerial supervisor, it is also customary, and actually required by BU and the UUA, that the church have a lay internship committee that is independent of the supervisor; we are that committee. We meet each month with Ben, and our job is several-fold:

First we act as a sounding board: For example, we can help Ben with his questions about the church, provide a friendly and safe space to listen to his concerns, talk about our various views on UUism and functions of the ministry, and generally provide an alternate way to help him think about his time as an intern.

Secondly, we provide feedback. We have tried to be present for all of his sermons, and to have some of us involved in many of the functions he performs, as well as keeping our ears and eyes open during the normal course of our church lives. Our monthly meetings are a place to share what we have seen, heard, and thought.

Finally, the committee provides an evaluation for BU or the UUA. Ben also writes a self-evaluation, and we shared and discussed our evaluations with each other before turning them in.

This year, Ben went before the UU Ministerial Fellowship Committee—a huge step in the progression of a potential minister. The MFC is the UUA group that determines whether to give credentials to a potential new minister; these credentials will allow Ben to seek a ministerial job with a UU church or fellowship. The committee helped Ben prepare for his interview by talking about the interview (before and after) as well as by listening to and critiquing the sermon that was part of the interview process.

We are pleased to tell you that Ben successfully passed the interview and is now officially in “Preliminary Fellowship”. We will be sorry to see Ben leave UU Nashua, but we are happy for him, and for whichever lucky congregation he eventually serves.

This winter, Ben honored UU Nashua by asking if we would be the church to ordain him and the executive board agreed unanimously. We hope many of you had a chance to attend this celebration of Ben's ministry last May 23rd!

Thank you for your support of Ben; we ask that you similarly support Caro, our new intern who starts in August.

¹ We are called a committee rather than a team in order to match the standard language at Boston University and the UUA.