



Second Congregational Society
Unitarian Universalist
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Nantucket Unitarian Universalist Newsletter ~ January 2015

COMMON PATHWAYS

Windows Wide Open

by Reverend Linda Simmons

My husband Gary and I went to Phippsburg, Maine, a jagged peninsula jutting into the sea, for several days after Christmas this year and stayed in a bed and breakfast built in the 1800s on several acres of orchard and farmland. There are floor to ceiling windows in the farmhouse and the sun streamed in and touched these computer keys as I typed and mused and paused to breathe out loud.

On one of our nights there, when the sky was black and clear, laden with stars, we drove on a long, windy, deserted road out to the small town of Sebasco. We cruised with the radio up full blast and the windows open with the freezing air waking our minds: singing along, tapping the dashboard, laughing, wind tears falling down our red faces.

Turning toward the bay, down a weather ruttled dirt road, we dead-ended at a closed fish and chips restaurant and got out to sit on the night air soaked picnic tables. The sea landed softly on the rocky shore. We could see a small island, a dark stranger so close to shore, all pine trees and rocky outlines. It called to us. When we returned to computers and lights and heat turned up, we looked up that island and learned the story of Malaga.

The *Casco Bay Breeze* and other newspapers writing in the 1890s, printed stories about a "degenerate colony" living on Malaga. In 1905, the State of Maine built a school and sent a schoolteacher and began focusing its attention on the interracial, poor, island community. This did not quell the local outrage about black and white folk living together in harmony on this half mile long and quarter mile wide island.

Fewer than 10 years later, Governor Frederick W. Plaisted, concerned about the state's reputation, ordered Maine authorities to abduct and remove men, women, and children many of whom were forced into various institutions and, in 1912, undertook the mass eviction of the remaining 45-member community. To discourage resettlement, Maine authorities eventually dug up the graves, and took the dead for burial at the Maine School for the Feeble-Minded.

Reading this, taking this in, I realized we are never far from places within and outside of us that insist that others are other due to race, country of origin, religion, sexual orientation, ability.

The late Irish poet Seamus Heaney wrote:

"History says, don't hope on this side of the grave; but, then once in a lifetime, the longed for tidal wave of justice can rise up, and hope and history rhyme."

May we nurture each other to lives that speak justice and so be part of a history that encourages open hearted vision- windows flung wide open.

** Nantucket is full of common pathways, some known by many, others known only by a few. Our Meeting House brings us together, traveling over many pathways, some common, some not, as we learn to walk with each other even when the ways are unfamiliar and unmarked.*



**JOIN US AT 10:45 A.M.
EVERY SUNDAY**

Sunday, January 4
"New Year's Crossings"
Rev. Linda Simmons
Hendrix Hall

Sunday, January 11
"Cultural Diversity"
Lay-Led Service
Hendrix Hall

Sunday, January 18
"Beloved Community"
Rev. Linda Simmons
Hendrix Hall

Sunday, January 25
"Holy Experiment Day"
Rev. Linda Simmons
Hendrix Hall
Congregational Meeting
will follow the service.

Families Welcome!
Religious Education
for Children Every Sunday.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Jim Sulzer, Board of Trustees President

Every organization that flourishes does so because of the dedication and skill of its members. As we welcome in the New Year, I'd like to highlight the contributions of some of the UUs who play a big role in keeping our building, our congregation, and our spirit alive and well. All are volunteers, giving freely of their time and talents.

Buildings and Grounds: Where would we be without the know-how and cheerful stewardship of our Buildings and Grounds committee? Bob Lehman and Craig Spery are tireless guardians of our large, beautiful, historic home. The needs of our structure are many and unceasing—from large items such as a new roof, to smaller items such as a reset of a heating system or a tweak of a recalcitrant lock. These two gentlemen give myriad hours of on-call service to keep our home warm and safe.

Treasurer: I believe that no congregation in Massachusetts has a treasurer of such skill and dedication as our Paul Stewart. In a year on the job he has mastered every detail, from tax codes to line items to creating a new budget—and he has found ways to present it all so that the rest of us can understand it. We are extraordinarily fortunate to have him in this role—for years to come I hope!

Lay Led Service Committee: How wonderful have our once-a-month lay led services been, under the leadership of Kat Robinson Grieder, Val Hall, and Linda Spery! The beauty and elegance of these worship services are a fitting complement to the stirring, meaningful services led by our minister, the Reverend Linda Simmons.

Religious Exploration Committee: Anyone who has worked with Susan Richards is struck immediately by her cheerful, thoughtful, and inclusive approach to whatever she does. She makes the people around her better and happier than they might be without her. Under her leadership the committee has grown and is reaching out in new ways to enhance the religious exploration of our youngest members.

Caring Team: Lora Stewart has become a major force for good works in our congregation, from leading the shawl ministry to reaching out in many and sundry ways to members who might be in need. Her heart is beating deep in the soul of our congregation.

Grassroots Nantucket: Where would we be without Gary Langley? We hit the jackpot when we called Rev. Linda: not only did we receive a wonderful new minister, but we got Gary as well. His social awareness, kindness, and unflagging energy are behind much of what is best about our congregation—and find full flower in the initiatives of our social justice group, Grassroots Nantucket.

Fin Com: Our Finance Committee, consisting of Craig Spery, Jack Weinhold, Gwen Richter, and Peter Richards (as well as Treasurer Paul Stewart), works with great expertise and true commitment to ensure that our finances are in good shape. We are very fortunate to have them!

Fellowship: Val Hall has overseen the “coffee hour” after church, which often has become a full-on lunch! We are deeply grateful for Val's stewardship of these bountiful offerings. And where would we be without Karin Gockel's unceasing efforts to clean up afterwards—and keep our kitchen area tidy and spotless? She is definitely an unsung hero among us.

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Pledge/Members Fund Committee: Linda Spery remains the guiding force behind so many of our initiatives and successful undertakings—including the lovely redo of Hendrix Hall last winter. As chair of the Members Fund Committee, she (along with others such as Peter Richards and Jack Weinhold) led a very successful campaign to deepen our members' financial support of our church.

South Church Preservation Fund: Led by president Mary Beth Splaine, the SCPF is our guardian angel—the organization that raises money to preserve South Church. Under her leadership, the SCPF presented a stunning proposal to the CPC for funding for a new roof . . . which we hope to see next fall.

These are but a few of the many talented, committed, generous leaders of our congregation. On behalf of everyone, thank you so much as we ring in the New Year!



~NOTICE~
**The 2015 Annual Meeting of the
Second Congregational Meeting House Society, Nantucket
will convene at the Meeting House, Sunday, January 25, 2015
in Hendrix Hall following the service.**

Agenda

1. Call to Order and Establish Quorum - Jim Sulzer, Board of Trustees President
2. Opening Words – Reverend Linda Simmons
3. Presentation and Approval of Minutes of the Last Year's Annual Meeting – Steve Estabrooks, Clerk
4. Discussion and Approval of Operating Budget for 2015 – Craig Spery, Finance Committee Chair
5. Election of Board of Trustees Members – Nancy Rappaport, representing the Nominating Committee
6. Election of Treasurer – Nancy Rappaport
7. Election of South Church Preservation Fund Board Members – Nancy Rappaport
8. Election of Nominating Committee – Nancy Rappaport
9. Other Business
 - Vote on Approval of Expenditures for Reroofing Parsonage
 - Vote of Approval of Revised Congregational Handbook
10. Adjournment – Jim Sulzer

	A	B	C	K	L	R
2	2015 General Operating Budget - Board Recommended 12/16/2014			Budget	Projected	Board
3		Function		2014	Actual '14	2015
11	Income	Pledge Income Total		\$ 80,150	\$ 80,857	\$ 82,314
12		Sunday Collection Basket		\$ 9,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
13		Gifts (unrestricted)		\$ 4,000	\$ 500	\$ 500
28		Rentals Total (FdeL, CSHY, Weddings and HH rental, 5@Tower)		\$ 69,900	\$ 75,668	\$ 78,450
42		FUNdraising Total (Auction, July 4th, Concerts, , etc.)		\$ 20,850	\$ 15,527	\$ 14,900
46		Interest and Dividends Total (Endowment, Sanford Fund)		\$ 28,600	\$ 28,070	\$ 38,000
47	Income Total			\$ 212,500	\$ 210,622	\$ 224,164
70	Expenses	Ministry Total (2015 includes Provision for Sabbatical)		\$ 96,000	\$ 96,000	\$ 99,850
109		Building & Grounds Total (2015 includes Provision for Parsonage Capital Maintenance)		\$ 48,621	\$ 52,663	\$ 53,786
130		Operations Total (Office, Administration, Bookkeeping, etc.)		\$ 32,540	\$ 31,483	\$ 31,754
145		Religious Exploration Program Total		\$ 4,161	\$ 5,020	\$ 6,241
156		Music Program Total		\$ 21,378	\$ 20,029	\$ 22,045
160		Denominational Affairs Total (UUA, Ballou Channing District, Partner Church Council)		\$ 5,300	\$ 5,300	\$ 4,589
161		Congregational Leadership/Training				\$ 500
162		Committee Budgets				\$ 400
163		Hospitality (Coffee Hour)	Coffee-hour collections as necessary to cover it			\$ -
165		Adult RE Speakers/Trainer	ask for Sponsors for specific speakers?			\$ -
166		Contingency/Slack	Unforeseen, emergencies, or slack on other items ...	\$ 4,500		\$ 5,000
167	Expenses Total			\$ 212,500	\$ 210,495	\$ 224,164
168	Income minus expense:			\$ 0	\$ 127	\$ 0

GRASSROOTS UPDATE

by Gary Langley

At our last meeting, on December 14th, Grassroots Nantucket decided to move forward with the Green Sanctuary Program (GSP) as the “umbrella” under which Grassroots Nantucket can move forward on a number of specific social justice initiatives. GSP is a UU sponsored, multi-faceted, structured program that invites the congregation to decide on and carry out a series of actions addressing various environmental and social justice issues facing the island and beyond. When the program is successfully running it would bring our congregation recognition as a “Green Sanctuary.”

The GSP’s actions will focus on four main areas: Worship & Celebration, Religious Exploration, Environmental Justice, and Sustainable Living.

As the program unfolds, the congregation will be asked to participate in selecting which initiative we will undertake. Our hope is that members of the congregation as well as folks in our larger community will become directly involved in the implementation of these projects.

We had great success with our Community Garden project which, along with our involvement with Moor’s End Farm, provided fresh produce to the Food Pantry through November. We plan to expand those efforts in the coming year. Grassroots Nantucket is continuing our relationship with the Food Pantry this fall by initiating a clothing distribution program. This project was begun by Joanna Greenfield and encompasses collecting donated clothes from individuals as well as a multitude of other sources and distributing them to the folks that use the Food Pantry.

We thank the many from our congregation who have generously donated to this effort. The American Legion has offered their Hall as our distribution site and was used 3 times in December to offer clothing, at no charge, to the hundreds who have participated so far.

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD. Grassroots Nantucket welcomes your participation in our growing social justice movement. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 12:30, following coffee hour, in Hendrix Hall. Contact: gary@blinddogphoto.com

TREASURER'S REPORT

by Paul Stewart

The Finance Committee and the Board of Trustees met to work on the Society's 2015 General Operating Budget six times in the past two months. The 2015 budget finally recommended unanimously by the Board on December 16 is balanced; it anticipates equal income and expenses with no drawdown of principal from our Endowment.

Compared to 2014 it provides slightly improved support for the Society's various programs and obligations in 2015. It also incorporates a number of format and content changes, some of which are discussed here.

The full budget and all accompanying materials will be distributed to the Society in preparation for the Annual Meeting scheduled for January 25. I will be available for a discussion and question-and-answer session about the budget and church finances after the January 18 service.

Columns in the accompanying spreadsheet show the 2014 Budget, the Projected Actual 2014 results, and the Board's 2015 Recommended Budget.

General changes made in this budget include:

1) Included in both 2014 and 2015 as offsetting income and expense is the \$25,000 we determine as the value of the use of the parsonage (both income and expenses are \$25,000 higher than the original 2014 budget, where that rent was implied but not included).

2) In the original 2014 budget certain expenses related to income were netted from income but some were not. The largest was the \$9,400 Investment Management fee we paid to TIAA-CREF. In this budget that has been netted from 2014 Endowment Interest and Dividends income to show what we actually receive from our endowment.

For 2015 the Finance Committee proposed, and the Board agreed, that we would forego this portfolio management service and fee. The FinCom will be reporting further to the Society on its plans for this change in coming months.

3) Included for 2015 are annual 'Provisions' (set-asides) for Parsonage Capital Maintenance and for Minister's Sabbatical. These are not new expenses (we've paid for periodic capital maintenance on the parsonage and we've sometimes paid for a replacement when our Minister goes on Sabbatical) but previously we mainly handled those in the year when they occurred.

Starting in 2015 we are more properly recognizing portions of these future expenses on an annual basis so we don't face a budget-buster when they actually come due. These 'Provisions' will be saved up annually in designated Funds until such time as the corresponding expense comes due.

4) In the 2014 budget we paid insurance premiums from the Building and Grounds budget. Those insurances are for fire and liability insurance on the Meeting House and the Parsonage, and for required Worker's Comp. For 2015 we've moved those amounts to the budget lines to which they actually belong (Meeting House, Parsonage, and employees).

And there are a few smaller changes; the goal of all these being to show expenses where they are actually used in the budget, thereby enabling better budget decisions.

A further discussion of the 2014 Budget versus Actual will be available once we have final actuals for the year. In general, we've done well living within our total income and budget despite higher fuel and insurance costs.

Contact: Paul Stewart, Paul@PLPDD.com

Note: See spreadsheet on page 4.

SUNDAY SERVICES IN JANUARY

Sunday, January 4, 2015

“New Year’s Crossings”

Rev. Linda Simmons ~ Hendrix Hall

As the New Year dawns, some doors open and others close. Where and how do we find the doorways that bring us closer to the meaning of our lives and the faith to open them?



Sunday, January 11, 2015

“Cultural Diversity”

Lay-Led Service ~ Hendrix Hall

At this service we will celebrate the island’s increasing cultural richness in a service led by members of the Lay-Led Service committee. Michael Cozort, Superintendent of the Nantucket Public Schools, will speak about the reflection of this diversity in the changing makeup of the K-12 school student body and how the public schools are addressing these needs.

Sunday, January 18, 2015

“Beloved Community”

Rev. Linda Simmons ~ Hendrix Hall

Martin Luther King Jr. believed love could radically change the world. How can his words and life inspire us to build a vision we can all live into?

Sunday, January 25, 2015

“Holy Experiment Day”

Rev. Linda Simmons ~ Hendrix Hall

The annual meeting of the congregation will convene in Hendrix Hall immediately following the service.

There is a holiday called Holy Experiment Day defined as a time to try something or ask for something and measure the results. On this day of our Annual Meeting, how do we measure the results of this past year of requests and initiatives? This sermon will summarize our year together and offer hope for the journey.

Childcare for infants and toddlers is provided at no charge from 10:30 – noon. Children begin the morning with the congregation in Hendrix Hall then depart for circle time, a story or activity, and a snack as part of the cooperative Religious Exploration Program. Enjoy coffee and conversation following the programs in the Activities Room at 11:45. The Meeting House Choir rehearses on Sunday mornings at 9:30. Singers of all abilities are welcome.

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION REPORT - Winter Fun!

by Susan Richards, RE Chair

After a very enjoyable December full of busy RE classes, decorating our Stroll Tree (with our wonderful "UU Light Up My Life" theme!), a Community Dinner featuring Hanukkah latkes and Dreidel spinning... we're on to a new year and more fun happenings!

On **Friday, January 30th from 5:30-7:30 pm** we'll be hosting a "Parents Night Out" event... a PJ's and Pizza night for the children while parents can enjoy a couple of hours to do whatever you'd like! Jen, Rev Linda, and Susan will be hosting the children in the Activities Room where we'll have pizza, a special project, Storytimes, and a video or two. We invite the children to wear their PJ's and bring a favorite stuffed animal... it should be a fun and cozy time! We'll be passing a sign-up sheet around over the next few Sundays so we can get an idea of how many children will be attending. You can also email Susan at susanoncobble@gmail.com if you have questions or would like to sign up!

Thinking ahead to February and March.... Just in case you were starting to worry about the two **Friday** the 13th's we have coming up....have no fear! We'll be hosting **Community Spaghetti Potlucks on both Friday, February 13th and Friday, March 13th - from 5:30 to 7:00** on both nights. If you have a suggestion as to a theme or an activity that you'd us to feature... just let us know! These are fun events for adults and children alike and the slower winter months are a perfect time for UU friends (and feel free to invite your friends as well) to get together!

RE Committee - We are still looking for a new member or two for our fun group! We meet once a month (right now it's the 3rd Thursday of each month from 4-5pm but we can be flexible to accommodate a new member's schedule).... This group plans RE events and helps Jen plan for RE classes. Please contact Susan if you are interested!

MEET THE CARING TEAM

by Lora Stewart

The Caring Team is intended to augment the pastoral care provided by Reverend Linda. One of the wonderful things about being a small congregation is that, when one of us needs a little boost, another of us can be there to help. The purpose of the Caring Team is to facilitate this help including: visits to parishioners who can't get out (especially during the winter months), rides to appointments, emergency child care, meals and short term help around the house.

This is the current Caring Team: Lora Stewart, Mary Beth Splaine and David Hall. Contact me for more information at lora@PLPDD.com.

SEASONAL SUPPER UPDATE

by Lora Stewart, Membership Committee Chair

Save the date of **Friday, January 23rd** for the next Seasonal Supper! These are (usually) small dinner parties in parishioner's homes. The host provides the main dish and then asks guests for specific dishes to fill out the rest of the meal. These parties are a good way to see old friends and meet new ones. If you have never attended, especially if you are new to the Meeting House, please sign up to be a guest.

We are looking for hosts! If you are a regular and are able to host, please consider offering your home. Look for Lora Stewart or another member of the Membership Committee for sign-ups during coffee hour on January 11th and January 18th.

JOIN US FOR SHAWL KNITTING

Please come join our group for an evening of fellowship, conversation and creativity! Our January meetings will be on the last four Thursday evenings (8th, 15th, 22nd and the 29th). All gatherings will be at 7 PM at the home of Lora Stewart: 61 Madaket Road. Beginners are always welcome. If you don't know how to knit, someone can help you get started.



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Church Staff

Rev. Linda Simmons, *Minister* ~ **Edward B. Anderson**, *Minister Emeritus*
Diane T. Lehman, *Music Director* ~ **Lucretia Voigt**, *Office Manager* ~ **Jen Dunbar**, *Lead RE Teacher*
Ed Sullivan and Dennis Santangelo, *Sextons*, **Chuck Gieg**, *Bookkeeper*

Board of Trustees

Jim Sulzer (*President*), Susan Richards (*Vice President*), Paul Stewart (*Treasurer*)
Jan Ellsworth, Steve Estabrooks, Joy Margolis, John Rivera, Linda Spery, Lora Stewart

Church Office Hours

Monday - Friday ~ 9 a.m. - noon

Minister's Office Hours

Tuesday (10 a.m. - noon) and by appointment