

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF HARTFORD
Economic Summit, May 1, 2011

Call to Order:
28 people in attendance.

Meeting was called to order at 12:15

Subject	Discussion																
Stewardship Campaign	<p>Mike Winterfield as part of the stewardship committee provided a briefing on the results of this year's canvas. We have a large deficit and very painful budget cuts will have to be made, but there are things we can do to make the painful budget cuts less painful. We have \$235,000 in pledges and a projected deficit of \$125,000. There are two groups that could help make a difference. One, those of us that are happy with USH and can possibly increase our pledge. The second group is the folks that have serious concerns about where the congregation is going and are reconsidering their pledge as a way to communicate their unhappiness. Not to trivialize the concerns of this group, but please reconsider your pledge, defunding the congregation you love is not the best way to address your concerns. For those that are unhappy consider working with the leadership people and be clear about the things that are important to you. If we go forward with this large gap everyone is going to be hurt.</p>																
Budget	<p>The complete annual review of the endowment is available in the church office for your review.</p> <p>What are our priorities for USH? Let's do a couple of exercises</p> <p><u>Exercise #1 Non-Chocolate Coins in a Basket</u></p> <p>Everyone will get 10 coins and participants will split their coins among the baskets listed with 7 budget priorities. The coins reflect our priorities not the size of the budget. As suggested in the last meeting this will help us look at the budget from the "bottom up"-seeing where priorities are and not focusing on a current budget and where to cut.</p> <p><i>Question:</i> What happens if we don't pay our "fair share" to the UUA <i>Answer:</i> Think of USH in terms of the larger faith of UU. For the UUA to exist and continue to do its work on behalf of all the UU congregations it needs to be supported by individual member congregations like USH. As "fair share" members we can call on the UUA to help us through difficult times like over the last year-they provided a good deal of support and guidance. They also provide leadership development, curriculum for religious education, and assistance in ministerial searches. It is also in our constitution that we should provide our "fair share".</p> <p><i>Question:</i> Building costs are fixed expenses-how can this be on the table for reprioritizing? <i>Answer:</i> Yes, some of these are fixed costs, but maybe we could look at finding cheaper services or other cost cutting methods.</p> <p><i>Question:</i> Are district dues and UUA dues tied together? <i>Answer:</i> No, but district dues are about 1/4 of our total dues.</p> <p><i>Question:</i> How much does this building cost us to run and how does that compare to renting? <i>Answer:</i> That is something that we can explore so that we can have that sort of information to evaluate as a congregation.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Budget Priority</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Number of Coins Received</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Director of Religious Education</td> <td style="text-align: center;">53</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Building Needs</td> <td style="text-align: center;">48</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Staff</td> <td style="text-align: center;">44</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Minister</td> <td style="text-align: center;">47</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Internal Programs</td> <td style="text-align: center;">34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UUA and District Dues</td> <td style="text-align: center;">19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>External Outreach (<i>i.e. Social Justice, Information and Advocacy</i>)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">26</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Budget Priority	Number of Coins Received	Director of Religious Education	53	Building Needs	48	Other Staff	44	Minister	47	Internal Programs	34	UUA and District Dues	19	External Outreach (<i>i.e. Social Justice, Information and Advocacy</i>)	26
Budget Priority	Number of Coins Received																
Director of Religious Education	53																
Building Needs	48																
Other Staff	44																
Minister	47																
Internal Programs	34																
UUA and District Dues	19																
External Outreach (<i>i.e. Social Justice, Information and Advocacy</i>)	26																

	<p><u>Exercise #2: Red, Green and Orange Dots</u> There are six statements on the flip charts at the front. Each participant will receive ONE red, green and orange dot. Place the appropriate colored dot next to ONE of the six statements.</p> <p>Red dot=I DO NOT agree with this statement. Orange dot=I am NEUTRAL about this statement. Green dot=I DO agree with this statement.</p> <p>Each participant then will only be able to put a dot on three of the six statements.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="443 478 1360 831"> <thead> <tr> <th>Statement</th> <th># of red</th> <th># of orange</th> <th># of green</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>We need to have a full time minister.</td> <td>3</td> <td>6</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The endowment should only be used for capital projects.</td> <td>4</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>USH is a place where our children should learn the joy of music.</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>We should be a "fair share" member of the UUA and the District.</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>We should use the endowment for operating expenses.</td> <td>3</td> <td>7</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>We should spend more of our annual budget on social justice issues.</td> <td>5</td> <td>1</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Statement	# of red	# of orange	# of green	We need to have a full time minister.	3	6	8	The endowment should only be used for capital projects.	4	3	4	USH is a place where our children should learn the joy of music.	3	4	2	We should be a "fair share" member of the UUA and the District.	3	2	1	We should use the endowment for operating expenses.	3	7	2	We should spend more of our annual budget on social justice issues.	5	1	6
Statement	# of red	# of orange	# of green																										
We need to have a full time minister.	3	6	8																										
The endowment should only be used for capital projects.	4	3	4																										
USH is a place where our children should learn the joy of music.	3	4	2																										
We should be a "fair share" member of the UUA and the District.	3	2	1																										
We should use the endowment for operating expenses.	3	7	2																										
We should spend more of our annual budget on social justice issues.	5	1	6																										
Open Discussion, Comments	<p><i>Comment regarding the minister:</i> We need to know how many people would come back if we got an interim or new minister, and how much money would be restored to USH. Conversely we need to know how many people would leave if we got an interim or new minister, and how much money they would remove. There needs to be a poll to include all of the current congregation as well as those who have left USH, so we could have that information.</p> <p><i>Response #1:</i> I would leave if we got a new or interim minister. I would be glad to just move forward.</p> <p><i>Response#2:</i> Although I am very happy at USH right now, we could electronically have a vote to see what others think.</p> <p><i>Response #3:</i> I am apprehensive about raising such a divisive issue. It is the community that keeps me here.</p> <p><i>Response #4:</i> The group on ministerial relations would have to be involved with this process if we were to really go forward with it.</p> <p><i>Response #5:</i> This church community is more than who the minister is. We have a covenant that we say each week as a community. We are a community with many issues and for some folks the minister seems to be the main issue-we are much more than that.</p> <p><i>Comments on closing in the summer:</i> One idea has been to close during the summer; however we do get a lot of visitors during that time. West Hartford is open all summer however their Sunday service is done by an all-volunteer staff and the church office is closed on certain days.</p> <p><i>Question:</i> How much would we save? We don't know. Savings would be in staff compensation.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> This summer there will be 9 staff run services. There could be volunteer office workers-we have one already. If we have to cut staff hours we need to discuss how to fill the void with more volunteers.</p> <p><i>Comment on compensation:</i> Maybe we need to look at reducing the compensation of the minister.</p> <p><i>Comment on marketing:</i> Increasing marketing of USH would be a worthwhile activity.</p>																												

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm
Respectfully submitted, Meredith Vasta