

### Attachment 3

On February 15, 2017, the Standing Committee (SC) formed a Task Force and charged it with (1) investigating the pluses and minuses of having the Winchester Unitarian Society commit to some level of sanctuary church status either Level One (i.e. a hosting congregation) or Level Two (i.e. a supporting congregation) and (2) presenting the SC with recommendations.

Initially, the Sanctuary Task Force members attended the March 29, 2017 Winchester Interfaith Meeting, conducted a literature search and benchmarked with six Unitarian churches. The process of engaging the congregation began in earnest in the fall and included:

- o September 17, 2017 worship service including a discussion afterwards with panelists from the First Parish of Bedford and the Epiphany Church
- o October 18, 2017 viewing of the film 120 Days
- o November 16, 2017 briefing by Immigration Attorney Susan Church
- o November 30, 2017 Guest Commentary in the local newspaper
- o December 4, 2017 Call to the Congregation for Sanctuary Support volunteers
- o December 10, 2017 Music Director's *Immigration Experience* cantata worship service

Given that the First Parish of Bedford has (1) declared itself a Level One hosting congregation, (2) prepared adequate space and accommodations to host a guest undocumented immigrant at its site, (3) sought support from seven houses of worship at a minimum and agreed to provide the necessary training, (4) hosted an undocumented individual one night with a stay of deportation granted the following day, and (5) become known to the immigrant community:

**The Sanctuary Task Force recommends for the Winchester Unitarian Society to have an immediate potential impact on ameliorating too hasty deportations by becoming a Level Two supporting congregation to the First Parish of Bedford.**

To ensure that the Winchester Unitarian Society could fulfill this Level Two commitment, the following call was issued to all WUS members, friends and staff:

Dear Winchester Unitarian Society (WUS) friends, members, and staff,

As part of our discernment process, the Sanctuary Task Force would like to gauge availability of WUS volunteers to provide support to a congregation hosting undocumented immigrants. We already know that the First Parish of Bedford has in fact hosted an undocumented individual. While only for one night (a stay of deportation was worked out), the Bedford UU church is now becoming known to the immigrant community as a "sanctuary church".

If Winchester Unitarian Society decides to become a support congregation, First Parish would be looking to us to provide **coverage over a 24 hour period one day a week.** Coverage is 24/7 since Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) could come at any time.

**We would need to cover 4 four-hour shifts and 1 eight-hour shift. Each shift would require two volunteers for a total of 10 volunteers over 24 hours:**

7 AM - 11 AM  
11AM - 3 PM  
3 PM - 7 PM  
7 PM - 11 PM  
11 PM - 7 AM

If you are not able to take a shift and would still like to help, you can also volunteer to be available for specific tasks, e.g. grocery shopping, transport of family members not subject to deportation, etc. Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks and training would be taken care of before we would be allowed to assist the First Parish. The first part of the training is logistics including familiarizing volunteers with the church building, where important information is located, and what to do if an ICE officer comes to the church door. The second half of the training will improve the ability to communicate with the guests who may have particular norms, issues or traumatic experiences.

**Please e-mail Marilyn Mullane ASAP at [marilynmullane@me.com](mailto:marilynmullane@me.com) if you are interested in volunteering.** For now, we won't worry about particular shifts or if you can handle an overnight. If you can only take on specific tasks, please indicate this in your response. We intend to brief the Standing Committee on December 13, 2017 and it would be helpful to be able to report that we already have adequate volunteer availability.

Thank you and if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to talk to any member of the Sanctuary Task Force.

Your Sanctuary Task Force

Steve Butterfield, Rev. Heather Janules, Rebecca Keller and Marilyn Mullane

As of December 13, 2017 we have twenty-two volunteers to cover five shifts over one 24-hour period per week and five others to do errands.

According to the UUA, because sanctuary is most commonly provided in conjunction with a public declaration of who the person in Sanctuary is, and why those sheltered are being provided sanctuary, there is no "intent to conceal". The UUA also noted that no U.S. congregation has been prosecuted for providing sanctuary in the past forty years.

If demand for sanctuary far exceeds the capabilities of the First Parish of Bedford, the Winchester Unitarian Society may want to revisit its Level Two decision and contemplate becoming a Level One Sanctuary Church at a later day.