

# Annual Report – 2017



Second Congregational Meeting House Society  
Unitarian Universalist  
Nantucket, MA

January 28, 2017

## **Board of Trustees - 2017**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Term Ends</b>
Val Hall, President	January 2019
Clay Twombly, Vice President	January 2019
Peter Richards, Clerk	January 2020
Paul Stewart, Treasurer	Elected Annually
Lora Stewart	January 2018
Joanna Greenfield	January 2018
Cynthia Csabay	January 2018
Michelle Whelan	January 2020
Christine Sanford (appointed to serve out remaining term of Joy Margolis)	January 2018

Board terms are three years, except for the Treasurer whose term is one year. Board members, including the Treasurer, are elected by the congregation at the Annual Meeting. The Board elects its other officers annually from among its members.

## **Staff - 2017**

Rev. Linda Simmons, Minister

Rev. Ted Anderson, Minister Emeritus

Diane Lehman, Director of Music (through November 5, 2017)

Leyah Jensen, Youth Programs' Coordinator

Sherlly Morocoima, RE Assistant

Lucretia Voigt, Office Manager

Chuck Gieg, Bookkeeper

Janelle Morocoima, Custodial Sexton

## **Minister's Report – 2017**

I have served as your minister now for four and a half years. I give thanks each day for the joy, challenges, and growth that ministry provides. I can think of no other way I would rather spend my days. Thank you for offering me this opportunity to engage so wholeheartedly with all of you and this island's diverse people.

This year I led worship services and offered sermons on 34 Sundays. The topics were wide-ranging and included themes such as: *The Moral Imagination, Stories and Identity, Rebirth, Flipping the Script of Independence, Rejoice & Resist, Radical Hope, Being Good and Where Do We Go From Here, #Me Too: Women and Justice in 2017* and *Living Beautifully in an Age of Vitriol*. We welcomed some guests to our services including Dr. Abrar Qureshi who spoke eloquently on August 13<sup>th</sup> about *Love from the Islamic Tradition*, Rev. Diane Miller who gave a rousing sermon on September 3<sup>rd</sup> entitled *Improv Church*, Rev. Kimberley Debus, our soon to be sabbatical minister when I go on sabbatical from February 7-April 9, gave a thought provoking sermon entitled *The Art of Meaning* on October 15<sup>th</sup>, Rev. Dr. Lora Kim Joyner spoke on Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> from her heart and soul in a sermon entitled *Reverence for Life*, and storyteller and psychologist Dr. Lani Peterson spoke on November 12<sup>th</sup> about *The Power of Pause, Taking Response-Ability for our Stories*. We also had our Blessing of the Animals on October 1<sup>st</sup> outside in front of the sanctuary doors where the rain held off for one more year. In addition to my Sunday morning responsibilities, I officiated four weddings and four memorial services. Sunday morning average attendance was 51.

This year our social justice work through the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle Project expanded to include Nantucket Immigration Community Alliance, NICA. We began meeting in March of 2017 and quickly learned from our diverse attendees that there was a need for an Immigration Resource Center which could meet at the UU Meeting House and answer questions posed by immigrants, especially the undocumented. NICA formed into about 8 small groups that went out to the island's agencies to ask questions about the services they provide and returned with pamphlets and answers to many questions. We then organized a binder of FAQs (sought after now by many of these same island organizations that we interviewed) that is updated monthly as we gather more information. We are seeking grants to build a website to put all of this information in one place for easy access and will be copying the binder in the meantime to give out to the agencies requesting it.

The Immigration Resource Center, IRC, opened officially the first Monday of June and has been open the first Monday of every month from 5:30pm-7:30pm ever since. The IRC is under the auspices of the social action committee, the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle Project, of the Unitarian Universalist Meeting House. A group of people from IRC have signed on to work with Catholic Charities in Boston to reunite Central American minor refugees with their legal guardians and parents on Nantucket under the Federal program, Central American Minors. We have been trained to do home visits and to offer additional support. We have been working with one Central American minor refugee on island since August.

Food Rescue continues to be a vibrant initiative on island run with Gary Langley as chair who will give a more detailed report on the pages herein.

Teena Loftin, Alison Forsgren, Jack Weinhold and Susan Richards began the Indivisible Nantucket initiative on island that meets at the UU Meeting House as well. This is a vibrant effort that meets to resist policies that erode the worth and dignity of others.

There is so much more including Make It Stop, the Clothing Drive and the Community Garden Project that Gary Langley writes about in his report on the 7th Principle Project.

Diane Lehman's last Sunday as our Music Director was November 5, 2017. Diane resigned to go to St. Mary's to take a fulltime position. We are grateful for her years of wonderful music, friendship and commitment to the UU Meeting House. Barbara Elder joined us on January 1<sup>st</sup> as our Interim Music Director and continues the tradition of musical excellence in the UU Meeting House. Barbara is no stranger to us as Music Director, having occupied this position from 1982-1995. Welcome back Barbara! We are grateful to have you.

Bob Lehman also went to St. Mary's to support his beloved Diane and so retired from the Building and Grounds Committee in November, 2017. Steadfast and qualified David Hall stepped up to fill his shoes as Chair of the committee and Angus MacCleod joined our little team to ensure that the building continues to be cared for as it always was under Bob's mighty leadership.

The Religious Exploration Committee has been busy as usual with its Sunday morning program as well as ACK-spress which has now become ACK-tion. Susan Richards and Lora Stewart will have more to say about that in their RE report to follow.

We welcomed 8 new members in 2017: Jeffrey Thomson, David Janero, Christopher Hanson, Christine Hanson, Dianne Coscia, Laurie Schutt and Kathleen Tyrer. How blessed we are to include them in our community!

This year we also hired a new sexton, Janelle Morocoima on May 10, 2017 and her daughter Sherlly Morocoima on October 10, 2017 as Religious Exploration Assistant. Janelle and Sherlly have been welcome blessings to our strong team of employees here at the UU Meeting House.

I devote a large part of my ministry to pastoral care. I am the chaplain with Palliative and Supportive Care of Nantucket (PASCON) and serve many of our island residents who are in need through that role, and I am the chaplain of the Cottage Hospital, so get called there as well. I also make numerous house and hospital calls for our congregants. Many folks also come to the parsonage for tea and conversation. I continue to learn much about compassion, presence, love, forgiveness, hope and community from showing up in this way with so many of you. This part of my ministry blesses me deeply.

I co-led a book group once a week from July 19<sup>th</sup>-August 23<sup>rd</sup> with Rev. John Beach from the Episcopal Church, St. Paul's, using Jodi Picoult's novel, Small Great Things about racism in a small community in America. We met to discuss the book and begin our own conversations about racism in our lives and communities. The class was well attended and had participants from the UU Meeting House, St. Paul's, St. Mary's and from the island at large. The conversation about racism and how it affects who we are and see the world, was provocative and informative.

I also began a Year to Live class that meets once a month for a year, which began on October 4, 2017. We meet to face mortality with intentional preparation, and to live one year consciously, to the fullest. Class topics include: forgiveness, making peace with our lives, writing an ethical will (or legacy letter, which is a way to share our values, blessings, life's lessons), exploring our concepts of death and those from religions around the world, doing a life review and will culminate in a joint "celebration of life" for all participants.

I am a member of the Interfaith Council and a board member of The Behavioral Health Task Force and The Alliance for Substance Abuse. I am also the Grievance Officer for Nantucket Housing Authority.

I extend my thanks to members of the Board especially President Val Hall and Vice President Clay Twombly and Clerk Peter Richards; and to Finance Committee members and Treasurer Paul Stewart for their extraordinary talents and commitment to the congregation. Committee chairs and members deserve equal thanks as well— Susan Richards and Lora Stewart, Religious Exploration Chairs; Val Hall, Lay Led Service Committee Chair; David Hall, Building and Grounds Chair; Gary Langley, 7<sup>th</sup> Principle Project Chair; Lora Stewart Caring and Membership Committees' Chair; Barbara Elder, Committee on Ministry Chair/Sabbatical Committee; Paul Stewart, South Church Preservation Fund Chair; Susan Richards, Nominating Committee Chair; Docenting: Peter Richards; Val Hal and Christine Sanford, Coffee Hour Aficionados; and Joanne Polster, Manager of Church Archives. And last but not least much gratitude to our staff: Barbara Elder, Interim Music Director; Lucretia Voigt, Office Manager; Leyah Jensen, RE Lead Teacher; Sherlly Morocoima, RE Assistant; and Janelle Morocoima, Sexton -- for their continued service and devotion. I also thank my colleague, Ted Anderson, *Minister Emeritus*, for the blessing of his friendship.

*I extend my heartfelt thanks to all of you for your commitment, steadfastness and whole-heartedness. It is a great honor and privilege to serve as your minister.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Simmons, Minister

### **President's Report - Board of Trustees - 2017**

This has been an eventful year for the Board of Trustees. We welcomed new members Michelle Whelan and Peter Richards. Officers elected were Val Hall President, Clay Twombly Vice President, Peter Richards Clerk, and Paul Stewart Treasurer (by Congregation). Other Board members are Lora Stewart, Christine Sanford, Cynthia Csabay, and Joanna Greenfield.

One of the first actions was to review our Vision statement and Covenant and to begin to form a new Mission statement. This work is still ongoing. The Board also approved the following "Share the Plate" collections, with the idea of holding one per quarter: Nantucket Island Safe Harbor for Animals (in conjunction with the Blessing of the Animals), Palliative and Supportive Care of Nantucket, Nantucket Food Pantry, and one more, to be determined.

On March 18, the Board had its Spring Retreat. We reviewed our congregational goals to make sure they all reflected the Seven UU Principles, and how well our budget addressed these. We need more volunteers so that we can have more social and fundraising activities to build the church. We also

discussed how the Board makes and records decisions, how we can improve communication with each other, and how we can become better spiritual leaders. We formulated a draft Mission Statement, which is still being distilled. It will then be presented to the Congregation in the same “Town Meeting” style as were the Congregational Goals.

Some major actions in the spring were coordinating Linda’s Sabbatical leave, including advertising for a Sabbatical minister, the hiring of a new sexton, Janelle Morocoima, planning a May visit of the Barnstable UU congregation, discussion of contract renewals, Activity Room renovations and excessive noise entering the parsonage, and approval of Barbara Elder’s proposal to organize a summer Noonday Concert series. We also began to discuss a new book, “Serving with Grace: Lay Leadership as a Spiritual Practice”.

In June, Rev. Linda and Gary flew to New Orleans for the UU General Assembly, while Board members Paul and Lora Stewart, Val Hall, Peter Richards, and past president Susan Richards took a 60’s style “road trip” to New Orleans in Paul’s van. A highlight of the GA was the recognition of Rev. Linda’s achievement of reaching final fellowship as a UU minister. We were her cheering squad, accompanied by Peter’s kazoo.

Summer brought our Muslim friends back for their weekly prayer meeting, led by Dr. Abrar Qureshi and his amazing family, and our Shirat Ha Yam friends for their weekly Friday Shabbat service in Hendrix Hall. In July, the Board voted to offer the position of Sabbatical Minister to Rev. Kimberley Debus, who promptly accepted. There was a very successful 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration in the sanctuary, spilling over into Hendrix Hall, thanks to the leadership of Jack Weinhold and Cynthia Csabay, and to many volunteers. August brought the Summer Auction, an enormous fundraising success thanks to the leadership of Jim Sulzer, Barbara Elder, and Paul and Lora Stewart. The Board hosted a summer members’ gathering at the parsonage, well-provisioned especially by Paul and Lora, and enjoyed by all.

The fall brought a more quiet, but no less busy, time for our congregation. We said goodbye to our wonderful summer friends and moved back downstairs to cozy Hendrix Hall. Rev. Linda was authorized to hire an RE assistant, Sherlly Morocoima, who is the daughter of our sexton. Rev. Kimberly came for a visit and preached, giving us all a chance to meet her. Sadly, our beloved Music Director, Diane Lehman, submitted her resignation effective early November. The Board formed a Music Committee consisting of Barbara Elder, Chair, Gerry Mack, Val Hall, and Rev. Linda, to write up a job description and advertise the position of Music Director. The committee gave its recommendation before Christmas to split the job into summer and “off season”. The Board then voted to offer the summer position to Barbara Elder, who has accepted it, and the “off season” one to another individual, who was not in a position to accept our offer at this time. The Board then voted unanimously to hire Barbara Elder as Interim Music Director.

It has been a joy and a privilege to be your President this year. I so appreciate all the support I have received from Rev. Linda and the Trustees, as well as Lucretia and the other church staff members. And my sincere thanks to the departing Trustees, Lora Stewart, Christine Sanford, Joanna Greenfield, and Cynthia Csabay, for their dedication and service.

Respectfully submitted,

Val Hall  
2017 Board President

Congregational goals:

- *To continue to foster Social Justice Initiatives*
- *To make a firm commitment to Lifelong Religious Exploration*
- *To develop an effective Communication Plan*
- *To involve more members of the congregation in Leadership*

Draft Mission Statement:

*In our Meeting House, we welcome people of all races, genders, faith traditions, nationalities, and legal status. We stand in solidarity and love to build bridges among our diverse island communities. Within our congregation, we gather to support and celebrate each others' lives.*

**Clerk, Board of Trustees - 2017**

The Clerk's Committee is comprised of Peter Richards (Clerk), Paul Stewart (Treasurer), Val Hall (President), Lora Stewart (Membership), and Reverend Linda Simmons. A meeting was held on January 24th to review the membership and determine the exact count of Pledging, Island residents, congregational members. This number will be presented at the Annual Meeting which will be held after the Sunday service on January 28, 2018. The official number that the committee determines from their count will have financial implications. Being a member of the Ballou Channing District within the Unitarian Universalist Association, we are responsible for paying a certain fee for each member of our congregation. This will all be further explained at the annual meeting.

Our overall attendance in 2017, combining both the Sanctuary and Hendrix Hall, was 2,496 adults, just 56 fewer than in 2016, which is a 2.2% drop. This yields an average of 48.9 adults. The total RE count increased slightly from 204 to 210, which is an average of 4.1 for the year.

For the Sanctuary, the average attendance was 57 adults for 19 services. For Hendrix Hall, the average attendance was 44 adults over 32 services.

There were two weeks when there was no attendance taken. The first was on January 8th when Winter Storm "Helena" forced cancellation of the service. The other was on October 1st when we held our annual "Blessing of the Animals" service held outside on the sidewalk in front of the Meeting House. It was a beautiful day with many attending, including a number of curious passers-by, but no official attendance was taken.

Finally I would like to thank Val Hall, Rev. Linda Simmons, and Susan Richards, who all helped me keep the minutes of the monthly meetings. During this time I discovered that my skills taking notes "on the fly" had deteriorated significantly over the years since my college days.

Respectively submitted,  
Peter Richards, Clerk



## **Building & Grounds – 2017**

The Building and Grounds Committee has been busy keeping the UU Meeting House, now 209 years old, and the parsonage up to snuff. Minor and more major repairs have taken place over the last year and in November Bob Lehman left his chairmanship to join Diane at St. Mary's. B&G Member David Hall quickly stepped in to take his place. Our group which includes Dennis Simmons, Paul Stewart as consultant, and Rev. Linda ex officio, was joined by Angus MacLeod at the end of 2017. Welcome aboard Angus!

Besides keeping the lights on, the toilets from overflowing, the windows from blowing out, the doors from locking shut and the place from falling down in general, below is a more specific list of what has been accomplished this past year:

### **UU Meeting House**

- New Activities Room lighting was put in
- The back stairwell was primed, scraped and painted
- The AR committee and Shirat Ha Yam agreed on flooring in the AR of Marmoleum, which comes in 2' squares and is a pergo like material with a cushion underlayment which comes in 6' lengths. We are waiting for funding from Shirat Ha Yam and UU Meeting House to be voted on before proceeding
- The Portuguese Bell received a new circuit board to continue its melodious ringing
- We passed another Fire Inspection
- We bought another AR back door which has been primed and is waiting for installment

### **Parsonage**

- New gutters and drains were installed

I am sure there are items that are forgotten on this list without Bob here to read over and add to this report. My apologies for any omissions.

Respectfully submitted,  
David Hall, Chair

## **Lay-Led Service Committee – 2017**

The Lay Led Service Committee is a vibrant, multi-generational group consisting of Peter and Susan Richards, Kat Robinson Grieder, Paul Connors, Grace Noyes, Britt Martinez, Ezra Descarfino, and Val Hall. Each month, we plan and lead a service so that Rev. Linda can have a Sunday off. One or more committee members lead each service. Sometimes there is a guest speaker, but at other times, members of the committee or congregation will deliver the sermon. Each service follows a theme, which is enriched by the contribution of the Music Director, choir, and guest musicians. Thank you all!

Here is a snapshot of our lay led services for 2017:

Date	Service Leader	Speaker(s)	Theme
29 Jan	Val	Charlene Thurston, PASCON	Reflections from the Bedside



26 Feb	Kat	Anne Marie Bellevance, Nantucket Food Pantry	Loneliness and Isolation
19 Mar	Kat, Val, Grace	Mary Beth Splaine, Paul Stewart, Dennis Simmons, Val Hall	Stories that Sustain Us
30 Apr	Val	Bill Blount	Those Who Go Down to the Sea in Ships
21 May	Peter and Susan, Ezra	Bryan Frascati	Hope Through Community
25 June	Kat	Haziel Jackson, Phaedra Plank, Liam Strand, Brandon Menjivar	UU United Nations Office: this year's work on women's and children's rights and climate change
July, Aug	Rev. Linda		Break for LLS Committee
17 Sep	Kat	John Merson	Is there a Civic Civil War?
22 Oct	Val	Linda Sperry	Life: A Balance of Holding on and Letting Go
26 Nov	Peter and Susan	Congregation's gratitude	We Give Thanks (for this Precious Day)
31 Dec	Val, Ezra, Britt, Paul	Val Hall	Rebirth, Renewal, and Resolution: New Year Traditions Around the World

Respectfully submitted,  
Valerie Hall, Chair

### **Committee on Ministry – 2017**

Serving on the Committee on Ministry in 2017 were Barbara Elder, Peter Richards, Cheryl Creighton and Nancy Mack. Rev. Linda's sabbatical leave is from February 8-April 8, 2018, and her husband, Gary Langley, will accompany her. The theme for the sabbatical is "Northern Nepal and India Through the Eyes of a UU Minister". Initial discussion and planning began in January and dominated the committee's focus throughout 2017.

In conjunction with assistance and guidance of the Board of Trustees, the planning and searching for Rev. Linda's sabbatical replacement, advertising for same, along with all required documents to support that effort became a major project. An advertisement was initially placed in June during the UU General Assembly in New Orleans, and meetings were set up with two prospective ministers who had answered our ad.

Reverend Kimberley Debus is highly qualified and the timing turned out to be perfect for her. Following a visit to Nantucket and a sermon in the pulpit on October 15th, an agreement was reached and approved by the BOT and things began to fall into place.

The committee designed, developed and published (via Paul Stewart) a "Sabbatical 2018" 4-page color brochure. This handout provides the congregation with information about the trip and how best to follow along via Rev. Linda's blog. There's a section about Rev. Kimberley Debus, pertinent contact information for the congregation while Rev. Linda is away, and her plans for several book discussions and a PowerPoint Travelog presentation at the Atheneum in the spring. Copies of the "Sabbatical 2018" brochure and a study guide for those book discussions are being sent out to congregants as well.

As the cover of the "Sabbatical 2018" guide reads: "...it is a time for minister and congregation to have a chance to grow, to gather new ideas, and so to rejoin with more energized hearts and minds, ready to inspire one another toward new ways of being together in the world."

Respectfully submitted,  
Peter Richards

## **Music Director – 2017**

### **Report through November 2017:**

Thank you for your continued support of the music program. As Musical Director this year, I was able to work with the choir, play the organ, play music of a wide variety, and collaborate with members, Rev. Linda, and the soloists to create what I think was an eclectic mix of programming. My experience here has been a positive one, enriched by the contributions of so many talented musicians. Rev. Linda Simmons has been a wonderful leader and supporter, colleague and friend. Lucretia is awesome as are the members of the Board! Thanks to the choir for supporting my musical decisions and choices. It has been a wonderful year of music and song thanks to all the talented church musicians we have here.

As the Music Director, I continued my role as a musical support person for Rev. Linda, whose themed programs each Sunday provided the impetus to create a program of congruent musical offerings. The choir continued to be a joy to work with. There always seems to be just enough voices to put together an anthem for at least 3 Sundays a month. We sang for almost every service in 2017- repeating the varied repertoire favorites due to time constraints, but thanks to their abilities and talents. There are some that attend every rehearsal and every Sunday, for which I am grateful. I can always count on them to keep me on my toes. I use this space to thank each of them: Nancy, Linda, Grace, Kathy, Cynthia, Polly, Nancy T., Phaedra, Val, Karin, Bob, Al, Craig, and Haziell. Liam even joined in while he was here this summer, as did Anne R. The choir is the only group at our church that stands as one each Sunday and willingly delivers a proud performance that moves us and reminds us of the importance of music. To our soloists, Bob and Cynthia, Craig and Nancy T., Phaedra, Rob...I thank you for your additional music offerings.

Throughout the summer, we engaged soloists, and instrumentalists which were all a true joy. Throughout the year, Jacob Butler served as a substitute for me and his performances have been well received. Barbara Elder, Jim Sulzer, Rob Dunbar, Steve Estabrooks , and Jordan Delphos, Phaedra Plank, Bill Schutt, Frank Lombardo, Eliot Levine and Aille Sweeney have been just a few of the musicians who have filled in and added tremendous variety to our services in 2017. It was particularly wonderful to be in the sanctuary this summer with the beautiful painting to look at, music all around and friends to enjoy it with.

The instruments at the church are being maintained, though we now have a different tuner, Tim Thompson. The organ is still lovingly taken care of by the Andover Organ co. with Bob Newton to thank for the Goodrich's care and keeping. Our new protocol has been adopted regarding maintenance scheduling because, and as I see it, it works better for the Music Director to identify when the instrument needs maintenance. Contacting the Office Administrator in that instance is merely to make sure that she is aware of the tuner's arrival and subsequent billing.

Carson Cooman was a solid presence throughout the summer, performing at 3 Sunday services, and a Thursday concert - providing wonderful music and inspiration for all of us. Liam Strand was a new addition to the organist roster, and we hope to see/hear him as he continues to grow as a musician. We have a dedicated donor, who provided a generous fund allowing organists to be compensated for their performances.

The position of Music Director has required an advanced knowledge of musical repertoire, an ability to lead a choir without exclusion of people who may not have the same level of music knowledge as the person next to them, an advanced knowledge of hymns, a level of skill to play accompaniment and song leading, and a dedication to the church which is evidenced by weekly attendance to rehearsals and services. While working to communicate well with the choir, as director and accompanist, I have missed having a committee to help develop ideas for fundraising. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve the church and the congregation, and thanks to Barbara for stepping in to take over!

Respectfully submitted,  
Diane Towle Lehman

### **Music Report continued . . .**

There has been a big change in our music program with the departure of our music director Diane Lehman. As of November 2017, Diane is now serving as the music director of St. Mary's Church. Our church will miss her presence, talent and skill as our music leader and we wish her well in her new position.

A Music Committee was formed to search for a new music leader. Dr. Gerry Mack, Val Hall and Barbara Elder served on the committee. There was a job description and a timeline for hiring that was approved by the Board. There were two applications and one was considered viable but the individual was not available during the summer months due to prior commitments to another church. It was decided to have two positions: one for the summer months and one for the rest of the year. The job during non-summer months was offered to an individual, who then turned it down. Barbara

Elder stepped in to fill in as interim music director until the end of May and then officially as music director in summer months, May – October. The Music Committee will reconvene in April upon Rev. Linda Simmon's return and consider where things are musically and whether or not we need to do a new search at that time.

The Summer Concert Series continued this summer with the concert time returning to noon on Thursdays after the bell tolls. Thank you to Bill and Laurie Schutt for their generosity in underwriting the concerts. The Noonday Concerts offered an oasis of calm, joy and serenity in July and August. Barbara Elder volunteered to organize the program. The concerts were as follows:

#### **JULY**

6 Women's Chorus of Nantucket, Barbara Elder, director  
13 Anthony Healy, solo jazz piano  
20 Janie Hobson-DuPont & Lisa Wendelken, singer-songwriters  
27 Jake Vohs, solo piano

#### **AUGUST**

3 The Rossini Club: James Blanchard, flute, Nick Davies, clarinet & Ivy Ringel, bassoon  
10 Carson Cooman, organ  
17 Mollie Glazer, cello & Isaiah Williams, piano & organ  
24 Marcia Hempel, organ  
31 William Schutt, saxophone & Matt Hutchinson, piano

We plan to continue the Noonday Concert series in 2018.

We wish to express a deep gratitude to Jacob Butler and Mollie Glazer for contributing to our Sunday services November through December. We will continue to patch together music on Sundays through to May as Barbara serves as interim director, missing some weekends due to previous off island commitments. We hope to see a lot of Jacob and Mollie as we continue on our musical journey together.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Elder

### **Religious Exploration Committee – 2017**

2017 was a year of solidifying the two active programs within our Religious Exploration (RE) community of children... our weekly Sunday RE classes along with our bi-weekly/monthly youth group meetings. Our RE Committee met very regularly and worked hard to create and maintain programs and curriculum that reflect our UU principles.

#### **Some 2017 highlights for Sunday morning RE programming:**

- Two Community Potlucks were hosted by the RE: one in the spring to introduce Leyah Jensen, our Youth Programs Coordinator, and another in the fall.
- The spring 2017 Sunday morning classes focused on the theme of world holidays, learning about other cultures, our role in the Interdependent web, protecting the earth, and community service.
- A relaxed and welcoming summer RE program featured art activities and walking field trips.

- In September, the curriculum shifted from world cultures and holidays to the theme of “Being UU Every Day”. Programming was guided by the UU Tapestry curriculum. The children focused on symbols of our faith, our Principles and Sources, and famous Unitarians in history.
- Community service continued to be an important focus. The children who attend Sunday morning classes arranged a donation to Native American children at the pipeline which was hand delivered by our Youth Programs coordinator, Leyah Jensen.
- One child also had a “pop-up” sale on Sunday morning in the early fall and was able to raise \$100.00.
- Together, the children created workbooks and were able to buy art supplies and small stuffed animals to send to Syrian children via the Qureshi family who were taking part in a humanitarian trip sponsored by SAMS (Syrian American Medical Society).
- Children continue to take part each Sunday in “A Story for All Ages” and have begun to take small roles during the adult service: e.g. handing out hymnals, helping to read the story, an occasional musical contribution.
- Participation in Holiday Stroll and Tree decorating on Main Street

#### **Plans for Sunday morning RE in 2018 include:**

- Identification and discussion of the adult leaders in our congregation
- Exploring the role of children and youth as leaders in our congregation and in the wider community
- Renewing our relationship with our sister church in Transylvania
- More creative art projects and activities
- More involvement of the RE children in the regular services. Work on a service led by the children to be presented to the whole congregation later in the spring. The service will be designed by the children with help from the RE team.
- Continue exploration of our Principles and Sources and ways to live into “Being UU Every Day”
- More opportunities for community service projects for the children individually and in groups

#### **Some 2017 Highlights from our ACK-spress/ACK-tion Youth Group**

- In January 2017, we launched our Junior Youth Group, “ACK-spress”. Initially, the group centered on art expression but branched out into community service as we progressed.
- Our original youth group, “ACK-spress” started out with a bang as our Youth Coordinator, Leyah designed ambitious art projects for 14 youth from our congregation and the wider community.
- The enthusiastic group reveled in paint, clay, pottery, electricity and boat making.
- As spring continued, there was a shift to include values education and community service. The youth discussed various groups and non-profits that could benefit from monetary or physical help.
- In April, the youth had an art show where they raised over \$600.00 dollars. Of that money, they decided to donate \$500 to NiSHA (Nantucket Island Safe Harbor for Animals), the local animal shelter. The check was delivered at the Blessing of the Animal service, the first Sunday in October when animal friends and pets come to the Meeting House to be blessed by Reverend Linda.
- Over the summer, the group met three times to keep in touch and continue community service. In **June**, they met at Miacomet Pond for a picnic and to test some person-sized, kid-

created cardboard boats. In **July**, they met to be introduced to the Animal Shelter and to install a bird bath they had made. In **August** the youth made a trip to the Lily Pond Park to have a picnic, clean up trash and install another group-made bird bath.

- In the fall, the group moved from “ACK-spress” to “ACK-tion” to reflect its move toward community service, but still incorporating plenty of hands-on projects.
- An important goal for the group was to find “Community Partners” – to date: Landmark House, NiSHA, Sherburne Commons and Our Island Home as well as the Coast Guard station at Brant Point.
- Shared holiday cookies and handmade decorations at area facilities serving the elderly including a rousing sing-a-long at Our Island Home.

#### **Plans for ACK-tion in 2018 include:**

- More community partnerships are being explored for community service projects. Talks are in progress with: the Food Pantry, the Atheneum, more projects with Nantucket Parks and Recreation, the Conservation Dept., and the Shellfish Department (in hope of some education about the health of our harbor and the scallop fishery).
- Continuing our current partnerships with various agencies serving the elders in our community including: Our Island Home, NiSHA, Landmark House and Sherburne Commons.

The youth group is only funded through the spring. We will be looking for grant opportunities and other funding possibilities so we will be able to continue with “ACK-tion” into the future.

Many thanks to all the volunteers from the Congregation who stepped forward in 2017 to work with the RE children. We look forward to an exciting and inspirational 2018 together!

Respectfully Submitted,

The Religious Exploration Team - Susan Richards - Chair, Lora Stewart, Leyah Jensen, and Rev Linda Simmons

#### **7<sup>th</sup> Principle Project Committee – 2017**

**The UU 7th Principle is “Respect for the Interdependent Web of all existence of which we are a Part.” The mission of the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle Project is: *We are committed to sustainability and environmental justice, including partnering with the most vulnerable among us, in response to the challenge that our Earth and its people are facing.***

In 2017 the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle Project was busy including work in the following areas:

**Food Rescue Nantucket:** 2017 was a real growth year with successful new initiatives and projects, including:

- \* A food collection bin, located in Wauwinet, for renters to deposit their unopened and non-perishable leftovers as they leave their rental units. We collect weekly and deliver to the Food Pantry. Another bin will be installed in Madaket, at the fire station, for this coming rental season.
- \* A donation of \$20,000 by a congregant to procure a walk-in cooler/freezer. This system will be up and running in April and will allow us to expand our ability to capture wholesome food that might otherwise end up as waste.

\* Talks have begun between Food Rescue Nantucket, Sustainable Nantucket and Nantucket Public Schools to create a campus wide composting program for all of their schools.

\* Food Rescue Nantucket, Sustainable Nantucket and the Food Pantry were partners in a project proposed to and selected by Worcester Polytechnic Institute this past Fall, to map the entire island's food system including the growing, importing, distributing and selling of food. It included resources from potential new agricultural land and ocean growing/harvesting, to surveys on attitudes surrounding various food related issues. The three organizations involved will use this research to inform their decisions going forward as well as publish the final project results publically.

We anticipate that in 2018 we can increase our food captured well beyond the 20+ tons of food diverted from becoming waste over the last 2 years.

If anyone is interested in becoming involved or would like addition info, please contact Gary Langley - (gary@blinddogphoto.com).

**Immigration Resource Center:** The goal of the Immigration Resource Center is to provide support to recent immigrants on Nantucket. Our focus is to offer information and referrals. We have concentrated our efforts in the areas of counseling, education, food, clothing and housing, health care and legal and government services.

In March 2017, a group of concerned islanders, including recent immigrants, asked to gather at the UU Meeting House. That group quickly became the Nantucket Immigration Community Alliance NICA. All people agreed that as neighbors, friends and colleagues, we wanted to have an island that felt safe and supportive for all people. NICA developed the idea of creating a safe place where recent immigrant could come and be heard and ask questions about legal rights and services available on island. We named this safe place, The Immigration Resource Center (IRC). The IRC is under the auspices of the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle Project of the Unitarian Universalist Meeting House and meets here the first Monday of every month from 5:30pm -7:30pm. Our email address is [immigrationresourcecenter@gmail.com](mailto:immigrationresourcecenter@gmail.com). The IRC is a group of volunteers who come from all over the island that includes recent immigrants. The volunteers first created a list of questions most frequently asked by recent immigrants for example: How can I get a social security number? Where can I improve my English? What are my rights as a tenant? How can I become a citizen? We then canvassed the island for answers and gathered the info in an FAQ binder. We decided our best role is to refer clients to organizations already doing the work rather than duplicate good efforts already happening on island. We also work with an immigration lawyer who donates his services to us pro bono.

A trained group of people from IRC have signed on to work with Catholic Charities in Boston to reunite minor refugees with their legal guardians and parents on Nantucket under the Federal program, 'Central American Minor Refugees'. We have been trained to do home visits and to offer additional support.

**Indivisible Nantucket:** The Indivisible movement was founded by former Obama staffers who watched the Tea Party movement take hold and gain traction. They then created a core action model



of grassroots advocacy, laid out in the Indivisible Guide. There are now over 6,000 groups, at least one in every 435 Congressional District, throughout the United States. Nantucket is on the map. Indivisible Nantucket supports the need for everyone to express their concerns, fears and ideas. In these times, we need to make a safe space within the community for that to happen and Indivisible Nantucket found one at the UU Meeting House. We began meeting in early February 2017 and over the course of the year have hosted probably 6-8 meetings with an average of 50 people per meeting.

Under Indivisible Nantucket there is work to do: communication with members of Congress, research, understanding the bills we are opposing or supporting, and developing relationships with Indivisible groups off island and other social/political groups, on island, regional, and national. At the same time, we keep our focus on local advocacy as well. The midterm elections are taking place this year and it is a year of action.

It has been wonderful to have use of Hendrix Hall as a gathering place for what has become Indivisible Nantucket. Originally a shocked and frightened group of concerned Nantucketers, much has come from the individuals who continue to meet in the safe walls of the Unitarian Universalist Church.

**Community Garden:** Led by Cheryl Creighton, we shared our plot at the Community Garden with an El Salvadoran family. While nurturing seeds inside the greenhouse during the still cold days of spring, outside a new gate was built, the plot rototilled, compost spread, and wide beds formed. An early harvest of spinach and beets was enjoyed and later zucchini, summer squash, scallions, tomatoes, cucumber, chili peppers, chives, parsley, mint, and zinnias. Throughout the season dietary nourishment was supplemented with tremendous friendship and goodwill.

**Make It Stop:** Make It Stop is a group of island people that meets once a month to write letters, make calls to senators and congresspeople, demonstrate, speak out, host events, and learn about how to make a difference in gun safety that is under the auspices of the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle Project of the Unitarian Universalist Meeting House. We did much work in 2017.

We met with Detective Jerry Adams of Nantucket Police Department who discussed domestic violence issues on the island. In the spring, Dylan Fernandes presented his gun safety ideas to the group. US Senator Ed Markey visited the island and we questioned him on his position regarding gun safety. On October 8, Make It Stop sponsored a gathering at the UU Meeting House to mourn the loss of 56 people in the Las Vegas calamity. Each victim was remembered.

We are working to align ourselves with other national and regional groups to increase our effectiveness: Everytown Mass Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence, Mothers Demand Action, and others.

We continue to call our representatives and ask for more sane gun laws. We are researching bringing another film here to Nantucket with speakers afterwards to discuss.

**Clothing Drive:** Partnering with the Food Pantry, the clothing drive continues to be active with clothes donated by the Hospital Shop at the end of their season, picked up at the 'Madaket Mall' and

donated by the island community. The American Legion has graciously provided their facility for the clothing distribution, at no cost, to the Food Pantry's clients.

In Community,  
Gary Langley

### **Nominating Committee – 2017**

The 2017 Nominating Committee of Susan Richards, Lora Stewart, and Stephen Estabrooks present the following nominations to our Congregation for their vote. Note: During 2017, Jan Ellsworth stepped down from her position on the Nominating Committee and the Board appointed Lora Stewart to the position for the remainder of Jan's one year term.

I. For the Board of Trustees - for three year terms (filling the spots left by departing members Lora Stewart, Cynthia Csabay, Christine Sanford, and Joanna Greenfield):

- Alison Forsgren
- Kat Robinson Grieder
- Susan Richards
- To be determined

II. In addition, we nominate as Treasurer for a one year term:

- Paul Stewart

III. And finally we nominate to form the Nominating Committee for a one year term:

- Lora Stewart
- 2 more members to be determined

Many thanks to our departing board members - Lora Stewart, Cynthia Csabay, Christine Sanford, and Joanna Greenfield who each made unique and invaluable contributions to our Board as well as to our Congregation.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Susan Richards  
Nominating Committee Coordinator

### **Membership Committee – 2017**

The mission of the Membership Committee is to build and support community. We:

1. Support and recognize current members.
2. Welcome and encourage new members.
3. Recognize summer members with a special annual social gathering and facilitate summer members' participation in congregational activities.
4. Encourage all members to participate in church activities and governance.

Throughout 2017, social activities were organized to encourage community building. The annual St. Patrick's Day dinner was organized again this year by Lora Stewart and took place in the AR for the second year in a row. The RE Committee also organized a couple of child-friendly spaghetti dinners to

which the whole congregation was invited. The spring RE spaghetti dinner introduced Leyah Jensen, our Youth Programs Coordinator, to the congregation. In November, members of our congregation met with people from some of the other congregations that worship at the Meeting House for a pot luck dinner organized by the RE Committee. Members of the El Salvadoran congregation, Faro de Luz, as well as members of the Muslim prayer group joined the dinner for a wonderful evening sharing food, song and good company.

On July 20, 2017, Lora Stewart coordinated the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Summer Members' Gathering. She provided hearty appetizers and drinks with help from a couple of Board members and other parishioners. Once again, Reverend Linda Simmons and her husband, Gary Langley, were kind enough to offer the parsonage and the Meeting House garden as the venue. Though threatening, the weather cooperated and everyone had a wonderful time socializing while we honored our summer members and friends.

Thanks to seasonal member, Loretta Middleton, for organizing a Fall Seasonal Supper. There were three host homes and everyone had a great time. Congregants have been asking that these be reinstated and it was great to have someone pick up on the request!

Last year, we initiated a practice of pairing up a current member with each new member to provide new members with a resource person familiar with systems and people in the congregation. This has been going well with a number of new friendships forged.

The Membership Committee consists of two people: Lora Stewart, Chair and Susan Richards. Another member or two would be welcome. If you are interested, please contact Lora Stewart, Chair at: [Lora@PLPDD.com](mailto:Lora@PLPDD.com)

In 2018:

1. We hope to add one or two new members to the committee.
2. Susan Richards and Val Hall will coordinate with sabbatical minister, Rev. Kim, to organize the annual St Patrick's Day dinner/fundraiser.
3. Seasonal Suppers will be re-established.
4. The Annual Cookout will happen again in June.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lora Stewart

### **Fundraising Committee – 2017**

In recent years, the Membership Committee has also taken on the role of keeping track of fundraising activities and encouraging parishioners to help out. It is important that a separate FUNdraising Committee be established. The chair would just need to brainstorm new ideas and make sure current fundraisers have coordinators and teams going forward. Most events already have organizing teams. For example, our three biggest fundraisers, the Annual Goods and Services Auction, the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration and the Stroll Sale already have teams in place.

Fundraisers in 2017 included:

1.	March 17, 2017 – St. Patrick’s Day Dinner	\$350.00
2.	July 4 <sup>th</sup> celebration	3804.00
3.	UU Brewster church – visit and lunch (one time event)	546.00
4.	Annual Goods and Services Auction	14,958.00
5.	Stroll Craft Sale	2,511.00
6.	Summer Concerts (gate)	<u>1,175.00</u>

Total: \$23,343.00

Respectfully submitted,  
Lora Stewart

### **The Caring Team - 2017**

The mission of the Caring Team is to augment the pastoral care provided by Reverend Linda Simmons and to help facilitate a culture of caring within the Meeting House community.

In coordination with Reverend Simmons, the Caring Team:

1. Facilitates providing meals, transportation and errands for those in need.
2. Helps identify needs and resources among friends and family.
3. Reaches out to parishioners with phone calls, visits and cards when appropriate.
4. Facilitates or provides help with small household chores as needed.
5. Encourages others to participate in fulfilling our mission.

A priority for the Team and Reverend Simmons is to reach out to community members who are unable to get to the Meeting House. Most home visits are made by Reverend Simmons, but these are augmented by the Team as needed.

This has been a tough year. There have been some heartbreaking losses in the community as well as some significant injuries, medical issues and surgeries that have arisen. The Meeting House Family has continued its well-practiced history of caring for one another by providing meals, transportation and general support for members and friends facing a challenge. In many cases, the Caring Team simply acts as facilitator/coordinator for the community’s efforts, especially in providing meals. Fulfilling one of our goals from last year, Reverend Simmons is offering a once-a-month, year-long class called “One Year to Live” which began in October. In this class, participants are examining their lives to date and planning their futures (including their deaths). We have been talking about this need for a couple of years and we are grateful to Reverend Simmons for facilitating this opportunity. It is being well attended by both members of the Meeting House and by members of the wider island community.

The Shawl Ministry, which is under the umbrella of the Caring Team, built up a good stockpile of shawls and has been less active for the last couple of years. This has been possible because a couple of people have continued to turn out shawls. We are particularly grateful to Joanne Polster, our “knitter extraordinaire”, who has been prolific. The number of finished shawls is now dwindling and it is time to re-stock. With the new and ongoing Saturday morning craft workshops, knitters are welcome to join this good company to work on a craft for next December’s Stroll Fair, a project of

their own or a shawl! The Shawl Ministry is grateful for the yearly monetary allocation to The Caring Team, some of which helps to defray the cost of yarn for the shawls.

Recently, Alison Forsgren joined the Caring Team and we are grateful for her knowledge of the Meeting House and wider Nantucket communities. She brings experience from her volunteer work with the elderly and hospice as well as a number of other island non-profits that serve the wider community. Alison's institutional knowledge and historical perspective are invaluable.

David Hall continues to be a wonderful resource for doing odd jobs for elders. Ever cheerful, David is always ready to lend a hand when needed.

In 2018 the Caring Team hopes to:

1. Recruit one more member of the Team.
2. Continue to support and augment the pastoral care provided by Reverend Simmons.

Anyone interested in joining the Caring Team is encouraged to get in touch with Lora Stewart, chair. Email: [Lora@PLPDD.com](mailto:Lora@PLPDD.com)

Respectfully submitted,  
Lora Stewart, Chair

### **Docenting – Summer 2017**

The summer of 2017 was one of the busiest in recent memory. For the most part the weather was excellent throughout July and August which usually doesn't translate well for great numbers of visitors to the sanctuary. In July we greeted 484 with another 408 in August for a total of 892 visitors over the summer, 84 less than last year. People came from all over the world, including at least 20 foreign countries with Canada and the UK leading the way.

This season we welcomed Ezra Descarfino to our team and Cheryl Creighton was back for her second year. Returning veterans included Linda and Craig Sperry, Jack Weinhold, Libby Oldham, Gary Langley, Paul Stewart, Christine Sanford, Trish Jarrell and Susan & Peter Richards. A big thank you to a great team!

We filled three 2-hour shifts from 10am to 4pm weekdays and two shifts from 10am to 2pm on Saturdays. We tallied up \$414.79 in cash donations from visitors throughout the two months. The proceeds are designated to the South Church Preservation Fund.

We look forward to next summer and hope to entice new members to join our docent team. It really is a very pleasant and rewarding experience meeting new people who are truly amazed by the beauty of our historic meeting house and its interesting history and connection to Nantucket.

Respectfully submitted,  
Peter Richards, Docent Coordinator



**Second Congregational Society Meeting House/Unitarian Universalist  
Annual Meeting  
January 22, 2017**

**Call to Order:** President Jan Eldridge called the meeting to Order at 12:10 PM.

**Quorum:** The Clerk, Stephen Estabrooks, established that a quorum of at least 25 congregants were present for the annual meeting.

**Opening Words:** Reverend Linda Simmons opened the meeting with words of welcome.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the January 21, 2016 Annual Meeting were presented by Clerk, Stephen Estabrooks and accepted unanimously.

**Discussion and Approval of the 2017 Operating Budget:** Treasurer Paul Stewart presented details of the new budget that had been previously approved by the Finance Committee and the Board of Trustees and needed the final approval of the Congregation. He discussed some of the highlights of the 2016 Budget, noting that there was a surplus of \$9886.00, the bulk of which came from the Nantucket Lighthouse School Program from the sale of the Nantucket Island license plates. Paul made a motion for \$2299.00 of this money to go to pay for the outstanding balance of the sanctuary sound system and the remaining \$7,000.00 to go into the Activities Room Renovation Fund. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

A question was asked by a congregant regarding the nature of our investments as to whether they reflected the values of the 7 UU principles. Paul stated that last year a trial program was started with \$100,000 of the endowment being placed in the UUA Investment Fund, and while it had lost 3%, it was still too early to make a final decision on it. He did note that the Board of Trustees had, in its last meeting, allowed the Finance Committee to enlarge its membership. This would allow them to put together an investment portion of the Committee that could look deeper into what was out there in the way of other conscientious investment programs.

In addition, money has been set aside in the 2017 budget for publicity regarding the Meeting House and for increasing the Religious Education program. Money saved in 2016 from heating the parsonage has been placed in the Parsonage Capital Maintenance Fund. A complete 2017 Budget Report is attached. The 2017 Annual Budget was approved unanimously as submitted.

**Election of Board of Trustees Members:**

Outgoing members, President Jan Ellsworth and Stephen Estabrooks, Clerk were replaced by Paul Richards and Michelle Whelan. Christine Sanford will continue for one more year to complete the term made vacant by the resignation of Joy Margolis. Nominations were approved unanimously.

**Election of The South Church Preservation Fund (SCPF) Board.** Paul Stewart is the current President, and will be joined by Christine Sanford, Peter Richards and Mary Beth Splaine. There are 11 directors and greater than half need to be members of the Meeting House. Nominations were approved unanimously.

**Nominating Committee:** Volunteering to serve a one year term were Susan Richards, Stephen Estabrooks, and Jan Ellsworth. Nominations were approved unanimously.

**Statement of Conscience:** Gary Langley spoke briefly about a draft Statement of conscience regarding escalating inequality (see attached) that will require the approval of a minimum of 25 congregations to approve before it can be brought before the UUA where it will undergo additional review, changes inputs and could take years to finalize.

**Make It Stop:** Carl Borchert asked that the congregation approve adding this group, dealing with gun safety, to the UU 7<sup>th</sup> Principle Projects list and was approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Estabrooks, Clerk



**We, the member congregations of the Unitarian  
Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:**

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregation.
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregation and in society at large.
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.