



Second Congregational Society
Unitarian Universalist
11 Orange Street - P. O. Box 1023
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Nantucket Unitarian Universalist Newsletter - September 2015

COMMON PATHWAYS *

By Reverend Linda Simmons

Families and Three Legged Stools

I attend a Family System's conference once a year and it always turns my world right side up or upside down, depending on one's perspective. The basic premise of Family Systems is that we all live in triangles and like a three-legged stool, when in balance, we can sit quite comfortably. But when one of the legs of the triangle is fused with another, we tip over. Tipping over looks like anxiety, fear, dread, lack of confidence...which often is expressed as control, restlessness, over use of whatever we define as relaxing us, incessant talking or an inability to express anything with ease.

Family Systems therapists suggest that when we end up fused with people we identify as having or causing a problem we cannot ignore, we tip over. In Family Systems workshops, most of what we want to talk about as participants is not initially about our families. It is about so and so who just does not understand or is over-demanding or unwilling to take responsibility or will not listen to reason or thinks s/he is always right. Family Systems therapists direct us in these small group meetings to draw a triangle with ourselves on one point, the person we are wrangling with on the other, and the third person who gets tied up in all of this, willingly or unwillingly (or the issue this all evokes for us), as one of the other three points.

And then the kicker question is always asked by the therapist: "Okay, who in your family does this person you are wrangling with represent?" When I first heard that question, I was shocked. "Wait a minute," I protested, "this is a real issue. I need feedback on it. I do not need to do more work on my family of origin!"

Turns out, returning to families of origin is never lost time. The advice is always the same: Go and do some work with that person in your family and then return to this issue. And the work they suggest is done with this family member is not to hash out all the many transgressions of living a life together, but to learn to see this person as a whole person, with a story that is not easily understood, as someone who has struggled, lost, mourned, and birthed an identity at the same cost we all have.

Someone asked me the other day what my vision for the UU Meeting House was. I found myself saying, "The vision is something you are all so capable of discerning. What I hope to do is to learn and model accepting myself and others. This seems enough for one lifetime."

I am committed to sitting peacefully and balanced. And if I tip over, I will know it is time to do my own work with more integrity.

May balance grace all of our lives and may our stories leave room for the three-legged stools of those whose fill its pages.

*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, Sept. 6
"Kindness, Truthfulness and a Daily Life"
Rev. Linda Simmons
Historic Sanctuary

Sunday, Sept. 13
"The Great Chain of Being"
Rev. Linda Simmons
Historic Sanctuary

Sunday, Sept. 20
"The Year of the Bell"
Libby Oldham, David Barham and
Rev. Linda Simmons
Historic Sanctuary

Sunday, Sept. 27
"Let It Be"
Lay Led Service
Val Hall and
Emily Seawall
Historic Sanctuary

Families Welcome!
Religious Education
for Children Every
Sunday

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

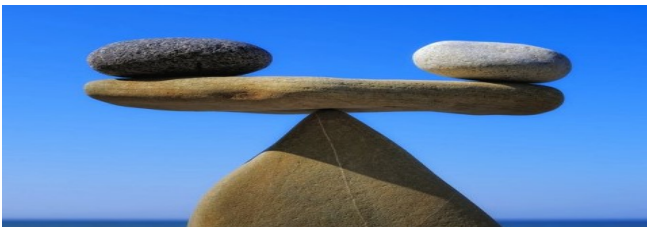
Taking a Break....

by Susan Richards, Board of Trustees President

This time of year on our island always brings the inevitable comments like "I can't believe how busy it is!....the traffic is worse than ever.....did you see the Stop and Shop parking lot?"... Even those of us who don't work in jobs that are fueled by the seasonal economy find ourselves impacted by this summer mindset of perpetual busyness. As a result, many of us have mixed feelings about the months of July and August.....recently this was the focus of the wonderful lay-led service led by Kat Robinson-Grieder.

As the current president of the Board of Trustees of this UU Congregation, I am aware (and in awe) of how hard so many of our congregational members work. While many UU congregations across the country curtail or reduce services and church activities during the summer months, our Meeting House becomes even more active as we welcome our summer members and island visitors.

As someone who works with children I am also very aware of how important well-timed "breaks" in activity are.... whether we call it naptime, re-charging, time-off, or simply "taking a break".... without them we can become exhausted, cranky, and far less productive. And so, I was determined as Board President to take something off our busy board members summer "to do" lists. I proposed that we skip our August board meeting. After an unanimous vote of approval, we took the month of August off.... Sure there were still some UU business related emails flying back and forth but I like to think that by "taking a break" from our usual 3rd Tuesday of the month meeting we have allowed ourselves a moment (or even two!) to take a breath and hopefully recharge a little as we move into the Autumn months. I encourage all of our congregational members to remember the importance of taking a break from time to time!



The 7th Principle Project/Green Sanctuary

By Gary Langley, Grassroots Nantucket

It is time to vote on where we will stand as a UU Meeting House in relation to environmental justice and sustainability. Each item listed was offered by a member or friend of the UU Meeting House.

As you vote, consider not only how the projects you choose might change our island but how they might change each one of us and our congregation. To walk our talk, every one of us must participate, review our own ways of life, and consider what we can all do right here in our Meeting House and in our lives to live into our 7th Principle: 'respect for the interconnected web of existence of which we are all a part'.

There is a room for all of us somewhere on this list. Consider what your gifts are. Can you put stamps on letters, reduce your own carbon footprint and serve as an example to all of us, clean out a closet or attic and offer some of it to others, make something that someone else would like, do research, offer counsel, reach out to experts to speak to us, cheer on others with your support? Vote with your conscience and your willingness to engage. Let's show up for each other, our island and the world and make the difference the best way we can!

There will be an email coming your way with the issues listed and explained, which information is attached to this newsletter. To vote online, just reply to the email, or email the office directly with your vote to office@unitarianchurchnantucket.org.

September Calendar of Events

Wednesday, September 9, noon

Lunch Bunch with Rev. Linda
Parsonage, 10 Fair Street

Saturday, September 19, 10:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

Children's Storytime with Rev. Linda
Farmer's Market under the tent

Friday, September 25, 6 p.m.

Hungarian Dinner
Activities Room

See You At The Meeting House!

Meet Our Members

"Meet Our Members" is a monthly series highlighting a different member or family each month.

Anne Rosén and André Spears

We are from Greenwich Village, New York City, where we've lived for 34 years. We started summering on the island in 1992; after hearing a few Ted Anderson sermons, we joined the church in about 1996. Our three boys were all "blessed" at the Unitarian Community Church in N.Y., and so we naturally gravitated to Unitarianism here, and we wanted to give our kids some spiritual input. We were of course disappointed by Rev. Anderson's departure, and our attendance and involvement lapsed for quite a few years thereafter, for several reasons. (For instance, Anne's mother moved to the island and joined the First Congregational Church—!!—so we often went there on Sundays to be with her while she was still alive.) Mary Beth Splaine and Jack Weinhold brought us back "into the fold" several years ago, and of course we are now re-inspired by the rejuvenating spirit of Rev. Simmons and her husband.

Lay-Led Committee Report

by Val Hall

On Sunday, August 23, we celebrated "Summertime and Community" in a lay service led by Kat Robinson-Grieder. The congregation was treated to special organ music played by Bill Sano, and a wonderful solo of "Summertime" sung by Mary Shaw, accompanied on the piano by Bill Sano. The choir sang "Wild Mountain Thyme", a traditional summer anthem, and the service ended with a rousing sing-along of "In the Good Ole Summertime." Our speakers were Kat and Kent Jarrell.

The next lay service will be Sunday, September 27, with the theme of "Let it Be", led by Val Hall and Emily Seawall. Emily recently completed an intensive meditation retreat, and wishes to share her experience with the congregation. She states, "Meditation is an ancient tradition that has gained much media popularity in 2015. Self-help gurus and celebrities alike tote its benefits in today's overstimulated, non-stop world. Today we will take a personal look into a ten-day Vipassana meditation retreat." Music being planned for this service will range from traditional hymns to the Beatles.

Persons AND Beings:

a Compromise for the First Principle

Submitted by Haziel Jackson, Nantucket churchmember and UU-UNO envoy

We UUs adore nature, ecology and Darwin; affirm that no deity granted us "dominion" over "its" creation; acknowledge the sentience of elephants, whales, dogs, even houseplants; and admit that, genetically, we are mere nucleic acids away from being born as chimpanzees. So "beings" is obvious, right?

But is there a slippery slope? A can of worms? E.g. Is it "cruel and unusual" to squash annelid life, earthworms, into a can? Or to eat the fish they help us catch? Are we to "liberate" our dogs, cats, endangered parrots and tropical fish? "Hunt" our prey in supermarkets? Pray to their spirits—like Native Americans? Or just chew very conscientiously—like Buddhists?

Yet Nantive Americans warred religiously, Hindus slaughter Muslims as fervently as Muslims do other Muslims, Christians enslaved anybody handy, and Burmese Buddhist priests exhort the annihilation of the Ryohinga people. Worldwide, even in the U.S., human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing, most lucrative industries. And rape, torture, even beheading, are so commonplace our children can see them enacted on TV.

For the most part our cruelty to animals has been utilitarian—or defensive (like swatting mosquitoes). But humans' inhumanity to human knows no bounds. Let us not fall victim to easy-mouthed platitudes that help us to evade our responsibility to our own kind. Maybe: "persons AND beings" safeguards us.



Annual Hungarian Dinner

Join us on Friday, September 25th at 6:00 p.m. in the Activities Room for our annual Hungarian Dinner in honor of our Unitarian Hungarian brothers and sisters in our partner church in Kolozs, Transylvania. Traditional food, decorations and paprika will be featured as well as some history of our connection to Hungarian Unitarians.

Sermons for September

On the first Sunday of every month, Rev. Linda will remain in the Sanctuary after service to give an overview of what it means to become a member of the UU Meeting House and to answer questions. Please join us for this informative and low-key discussion.

September 6: "Kindness, Truthfulness and a Daily Life" - Rev. Linda Simmons

How do we achieve a balance between kindness and truth? What do truth and kindness mean in relation to each other? What tools can help us hold these two virtues while walking a path of integrity?

September 13: "The Great Chain of Being" - Rev. Linda Simmons

How will we know when we are living into our 7th Principle, The Interconnected Web of all Existence? Where does the individual fit within this paradigm? What changes are needed and how do we name them so that we might live into this we(b)?

September 20: "The Year of the Bell" - Libby Oldham, David Barham, and Rev. Linda Simmons

December 18th marks the 200th anniversary of the Portuguese Bell that graces the UU Meeting House tower. Come hear more about the history of the bell, how bells have been used throughout history, and the ways bells connect us through time.

September 27: "Let It Be" - Lay Led Service led by Val Hall and Emily Seawall

Emily Seawall recently completed an intensive meditation retreat, and wishes to share her experience with the congregation. She states, "Meditation is an ancient tradition that has gained much media popularity in 2015. Self-help gurus and celebrities alike tote its benefits in today's overstimulated, non-stop world. To-day we will take a personal look into a ten-day Vipassana meditation retreat." Music for this service will range from traditional hymns to the Beatles.

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

~ The inherent worth and dignity of every person.

~ Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

~ Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.

~ A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

~ The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

~ The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

~ Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

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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, Sexton ~ Chuck Gieg, Bookkeeper

Board of Trustees

Susan Richards (*President*), Jan Ellsworth (*Vice President*), Paul Stewart (*Treasurer*), Steve Estabrooks (*Clerk*)
Cynthia Csabay, Joanna Greenfield, Joy Margolis, Jim Sulzer, Lora Stewart

Church Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - noon
Minister's Office Hours: Tuesday, 10 a.m. - noon and by appointment

Long-Term Launch
7th Principle Project/Green Sanctuary

A. Green Building/Recycling

Home building is one of the largest industries on the island, employing many full time residents in a variety of disciplines (construction, engineering, interior design, landscape design, etc). Considering the breadth of such an industry, and one that eats up environmental resources in numerous ways, Nantucket must begin thinking more “green.” Now is our time to become part of a movement that is saving our forests, re-using materials and inventing new ways to create and use recycled products, and most of all, expanding energy methods to solar, rainwater and wind in the effort to preserve our natural resources. With the amount of home building (sadly often tearing down and rebuilding - including landscaping) over such a small area, and the level of income that invests in it, we have the opportunity to be at the forefront of changing the very scope of this industry.

B. Meeting House as Forum

The intent of this project is for The Meeting House to become a host of regular forums for discussions, presentations and guest speakers to engage the Nantucket community in topics that concern us all.

C. Immigration

Rising global temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, climbing sea levels, and more extreme weather events intensify the challenges of global instability, hunger, poverty, and conflict. This will lead to food and water shortages, disease, disputes over resources, and destruction by natural disasters in regions across the globe according to a news’ brief from The White House. Immigration will only increase in response. We all have a responsibility to educate ourselves about immigration and build relationships across barriers of color, class and ethnicity.

D. Protection of Beaches/Erosion

Nantucket's beaches are at risk. In an era of climate change and sea level rise, the island is at a crossroads in balancing environmental concerns with private property rights as erosion control devices crop up at locations along the entire coastline. Some of the erosion control structures put in place to protect coastal properties have been shown to actually hasten the erosion process of the protected beach and those downdrift properties nearby. Public access to the Town-owned beaches is reduced in the process. Educational opportunities about erosion, climate change and sea level rise are being offered by a number of existing nonprofits including the Nantucket Land Council, UMASS Boston Nantucket Field Station, Nantucket Coastal Conservancy and Nantucket Civic League.

E. Energy Initiative

The increasing costs of energy, depletion of resources and global warming are demanding a change in the life style of everyone on earth. Small group gatherings in local communities, with the agenda of energy education, are an important first step in developing resilience and adapting to a post carbon society.

As an initiative of the 7th Principle Project, we have a unique opportunity to work in cooperation with the Town of Nantucket Office of Energy, and the committed support of National Grid (advertising, brochures, videos, etc.), to lead the design, organization and facilitation of an energy-education program focused on changing the energy habits of all island stakeholders.

F. Ethical Eating

This has already been recognized as a national UU initiative. There are many ways we could approach this project as a congregation, such as: working towards providing economic accessibility to safe, ethically produced food, supporting UU organizations, like the UU-UNO in their efforts, advocating for healthful food for school and other institutional meals, and assisting local Meals on Wheels and other food bank programs.

G. Ban Pesticides/Leaf Blowers

Most pesticides are highly toxic and untested. They can poison our water, our food, and the animals that naturally eat pests. Pesticides harm us all, especially our children. We can ban the most toxic pesticides, like roundup, from the island, have lectures, and encourage schoolchildren to promote natural pest controls, by making bat houses, raising chickens and guinea hens, and filling bird feeders.

H. Ban GMOs

Tests done in other countries have suggested that GMO crops can damage the digestive tract and possibly affect children's development, increasing the rate of cancer, autism, diabetes, and food allergies. Pollen from GMO gardens and farms and grass can contaminate all our crops. As an island we have the opportunity to protect ourselves if we can ban GMO seeds. Lectures, articles, signs for lawns, online awards for GMO free stores and restaurants. Sustainable Nantucket, land council and farm partnerships.

I. Year Round Bus

A year round bus would reduce the need for cars on the island, helping fight pollution and poverty. People stand in the snow and rain for sometimes an hour, waiting for a car to pick them up after work, without a waterproof coat. Our most disadvantaged workers are at greatest risk.

Quick Launch
7th Principle Project/Green Sanctuary

A. Bee Keeping

Bees are in peril around the world. We have a bee keeping group on Nantucket that can donate most of the equipment to start at least one hive. We currently have 2 complete bee keeper protective outfits.

B. Food Rescue

This project would collect unsold fresh food, like fruit and vegetables, and prepared foods and dairy products nearing their sell-by dates from a range of donors including grocery stores, farmers markets, and bakeries. The food is then distributed to charities that serve the hungry- groups that sometimes are lacking in fresh food options.

C. Voter Registration/Childcare at Town Meetings

Too few people vote on our island and/or attend Town Meeting. Providing opportunities for people to register to vote and offering information around the issues of climate change, increases the well-being of all. Also, many people do not attend town meeting because there is no child care. Providing child care would encourage diversity.

D. Partnering with Economically Fragile Groups

Environmental changes impact those with the fewest resources first. Partnering with economically fragile groups on this island would build our capacity to be allies and good neighbors.

E. Yard Sale

A yard sale is a fabulous way to recycle items that are no longer wanted by members of the congregation. It is a quick start project that offers the opportunity for Meeting House members to become involved in the 7th Principle Project by donating and/or volunteering to help on the day of the sale.

F. Clean Team

Officially join and support the Clean Team which cleans roads and beaches every Sat. morning May through Oct.

G. Social Media

Create a social media network for sharing environmental articles/issues via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

H. Plastic Bottle Reduction

Start a partnership with other island groups to start working toward banning plastic bags and bottles from the island by 2018.

I. Book Discussion Group

This would be a group that gets together on a regular basis to discuss books/articles with green themes. This group could gather ideas for possible future 7th Principle projects as well as keep the Green Sanctuary discussion going in a very interactive way.

J. Support Bike Path Initiatives

Bike Path initiatives are already in the works on our island. This is an important project as we move toward creating and supporting safer avenues (in the form of bike paths) for our growing population of bikers.

K. Spaying/Neutering Animals

Nantucket is an animal loving island. What better way to act on this love than to support ways to prevent homeless animals? This project could involve supporting groups that are already in place like Nantucket Safe Harbor for Animals and Cat Trap that need help with their Spay/Neuter programs.