

Nantucket Unitarian Universalist Newsletter ~ April 2015

COMMON PATHWAYS

by Reverend Linda Simmons
The Common Good

I recently had the great pleasure of speaking with Sister Vimola from the Dominican Sisters of the Presentation in Massachusetts whose stated vocation is: *To bear witness to God with our whole lives.*

To this end, they have a mission in Honduras. The Mission at Guaimaca is staffed by the Dominican Sisters of the Presentation and offers sixty-five girls education, free medical care for the desperately poor and manages a food producing organic farm. The sisters have been there for over 10 years. They recently added a house for educating girls in the city capital, Tegucigalpa.

Sister Vimola told me that in Honduras women have no place. The sisters try to educate young women not only in math, reading and writing but also in how to care for themselves and others. Sixty-five girls come from the mountains. They walk 1-2 hours to get the bus that brings them to the village mission. They come on a Monday and leave on a Friday. During the week after classes and studies, they help the sisters with cleaning and cooking. To date, four classes have graduated.

One condition of acceptance to the school is the girls bring what they have learned to their parents (most of the girls have only a mother or grandmother): the alphabet, reading and writing and what is taught about caring for themselves and others.

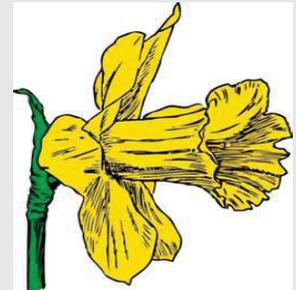
Sister Vimola told me that the teachings about what is good and valuable include: discussions of self-respect and worth, solidarity (defined as being with one another and helping one another), and not using another for our own purposes but seeing another as they are and meeting them there.

Everything the sisters teach is about building the common good. The question the sisters pose is "How can you be true to yourself and live a life that honors the worth and dignity of all others?"

I asked Sister Vimola if she and the other sisters are ever afraid, Honduras having the highest murder rate in the world. She told me that they are not because they take care of those around them and those around them then offer them their care and protection.

Sister Vimola embodies so many of our UU values and principles. Some of the sisters will be coming here to speak with us, hopefully in the late spring. In the meantime, I found myself humbled and filled with hope listening to her story. I hung up asking myself, what is our common good and as we find the pieces of this answer, how do we respond with our lives?

** 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, April 5
"Resurrecting"

Rev. Linda Simmons
Hendrix Hall

Sunday, April 12
"Ritual Stories"

Rev. Linda Simmons
Hendrix Hall

Sunday, April 19
"Let It Be"

Emily Seawall, Lay Led Service
Hendrix Hall

Sunday, April 26
"Earthlings"

Rev. Linda Simmons
Hendrix Hall



Families Welcome!
Religious Education
for Children Every Sunday.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A Day in the Life of a Board Meeting

by Susan Richards, Board of Trustees President



As a member of our Nantucket UU congregation you may at times be wondering..... What does a typical UU Board Meeting look and sound like? It may even seem a bit mysterious to you.... So the following is a general description of the Board's monthly gatherings....

On the third Tuesday of each month, from 4:30 - 6:30 (if we're lucky) in the Activities Room, nine Board members plus Rev Linda get together to discuss the state of our UU Congregation. After the meeting is called to order, there are Opening Words - sometimes solemn, sometimes humorous, always thoughtful.... each board member gets a turn to share some meaningful words to start us on our two hours together.

Two key agenda items are always the Treasurer's Report and the Minister's Report... The Board reviews the financial standing of our Congregation with the guidance of our very able Treasurer, Paul Stewart..... we take our responsibilities with regards to our budget and expenditures very seriously. There are always questions and comments as we go through the report together.

The Minister's report is shared by Rev Linda. When I first heard a Minister's report back in my beginning days on the Board, I was absolutely flabbergasted at how much our minister does during a typical month! Although I knew that the Minister's time was not simply spent preparing for and leading the Sunday service, I had no idea of the breadth and depth of Rev Linda's job... from visits to the hospital and nursing home, to being a member of a plethora of committees inside and outside the church in the greater Nantucket community, she is representing and supporting our congregation tirelessly!

Rev Linda brought a new agenda item to our Board meetings - a time when each Board member speaks to something that is happening in their lives and how it relates to one of the UU Seven Principles..... As active participants in the life of our Congregation, it's important that we have time to reflect on how these principles may impact our lives and what we do inside and outside of our Meeting House.

Following this, we look at new and old business items. We hear reports from one or two Committees each month, we discuss fundraising endeavors and other events. New initiatives like "Share the Plate" and reaching out to our fellow congregations who use the Meeting house space - Shirat Ha Yam and Faro de Luz, are discussed.

If we're lucky, we can fit all this into a 2 hour space of time and we adjourn on time at 6:30pm. We have time during the month between meetings to move forward on the action steps that have been discussed during our meeting and there is typically some work to be done between Board meetings as well.

Finally, please remember that these Board meetings are open to every congregation member... just give us a call if you'd like to come observe or if you have something you'd like the Board to discuss. You're always welcome to attend!

RE UPDATE

Ready for Spring!

by Susan Richards,
RE Committee Chair



Our multi-age RE group of students ranging in age from 2 to 9 years old has been busy in March and has some fun activities planned for April and beyond!

In March we worked on our pen pal letters to the RE students in our sister UU in Transylvania, we talked about the Hindu holiday of Holi Water/Burn Winter and planted zinnias and radishes in our own individually decorated flower pots... We did a SpiritPlay story of Naahma, Noah's wife and "Guardian of Plants" and created our own Naahma's Garden. Please check out our RE bulletin board to see some of the children's artwork and ideas! In April we will celebrate the Spring holidays of Easter and Passover and work on some more penpal letters to Transylvania.

Welcome!.... to Mia Silverio (Stefan's sister) who will be helping out with our RE Class in April and May. Mia has lots of experience with young children and already seems right at home in our program!

Save the Date: We are planning a Spring Community Dinner on Tuesday, May 26th when we hope that Spring will be really here!

Some other announcements:

* If you have a special hobby or interest you'd like to share with our RE children, please let us know - the children love it when we have special visitors!

* We continue to look for members of the Congregation who would like to volunteer to help out with the RE group from time to time. We also are seeking new members of our RE Committee which meets once a month and helps support Jen and the RE program. Please see Rev Linda or Susan if you are interested in either of these two volunteer opportunities.

April 5 "Resurrecting" ~ Rev. Linda Simmons

Easter is a story of death, resurrection and love. This sermon will reflect on these themes in our daily lives, ever seeking the joy in each moment and the awareness that allows us to be part of it all.

April 12 "Ritual Stories" ~ Rev. Linda Simmons

Passover is the Jewish Holiday that commemorates a time of great trial, loss and endurance. Stories stitch us together, shape our pasts and our present. This sermon will reflect on the power of ritual stories to make and remake us.

April 19 ~ Lay Led Service, "Let it Be" ~ Led by Emily Seawall

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 take a personal look into a ten day Vipassana meditation retreat.

April 26 "Earthlings" ~ Rev. Linda Simmons

Earth Day was this past week. What does it mean to be a citizen of this earth? This sermon will look at some challenging new theories of how to address climate change by changing the way we think and walk through our daily lives.

GRASSROOTS NANTUCKET

by Gary Langley, Grassroots Nantucket Chair

Grassroots Nantucket met this past Sunday to plan the garden layout for our plot at the Community Gardens. This is our second year and we hope to increase our harvest, which will again be dedicated to the Food Pantry. Once the garden has been prepared and planted we will turn our attention to another clothing drive and hopefully receive spring and summer items. As we have done four times previously, the donations will be given to Food Pantry clients and will be held at the American Legion Hall, given at no cost to us for this use.



We will be hosting Spanish language classes at the parsonage starting with an informational session on Friday, April 24th from 5 to 6:30 and then beginning in May on the 1st and 3rd Friday of each month at the same time and place. Please sign up in the activities room. All are welcome.

While these activities are underway, we will continue on the path of becoming a Green Sanctuary. One of the UUA's requirements for candidacy in this program is that we obtain approval from the congregation. To that end, we will be presenting the Green Sanctuary Program to the congregation during one of our June Sunday services which will be followed by a congressional vote to begin the process of becoming Green Sanctuary. As we move forward, we will be creating new ideas as to how we might, as a congregation, become more involved with issues affecting our island community and beyond. Please join us in this effort to raise the profile of our UU Church as an integral, committed and active member of our island community. Grassroots Nantucket meets on the second and fourth Sundays following coffee hour and all are welcome.



Second Congregational Society
Unitarian Universalist
11 Orange St. ~ P.O. Box 1023
Nantucket, MA 02554

Second Congregational Society Unitarian Universalist



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



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 and Dennis Santangelo, *Sextons*, **Chuck Gieg**, *Bookkeeper*

Board of Trustees

Susan Richards (*President*), Jan Ellsworth (*Vice President*), Paul Stewart (*Treasurer*)
Cynthia Csabay, Steve Estabrooks, 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