

## **Update on Our Sanctuary Work- December 2019**

There are many exciting things happening as we work with our partners, the Essex County Community Organization (ECCO) and the North Shore Interfaith Sanctuary Coalition, on Sanctuary. We wanted to make everyone aware of them and also let people know where they can become involved.

### **North Shore Interfaith Sanctuary Coalition**

The North Shore Interfaith Sanctuary Coalition is a group of faith communities that have joined together to support UUCGL in its work on Sanctuary. The coalition is supported by ECCO and consists of dozens of houses of worship throughout Essex County. It meets monthly and has formed subcommittees to work on fundraising, volunteer training, and messaging. Four church members represent UUCGL on the Coalition's Steering Committee: Scott Nowka, Tom Sheehan, Mary-Ann Hayes, and Bruce Campbell.

### **Building Updates**

A local architect, Paul Fermano, and a general contractor, Tom Sutton (who completed the upgrades to the courtyard), were chosen to design and construct the living quarters on the lower floor. The focus is on constructing a modest living space that is useful for additional future church uses. Based on conversations with Paul, Tom, and others (the Properties Committee and the Faith Development Ministry Team, for example), and the desire for privacy for a future guest, the living quarters will be located in the far room located on the lower level closest to the bathrooms. A shower will be added to one of the bathrooms, and the space will be brought up to code for occupancy.

### **Paying for Our Sanctuary Efforts**

The funding for our effort to provide a space for a person in danger of deportation will come from a variety of sources, including (but not limited to) grants which ECCO will pursue, fundraising done at ECCO congregations and at our own church, and in-kind gifts for particular furnishings that we need. The church has provided up-front funding of \$4,500 to have the architect draw up plans so that total cost estimates can be generated by the contractor. Once those estimates have been created, the fundraising subcommittee, the Sanctuary Coalition, and ECCO leadership will have a fundraising goal to direct their efforts toward.

### **Message Training**

Staff from ECCO with training in media relations and messaging have worked with UUCGL to create brief talking points that frame and explain the Sanctuary work. You will see some of that messaging on posters and other informative displays in church in the near future. ECCO staff also conducted media training with several church lay leaders and staff.

### Volunteer Opportunities

If you are interested in the work described above, or Sanctuary in general, there are areas to become involved. The primary one is the UUCGL Sanctuary Task Force, which is overseeing our efforts on Sanctuary and meets monthly. The Task Force is headed by Scott Nowka and meets next on January 15<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. While it will still be some time before we can welcome a guest into our church, we aim to begin training presence volunteers—those people that will be in the church in set shifts while we have a guest in sanctuary—later in the spring. Those that would like to volunteer as presence volunteers, or train volunteers from other congregations, will have plenty of opportunities. More opportunities will arise in the future, but when in doubt- ask!

Scott Nowka, Chair, Sanctuary Task Force

Michael Celona, President, Board of Trustees