



Second Congregational Meeting House Society  
Unitarian Universalist  
11 Orange St. ~ P.O. Box 1023  
Nantucket, MA 02554  
(508) 228-5466

Nantucket Unitarian Universalist Newsletter ~ January 2014

## Common Pathways Ring of Protection

by Rev. Linda Simmons

Anne Lamont tells a story of four boys camping on a mountain who worked hard to put out their campfire in the morning, covering it with dirt until all smoke was choked off. The fire was still underground though and a blaze ensued that destroyed 12,000 acres of wilderness and 50 homes.

The boys turned themselves in early. They told their story. They were deeply remorseful. They and their parents were thinking of leaving the town.

The president of the board of fire fighters told the townspeople at the picnic held in honor of the firefighters that in times gone by, those who harmed a town were sent to live outside its borders, beyond community and protection. He talked about the boys and said the town needed them, that the town wanted to keep them inside the ring of protection. The townspeople applauded, including those who had lost their homes.

This got me to thinking about community. Living together on this small island, we all know when another harms or is harmed. A long time island resident told me that you can run but you cannot hide on Nantucket. She felt this was hard but it helped us get over our own fears of being judged. Because we cannot hide, we have to eventually come to terms with accepting our weaknesses, our tragedies, our mistakes and even our successes. This has to happen living on an island, she told me.

I have been reflecting on this and I have surmised that what happens sooner is that we have to accept our own and others' humanity.

There is a Zen story that I am reminded of here:

In early times in Japan, bamboo-and-paper lanterns were used with candles inside. A blind man, visiting a friend one night, was offered a lantern to carry home with him.

"I do not need a lantern," he said. "Darkness or light is all the

continued on page 2



Join us for Sunday  
services each week!  
Choir practice at 9:30 a.m.  
Religious Exploration  
and services  
begin at 10:45 a.m.

Sunday, January 5  
"Walking into the Future  
by Way of the Past"  
Rev. Linda Simmons

Sunday, January 12  
"Non-Violence and  
Beloved Community"  
Rev. Linda Simmons

Sunday, January 19  
"Stories of  
the Chalice"  
Lay Led Service

Sunday, January 26  
"Good Things  
Happen Here"  
Rev. Linda Simmons

same to me.” “I know you do not need a lantern to find your way,” his friend replied, “but maybe another will be walking near you and need the light.”

Winter is upon us for real now; the holidays passed, the tourists gone, many of the shops and restaurants closed. Remember to kindle the lantern of your heart, just in case another island traveler needs the light. We never really know who is walking beside us and needs our ring of inclusion and protection. Remember, too, that we are only and impossibly human because we are human together.

*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.*



## President's Column

by Linda Sperry

What a memorable year we've just concluded at the Meeting House! We've welcomed new faces and bid fond farewells to long-time members of our church community who moved off island to other locales. We've taken a leap of faith and brought a new settled minister into our midst, who has been thoroughly embraced by the congregation she has come to serve.

Now as we enter 2014, we embark upon a year of great promise and possibility. We've already begun laying the foundation for an exciting social justice program built upon our seven UU principles that guide our ethical choices.

Our Religious Exploration program is energized with the addition of our new lead teacher Jen Dunbar and her supporting volunteer teachers from the congregation.

We're also starting out the year by adding adult religious educational offerings, beginning with a World Religions Series. Our Music program is equally poised to excel in 2014 with a full complement of talented singers in our choir led by our outstanding music director Diane Lehman.

And on the financial front, we have now moved away from dependence on the principal of our endowment. We're living within our means and conserving the endowment so future generations can carry out our liberal religious tradition.

As we look forward to the year ahead, I encourage you to be an active member of the church community, lending a hand with your time and talents when you can. We love the fact that we're a small congregation where we all know and are able to care for one another in a way that would not be possible in a larger, more impersonal church.

However, being a smaller congregation means that every one of us has to take responsibilities—for our financial stability, for leadership roles and for volunteer opportunities. With the energy I've witnessed and the willingness to step up, from all of you, I'm convinced that the sky is the limit as to what we can accomplish.

It has been a pleasure to serve this past year as the board of trustees president. It's been a truly rewarding experience and has brought me closer to the Unitarian Universalist faith. Thanks for the trust you have placed in me and the rest of the board of trustees. We are grateful to every one of you.



## Religious Exploration - 2014

by Susan Richards

After an RE salute to the holidays - including Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hannukah, and Solstice (complete with the decoration of our UU



Friendship Tree on Main St) - we are back to our UUA curriculum - "Wonderful Welcome" in January. Be on the look out for handouts coming home which will give you more of an idea of what the children are doing during our sessions! Be sure to check the UUA website under "Tapestry of Faith" to get more details of what the program is all about.

Date to remember... We will be hosting another Family Spaghetti Dinner on Friday evening, January 17th; 5:30 - 7:00pm. Bring your family and friends and a favorite pasta topping and enjoy a low-key gathering in the Activities Room at the Meeting House. We will supply the pasta, bread, salad and beverages. And for a bit more fun, there will be some Trivial Pursuit questions for all ages sprinkled throughout the night!

Looking for ways to support RE? There's a snack sign up on our bulletin board along with a wish list for special supplies - thanks to those of you who have already donated - we've received some great yarn for future knitting/crocheting projects! If you would like to help out with a class as a support teacher, let us know.... we are always on the lookout for help during Sunday service. But if being a support teacher for RE is not your "cup of tea", there are plenty of other ways to help.... please see our Lead Teacher, Jen Dunbar or give RE chair Susan Richards a call or email at [susanoncobble@gmail.com](mailto:susanoncobble@gmail.com).



## Noon Years Eve Workshop Wraps Up 2013

by Linda Sperry

The Nantucket UU congregation, in cooperation with the Artists Association of Nantucket (AAN), sponsored a "Noon Years Eve Workshop" in the Activities Room on snowy December 31, attracting a crowd of 35 children between 3 and 9, accompanied by parents, grandparents and caregivers.

The group created a number of handicrafts to take

home, including jeweled and decoupaged "2014" decorations, magic wands, ice cream cones, snowmen and snowflakes.

The morning of activity culminated at noon with an apple juice toast to the new year as the 1815 Portuguese Bell rang out in the church tower followed by a parade down to Main Street with cowbells, wands and shouts of Happy New Year.

Our thanks to AAN Arts Program Director Lori Garrabrant, who did an incredible job of pulling all the details together and bringing her great team of teachers and volunteers to help with the program.

A special thanks also to our own Susan Turer and her daughter, Max, who volunteered their time and did an awesome job working with the children to create their treasures.

The program was funded by grants from the Nantucket Golf Club and ReMain Nantucket and was a featured event in the Nantucket New Year community celebration.



Susan Turer, above, Ezra Descarfino, below, teach Magic-Star Wand, "2014" Numbers, and Snowflake making at the Noon Years Eve Workshop.





## January 2014 Sunday Services

### Sunday, January 5th

#### Walking into the Future by Way of the Past

On this Sunday, the New Year will be honored. This sermon explores the way we make commitments, tell the stories of our lives, and how this effects our ability to embrace what is right before us. There is a special treat in store as well during this service!

### Sunday, January 12th

#### Non-Violence and Beloved Community

Martin Luther King preached about non-violence and beloved community. What are the tenets of non-violence and how can we bring them into our everyday lives? How might the strengthening of this capacity help us build and be a loving part of the beloved community here between us?

### Sunday, January 19th

#### Stories of the Chalice - 4th Sunday Lay-Led service

This Sunday we will light the "General Assembly" Chalice. This special chalice, first used at the Boston General Assembly in 2003, has lighted 11 General Assemblies and is traveling the circuit of our Ballou Channing District, calling its congregations to General Assembly, June 25-29 in Providence, Rhode Island .

### Sunday, January 26

#### Good Things Happen Here

For the last several Sundays, there have been jars with the words Good Things Happen Here taped to them and paper and pen for all to write about what they love about the UU Meeting House community and experience. As we come to our Annual Meeting Sunday it seemed relevant to ask and answer some questions together. How does the Meeting House make a difference in your life, in your spiritual self, in your outlook on life? What is fun, what is special, what is meaningful? What is different from the rest of your life? This Sunday we will explore your answers together while reflecting on the value of our religious community.

## The Inside Story

by Rev. Ted Anderson

*Minister Emeritus, Rev. Ted Anderson recollects the early days of South Church Preservation Fund in a tale of how the congregation and the community rose to the occasion. M.B.S.*

The most revealing events in the birth of an institution often occur before there is any organization to it at all, let alone a name; no formal meetings, no clear sense of purpose or direction, no officers, perhaps some vague vision thing but not much more. The SCPF followed this typical pattern of spontaneous generation as it came into being.

Though most of the participants have faded from memory, they still deserve our thanks for undertaking the restoration projects of the 1980's. It was a challenge magnified by the fact that the last survey taken beforehand revealed only 28 members taking part in the life of the church in any way. Such limited numbers and resources made it audacious to utter the words, "major restoration."

The South Church Preservation Project did not begin as a "major" anything. Spontaneously two retired librarians began calling the congregation's attention to a couple of serious structural deficiencies. Mary Gulick insisted there should be an emergency door in the basement "for safety's sake." The only way out was through the main front door. The present door into Hendrix Hall was then a window. Mary was so obviously right no one could argue, as always seemed the case when Mary was making a point.

Eleanor Phinney, the other librarian and a fine poet, feared the flaking Wendte wall paintings were fast becoming unsalvageable. We are the custodian of three historic treasures, one in music (The Goodrich Organ), one in architecture (the building), and one in paint.

With a little informal help the minister and the trustees found the resources to conduct the preliminary studies necessary to evaluate the feasibility of putting in a back door, repainting the ceiling and, of course, correcting whatever other little problems

might show up in an engineering survey. In the wink of an eye, it seemed, we were suddenly talking about structural steel, gutting the basement, and an estimated cost of around half a million dollars.

As our record keeping of the emotional impact of these spine-shattering developments is casual in the extreme I am forced to rely on unreliable sherds of oral tradition for the remainder of this little pre-SCPF history. Recognizing that the congregation was accustomed to pondering sums of the magnitude of \$35,000, the size of the annual church budget, the emotional impact of adding a few ciphers here and there is more accurately translated from 1980.

After stewing about it and wallowing through a swamp of discouraged confusion for a few days, someone finally had to deal with the gorilla that had elbowed its way through the back wall. Accordingly John Greenleaf invited a few prominent members of the congregation to his house after church for an "up or down vote."

We batted realities around for an hour or so. It was the money. No one was ignorant of the fact that estimates on projects like this are always low. If we ran out of money and could not finish the job, it would probably mean the end of the church. To be willing would not be enough.

Jack and Jim Hendrix, Bob Congdon, John Greenleaf, and Bernie Grossman were men who could do it, but they had to be enthusiastic and they had to be unanimous. We had done all the prep work. We could explain our case to any potential supporter. All that was needed was a decision, to take the risk for half a million dollars or to put it off to another generation.

Finally Bernie said, "Let's all write down how much we ourselves would be willing to contribute and see where that would leave us..." Silence !... Timidly, one said, "ok."

Bernie gathered up the scraps of paper and totaled up the sums, then turned to the rest and said, "Among the six of us we've ponied up a quarter of a million.

It was not a firm pledge, of course. What confidence can do is more amazing than firm. It was that

continued on page 6



confidence that give birth to the SCPF. There was no more uncertainty. That the project would be completed was suddenly a certainty.



## A Financial Milestone

At the 2011 summer congregational meeting we pledged to wean ourselves from using endowment fund principal to fund annual operating expenses. We agreed to make that happen by 2014, and we did it. We can all be proud of that accomplishment.

Although we missed our 2014 Members Fund Pledge Campaign goal, which would have allowed us to maintain a 2013 level of programs and support services, pledges did increase enough to allow the finance committee to craft a balanced budget for 2014.

The budget, which includes the reductions, was approved by the Board of Trustees and will be submitted for congregational approval at the annual meeting. Everyone will be mailed an annual report, including the budget, prior to the meeting.



## 2013 PLEDGE PAYMENT REMINDER

If you have not completed your 2013 commitment, please send it in pronto so that we may close out the books for last year. Need information, contact Peter Richards at [cobbleland@aol.com](mailto:cobbleland@aol.com)



## PLEDGE CARDS STILL BEING ACCEPTED FOR 2014

Still waiting to make a financial commitment to the church for 2014? Wait no longer. Blank pledge cards with envelopes are available in Hendrix Hall and the Activities Room. Fill one out and drop it in the church office door slot.

## Meeting House Knitters

This group will meet Thursday, Jan. 9 at Mary Beth's House, 11 South Shore Rd. at 7pm to work on prayer/comfort shawls and set a calendar of future meeting dates. All welcome, old pros and beginners. Thanks to organizers Lora Stewart and Nancy Rappaport.

## Good Things Happen Here!

For the month of January, you will find jars with pen and paper around the Meeting House that say Good Things Happen Here. This is your opportunity to let us know what you love about coming to the Meeting House, being part of this community, celebrating this life together. Please take time to jot down your thoughts and put them in the jars. The collected thoughts will be part of the January 26th service.

You can also send a facebook message to the Meeting House facebook page or email Rev. Linda at [revlindasimmons@gmail.com](mailto:revlindasimmons@gmail.com).



Carolers entertain Our Island Home residents and others on Christmas Eve led by Diane and Bob Lehman.



## NOTICE

The 2014 annual meeting of the  
Second Congregational Meeting House Society, Nantucket  
will convene at the Meeting House, Sunday January 26, 2014,  
in Hendrix Hall following the service.

### HENDRIX HALL RENOVATION **The hall will be closed February 3-28, 2014**

Shirat Ha Yam, South Church Preservation Fund (SCPF) and Faro de Luz have graciously consented to join our congregation renovating Hendrix Hall with **new paint, new carpeting and new cushions for the pews**. Shirat Ha Yam and SCPF will be matching our congregation's donation.

Please consider making a **Special Donation** (above and beyond your pledge payments) towards the Hendrix Hall Renovation. We welcome your gift. Donations for this project will be accepted throughout the New Year.

During Renovation, for three Sundays (February 9, 16 and 23), we will be holding Sunday services in the African Meeting House, corner of York and Pleasant Streets.. RE classes for the kids and coffee hour will take place back in our own Activities Room. For more information, contact president Linda Sperry at lindaspery@gmail.com.

### WORLD RELIGION SERIES **BEGINS - JANUARY 6TH**

Reverend Simmons will be teaching a world religion series covering Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism and Christianity, with each class focusing on a specific religion. Classes will be in the Activities Room from 4-6 p.m. on Mondays, beginning on January 6 and ending on the first Monday in February, the 3rd, depending on the size of the group. Sign up on the sheet on the door of the kitchen or contact Reverend Simmons at revlindasimmons@gmail.com.

Winter - Winter - **Save These Dates** - Winter - Winter  
Friday, January 17 at 5:30 pm - **Spaghetti Dinner in January**,  
Sunday, January 26 **Annual Meeting**, immediately following the service  
Monday, January 6, 13, 22, 27 & Feb. 3 **World Religion Study Series**, Rev Simmons  
Sunday, February 2, Annual Souper Bowl Pot Luck Dinner. Limit 20, Call Linda Sperry

Next Seasonal Supper - Friday, January 24th  
Good food and conversation, and GREAT company!

Looking for hosts and guests for these small dinner parties in members' homes. The host provides the main course and coordinates contributions from the guests to complete the meal.

Get together with some old friends and meet some new ones!  
See Lora Stewart at Coffee Hour to sign up, or call (978)729-4026.



Second Congregational  
Meeting House Society  
11 Orange Street  
P.O. Box 1023  
Nantucket, MA 02554

Second Congregational Meeting House Society  
Unitarian Universalist

11 Orange St. ~ P.O. Box 1023  
Nantucket, MA 02554  
(508) 228-5466 (Office)  
[www.unitarianchurchnantucket.org](http://www.unitarianchurchnantucket.org)  
[office@unitarianchurchnantucket.org](mailto:office@unitarianchurchnantucket.org)

**Church Staff**

**Rev. Linda Simmons** *Minister* - **Rev. Edward B. Anderson**, *Minister Emeritus*  
**Diane T. Lehman**, *Director of Music* - **Lucretia Voigt**, *Office Assistant*  
**Mimi Jones and Dennis Santangelo**, *Sextons*

**Board of Trustees**

Linda Sperry (President), Jim Sulzer (Vice President), Susan Richards (Clerk),  
Peter Richards (Treasurer), David Hall, John Rivera, Lora Stewart, Marina Sutro, Jack Weinhold

**Church Office Hours**

*Monday - Friday ~ 9:00 a.m. - Noon*

**Minister's Office Hours**

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