**Staff Report**

**The Rev. Matthew Emery, Senior Minister *For Governing Board: May 9, 2017***

**Items needing Board action/response of some kind**

**Sabbatical Supply Minister:** Members of the Finance-and-Admin board committee have been working, with assistance from me, on developing a job description for the Sabbatical Supply Minister we will seek to employ during my sabbatical. ***This job description is likely to be ready for consideration and, hopefully, approval at this GovBd meeting.***

**Budget watch – Computer System Support:** Because of a couple of unanticipated need discovered in the process of our computer upgrades earlier this year (such as a new desktop printer for the Director of Music Ministry’s office, as one example), I will not be surprised if we end up overspending the 2017 budget line for Computer System Support. ***Just a “heads-up” that budget adjustment in this area may be necessary before the end of the year.***

**UCC Wider Church Delegates:** Janis Hoyle’s “term” as one of our delegates to the wider settings of the United Church of Christ (i.e. association and conference) has ended, and she does not wish to renew. It has been my strong feeling for some time that we would be best served by having Governing Board members/officers serve in this capacity, so as to make the exposure to and relationship with the wider church less ancillary and more integrated into the life and leadership of the congregation. ***The Connecticut Conference annual meeting is coming up in June, and we need to name a new delegate for it****.*

**Information Sharing items**

**UConn Construction and SCC Parking info:**The main points regarding this summer’s impact to us of UConn’s utilities construction were shared in the May issue of *The Carillon*. In summary, those are:

* one-way traffic, west to east, on North Eagleville Road, and no on-street parking on North Eagleville Road either
* SCC parking lot open, but only accessible via two-way traffic on *one* of the driveways. ***New info*** since the Carillon article is that it appears the available driveway will be the one that’s normally the outbound/exit driveway (this is, in my opinion, the less-desirable choice for a number of reasons, but ultimately both driveways are on the Islamic Center’s property and they seem to think this the preferable option; I have made known my perspective regarding why this seems the less desirable choice.)
* For Sunday parking, nearby UConn lots and the street parking along Horsebarn Hill Extension are all available to us (which was not the case last year).
* ***Other new info***: Timeline – construction on our side of the road is scheduled to be finished by August 15th. This means that at that time, both driveways will be opened back up to the parking lot. There will still be one-way traffic on North Eagleville and most-likely no access to the street parking, though, as there will still be work going on (just on the *other* side of the road).

**Just Peace Church ministry team formation:** I truly celebrate the formation of our new ministry team around the Just Peace Church process and subsequent justice-witness ministry. Alice O’Donovan is serving as the convener of this team, with Darryl Hilliard and Tina Huey as assisting conveners. The focus of this team’s work in the near term is on engaging the congregation in processes of education and discernment around justice-witness ministries in the life of a congregation and around whether our congregation feels called to declare itself, officially, a “Just Peace Church”—an action that would be ultimately taken by the congregation in a similar way that an ‘Open and Affirming’ declaration is. Beyond the near-term, this team would become a home and catalyst for justice-advocacy-and-witness work among us.

**Ministry Fair on April 23rd:** While I think the energy-in-the-room seemed lively and good fellowship was happening among congregants at the Ministry Fair on April 23rd, I’m also hearing around the edges that a number of our ministry leaders did not find it particularly helpful in terms of engaging new ministry participants. I will note that the class I went to in February around lay leadership development also significantly questioned the effectiveness of such events, although by that point in time, this spring’s ministry fair was already “on the radar” so it seemed a good idea to go ahead.

**Time away:** Please be aware of the following times away (both *past* and upcoming) for myself:

* May 2-4 – Serving as worship leader at the New England Association of United Church Educators (NEAUCE) annual conference, being held in New Hampshire
* June 16 & 17 – Connecticut Conference annual meeting, in Hartford
* June 29 – July 5 – United Church of Christ General Synod (*This time around, I* am *serving as one of our conference’s delegates*)
* July 17 – 24 – Vacation

*As far as I know at this time, the above listed items will comprise all of my “away” times between now and the beginning of my sabbatical on August 25th.*

**Community/outside Involvements:** From mid-March through early May, I …

* participated in the activities of the Windham Interfaith Working Group (multiple dates)
* planned and led worship (3 services) for the annual conference of the New England Association of United Church Educators (NEAUCE)

And coming up….

* I will be the presenter for the 2nd session of the Windham Interfaith Working Group’s “Sharing Our Scriptures” series, focusing on Christian scriptures and how Christians use and understand scripture; this will be May 24th here at SCC
* I will also be leading a session at the Bolton Congregational Church, requested by their pastor, related to the topic of choosing new hymnals