



Unitarian Universalist
Meeting House
11 Orange Street - P. O. Box 1023
Nantucket, MA 02554
(508) 228-5466

Nantucket Unitarian Universalist Newsletter - January 2018

COMMON PATHWAYS *

By Reverend Linda Simmons

Sitting with Uncertainty

My sabbatical is coming right up! On February 7th Gary and I will be flying to New Delhi, India to begin our 2 month adventure that takes us into the foothills of the Himalayas in Nepal for a 21 day trek at 10,000 feet and then on to another month in India to stay with the Unitarians of India in Shillong. To learn more about our trip and to follow our journey, check out my blog at <https://nepalindiadotblog.wordpress.com/>

What has been most pronounced about this trip planning for us has been managing the uncertainty that arises. How will my lungs do at 10,000 feet? What might be the other effects of altitude? Will we get sick from drinking water or food that we cannot tolerate? Are we strong enough to trek 3-5 hours a day at 10,000 feet? How will we manage with no indoor plumbing or running water for the 21 days during our trek? Will our two backpacks allow us enough of the right types of clothing to be comfortable? In other words, will we be able to achieve the spiritual and personal awakening that we are seeking if the bulk of these questions are not answered favorably?

Gary and I have lists and lists of things to do and gather, immunizations to get, insurances to consider purchasing. Our bedroom has piles of things to consider taking on the trip, only half of which will fit in the packs we are taking along. We wake at night dreaming thin air dreams and add new items to our lists which we forget when we return to sea level by morning.

I have been sitting with uncertainty these days, as a concept, entity, and shape. Pema Chodron, a Buddhist nun, writer and teacher, writes of uncertainty in her book When Things Fall Apart: "When we're on the verge of we know not what, the test of each of us is to stay on that brink and not concretize. The spiritual journey is not about heaven and finally getting to a place that's really swell."

So, I'm working with *staying on the verge* and not concretizing and while doing so, it has struck me that we may only be able to achieve the spiritual and personal awakening that we are seeking if the bulk of the questions above are not answered favorably!

I once had a teacher who said to me, "Linda, you ask questions that only the end of the journey those questions will lead you on can teach you the answers to." This is a particular disability of mine. Do you share it too? It can discourage journeying at all. Here's to the journey this New Year my friends, whatever your journey is. May it lead you deeper into the questions. And as Rainer Maria Rilke writes, "Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer."

Happy New Year!

*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

January 7
"Comfortable with
Uncertainty"
Rev. Linda Simmons

January 14
"Being Seen by our
Stories"
Rev. Linda Simmons

January 21
Lay Led Service

January 28
"Posing the
Question"
Rev. Linda Simmons
**Our Annual Meeting
will take place
immediately following
the service**

Families Welcome!
**Religious
Exploration for
Children Every
Sunday**

Board of Trustees Monthly Report— January 2017

The Board of Trustees The Board of Trustees met on December 19, 2017 and made the following actions:

- Accepted the recommendation of the Music Committee to hire Barbara Elder as summer Music Director, from June 10 to September 16, 2018. Since the “winter” position remains open, the committee recommended to the Board that Barbara Elder be appointed Interim Music Director until she assumes her summer position. Meanwhile the search will continue for a year-round Music Director. The Board unanimously approved Barbara’s appointment by email vote. The Music Committee consists of Barbara Elder (chair), Gerry Mack, Val Hall, and Rev. Linda Simmons.
- Welcomed new chairperson of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, David Hall, and new committee member Angus McLeod.
- Approved the 2018 budget, to be presented to the congregation for final approval at Annual Meeting January 28. We have not touched our endowment for at least four years, yet we have maintained a balanced budget.
- Received a report from Jack Weinhold about last year’s 4th of July celebration, and heard plans for this July. Jack has some new ideas, and is asking for volunteer help.
- Reviewed the “Animals in the Meeting House” policy in the Congregational Handbook. A reworded policy will be written and voted on at the next meeting. Essentially, animals (except Service Animals) are not allowed in the Meeting House without prior approval.
- Lowered the fees for weddings which take place off-season in Hendrix Hall.
- Welcomed Allison Forsgren to the Caring Committee.
- Approved two “share the plate” offerings for the Minister’s Discretionary Fund.

Respectfully Submitted,
Val Hall, President
scallop lady@gmail.com

The Immigration Resource Center is Open!

**Monday, January 1
5:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m., Activities Room**

and the first Monday of each month.

The IRC is a safe place to ask questions, receive referrals and compassion. If we don’t know where to find the answers, we’ll learn together!

Spanish, Portuguese, and English spoken.

Spread the word!

January Calendar of Events

Monday, January 1, 5:30 p.m.— 7:30 p.m.
Immigration Resource Center—Activities Room

Wednesday, January 3, 10:30 a.m.—12 p.m.
A Year to Live Workshop—Activities Room

Wednesday, January 3, 5 p.m.—5:45 p.m.
Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting—Activities Room

Friday, January 5, 10:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.
Religious Exploration Committee Meeting—Activities Room

Saturday, January 6, 9 a.m.—4 p.m.
Storytelling Workshop with Lani Peterson—Activities Room

Sunday, January 7, 12:15 p.m.—2 p.m.
Indivisible Nantucket Meeting—Hendrix Hall

Tuesday, January 9, 4:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.
Lay Led Service Committee Meeting—Activities Room

Saturday, January 13, 9 a.m.—12 p.m.
UU Crafting Group—Activities Room

Tuesday, January 16, 4:30 p.m.—6:15 p.m.
Board of Trustees Meeting—Activities Room

Saturday, January 20, 9 a.m.—12 p.m.
UU Crafting Group—Activities Room

Sunday, January 21, 12:30 p.m.—1:30 p.m.
Finance Committee Meeting—Activities Room

Monday, January 22, 3 p.m.—6 p.m.
Shirat Ha ‘Yam Hebrew School—Activities Room

Thursday, January 25, 11 a.m.—12 p.m.
Food Rescue Meeting—Activities Room

Saturday, January 27, 9 a.m.—12 p.m.
UU Crafting Group—Activities Room

Sunday, January 28, 11:45 a.m.—12:30 p.m.
Second Congregational Meeting House Society, Unitarian Universalist, Annual Meeting—Hendrix Hall

Monday, January 29, 3 p.m.—6 p.m.
Shirat Ha ‘Yam Hebrew School—Activities Room

See You at The Meeting House!

"Under One Roof" - UU Tree at the NHA Whaling Museum

by Joanne Polster



For the third year in a row, the Unitarian Universalist Meeting House participated in the Nantucket Historical Association's "Festival of Trees" held at the Whaling Museum in December. Titled "Under

One Roof", the tree was decorated with the logos of all the groups that meet here and those for our public activities. The brainchild of Lora Stewart and illustrated by Paul's graphics and production, the tree represented the continued presence of the Meeting House in the life of the community. Work would not

have been completed without the other members of the committee: Joanna Greenfield, Nancy Mack, and Joe Olsen.



Telling Our Stories, Changing Our Stories

A Storytelling Workshop

Led by Lani Peterson

Saturday, January 6, 2018

9 a.m.—4 p.m.

Meeting House Activities Room

**Visit Lani's website at
lanipeterson.com.**

Co-sponsored by Mary Beth Splaine
and Darcie Evans



What to do in a state that's *Blue*?

*Come to the
Indivisible:Nantucket
meeting this Sunday*

- Hear the stories of other Massachusetts Indivisible groups.
- Learn how to get involved in 2018's critical Massachusetts elections.
- Hear from the leaders of other island activist groups.

***This Sunday January, 7th
12:15 Unitarian Meeting House***

***Details of the Women's March, on
January 20th, will be presented.***

Children Celebrate Through Giving

by Leyah Jensen

The kids of RE celebrated the holiday season this past month by remembering that the best way to kick-start our own joy, is to give. In the first week of December, they finished a multi-week project by creating adorable tiny multi-cultural "fairies" from wood and wool, to share with the community by way of our Main Street Christmas tree outside the pharmacy. They added their own special "finesse" by adding golden star-shaped leaves they collected from the sidewalk to the tree; where at the top on birch-bark banners was read: "Everyone is Important....All around the World. Love, the Unitarian Universalist Fairies." Next they made stained-glass chalices—complete with a glowing candle inside—that were given to the families of Faro de Luz on Saturday evening before Christmas Eve. And to top off a month of learning about December celebrations around the world...from Hanukkah to Solstice, to the birth of Jesus...each child got to make a special gift for themselves, that would be shared with others: an LED light-up chalice necklace, for remembrance that the greatest gift one can give is the light we each hold inside. It can always be reignited, by such simple acts as receiving the kind smile of a stranger; or, by the inspiration we get through taking part in a congregation that cares for us. And the surest way for igniting joy, is to give away.



ACK-tion! Gets "Out & About"

The end of 2017 brought a brand-new beginning for our kids 9-12: because in just three sessions, they reached out--*literally!*--in every direction. Hopping about town, the kids offered good deeds from north to east to west of the Meeting House...first, the Landmark House received a party via early carolers and Christmas cookies after a frenzy of baking. Next came a budding "big brother" friendship at Bryant Point, where the U.S. Coast Guard gave the rounds and offered inspiration for our upcoming parade float. Finally Our Island Home residents joined us as we helped decorate their Christmas tree in our sculpted ornaments; sang song after song of old time classics over gingerbread treats; and at last hung our "mistletoe" over the doorframe, sending our new friends into giggles.



RE Sundays will be continuing our series "Being UU Everyday," with discovering new frontiers for acts of compassion and with whimsical projects galore...like theater, doll-craft, and music, *oh my!*

ACK-tion! Fridays for kids 9-12 will be broadening to brand-new members as we expand the horizons for our creativity: through community giving!

UU Crafting Group

Starting on **January 13th**, the UU Crafting Group will be meeting in the **Activities Room on Saturday mornings from 9am to noon.**

This is an informal group that started last fall to make items to sell at Stroll. We had so much fun socializing and sharing ideas and techniques that we decided to continue to meet after the holidays! Drop in once or join us every Saturday to learn a new craft, get help on your current project, share your expertise and/or make items to support the church. It's a fun and relaxed way to get to know others in the congregation.

All are welcome!

Contact Kat Robinson Grieder
(tuckernuckat@gmail.com) with any questions.

Coming in February and March: Friday Frolics!

Shake off the winter doldrums with these four Friday events—
all are potluck suppers, and all are fun!
Hosted by Rev. Kimberley

Movie: *Defending Your Life*
Friday, February 16 at 6pm in the Activities Room

Karaoke Dance Party
Friday, March 2 at 6pm in the Activities Room

Movie: *Contact*
Friday, March 16 at 6pm in the Activities Room

Tabletop Game Night
Friday, March 30 at 6pm in the Activities Room

Proposed 2018 General Operating Budget

The annual budget process we follow is laid out in our Congregational Handbook:

The Finance Committee shall develop the Church's annual budget in conjunction with the various departments and committees, within the context of the actual financial realities and long-term goals, and present a budget to the Board of Trustees for their approval by December 15, and then to the congregation two weeks prior to the annual meeting.

At its December 19th meeting your Board of Trustees voted to approve the Finance Committee's '2018 Proposed' budget shown below.

	A	B	D	E	F	G
1	Annual General Operating Budget	2017B	2018P		2018P vs 2017B	
2	Income less related expenses	Budget	Proposed		\$	%
3	Pledge Payments Received	\$ 88,282	\$ 86,966		\$ (1,316)	-1%
4	Sunday Collection and Gifts	\$ 12,800	\$ 12,489		\$ (311)	-2%
5	Rentals (Pars, FdLuz, CSHY, tower, wed, ...)	\$ 77,424	\$ 83,975		\$ 6,551	8%
6	FUNdraising (Auction, 4thJuly, etc.)	\$ 21,223	\$ 20,350		\$ (873)	-4%
7	Income from Our Reserves and Banks	\$ 40,327	\$ 42,107		\$ 1,780	4%
8	Sanford Fund income	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000		\$ -	0%
9	total Income less related expenses	\$250,056	\$255,887		\$ 5,831	2%
10	Operating Expenses					
11	Ministry + Guest Speakers	\$102,162	\$106,074		\$ 3,912	4%
12	Building & Grounds	\$ 65,340	\$ 71,007		\$ 5,667	9%
13	Operations (office, postage, etc.)	\$ 36,432	\$ 36,261		\$ (171)	0%
14	Music Program	\$ 23,913	\$ 22,834		\$ (1,079)	-5%
15	Religious Exploration (Sundays, Youth)	\$ 13,574	\$ 11,538		\$ (2,036)	-15%
16	Denominational Affairs UUA/BCD, UUPCC	\$ 5,106	\$ 5,131		\$ 25	0%
17	Committee Budgets	\$ 600	\$ 1,200		\$ 600	100%
18	Contingency/Slack [0.7%]	\$ 2,929	\$ 1,842		\$ (1,087)	-37%
19	total Operating Expenses	\$250,056	\$255,887		\$ 5,830	2%

This budget is balanced, total Income (cell D9) matches total Expenses (cell D19).

Some Income areas are projected to increase, and some to decrease, with a total net increase of 2%.

Increases in medical and liability insurance are reflected in Ministry and Buildings & Grounds expenses. Balancing the budget required a few painful cuts or choices not to grow further. Hopefully, the Music Program's contributions to our Sunday services will not be decreased by the slight adjustment there. However, in this budget the ACK-tion Junior Youth Group in RE has been funded only until June; we will need to find other funding to continue it in the Fall. Finally, the Contingency/Slack amount, our budget safety net, was reduced below its goal of 2% for the second year in a row.

Our Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on January 28th after service, and one of the topics will be our Annual Budget. Between now and then, I'm available to answer questions about our budget and finances in person or by e-mail.

Paul P. Stewart, Treasurer – Paul@PLPDD.com

Sabbatical 2018

Starting in February 2018, Reverend Linda will begin her two month sabbatical leave as part of our covenant with her as our Minister.

A Sabbatical is not a vacation in the traditional sense. 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.

You can follow her adventures on her blog:
nepalindiadotblog.wordpress.com

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Rev. Linda's 2018 Sabbatical

When is Reverend Linda Away?

Rev. Linda will begin her sabbatical on February 7 and return on April 9, 2018. Her first service in the pulpit will be on April 15, 2018.

Book Discussion and Presentation

While Rev. Linda is on sabbatical our congregation and the Nantucket community are invited to read The Royal Ghosts by Samrat Upadhyay, available from Amazon or downloadable from the Atheneum. It is a fictional narrative featuring characters struggling with their duties to aging parents, a caste system and the complexities of arranged marriage, all against the backdrop of the Nepalese Civil War (1996-2006), a time of deep cultural transformation. Rev. Linda and Cheryl Creighton have developed a study guide and questions. Upon her return Rev. Linda will hold 3 book discussions reflecting on the complexities of Nepalese society and make a presentation about what she learned from her travels in Nepal and India.

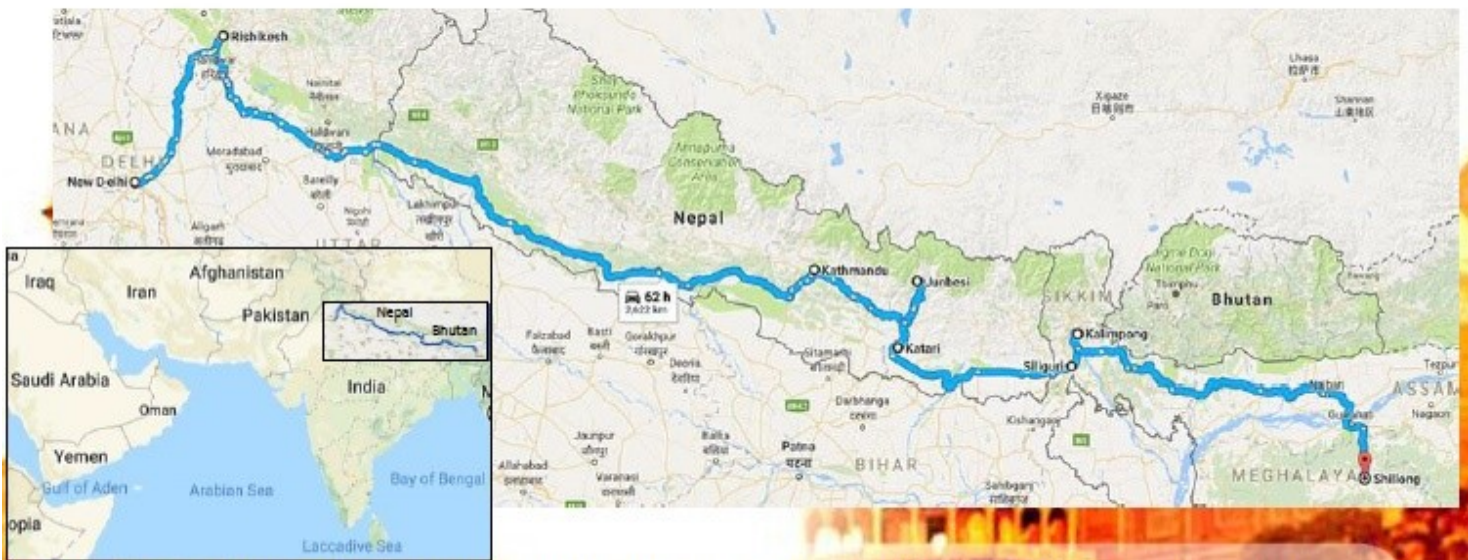
Who Will Be our Sabbatical Minister?



Reverend Kimberley Debus, who many will remember from her visit with us in November, will be our Sabbatical Minister. Her ministry, *The Art of Meaning*, is meant to help inspire tiny revolutions that keep us focused, keep us connected, and keep us present. She works as a community minister in the Albany, NY, area and has previously served the First Universalist Church of Southold on Long Island and One Island Family UU Congregation in Key West, FL. She was choir director of the UU Congregation of Saratoga Springs, NY, and has co-created Broadway revues that explored spiritual texts through the lens of musical theater. She serves on the Worship Arts Team for the UU Annual General Assembly.

The Lay Led Service Committee will be presenting its usual 4th Sunday service.

Nepal and India Through the Eyes of a UU Minister



My sabbatical adventure will begin in India where Gary and I will explore the cave in Rishikesh where Jesus is said to have spent some time during his much contested years in India. Rishikesh, located at the mouth of the Ganges, is a sacred site in and of itself. It is also said that Lord Vishnu appeared here under a Mango tree. All alcohol and non-vegetarian food is forbidden in this city because of its sacred nature.

The theme of my sabbatical is **Northern Nepal and India through the Eyes of a UU Minister**. Recognizing that all of life is seen through the context of the viewer, I hope to spend time noticing how religion changes the lives of the people it touches, exploring the Hinduism, Buddhism and Indian Unitarianism of the people we live amongst in these two months.

After Rishikesh, we are on to Katmandu, Nepal, where the Council of Unitarians and Universalists will be meeting. There we will explore the multifaceted nature of our global faith and strive to better articulate what our shared faith is. We will hear from several keynote speakers about how we can bridge the differences of our faith expressions to become a stronger, more united voice for religious freedom in our world.

The next 21 days in Nepal will be spent on a trekking adventure in the foothills of the Himalayas arranged by Karma Sherpa, a Nepalese guide, social worker and grand thinker, whom I met at the Nantucket Project. Local guides will trek with us to small villages where we will stay in homes and visit monasteries and schools and be in touch with many people, customs, religions and rituals.

We will continue by jeep and bus into India and journey slowly down to Shillong in the Khasi Hills, just above Bangladesh, and spend the rest of our sabbatical with the Indian Unitarians and their ministers, who live in a matrilineal society. Time will be spent volunteering in a local Unitarian orphanage, the Margaret Barr Children's Village.

Throughout all of this time, my goal is to open my heart and mind to the people, religion, culture, and ways of living around me so that I might see, feel, learn and experience myself and others in way that I have not and so learn new ways of being in the world and embody more compassion and awareness.



Who will handle the various ministries of the Church while she is away?

The Board of Trustees will continue to look out for the wider ministry of the congregation and the Committee on Ministry will continue to serve as the Communications Liaison to the congregation, helping ensure that the congregation understands what happens during the sabbatical.

Lucretia Voigt, Office Manager, will be the Administrative Liaison, under Board supervision.

Rev. Kimberley Debus will be the Worship Liaison, under Board supervision.

The Caring Team will continue to be led by Lora Stewart. She can be reached at 978.729.4026 (cell) or Lora@PLPDD.com.

Can I contact Reverend Linda?

The sabbatical is a time for reflection and renewal and for Rev. Linda to step away from the day-to-day activities of our UU Meeting House. The Committee on Ministry has worked with the Board and committees to ensure that almost all contingencies can be addressed. In extraordinary circumstances the President or the Committee Chair will contact Rev. Linda.

For more detailed information about the sabbatical
go to UnitarianChurchNantucket.org/sabbatical

Members of the Committee on Ministry are:

Barbara Elder, Chair	508.364.0373(c)	muscelder@gmail.com
Peter Richards	802.881.4911(c)	cobbleland@aol.com
Cheryl Creighton	508.228.7072(h)	seawardon9@gmail.com
Nancy Mack	508.280.6203(c)	nancymack10@gmail.com

Sermons for January

January 7: “Comfortable with Uncertainty” - Rev. Linda Simmons

How can we learn to lean into uncertainty with more grace, willingness, and ease? Is there a recipe that allows this and so offers us all the promised peace without inviting the detachment that we fear might be part of it? This sermon will look at the works of Pema Chodron, the Buddhist nun and writer, and Jamie Holmes and his recent book Nonsense: The Power of Not Knowing.

January 14: “Being Seen by our Stories” - Rev. Linda Simmons

In times of difficulty, personal and/or societal, the stories of our lives can become one-sided and we can have a hard time seeing ourselves as whole beings, full of complexity, multifaceted, both/and. This sermon will look at re-imagining ourselves and our stories to create some breathing room for hope, joy, and grace.

January 21: Lay Led Service

January 28: “Posing the Question” - Rev. Linda Simmons

On this day of our Annual Meeting, this sermon will look at the questions posed to communities of faith, the way Unitarian Universalism shapes answers and why that still matters. Please join us today to exercise the privilege of your vote and your voice as a valued participant of this UU Meeting House as we gather after service to vote on and discuss what shapes our UU Meeting House community.

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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On Facebook: www.facebook.com/Nantucket-Unitarian-Universalists-75824801619/

Church Staff

Rev. Linda Simmons, Minister (revlindasimmons@gmail.com) ~ **Edward B. Anderson**, Minister Emeritus
Diane T. Lehman, Music Director ~ **Leyah Jensen**, Youth Programs Coordinator, **Sherlly Morocoima**, RE Assistant
Lucretia Voigt, Office Manager ~ **Janelle Zapata de Morocoima**, Sexton ~ **Chuck Gieg**, Bookkeeper

Board of Trustees

Val Hall (President), Clay Twombly (Vice President), Paul Stewart (Treasurer), Peter Richards (Clerk)
Cynthia Csabay, Joanna Greenfield, Christine Sanford, Michelle Whelan, Lora Stewart
Rev. Linda Simmons (Minister)

Church Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9:30 a.m. - noon

Minister's Office Hours: Tuesday, 10 a.m. – noon and by appointment