

Sept 23 Brainstorming Meeting Summary

On Sept 23, the Committee on Ministry Task Force hosted a pot luck supper where members and friends then answered some questions about our church

Demographics: 24 people total - Seven from Hopedale, Seven from Milford and 10 from other towns. We also had two responses sent in before the meeting both from Hopedale

Executive Summary – Overall what is important to most of us at HUP is our people, worship service, religious belief and being present in the community. Many responses around strong ties to people in the church, caring for our building, building strong Sunday worship service, increase knowledge around UUism and world religions. There was also good points around focusing on a few main initiatives, obtain buy in from the parish and move forward with those initiatives.

1. What Makes you Excited About Attending HUP?

Two main categories—Worship and People

Worship- The overall Sunday service is what is loved that includes both the music and sermons that is felt is appreciated in our beautiful sanctuary. Just as important is the relationships we have with other members of our parish. Many said they like they like the feeling of community and being with likeminded people

Other responses

Increasing community outreach

Food

Children

UU Beliefs

Nothing

2. What makes you feel included supported by the church?

Most of the responses focused around being with people and feeling needed. The responses included

- Being in a warm welcoming community
- Being asked for input and involvement
- Receiving positive feedback
- Community atmosphere
- Support given to people
- One different response feeling alienated because of religious believes that may different that majority.

3. In three years how would you like our church to be viewed by our community?

Most of the replies were to keep HUP a safe place for anyone to attend with any belief, race or LGBTQ status. We want our church to be viewed as someone who cares about our local community (Hopedale and surround towns) and helps in community programs. One quote I liked a lot was an incubator of spiritual thinking.

4. What is something you would like to make happen for HUP (internally or externally)?

The replies broke down into some main categories

Help with physical building and grounds, much feedback about accessibility project and want it implemented

Help with education spiritual programs. Some ideas included, woman's spiritual group, expand RE to carry through summer, training for parish/community on important topics, opioids/terrorism, members prepare and deliver sermons, open our space for open forums, vigils to support peace and healing.

Other areas people are willing to donate time, fundraising, governance and outreach.

5. How can we build a Spiritual community that changes lives?

Responses fell into three main categories:

- Social Justice and Community Involvement
- Education (Learning about other religions and our own)
- Institutional planning and direction

For Social justice make ourselves more relevant to the world, focus on one or two important issues, participating in outreach

Education – Training and discussion on seven principles, world religions, guest speakers, programming through life span education for all ages.

Institutional Planning—Define who we are, be more specific on goals and get consensus on a few – measure afterwards, make church more vibrant

One outlying answer was we don't need to build a spiritual community

6. Where would you like to see our energies directed in the next 3 years?

The four main categories Social Justice, Community, Welcoming and Unitarian Evangelism

Social Justice—Inclusive of all races and religions, leader in human rights and equality, liberal activist congregation supports diverse communities such as LGBTQ and Black lives matter.

Community- Thriving welcoming congregation that is active in the community. Place people want to be on Sunday mornings, use space as a resource for town events.

Welcoming –Be viewed as a vibrant welcoming community, accessible, an opening welcoming place of safety.

Unitarian Evangelism—Just the way people developed it the way it is, central meeting place for local UU churches and community.