

Meeting - Nov. 1, 2023

Location: Pilgrim UCC, Nashua

Attendees: Rev. Judie Bryant (host), John Rowntree, Allison Palm, [Kristy BesadaJocelyn Sharp-Henning](#) Jon Spira-Savett, Bobbe Knickerbocker, Meta Vornehm, Jim Jensen, Tom Woodward, Bill Donahue, Karl Hester, Meg Hamm, Becky Green, Kathy Boss, Martin (from GSOP)
Joining via Zoom: Joanne Perez, Karla Tolomeo, Kim Hester, Nancy Meyer, Sharon Sargent, Tanya Stormo Rasmussen, Katy Cowen, William Manseau.

Attendees broke into three groups, two in the room and zoom participants in a breakout room to answer these questions. Each group had a designated reporter.

The Questions:

1 – What beliefs do you hold that inform your participation in the NAIC?

2 – How does what we do together reflect those beliefs, values and principals?

After 20 minutes of discussion these were the reports:

Meta reports for table 1:

All come from personal backgrounds, see faith intersections and our place in that. There is a unity or wholeness that enriches our life. God wants us to be united. We want to love each other. We are a bridge between our faiths and the wider community. We are curious. Use for networking and relationship building.

Events have helped us build understanding of one another. It is a good place to ask questions. Humanize us and remove labels that can harm. Clergy support groups have been good. We increase our impact on the community. Need to add something in the springtime. Open up to our congregations to do a book group - My Neighbors Faith (Peace, Rose, Mobley editors, Orbis Books).

Meg reports for table 2:

Group stressed how this group encourages our sense of community, and community greater than just this group. We support and learn from each other. Learn about avenues to put faith into action, such as the Crop Walk.. Get joy from Interfaith Choir. Place where we feel a sense of love and learn of the needs of the community.

Would like to have more events where we can all participate. Our activities express our religious beliefs. Tom: Would like to have a discussion on various religious sacred writings. What do you need to develop your personal faith? Is there a place for intercessory prayer?

Sharon provides a statement from the zoom group::

Q1 - We are like a soup that warms the body and satisfies the soul. We are a beautifully woven tapestry - a masterful work coming together from different faith backgrounds and traditions, uniting to meet the needs of the greater community to make changes for social justice, equity and equality through understanding our own and other's ministry work, both secular and as faith based organization to do the work of serving our neighbors.

Q2 - Together we work towards a deeper understanding of the needs of the community through guest and participant speakers. We draw together, worshiping and practicing our own individual calling and communal calling, visiting each other's places of gathering, listening and respecting each other. We share what we are each doing to address the needs of the community, being intentional about expanding our resources and roles for more effective and efficient service to the community. And in mutuality, we partner with those we serve with respect and dignity, offering encouragement and hope. We are all in this together.

Feedback of board members - this input will be useful for us to review and discuss.

Thanksgiving Service - Nov. 21st, 7 pm at Nashua UU. Service is being organized by Jon and Allison. The Interfaith Choir will sing two songs. Template using 'For the Beauty of the Earth' - each speaker will reflect on one verse. Will have a participant from the Islamic Society.

Two emails will be sent - First on how to join the Interfaith Choir, Second will be the announcement for the Nov. 21st service.

Tom mentioned need for prayers for the Middle East. Kathy stated that we held multiple vigils for Ukraine last year rotating locations and Good Shepherd had a public service of prayer on Oct. 17th for Israel & Gaza. Another service is planned for Nov. 14th, 6-6:30. She is open to others participating to make it more interfaith.

Karl mentioned that in the past we have discussed how we include atheists. Maybe we can have a list of things for people to pray for. (added to the points from crop 2)

Crop Walk report from Becky - Very successful, about 300 people. Christ the King was #1 raising \$ 6,781, followed by Messiah Lutheran. Milford Methodist \$ 4,800 in big category trailed by Temple Beth Abraham, in small category Pilgrim UCC #1, Nashua Presbyterian. In Very big group Immaculate Conception (largest church in Nashua) followed by First Church. Total in the \$ 47,000 range right now. Likely to go higher. Would like to get to \$50,000. We gave a round of applause to Temple Beth Abraham for hosting the Crop Walk again this year.

Our minutes are now online on our website.

Announcements:

Allison Palm - tonight, 6pm online event for supporting LGBT+ youth by NH Council of Churches
Sharon Sargent - Arlington St. UMC will be celebrating 125 years of service to the Crown Hill community on Nov. 19th - service at 10:30, meal to follow.

Bill Donahue - Ribbon cutting ceremony at Home Health and Hospice maybe 16th of Nov. More info to be sent by email. Opening six new rooms.

Meta Vornehm - [Cynthia Whitaker](#) or GNMH has a program Power Hour on local access TV and would like a clergy partner to participate in a discussion about grief.

Deb Gershon of NH Healthcare Workers for Climate Action reminds us that she and others in her group are available to speak to our congregations about climate change impacts on health.

Meeting adjourned at 1:15pm

John Rowntree, President
Acting Secretary