



Second Congregational Meeting House Society
Unitarian Universalist
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Nantucket Unitarian Universalist Newsletter ~ September 2013

Common Pathways

by Rev. Linda Simmons

Gary and I have been decorating and fixing up small odds and ends at the parsonage, with great delight. As we decide to put this candle there, that bookshelf here, this curtain here, that photograph there, it has struck me how much each place changes us.

In the parsonage, the floors slope from one side to the other, the ceilings are low, the beams are curved and strong. The wood is old, worn, and laden with the grooves of feet and furniture from time gone by. One can feel the lives lived here, the time elapsed, the effort and hope of each life that has settled here.

As the process of moving in and around unfolds, I have reflected that our decisions are not entirely our own. We are influenced by the echoes that whisper around us. We are influenced by the shapes, colors, and textures of each room and the remnants that linger of what came before us: old marks where curtains and pictures hung, patterns that tell us where furniture went before, which direction the room faced, where the towels hung.

When we come to a place new for us and begin to touch it with our individuality, it has imprints of all the touches that went before ours and changes the way we enter and remain. I think church is like this too. We come with all of our expectations, dreams, needs and hopes and they combine with all that has come before us and echo in our grand sanctuary.

I think what makes us a church is not only we who come each Sunday, our Principles and Purposes, our polity or way of making decisions, but also what calls out to us from the annals of our Unitarian Universalist history and vision and more specifically, the history and vision of our Meeting House. The spirit of all who have gone before us, their dreams and work and calling as people of faith, live here beside us and call us to step into our own ministries, to offer our goodness and toil and vision to this time and this place.

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Join us for Sunday
services each week!
Choir practice at 9:30 a.m.
with religious
exploration and services
starting at 10:45 a.m.

Sunday, September 1
“The Labor of Belonging”

Sunday, September 8
“To Be Worthy”

Sunday, September 15
“At-One-Ment”

Sunday, September 22
“Spiritual Journeys”

Sunday, September 29
“Blessing of the Animals”

Common Pathways (continued):

When Gary and I come to a resting place in our interactions, so to speak, with the parsonage, listening to its call and adding our own, we will have you all over for an open house. This is what is asked of all of us, to open ourselves as we change the world around us, as we work and fumble and make beauty and mistakes - to open ourselves to each other, again and again, and so make a bridge between what was and what is, leaving our patterns on the earth for others to decipher one day.

**Common Pathways: 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 to arrive, some common, some not. It is our work, as Unitarian Universalists, to discover the pathways we each travel, learning to walk beside each other even when the ways are unfamiliar and unmarked, until the pathway to our own hearts and the heart of the world becomes visible.*



Presidents Column

by Linda Spery

“Can you honestly say to someone who missed church that you **really** missed something?”

This question was posed by Lillian Daniel, author of “When Spiritual but Not Religious Is Not Enough: Seeing God in Surprising Places, Even the Church,” to a group of Unitarian Universalist clergy in her keynote address in June at the 2013 UUA General Assembly in Louisville, Kentucky. In her book, Ms. Daniel, a graduate of Yale Divinity School and senior minister at the First Congregational Church of Glen Ellyn, Illinois, provides, as one reviewer says, “a provocative case for why religious community matters.”

I wholeheartedly agree that religious community matters. When we gather together on Sunday morning to greet one another, listen to intellectually challenging sermons by Rev. Simmons,

join in singing favorite hymns and meaningful meditation, and share our joys and concerns, we emerge from the experience revitalized for the coming week. We’re grateful that we are a part of such a caring group of people.

This past Sunday (August 25th) was an especially powerful service as two of our long-time members—Jim Sulzer and Mary Beth Splaine—shared their spiritual paths. We laughed, we cried, we empathized and we sympathized as Jim and Mary Beth dug deep within themselves and told their touching stories. I can honestly say to you if you missed the church service that you **REALLY** missed something.

Now that the frenzy of summer is drawing near and fall is upon us, I invite you to make it a priority to be in the Sunday morning service every week. If you’ve not heard Rev. Simmons yet in the pulpit, you are indeed missing a real treat. We are now posting her sermons in written form each week on the website but it’s no substitute for hearing her in person.

And while you’re at it, consider serving as a Religious Exploration teacher. You don’t have to teach every week--just one Sunday a month as a lead teacher or assistant. I’ve signed up for one Sunday a month and would love to have you join me, Susan Richards, Casey Boukus, Sissy Girard, Yve Shevalier and others who are making the commitment to serve.

I can promise that you will always go home after your interaction with the bright, adventurous and caring children in our RE program saying to your friends and family, “you **REALLY** missed something on Sunday.”

See you in church!

Religious Exploration Our Unitarian Universalist Principles- Playdough Style

by Susan Richards

In a recent Religious Exploration class we spent our time with a batch of homemade play-

dough. What can children, ages two to eight years, learn about Unitarian Universalist principles while playing with playdough? Read on....

Principle #1: The inherent worth and dignity of each person. Each child received an equal amount of playdough no matter his/her age.

Principle # 2: Justice, equality, and compassion in human relations. We all sat around the same table - adult and child. All concerns expressed (playdough related and beyond) were listened to with respect.

Principle #3: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregation. As we sat around the playdough table everyone had a chance to talk about what was going on in their lives and what was important to them. We all listened to each other.

Principle #4: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning. Each child could make what they wanted with their playdough.... different colors, shapes, and creations abounded.

Principle #5: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregation and our society at large. In a group we all needed to wait our turn to receive our playdough and color choices.

Principle #6: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. We sat together at a table for half an hour or so, sharing, helping each other, and enjoying each other's company.

Principle #7: Respect for the interdependent web of existence of which we are a part. Each of us brought something unique to the group and our playdough creations. We each took a piece of playdough from the same large batch, worked on our own individual projects side by side, followed the "rules" of our group, and created something unique that we could share together.

So there you have it... all the UU principles rolled into one Sunday Religious Exploration class! Not bad for a Sunday morning spent with a batch of home-made playdough!



Music Notes

by Diane Lehman, Director of Music

Our Thursdays@5 Summer Concert series has been a great opportunity to meet and listen to an eclectic blend of music this summer. Thanks to ReMain Nantucket for seeing the vision and supporting it, and the M.S. Worthington Foundation for funds to complete the project, we will have hosted 12 musical groups or acts this year. In addition to Thursdays@5, we planned 2 Sunday Concerts, the first of which featured Hyannis Sound, the a cappella group from Hyannis.

Our series has focused on the "around the Sound" offerings of music; all with island connections, friends and fans who filled our pews. Kaitlyn Burke (office administrator) and Rev. David Horst were instrumental in helping to get the series off the ground, and the incredible dedication of Al Fuller, Karin Gockel and Cynthia Csabay followed it through every week by presenting the "face" of our Meeting House with their welcoming smiles at the door. Their attention and concern has made this summer's music series possible. I am so grateful for their participation.

For me, this summer has been about the work to insure the success of Thursdays@5, taking The Noonday Concert series to the next level. Featuring the sanctuary as a backdrop, the concerts were a 60 minute feast for eyes and ears. I gazed up and around during most of the concerts to feel absolutely filled with the beauty of sight and sound together in one place.

Implementing the idea of a concert series in the sanctuary was Susie Jarrell's gift to us; with her deft guidance and Marcia Hempel's follow through it became an anticipated event each summer. (Both women were former music directors at the Meeting House.) Thanks to their efforts over two decades, we have provided consistent weekly concerts for the community, which were attended by a spectrum of visitors, year-rounders and summer residents. Thanks to the talents of so many wonderful musicians from Nantucket and "Around the Sound", the series offered an unequalled expe-

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September 2013 Sunday Services

September 1st

The Labor of Belonging

The history of Labor Day involves many Universalists, some working for the rights of laborers, and some actively working against these rights. What has become of labor in our country? What is the worth of labor to us now and might there be something in our labor that connects us to ourselves and each other in a primordial, even holy way?

September 8th

To Be Worthy

We work so hard to believe we are good enough, worthy of love, of peace, of grace. Our spiritual roots of Universalism tell us that we are always worthy of love, right where we are, just as we are. Nonetheless, we strive to be more than we are. What does this striving keep us from seeing and experiencing? Allowing ourselves to be good enough right where we are can be an act of generosity that can feed and sustain us, and others around us.

September 15th

At-One-Ment

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are the High Holy Days in Judaism. This time has offered hope and reconciliation to the Jews for centuries. Is there some medicine for us all here to help us live our days with more awareness, forgiveness and therefore peace?

Fasting is a traditional part of these Holy Days. Fasting empties us so we might feel something we cannot feel when we are full. It breaks us out of ourselves. It frees us to feel, to digest our own lives and brings us a new awareness of others.

From sundown of September 13th until sundown on September 14th, UU congregants are invited to join in fasting. Shirat Ha Yam will also be fasting during this time, joined by Jews all over the world. The fast for us will begin with a meditation at the parsonage at 7:00 pm on the 13th and end the next day, the 14th, with a potluck at 7:00 pm, also at the parsonage. Please join us in exploring the wisdom and connectedness that fasting can evoke.

September 22nd

4th Sunday, Spiritual Journeys

This Sunday, we continue to explore the Spiritual Journeys of our members. Walk with us, as members and visitors of the Meeting House, as we risk opening our lives and hearts to each other, living our spiritual journeys out loud.

September 29th
Blessing of the Animals

Bring your furry, feathery, fishy, and slithery pets to church today for a blessing by Rev. Simmons. This all-ages event is held outside on the church steps and sidewalk on Orange Street. We ask that all animals be leashed, kenneled, or caged for their safety. In the event of heavy wind or rain, the animal blessing will be cancelled and a Sunday Service honoring the animals in our lives will be held in the sanctuary.

If the weather is questionable Sunday morning call the parsonage (508-680-6498) to confirm the outdoor service.

High Holy Days

Congregation Shirat HaYam

Dear Friends,

We invite you to join us on Friday, September 6 at 7:30 pm as we welcome Shabbat Shuvah. Rabbi Judith Edelstein and Cantorial Soloist Elliot Levine will be leading the congregation in prayer and providing a spiritual message along with your minister, Rev. Linda Simmons.

A few words about our holiday season...

Rosh Hashanah (Head of the Year) and Yom Kippur, (Day of Atonement), the Days of Awe, are the holiest days of the year for Jews. The days between them are the Ten Days of Repentance, and the Shabbat between them is Shabbat Shuvah, the Shabbat of Repentance. Our service on Friday, September 6 is typical for Shabbat, but we also add special prayers.

Rosh Hashanah is typically celebrated for two days, with synagogue services and resplendent meals at home. The Torah, our Bible, briefly mentions it as the day for sounding the shofar, (Numbers 29:1), yet the Rabbis who established many of our practices during the 6th century and the following millennia, called it the Day of Judgment, The Day of the Shofar, and The Day of Remembering. It also became the birthday of the world and the coronation of the King (God). These themes suffuse our liturgy and our thoughts as we accounting for our soul; examine our behavior of the past year; admit to wrong doing; commit to changing our ways so that we don't make the same mistakes; and ask those around us for forgiveness. We are also expected to forgive those whom we believed have wronged us.

Once we have cleansed our hearts and have repaired our relationships with other people, we are ready to face God on Yom Kippur. We fast from sundown to sundown in order to ignore our bodily needs to focus totally on God. If we have fully repented and repaired our relationships, we ask God to give us life in the New Year.

When the prayers have been meaningful to us, we end the holiday with a huge shofar blast, great hope and full hearts - and growling stomachs - as we make our way into the starlit night towards our break-the-fast meal.

Rabbi Judith Edelstein

Late Summer Music at the Meeting House

Thursdays@5, Thursday, September 5–5 p.m.

The Matt Hutchinson/Nigel Goss Trio

Nick Hayden completes the group for a jazz infused program that's sure to be memorable. With their combined talents and improvisational skills, they have been the backbone of music on Nantucket, in concert or in restaurants. You will recognize their familiar and pleasing sound while enjoying their camaraderie and hearing some stories of music "around the Sound".

Thursdays@5, Thursday, September 12–5 p.m.

NCMC Jazz Band

Playing music from the Swing Era you will want to get up and dance! This fine group of island volunteer musicians have played for dances, concerts, the county fair and in the bandstand at Children's Beach for over a decade. Under Nigel Goss's direction you'll relive your favorite sounds that remind you of the time when music was mostly played "LIVE" and people flocked to see and hear the sounds of "The Big Band."

Sunday, September 15–4 p.m.

John Murelle - That's Amore - Popular Songs from and about Italy

Baritone John Murelle, with John Salerno on keyboard, Al Orlando on mandolin, and guest Dennis Nobrega on reeds. This polished quartet perform popular songs from and about Italy. A Cape Cod favorite, here for one performance. Following the show, come meet the artists at a wine and cheese reception, downstairs at the Meeting House.

Summer Members Gathering

by Paul Stewart*

On August 11th the Board of Trustees hosted a gathering for summer members, and Rev. Linda Simmons and her husband Gary Langley, at the home of Mary Beth Splaine and Jack Weinhold. Hors d'oeuvres in the garden, were followed by dinner prepared by the trustees.

Rev. Linda gave a blessing and a short welcome of thanks to the group for coming out. Between courses, Summer Members were asked to introduce themselves and discuss their relationship to South Church. Temporal connections ranged from those who had started coming to South Church several years ago to several decades ago. Winter homes ranged from Massachusetts to Ottawa and Florida.

One theme was the number of stories from people saying that they had churches back home but they felt that South Church was their 'main church'. One couple even attends another denomination in the

winter but chooses to attend South Church in the summer.

Thanks to trustees for a wonderful evening and the chance to get more acquainted with each other, and our new minister, in a lovely, social, friendly setting.

*Originally from North Parish UU of North Andover, Massachusetts.

A Meeting House Moment...

The Meeting House (South Church) was built in 1809 at the close of Thomas Jefferson's second term and the beginning of James Madison's presidency. It was also the year of Abraham Lincoln's birth. As a congregation we are stewards of an important 19th century Nantucket treasure. Spread the word.

Music Notes (continued):

rience of concert going featuring a Gypsy Band , a Singer/Songwriter, an Opera Singer and many more. Thanks to those whose support was heard in their applause, it was a truly rewarding experience.

Music at the Meeting House remains strong with the choir's presence, (Karin Gockel, Jack Reindel, Al Fuller, Bob Lehman, Val Hall, Haziell Jackson, Polly Miller, Cynthia Csabay, Jessie Ann Lam-brecht, Grace Noyes, Craig Spery, Linda Spery, Nancy Rappaport, Debby Merritt) joined by our summer choir friends, Trish Jarrell, Kathy Tyrer, Meg Hunter, and Coreena Blewett. Our soloists Cynthia Csabay, Juliana Burdick, Brian McCaig, Bob Lehman, Bill Schutt, Rene LaPierre, Valerie and Susie Jarrell, Don Ingram, Ryan Bartosiewicz, and Jake Butler have brought us memorable moments, musical and melodic.

Guest organist Carson Cooman joined us on 4 Sundays this summer, during which we were able to perform two of his choral works ("Hope" and "Witnesses to Love") while he listened in the organ loft . The former was written for the installation of our former Nantucket member, Rev. Erin Splaine, as minister of the West Newton UU Church. The latter was written for the choir and based on the words of our new settled minister Rev. Linda Simons. We plan to perform both at her installation ceremony in October.

If you have ideas or comments about our programs, or would like to serve on the Music Committee, please contact one of us.

Annual Harvest Fair October 12th

"Baubles, Beads and Baked Goods" is this year's theme of our annual UU Harvest Fair tables, featuring jewelry of all kinds alongside cakes, cookies, pies and other treats from your kitchens. So start now: look in your jewelry box for some "baubles, bangles, and beads" that you'd like to donate for sale at the Harvest Fair. Or get creative and make a piece of jewelry. Put your treasures in a box with your name and Harvest Fair on the outside. Leave it in the church office or give it to one of the board members for safekeeping until the fair, October 12.

A signup sheet will be posted at coffee hour to list the treats you will be baking for our UU Harvest Fair table.

We're also looking for members to help set up, sell, and clean up on October 12.

Water Communion

On Sunday October 20th, our first Sunday back in Hendrix Hall, we will engage in the UU ritual of Water Communion. Please bring to the service a small amount of water from a place that is special to you that you visited during the summer or is right near by. During the appointed time in the service, you will be asked, one by one, to pour this water together into a large bowl. As the water is added, each person tells why this water is special to them. The combined water is symbolic of our shared faith coming from many different sources. It is often then blessed by the congregation, and sometimes is later used as the congregation's "holy water" in child dedication ceremonies and similar events.

As you travel this summer, off, or on island, please collect a small amount of water from a lake, a fountain, a pond, the sea or the faucet and save it for this special ceremony.

Docent Program

Mary Beth Splaine, President S.C.P.F.

The Meeting House summer docent program closed Friday August 30th after Paul and Lora Stewart's last shift. Thank you to them and the other 2013 docents, Craig Spery, John Rivera, Judy and Jeff Norkin, Peter Richards, Alex Harper, Jack Weinhold, Libby Oldham and Susan Richards. Introducing visitors to the treasures of the Meeting House was a pleasure. Libby Oldham will lead the docent program in the summer of 2014. Plans are underway to extend the days, hours and docent roster to better showcase the Meeting House to the community and island visitors. Collaboration with other preservation oriented organizations is on the agenda for discussion this winter.



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Church Staff

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

Board of Trustees

Linda Spery (President), Brian Girard (Vice President), Susan Richards (Clerk),
Peter Richards (Treasurer), David Hall, John Rivera, Jim Sulzer, Marina Sutro, Jack Weinhold

Church Office Hours

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

Minister's Office Hours

Tuesday (10 a.m. - noon) and Friday (noon - 2 p.m.)