



Unitarian Universalist
Meeting House
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Nantucket Unitarian Universalist Newsletter - February 2017

COMMON PATHWAYS *

By Reverend Linda Simmons

Sky Dancer

Gary and I go away every February for a month as part a vacation/study leave where I build classes and generally restore and enrich myself so that I might return here to offer you all some of that enrichment. This year, I will first be working on designing a retreat for the board about how to build a mission statement with the congregation. You will all be hearing more about that in the months to come.

The class I will be working on during my vacation/study leave to roll out in the spring or perhaps fall depending on how our ACK-spress program goes along and how many volunteer parents we get to chip in and how many times I am on deck, will be built from an online class offered by Harvard Divinity school last year that I took called *Religious Literacy*. The first part of the module, which I would be exploring, looks at how a lack of understanding about religion fuels bigotry, and prejudice, and hinders cooperative alliances in local, national, and global contexts. We'll learn why it is important to make a distinction between particular religious expressions or assertions of devotional beliefs on the one hand, and the exploration or study of diverse beliefs and practices on the other. We'll also learn how religions are internally diverse, how they evolve and change as living traditions. And how religion functions in all aspects of human experience, as opposed to being isolated in so-called private sphere of religious belief and ritual expression. We'll examine issues related to gender and sexuality, violence and peace, science, the arts, and the interpreted other. This will be a class you don't want to miss! Stay tuned!!

And then there will be the vacation part! We are going to Arizona this year and have rented a cabin called *skydancer* with a sky light that looks out into those clear Arizona skies. Part of the enrichment I plan to receive is doing some celestial dancing I must admit!

I have only been to Arizona once before, during a Justice General Assembly in 2012 in Phoenix. Right after that GA, Gary met me there and we traveled to the Grand Canyon and out into the deserts toward Utah. I was so moved by the winds. On Nantucket, the wind is so rich and full of sea and life and blue and breath. In the deserts of Arizona, the winds are full of sand and snake skins and dried bones and red mud and spirits. The wind here feeds me when I am hungry. The wind there empties me out and reminds me of a spiritual hunger for quiet and honesty and truth telling.

Gary bought me acrylic paints for Christmas this year and paper and palettes and brushes, so many colors! I last painted when I was 18! I want to paint a landscape without walls, a country with women's bodies telling their truths the way their truths are meant to be told, where hope is all the colors of the sky and the wind and the earth and where the dance of life is too big and outrageously bountiful to be feared. I want to paint love and the color of laughter and hope and religions that share food and headresses and blankets. I want to paint peace.

I will dream of you all taking care of each other, dancing with the island wind, singing your songs and loving each other into being. See you when I return. Call me if you need me. The wind can find me.

*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
IN
HENDRIX HALL

Sunday, February 5
"The Home in the
Hallway: Crafting a
Spiritual Home With-
out Walking Through
a Door"

Johannah Murphy,
Guest Speaker

Sunday, February 12
"Either or Both?"

Sana Saeed,
Guest Speaker

Sunday, February 19
"Articulating Our
Pluralism"

AJ van Tine,
Guest Speaker

Sunday, February 26
Lay Led Service

Families Welcome!
Religious Exploration
for Children Every
Sunday

Board of Trustees Monthly Report— February 2017

The Board of Trustees met on January 17, 2017.

The agenda included:

1. Board check in was on the 2nd principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations. All members felt that we have been tested over the last few months.
2. From the Treasurer:
 - The Board approved the 2017 finance budget and the plan to apply our 2016 surplus to completion of the AR and the sanctuary sound system fund.
 - The Board voted to apply any proceeds from the sale of the old main sanctuary light fixtures (once the new fixtures are installed) back to the SCPF for upcoming projects.
 - The size of the Finance Committee was revised in the handbook to state that the committee will have a minimum of 3 members including the Treasurer and eliminating the maximum size. Members will serve a one year term, renewable annually.
3. Planning for the Spring Board retreat was begun. Several dates in March and April were proposed and will be discussed further and approved by the new Board in February.
4. Board member Joanna Greenfield proposed that we work with the food pantry to be a drop off point for food (non-perishables) on weekends for those in need that do not feel comfortable going to the Food Pantry during the week. Gary Langley and Joanna will work with the staff at the food pantry to make this happen. The Board agreed that we would support the Nantucket community in this way.
5. The Board approved the annual meeting agenda. The following two items were approved and added:
 - The application for UUA certification of our congregation has been completed. We brought one last item to the annual meeting for a vote. The 2017 UU General assembly will include the statement of conscience, Escalating Inequality, if 25% of member congregations vote to include it on the agenda at GA. The Board agreed to ask the congregation to vote in the affirmative at the annual meeting. The vote will be included on our UU membership certification application due February 1, 2017. See www.uua.org/economic/escalatinginequality/escalating-inequality for more information.
 - The 7th Principle Project team asked the congregation to vote to include Make it Stop as a 2017 project.

This is my last submission to the Weathervane as Board President. It has been my pleasure to serve with this excellent, dedicated Board. I look forward to serving next year on the Nominating Committee and assisting our new President, Val Hall.

Jan Ellsworth
President Board of Trustees
ellsjan@verizon.net

A Word from the Incoming President of the Board of Trustees

I am both excited and apprehensive about becoming your new Board President. I promise to do my best to be your congregational leader. I hope that I can live up to the trust that you and the Board have bestowed upon me. I have spent the past year as Vice President, “learning the ropes” from outgoing President Jan Ellsworth and her predecessor, Susan Richards. I cannot say enough about the admiration and respect I have for these two women. Thanks so much to both of you.

Exciting things are in store for our congregation in this new year. The partnership with our Jewish, Christian, and Muslim friends will continue to flourish, as we all unite in our common concerns. Our Seventh Principle Committee maintains its marvelous program, including sponsorship of the new initiative to assist immigrants feeling threatened by the changes in Washington. We are thrilled that our own Rev. Linda Simmons will be recognized at this year’s UUA General Assembly in June for becoming our settled minister in final fellowship. Our growing religious exploration program, now expanding to include ages 9-12, will certainly bring us great pride. We are welcoming new members at an increasing rate, and the music that sustains our souls continues.

I am fortunate that I will have the help of so many as I stumble into this new role. I thank all of you who have been so willing to serve this congregation, and all my best to those who serve us in the future.

Sincerely,
Val Hall, President, Board of Trustees
scallop lady@gmail.com

February Calendar of Events

Monday, February 6, 3:15 p.m.—5 p.m.
Shirat Ha Yam Hebrew School—Activities Room

Thursday, February 9, 6:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.
Make It Stop Meeting—Activities Room

Friday, February 10, 5 pm—6:30 pm
ACK-spress (Junior Youth Group) - Activities Room

Sunday, February 12, 12:15 p.m.—1:15 p.m.
Indivisible Nantucket (formerly What Now) Meeting—
Hendrix Hall

Monday, February 13, 3:15 pm—5 pm
Shirat Ha Yam Hebrew School—Activities Room

Monday, February 20
Office Closed in observance of Presidents’ Day

Friday, February 24, 5 pm—6:30 pm
ACK-spress (Junior Youth Group) - Activities Room

CIVIL JUSTICE IN OLD NANTUCKET: A RETELLING BY HAZIEL JACKSON

(based on the research of Barbara Ann White of Nantucket)

Imagine us in this Old South Church, known to us today as The Unitarian Church on Nantucket, in October 1822. Schooling and religion are segregated; the Athenaeum library and the local cemeteries reject non-whites-- a sizable population consisting of former local slaves, fugitive slaves from other locales, freed black men and women seeking to raise their families where there is sufficient work and relatively just working conditions, and a scattering of transient men from all over the South Pacific and the world deposited from the many whaling vessels that stopover or originate in this famous port.

October 1822. Nantucketers, like all New Englanders, however obliquely, participate in and benefit from the great prosperity that unpaid, self-reproducing, nearly no-cost slave labor generates, over and over. And James Monroe, the 5th U.S. president – and the 4th Virginian slave-holding president – has just been re-elected. From the South, from Virginia, a bounty hunter, escorted by a U.S. Federal Marshall from Boston and his deputy, arrive on the island. Next morning, they proceed out of their hotel to catch an escaped black couple, Reverend Arthur Cooper and his wife.

But this is Nantucket, and the word is long since out. A boisterous crowd harangues them all the way, and at a house on Angola Street, in the windmill neighborhood at the edge of town then politely known as “New Guinea,” their entry is blocked by a mass of people. Meanwhile, while local magistrate Albert Folger further delays them, checking their credentials, warrants etc., young George Washington (no relation I assume) races to Vestal Street, then known as Prison Street, where many prominent Quakers lived – among them Macys, Gardners, and Maria Mitchell’s family (although she was only four then.)

These Quaker gentlemen, some of whom in later life became Unitarians, hustled the escaped couple and their children out a back door or window and into hiding in the Quaker home of Oliver Gardner on Vestal Street for between 2 to 6 weeks (no one now knows how long and no one squealed!!)

Today the graves of the escaped couple can be visited, side by side with very modest headstones, in the old Coloured Cemetery behind Nantucket’s Cottage Hospital.



Statement of Conscience Vote at Annual Meeting on January 22, 2017

Escalating Inequality, which is the draft Statement of Conscience (SOC) we voted on and approved at our Annual Meeting on Sunday, 1/22, has been a Congregational Study Action Issue for 3 years, which means it has been studied, discussed and the draft SCO created. The full SCO can be read here, <http://www.uua.org/economic/escalatinginequality/escalating-inequality>.

For this draft SOC to appear on the General Assembly Final Agenda for this June in New Orleans, our UUA by-laws require a minimum of 25% of certified congregations to vote for approval.

If it makes it onto the final agenda and is approved by delegates at the General Assembly, it will then be prepared, with study and action guides, for congregations to implement.

Example of previous years’ SOC include: Reproductive Justice, Immigration As A Moral Issue and Ethical Eating.

Some highlights of the draft SOC, Escalating Inequality are:

1. Since the adoption of the 2000 Statement of Conscience on Economic Injustice, Poverty, and Racism, economic inequality has escalated. We have experienced accumulation of debt, decreased support for growth and innovation, and increased concentration of wealth at the top accompanied by wage stagnation and decreased buying power for the 99%.
2. The 2000 Statement identified systemic racism as a major factor in economic inequality and this continues. Other systems that are intrinsically intertwined with the economic system include public health, health care, education, judicial and criminal justice, community development, human services, environmental, transportation, and societal systems.
3. A change in one system usually affects other systems. Therefore, improving our economic system requires looking beyond the finance and business sectors. For example, people with ill health and low literacy tend to have lower wealth, conversely our financial position influences health status and educational attainment.
4. Our UU principle of justice, equity and compassion in human relations drives us to work for healthier and more equitable economic systems.

Some of the many items that a moral economic system would include and are found in the current SOC are:

- * A major societal investment in communities that have been left out and locked out.
- * Investment in innovation, long term growth, and institutions and businesses that provide good paying jobs (Renewable energy vs. oil investment comes to mind).

(continued on next page)

(continued from prior page—*Statement of Conscience Vote at Annual Meeting on January 22, 2017*)

- * Environmentally sustainable economic practices and policies.
- * Access to affordable, quality, education at all levels
- * Universal health care. (Medicare and the VA System are examples of successful single payer medical services)
- * Dismantling of the prison industrial complex and implementation of systems of restorative justice.

Thank you for your vote to bring this important work onto the slate at General Assembly from June 21-25 this year. Many of us from our UU Meeting House will be headed to New Orleans for this event, including me and Rev. Linda! We would love to see you there!

7th Principle Project Report

By Gary Langley

On Sunday, December 18th, Food Rescue Nantucket (FRN) partnered with the Nantucket Culinary Center and Nantucket Eco Group to sponsor a fund raising event called **Presents For the Planet**. The proceeds were donated to the National Resources Defense Council and Our Children's Trust, both of which support climate action.



This was the first time the FRN provided food for public consumption, which has been a goal of ours since the inception of the group. The opportunity to undertake this new avenue for our rescued food was a result of Michelle Whelan's desire to raise money for climate action in response to the recent presidential election. The community donated the gifts, FRN provided the rescued food, The Eco Group and the Culinary Center provided the space and organization and chefs from local establishments donated their time and expertise to prepare the food. It was a well attended, joyous event with an estimated 200 folks wandering through, buying gifts and wine, eating and having a fine time. The success of the event has initiated talk of next year's 2nd annual **Presents For The Planet** event. We hope to expand this experience in other directions including a community dinner in the not to distant future.

For anyone wishing to become involved in the FRN project, please contact Gary Langley at gary@blinddogphoto.com.

In community,
~ Gary

Meet Our Members

This month—Dr. Natalie Chambers

I am my mother, my father my sister and my brother. Their dreams are my dreams. My hopes are their hopes. Hear me. See me. For these, I will give you praise. Ask me and I will ask you.



I am from Los Angeles and lived in the San Fernando Valley long enough for New Yorkers to easily hear my Valley Girl twang.

As a child of the Civil Rights era I wanted to prove to myself that I could pay my way. I put myself through UC Irvine earning a bachelors degree in Biology. Then to Lima Linda U for a MPH in Biostatistics. Michigan State University graces my medical degree.

The part of me that honors connection easily fits into the life of my solo practice as a family doctor in North Falmouth. My favorite grandmother, Lorraine, wanted me to play Bach's instrument, the organ. I prefer the more intimate sway of the cello. My current working cello piece is Bach's Prélude from Suite 1. Weekends include cello lessons, the gym, conservation walks, dinner and/or movies with friends. The Broadway play, Hamilton, is amazing! Current read is *Money, Master the Game*.

And, best of all, Sunday excursions to a little grey island off the Cape coast where I can be free to nourish my soul.

Looking forward to meeting everyone in peace and kindness.

Thankfully,
Natalie



**Join us for the next meeting of
Indivisible Nantucket (formerly *What Now*)
Sunday, February 12
12:15 p.m.—1:15 p.m., Hendrix Hall**

Indivisible Nantucket is a group of concerned citizens meeting to discuss how to remain actively involved in our democratic nation through engaged citizenship. Please join us as we learn how to increase the breadth and reach of our civic engagement.

New Year, New Energy!.... Religious Exploration Takes Off!

By Susan Richards, RE Committee

We invite you to visit the RE space (behind the folding doors) in the Activities Room before Sunday service or during coffee hour to check out the growing collection of exciting artwork and brilliant bulletin board displays! And if you're off island, you can probably "feel" the energy of the picture accompanying this article! You can also take some time to talk with our new Youth Programs Coordinator, Leyah Jensen, who is leading the charge of this new energy



through our Sunday RE classes and our new youth program (for 9-12 year olds), "ACK-spress" which is

meeting on alternating Friday evenings this winter.

Leyah's unique focus with the children on Sundays has been exploring the world with special stories and activities from different countries and cultures around the world. Recently the class was joined by two children from the Faro de Luz congregation and we plan on focusing future classes on some special projects focusing on El Salvador which is the home of so many members of the Faro de Luz Congregation.

Our January Friday night Potluck was a big success featuring dramatic skits put on by the children and fun New Years trivia.....not to mention delicious food! We hope to host some more family oriented special events in the future!



Coffee Hour Report

By Christine Sanford

All refreshment donations are most welcome and appreciated for coffee hour.



The table will be set up and waiting for your goodies! Anyone wanting to volunteer to help with set-up or clean-up, please talk to Val or Christine. Thanks!

ACK-spress IS IN DESPERATE NEED OF DUCT TAPE!

If you have some you would like to donate, please bring it on Sunday or drop it at the Church Office Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. – noon.
Thanks!

ACK-spress YOUTH PILOT PROGRAM:

Led by educator, designer, and RSDI trained artist Leyah Jensen.

This "Pilot Program" gathers youth ages 9-12 for 6 art classes that range from painting, sculpture, musical instrument building, and electronic assembling to paper boat making. Our last session will be an Art Show where youth will sell their works with proceeds going to a non-profit of their choice. This six-week "Winter Session" will serve as basis to gather a once-a-week ACK-spress youth group from April-May that will incorporate social justice and value building components. **Upcoming classes are Friday evenings, February 10 & 24, March 10 & 24 from 5 – 6:30 p.m. in the Activities Room.** Free for all who enroll! Limited spaces so sign up now at ackspress@gmail.com or call Linda at 508-680-6498. **For detailed class descriptions visit our Facebook page: ACK-spress.**

Sermons for February

February 5: “The Home in the Hallway: Crafting a Spiritual Home Without Walking Through a Door” - Guest Speaker Johannah Murphy

When we talk about home we often talk about a spiritual home outside the confines of the walls of houses, apartments, and condos. Do we as UU’s have a specific spiritual home that we share? Is this home inherent in our theology or is it something we create? Come explore these questions as we take time to craft, create, and be at home.

(Jo Murphy is a candidate for UU ministry and is doing a chaplaincy residency as her ministerial internship at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston. Jo graduated from Harvard Divinity School in May 2015, then worked in a development office at a school in Concord while organizing a short trip to Malawi, Africa to evaluate and work on a project she began while in the Peace Corps. She currently divides her time between patients at the Brigham and customers at Flour Bakery in Harvard Square, Cambridge.)

February 12: “Either or Both?” - Guest Speaker Sana Saeed

Did you know at the UUA’s General Assembly this year, we had a prayer space saved for UU Muslims? Did you know there are UU Muslims? In 2009, the Pew Research Center reported a rising trend of American’s claiming multi-religious identities otherwise known as people who hold more than one religious identity. This trend has existed and in some ways is re-emerging in Unitarian Universalist communities today. In this service, I invite you to reflect on how radical hospitality can create a more pluralist space for multi-religious UU’s and interfaith families in our churches.

(Sana Saeed is a Harvard Divinity School M. Div. Student and Chaplain Intern for the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life at HDS. She is also the Director of Youth Programs at First Church in Belmont, MA working with forty amazing teens!)

February 19: “Articulating Our Pluralism” - Guest Speaker AJ Tine

In the text of the Principles and Sources, it is said that our living tradition draws on “many sources,” and that we are “grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith.” However, this implied pluralism is not clearly defined anywhere in our covenant. How might we articulate it, both to the world and to each other? And what might a greater focus on religious pluralism mean for our practice?

(AJ van Tine is a seminarian in his second year at Harvard Divinity School. He and his wife are life-long Unitarian Universalists from Virginia, where he was an active leader in youth, young adult, and campus ministry before moving to Massachusetts.)

February 26: Lay Led Service

Unitarian Universalist Meeting House

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Church Staff

Rev. Linda Simmons, Minister - **Edward B. Anderson, Minister Emeritus**
Diane T. Lehman, Music Director - **Leyah Jensen, Youth Programs Coordinator**
Lucretia Voigt, Office Manager - **Ed Sullivan, Sexton** - **Chuck Gieg, Bookkeeper**

Board of Trustees

Jan Ellsworth (*President*), Val Hall (*Vice President*), Paul Stewart (*Treasurer*), Steve Estabrooks (*Clerk*)
Cynthia Csabay, Joanna Greenfield, Christine Sanford, Clay Twombly, Lora Stewart
Rev. Linda Simmons (*Minister*)

Church Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - noon

Minister’s Office Hours: Tuesday, 10 a.m. - noon and by appointment