

Annual Report – 2014



Second Congregational Meeting House Society
Unitarian Universalist
Nantucket, MA

January 25, 2015

Board of Trustees - 2014

Name	Term Ends
Jim Sulzer, President	January 2016
Susan Richards, Vice President	January 2016
Stephen Estabrooks, Clerk	January 2017
Paul Stewart, Treasurer	Elected Annually
John Rivera	January 2015
Lora Stewart++	January 2015
Linda Spery	January 2015
Jan Ellsworth	January 2017
Joy Margolis+	January 2015

+Selected by Nominating Committee to fulfill board term of Jack Weinhold (renominated for new 3-year term)

++Selected by Nominating Committee to fulfill board term of Brian Girard (renominated for new 3-year term)

Board terms are three years, except for the Treasurer whose term is one year. Board members, including the Treasurer, are elected by the congregation at the Annual Meeting. The Board elects its other officers annually from among its members.

Staff - 2014

Rev. Linda Simmons, Minister

Rev. Ted Anderson, Minister Emeritus

Diane Lehman, Director of Music

Lucretia Voigt, Office Manager

Chuck Gieg, Bookkeeper

Ed Sullivan, Custodial Sexton

Dennis Santangelo, Maintenance Sexton

Minister's Report – 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Minister since August 2013. I have now completed 1.5 years of ministry.

This year I led worship services and preached on 38 occasions. Topics ranged from the saving grace of community, forgiveness, art, memories, nonviolent communication, Buddhism, immigration, climate change, grace, Christianity and the Bible, politics and religion.

We enjoyed some alternative worship services including a Walking through the Doorway on January 5th, planting of seeds of peace ritual on Memorial Day, May 26th, the Blessing of the Animals on October 5th and the performance of the play *Joyeux Noel* about the cease fire during WWI on Christmas Eve. Sunday morning attendance averaged 53 throughout the year.

Our growing social justice committee, Grassroots Nantucket, has been busy! We planted a garden at the Community Garden and shared food with our community. A clothing swap program has recently been instituted via the Food Pantry and is going very well. We are working now on becoming a Green Sanctuary, a program that provides a structure for congregations to examine their current environmental impacts and move towards more sustainable practices in ways grounded in Unitarian Universalism.

Sunday morning music is rich and varied. Diane Lehman, Director of Music, continues the tradition of musical excellence at the Meeting House. Under Diane's direction, the Meeting House Choir presented quality vocal music on Sunday mornings for which we are thankful.

In addition to my Sunday morning responsibilities, I officiated at six weddings and three memorial services. I also did a memorial service at the Angler's Club.

Religious Exploration continued to grow with the work and creativity of church members and the RE Committee. Jen Dunbar, lead RE teacher, and I met in the summer of 2014 and pulled together curriculum for the year. We are so blessed to have Jen and her talent with both curriculum and children. The RE committee continues to provide dynamic religious exploration and is hosting RE dinners once a month throughout the year as a way to honor RE parents, children and volunteers. In addition, RE is providing a Parent's Night Out, taking care of our children for 2 hours so that parents can have a night out. Susan Richards, RE Chair, also did a Spirit Play training this past year that has added wonderful components to our classes. Stefan Silverio has been our trusted assistant and has done a fabulous job.

To involve and engage the children each Sunday, I have been reading or telling stories, some of which members of the congregation even acted out with great fanfare. I also invited the children to interact during this time by asking questions like, "What is peace to you?" Their answers during story time delighted us all. I've revised the order of service to provide a smoother flow including opening and

closing chalice words, more poetry and a thematic opening and closing that is threaded throughout the service.

Since January 1, 2014, we welcomed 7 new members.

I devoted a large part of my ministry to pastoral care. I made numerous house and hospital calls as well as been in touch with folks on phone and email. Many parishioners come to the parsonage for tea and conversation. I welcome this wholeheartedly and feel that one of the strong centers of my ministry is pastoral attentiveness.

In 2014, I joined the ASAP (Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention) Board, became Secretary for the Interfaith Council, Secretary for the Nantucket Recovery Partnership, joined the Behavioral Health Alliance, became spiritual advisor to Palliative and Supportive Care, Chaplain on call for the hospital, and the on island Chaplain for the Cape and Island Hospice program.

I taught a nonviolent communication class this September for 2 months that was very successful with over 15 participants. I will continue to offer adult education programs throughout the year.

I continue to support our wonderful staff. Lucretia Voigt is doing a fabulous job as Office Manager. Jen Dunbar, as mentioned, continues to provide excellent care and education of our children, Ed Sullivan and Dennis Santangelo continue to work hard to care for our building and of course Diane Lehman continues to be our extraordinary Music Director.

I assisted the Finance Committee in creating a 2015 balanced budget and we are all thrilled that this was possible without taking from our endowment. Financial health is a hard won and important indicator of church health and we are well on our way.

I extend my thanks to members of the Board especially President Jim Sulzer who has guided me deeper into my ministry with great skill, patience and compassion, Vice President Susan Richards whose kindness, intelligence and warmth never fail to encourage us all forward, and Treasurer Paul Stewart whose devotion and expertise have been welcomed with great enthusiasm. Committee Chairs also deserve note here: Finance Committee Chair Craig Spery who works tirelessly to ensure our financial health; Linda Spery, Chair of the Pledge Campaign and editor and layout artist of our monthly newsletter, the Weathervane; Susan Richards, Chair of Religious Exploration; Kat Robinson Grieder, Chair of the Lay-Led Service Committee; Bob Lehman, Building and Grounds Chair; Gary Langley and Joanna Greenfield, Co-Chairs of Grassroots Nantucket; Lora Stewart, Chair of the Caring Committee and Shawl Ministry; Nancy Rappaport, Chair of the Nominating Committee; Lora Stewart, Chair of the Membership Committee; Barbara Elder, Chair of the Committee on Ministry; Joanne Polster, UU Meeting House archivist, and last but not least, Val Hall, Chair of the Fellowship Committee that provides coffee and treats for us all every Sunday -- for their continued service and devotion, I am indebted. Great thanks too to all the members of the board: Stephen Estabrooks, Clerk, and Jan Ellsworth, Linda Spery, John Rivera, Lora Stewart, Joy Margolis and to all committee members. Your dedication, integrity and presence make the UU Meeting House a place of peace, joy, interest and welcome.

I also thank my colleague, Ted Anderson, *Minister Emeritus*, for his friendship and counsel.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to all of you for your support, honesty and compassion this past year and a half. I am truly home.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Simmons, Minister

President's Report - Board of Trustees - 2014

2014 was a year of accomplishment and stability, good cheer and friendship, and new milestones for our congregation.

I am delighted to report that the state of our congregation is very good. We have a wonderful settled minister, the Reverend Linda Simmons, and I think I speak for all of us in saying how thrilled we are to have her here. Her range of talents is remarkable—she gives deeply inspiring sermons, she is active in forging community bonds, she speaks with sincerity and integrity on issues of social justice facing our island and the larger world, and she has a soothing, healing touch in matters of pastoral care. She offered two highly successful adult education courses this past year: on world religions, and on non-violent communication. She is incredibly dedicated to her work as a minister. She has been all we hoped and dreamed for, and more. Thank you, Reverend Simmons, for being here with us.

In the past year we have gained seven new members, and equally as important, for the first time in many years, we have been able to operate within the limits of a balanced operating budget—a budget that does not require the withdrawal of funds from the principal of our endowment. The outlook on that front is rosy, as pledges continue to grow and as the fruits of our labor will start to show up, little by little, in the gradual return to this building being a vibrant home for community events and for weddings. Much of the credit for all this belongs to the congregational committees—such as the Finance Committee and the Buildings and Grounds Committee—that have worked so well and tirelessly to keep us all humming along. We have also had some very strong leadership: for instance, the lovely renovation of Hendrix Hall downstairs, and the installation of our new sound system, were only possible because of the dynamic leadership of former president Linda Spery, Craig Spery, Jack Weinhold, Bob Lehman, and many others.

While we have arrived at a good place as a congregation, I would suggest that much work remains to be done. Much of our success has rested on the shoulders of some outstanding leaders over the past three or four years who gave us their all. We now need to broaden our shoulders, as it were. We need to keep cultivating new leaders; we need members of the congregation to step forward. We

also need to broaden our financial support from everyone. And we need to start a discussion, among all members of our congregation, about our mission. What do we value? How do we see ourselves, as spiritual beings and as members of a committed group of UUs? Over the next year, the Board, with the active leadership of Rev. Linda, will work to get this positive process of self-reflection started.

No report would be complete without the prominent mention of our dedicated Board Members. Our Vice-President in 2014 was Susan Richards, our treasurer was Paul Stewart, our clerk was Steve Estabrooks, and our other members were Linda Spery, John Rivera, Lora Stewart, Jan Ellsworth, and Joy Margolis. Thank you for all you have done and are doing for this congregation.

The Board is there to work with and to support our minister, to make sure the church finances are in order, to assist the work of various committees, and to set priorities for the year.

This year the Board set the following priorities, all of which moved forward, as summarized below:

- **RE training & materials**

Under the insightful guidance of Rev. Simmons, our staff continued to develop excellent Religious Exploration lessons and participated in important training.

- **Beautification of AR**

We are in the middle of exploring options and possible costs for this important undertaking.

- **Continue grassroots Nantucket/community engagement**

Grassroots Nantucket has made significant strides in its first year of existence, and as a congregation we are deepening our bonds with the diverse island community. Chairs Gary Langley and Joanna Greenfield have also begun our initiative to become a Green Sanctuary, reviewing our environmental impact and sustainability practices.

- **Leadership development & training**

For the first time in memory, we now have a budget item planned for leadership training.

- **Mission/Fall retreat**

At our Fall retreat we set budget priorities and began discussions (which are ongoing as part of our monthly Board meetings) about UU values, as a way of starting our journey to find and develop our mission. (See below for the funding priorities.)

- **Handbook revision**

Susan Richards and Paul Stewart have led this exhaustive work, allowing us to take a healthy look at our guidelines and rules for operation, and we are presenting the revised version to the congregation for a vote on its adoption.

- **Summer membership inclusion/welcome/involvement**

We continued the tradition of hosting a warm and welcoming party for summer members, catered by the Board, and also invited some summer members to share their perspectives on our church at a memorable Lay Led Service in July.

- **Welcoming**

Peter Richards oversaw the welcome of members and visitors who attended our services, with the able assistance of many others, including Dennis Simmons and David Hall.

- **Growing the caring committee**

Lora Stewart's leadership has been strong in not only the shawl ministry, but in reaching out in many ways to those who might be in need.

- **Stewardship**

From our minister, to members of our Buildings and Grounds Committee, to our congregation, to our sextons, we have all been mindful of the need for careful and responsible stewardship of our extraordinary buildings.

The real power of our congregation rests with the members themselves—the installation of Rev. Linda as our minister, for example, needed a congregation vote. Our yearly budget requires a congregation vote. For our revised handbook, we will seek a congregation vote. Meanwhile, the Board deals with ongoing, smaller issues. Some that we faced in the past year included: Should pets other than service animals be allowed in the building? What rates should we set for the rental of our building and for weddings? Do we wish to encourage or discourage clapping after music during a church service? There were no right or wrong answers to any of these issues, and our discussions were often spirited and included many of your voices that we brought to the Board. Through it all, I am proud to say, we remained respectful of one another, and in casting our votes, decisions were made in the best interests of the congregation, not personal preference.

One last thing: At our fall retreat we set our Funding Priorities for the next year, which guided us as we created the new budget for 2015. Those priorities are:

Funding Priorities

1. Fulltime Minister
2. Staff salaries
3. Music every Sunday in addition to professional development money for Music Director
4. RE professional development
5. OWL training
6. Congregational Leadership/Training
7. Committee Budgets
8. Beautification of the AR w/Shirat Ha'Yam and Faro de Luz
9. District dues
10. Adult RE speakers
11. Advertisement

I am especially thankful for the professional development money that we are designating for our Music Director, Diane Lehman, who has such abundant talent and sensitivity, and creates such lovely music at each Sunday service.

Thank you for the trust you showed me in allowing me the opportunity to be the President of the Board this past year. I enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about our faith and to communicate my understanding of what it means to be a UU in a small and caring community such as ours, where our history continues to beat in the cadence of our hearts. I wish everyone the best as we rise to new challenges, and new heights, in 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Sulzer, Board President

Combined Finance Committee - Treasurer's Report – 2014

2014 was a good year for the church's finances. People were generous to the pledge program and along with other income we were able to meet the expenses of operating this important church community.

We didn't have to rely on using principal of the endowment fund, which is a goal that we have been working on for the last few years.

In an effort to reduce expenses, going forward we've decided to manage the endowment funds through the Finance Committee. We also intend to transition some of the funds into socially responsible investing, another goal of the congregation.

Attached to this annual report are the year-end reports on the financial condition of the church.

Thanks to all who serve on the committee, including Reverend Simmons and President Sulzer as ex-officio members. Everyone participated and contributed many hours from attending the monthly meetings to writing and compiling reports.

Respectfully submitted,

The Finance Committee: Craig Spery (Chair), Jack Weinhold, Gwen Richter, Peter Richards, and Paul Stewart (Treasurer), Reverend Linda Simmons, and Jim Sulzer (President)

Clerk, Board of Trustees - 2014

The Clerk's Committee, comprised of Paul and Lora Stewart, Susan Richards, Joy Margolis and Stephen Estabrooks along with Reverend Linda Simmons, met on January 8, 2015 to review the membership and determine the exact count of pledging, island resident, congregation members. That number is 69.

This list so defined has financial implications. As a member of Ballou Channing District and the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association), we are responsible for paying a certain fee for each of these members. In 2014, we paid our fair share to the UUA and got closer to that amount with Ballou Channing District.

Meeting House attendance has been consistently accounted for by Peter Richards and David Hall. This has included the number of children as well as guests. Average attendance per each service averaged 48 per week, while that for RE averaged 5.1 per week for a total of 55 per week on average. The average attendance for the Sanctuary was 52.1, with an RE average of 2.8 per week. The average for Hendrix Hall was 44.5 for adults and 6.5 for the RE children.

The one service for the Blessing of the Animals is not included in the figures above, but was estimated at 50 people.

I would like to thank everyone who was able to help me become familiar with the tasks of Clerk.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Estabrooks, Clerk

Building & Grounds – 2014

The following is a running list of duties performed as they appear in the monthly minutes of our B&G meetings. Generally the lights all work and the toilets flush. It's warm in the winter and cool (at least in the basement) in the summer.

Thanks to our loyal committee members: Craig Sperry and David Hall.

At the church:

Hendrix Hall has been painted, carpeted, and new cushions installed.

An ivory plaque has been donated and installed beneath the Ted Anderson portrait. Thanks to Marina Sutro.

Toilet in small bathroom was replaced with one donated from Habitat for Humanity.

Under-powered activities room heat circuit breaker was replaced

Light bulbs have been replaced as needed with a more energy efficient sort.

Kitchen door stops have been replaced.

Kids' chairs have been repaired.
Old sash has been temporarily reinstalled while repairs are made of storm damaged tower window.
Church signs mounted to front were refit because of crooked lettering.
Sound system was installed in Main Sanctuary and Hendrix Hall.
Energy audit has been completed.
Town safety inspections are completed, certificates in hand.
The floor of the rear entry was painted.
The Main Sanctuary window sills have been painted.
Church front has been scraped primed and painted to counteract mildew.
Activities Room and Hendrix Hall carpets have been periodically shampooed.
Damaged caused by Flowers On Chestnut to the end caps of the sanctuary pews has been repaired.
New microwave donated from Habitat for Humanity was installed in kitchen.
The lock of the Hendrix Hall door has been oiled and adjusted to smooth operation.

At the parsonage:

Linoleum was removed and then replaced in parsonage bath and driveway entry.
New driveway entry storm door has been resized repeatedly,
Parsonage windows were washed.

Half done

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Lehman

Archives - 2014

The archives are now in their maintenance mode; all that is now required is to add new material as it becomes available. I have filed all documents so far received in their appropriate spots.

I continue to update the indexes and hope, perhaps this year, to get them online.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Polster

Lay-Led Service Committee – 2014

After trying on a few names, the committee is currently known as the Lay Led Service Committee.
Most months the Lay Led Service ends up being on the fourth Sunday, but not always.

We started the year with the committee primarily composed of Kat Robinson Grieder, Jack Weinhold and Jim Sulzer as the liaison to the Board of Trustees. Rev. Simmons was also very involved for the

first few months of the year. During the year Val Hall and Linda Spery joined the committee as strong new members and John Rivera, Haziel Jackson and Adam Reed all contributed their talents for a portion of the year. Susan Richards has also been attending meetings as an “unofficial” member of the committee. In the summer Rev. Simmons conducted a training for members of the committee and has continued to meet with and train new members as they join.

The services planned by the committee this year have had a wide variety of topics. We were visited by the General Assembly Chalice and talked about the history of the chalice in UU churches. In February, Barbara White was our guest speaker at the African Meeting House and spoke about the desegregation of Nantucket schools and how UUs were a part of that. We shared the stories of important UU women from Nantucket including Rev. Phebe Coffin Hannaford, Rev. Anita Truman Pickett, Anna Gardner and Eleanor Phinney. In the summer we had a service celebrating our summer resident members who talked about their connection to our church and congregation and also a service in which members shared music or poetry that is important to them. In the fall Val and Jim led a service with a “Gifts from the Sea” theme and another service had members in different phases of life and connection with the church sharing their experiences. Michelle Whelan spoke about nature’s model of interdependence in November and we ended the year with a multimedia service organized by Linda Spery about the “Battle for Christmas.”

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to lay led services being a popular and dynamic part of our church’s activities. We are happy that the services planned by this committee have been so well received by the congregation.

If you are interested in helping plan and conduct lay-led Sunday services in 2015, please contact Kat Robinson Grieder or Val Hall to let them know of your interest. It’s a rewarding experience and a fun committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Kat Robinson Grieder on behalf of the Committee

Committee on Ministry – 2014

Serving this year on the Committee on Ministry were Barbara Elder, Peter Richards, Nancy Rappaport, Val Hall, Holly McGowan and Jan Ellsworth. Three people continued from the Search Committee (Barbara, Peter and Nancy) and three people - Val, Holly and Jan - were added.

The Unitarian Universalist Association has a rigorous process for a new minister to become “official.” It includes having a Committee on Ministry that meets monthly to review specific items in relation to the ministry of the church and also to serve as a feedback committee for the minister. In June 2014, the committee completed an evaluation form for Rev. Linda Simmons and submitted it to the UUA (July 2013- June 2014). This will need to be done twice more before Linda Simmons is completely installed as a UU minister. (7/2014 – 6/2015 and 7/2015 – 6/2016)

The Committee on Ministry meets once a month (the first Wednesday) at 8:30 a.m. in the parsonage. The committee meets around the table in the parsonage and Linda supplies us with tea. We meet for 60 – 90 minutes and discuss issues that pertain specifically to her ministry and any congregational issues that have come up over the month that need discussion. The goal of the committee is both to support and give current feedback so communication is free and open.

Rev. Simmons began her service on late July 2013. She is now one and a half years into her ministry with our church. Thankfully, she is very organized and presents our committee with a detailed report of everything she has done from month to month. This is in keeping with the UUA format and helps give us a clear picture about where her focus has been. Our committee is also a place where we discuss our church's potential and our limitations. We do not officially plan or recommend. We serve in an advisory capacity offering support and suggestions.

Thank you to all our Committee on Ministry members. May we all continue to represent our congregational needs well and support our minister.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Elder, chair

Music Director – 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Music Director again this year. It's been a rewarding experience and an education in itself. Rev. Linda Simmons has been a wonderful leader and supporter, and she continues to mentor me as a church employee. Lucretia, in the office, has aided me throughout the year with all manner of administrative tasks, her skills are endless! The Board, headed by Jim Sulzer, has provided much needed support and constant encouragement. Thanks to Susie Jarrell and Barbara Elder for their advice and counsel, and to the entire choir for supporting my musical decisions and choices. Every choir member has been incredibly kind in their acceptance of me; their voices and enthusiasm have helped me through this whole year.

As the Music Director, I continued my role as a musical support person for Rev. Linda, whose themed programs each Sunday provided the impetus to create a program of congruent musical offerings, the implementation of which was often contingent on the voices available, the space of performance and the available musical material in the church music library. Rev. Linda introduced us to "Life Calls Us On", which she discovered at the UU Annual Meeting. The cataloguing continues as I add new titles to the library.

The choir continues to be a joy to work with. Their generosity was evident in the memorial service for Jack Reindel, as they attended the service for a dear friend and fellow singer in the choir. We have a revolving crew of faithful singers, and there always seems to be just enough voices to put together an anthem for at least 3 Sundays a month. We sang for most every service in 2014, adding some great new repertoire thanks to their abilities and talents. The choir's suggestions are always

considered, and some of the best services have been made better by the care and concern of a choir member's anthem choice. The end of summer brought many departures among choir members though the depleted ranks performed with their usual optimism. There are some that attend every rehearsal and every Sunday, for which I am grateful. I continue to provide the choir with a recording (in parts) of the anthem to be sung on Sunday and I send them a PDF of the music which I scan at home, and record it for them to sing along to. This idea has been embraced as a model for the way the music can be heard before the Sunday rehearsal. Making the anthem work is a large part of my duty and very rewarding.

The Music Committee was helpful in the running of the Thursdays@5 concert series for the 2nd year - their attendance and help with programming were apparent in the persons of Karin Gockel and Cynthia Csabay, who sat at the door each Thursday, Al Fuller, who was the overseer for everything from windows to cash to seating and counting heads. Jack Weinhold made posters for each concert; his generous contributions made our visibility greater on Main Street and in front of the church. ReMain was our great patron, allowing us to hire wonderful performers for the series. We made a small profit, and gained a few new fans. Dear Jack Reindel's passing was hard, because he always used to come to the Noonday concerts, and was enthusiastic and supportive of our change to the Thursdays@5. Susie was there as often as she could be, which added great support to the many performers who have become regular to the series. We were host to Jim Sulzer and Jessica Heuser, The NCMC Women's Chorus and Jazz Band, Jake Butler performing solo, and many more including the Hyannis Sound A Capella group for the one Sunday concert in the series.

The Lay Led Committee services are always enjoyable. The Committee has sought my advice, and let me choose the music according to their theme. It seems to have gone well, though the summer lay led services were curtailed till fall, my experience with them has been very positive. I look forward to their next service. The hymns will be reviewed in advance and the repertoire will be ok'd as well.

Throughout the summer, we engaged soloists, and instrumentalists which were all a true joy. It was particularly wonderful to be in the sanctuary this summer with the beautiful painting to look at, music all around and friends to enjoy it with. We heard Carson Cooman play the organ on two separate Sundays, and Susie Jarrell gave us the Doxology and an occasional prelude from the loft on more than a few occasions.

The instruments at the church are maintained beautifully by Boaz, who is a real pro and a fine musician. The new protocol has been adopted, and as I see it, it works better for the Music Director to identify when the instrument needs maintenance, then calling the Office Administrator, who in turn calls the tuner (Boaz). We'll see how that works. If there is a problem, my advice would be to get back on a monthly visit from the tuner to identify any problems.

In regards to weddings, there has been great progress. As I had suggested from the beginning that we create a packet, Lucretia mastered the formula and even organized an open house for wedding planners. My part as musician on 3 separate weddings has worked seamlessly and I'm hopeful to be a part of a few more successful unions in the future. I hope to be part of a meeting with the Office Administrator and the Rev. in regards to this.

The position of Music Director has required an advanced knowledge of musical repertoire, an ability to lead a choir without exclusion of people who may not have the same level of music knowledge as the person next to them, an advanced knowledge of hymns, a level of skill to play accompaniment and song leading, and a dedication to the church which is evidenced by weekly attendance to rehearsals and services. It required me to be able to communicate well with the choir as both its director and accompanist. It required me to be able to lead a committee to develop ideas for fundraising and rally a core of people to help implement the plan. It required a collaborative spirit to bring out the best in the participants of the music program, soloists, member of the congregation and guest soloists.

This completes my report of the job as Musical Director this year. In conclusion, I was able to work with the choir, play the organ, play music of a wide variety, collaborate with members and Rev. Linda and the soloists to create what I think was an eclectic mix of programming. My experience here has been a positive one, as I said. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve the church and the congregation.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Towle Lehman

Religious Exploration Committee – 2014

2014 been a year of continued growth for our RE program as we explored different curriculums with the children as well as reaching out to the local and international community, inspiring new projects and endeavors for our UU children.

During the Spring and Summer of 2014 we welcomed Blake Lazarus to the Religious Exploration program. Blake brought enthusiasm and a natural expertise to her position as child care assistant. She was an invaluable aide to our Lead Teacher Jen Dunbar with the RE children throughout the summer. In September, we said farewell to Blake as she left for a year-long study program in Spain. High school sophomore Stefan Silverio joined our program as a volunteer child care assistant in September. He has proven to be a very reliable and popular addition to RE!

In terms of RE Committee membership, in 2014 we said goodbye to committee members Linda Spery and Saralyn Rice. Saralyn brought her organizational skills to our program along with some excellent curriculum ideas. She and her family moved off-island in the summer. Linda was invaluable to the committee as she not only contributed many program ideas and valuable resources but also led one RE class per month so the children could directly benefit from her enthusiasm and expertise. Luckily for us, Linda is still a very active member of the congregation and her incredible energy has been focused on other parts of the Meeting House community.

Notes of interest from 2014:

* This year we followed the UUA curriculum, "Children of the Chalice" as our focus in our RE classes. This has taught the children about service, the chalice, and our Meeting House. We also highlighted

world religions from the UUA curriculum "Holy Days and Holidays". Throughout the year class size ranges from 3-20 with the average being 6-8 children per class. The classes are multi-aged, with children ranging in age from 2-10 years old.

* RE hosted several Spaghetti Community Dinners on a monthly basis - January through April and October through December. Our Spring Family Event was a wonderful Passover Seder which took place in April and was organized by the RE Committee in collaboration with representatives from the Shirat Ha 'Yam congregation. This event was very well attended by members of both congregations and is sure to be repeated in 2015.

* As RE Committee chairperson, Susan Richards was able to participate in a day-long Religious Education training in a special UU curriculum, SpiritPlay. She brought back what she learned to share with the RE Committee and was able to use what she learned to re-organize some of our RE materials as well as lead a special SpiritPlay class. We are hopeful that our RE lead teacher, Jen Dunbar, will be able to participate in the training in 2015 and help us plan more RE classes with a SpiritPlay focus.

* The entire RE class has started a pen pal relationship with our sister church in Transylvania. The children wrote letters to the Transylvanian RE class about living on Nantucket complete with the children's artwork. The Transylvanian children sent letters with holiday wishes and descriptions of their lives. We are planning to continue this relationship in 2015 with more letters and artwork!

* Anne Marie Bellavance, director of the Food Pantry, took the class on a very thorough and thought-provoking tour of the Food Pantry. The children have been collecting food for the Food Pantry as part of the RE's social justice project.

* All the RE children helped decorate light bulbs and candles for our special holiday tree featured on Main Street with the theme "UU Light up my Life"

Once again we thank the volunteers from the congregation who have come forward to help out with our RE program... from donating snack items and resources, to helping out with special events, to being a helping teacher during the RE class.... all assistance is very much appreciated!

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Richards, Religious Exploration Committee Chair

Grassroots Nantucket – 2014

Almost a year ago our social justice committee, Grassroots Nantucket (GN), was created. Adam Reed was selected as our first Chairman with Joanna Greenfield as Co-Chair. After much discussion we selected a voter registration drive as our first action. Registration forms in various languages were ordered and we set up a table at both Stop and Shop island locations over a 6 week period. We repeated it again this Fall. The combined efforts were very successful in registering many new voters as well as raising community awareness of our nascent organization. Since this past October, Gary Langley and Joanna Greenfield are Co-Chairs of the committee.

In early Spring, we began both a composting and Community Garden initiative. For the composting initiative, 5 gallon buckets were ordered and offered to the congregation to use for home collection of food scraps while Paul Stewart and Gary Langley built a large 2 section compost bin on the Stewart's property to be used as a drop off point. We currently have a handful of folks using this

system on a regular basis, we intend to offer these buckets again this Spring and hopefully attract more people to this component of a sustainable living lifestyle.

In late Spring, we signed up for and were given a plot of land at the Community Gardens located off Hummock Pond Road. Paul and Lora Stewart, Susan and Peter Richards, Joanna Greenfield, Rev. Linda Simmons, Adam Reed, Emily Seawall, Tobias Glidden and Gary Langley cleared the lot, tilled and prepared the soil, erected a protective fence, planted our crops, weeded, watered and loved our crops to harvest. We put our early produce out on a couple of Sundays for the congregation to enjoy, but eventually connected with the Food Pantry and for the remainder of the season we donated our garden veggies to them and will continue to do so this year. After talking with the good folks at Moors End Farm, who are also donating their excess produce to the Food Pantry, we will make an effort to expand this initiative to other growers on the island.

In an effort to increase our involvement with the Food Pantry, GN began a clothing collection and distribution program. We have had 3 successful clothing giveaways for the Food Pantry's clients at the American Legion Hall and plan to continue this effort on a monthly basis.

The current focus of GN is to move our congregation toward becoming a Green Sanctuary. The Green Sanctuary Program (GSP) is a UU sponsored, multi-faceted, structured program that invites UU congregations to decide on and carry out a series of actions addressing various environmental and social justice issues facing their communities and beyond. The program will act as an umbrella under which GN can move forward on a number of specific social justice initiatives. When the program is successfully running it would bring our congregation recognition as a Green Sanctuary by the Unitarian Universalist Association. The GSP's actions focus on four main areas:

- * Worship & Celebration
- * Religious Exploration
- * Environmental Justice
- * Sustainable Living

Each of the four areas requires a number of specific projects to be decided on by the congregation. Our hope is that members of the congregation as well as folks in our larger community will also become directly involved in the implementation of these projects and truly make this a community effort.

Thanks for the opportunity to serve as Co-Chair, it has enriched my life.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Langley

Members Fund/Pledge Campaign Committee - 2014

Each fall we have the opportunity to shape the character, breadth and depth of our congregation for the coming year. It happens when we sign a pledge card indicating the annual commitment we are prepared to make. Each member and friend's annual gift commitment of financial support is

combined to provide our Finance Committee with a total amount of income to create next year's budget.

Just as we determine our own household budgets based on our projected income, we do the same with our church. Our total financial commitment as a congregation determines how extensive our music program can be, what our religious exploration program can be for both children and adults, and the extent of our community outreach, among other things. And, very importantly, our financial support funds our wonderful full-time minister, Rev. Linda Simmons.

In 2014, just as in prior years, we realize that some members are able to fund a larger percentage of our overall goal than others. However, this year as in prior years, every member is expected to support the church at some level of participation. This is an obligation that each of us agreed to honor when we signed the membership book.

This has been a remarkable year in the history of our church with our successful transition to a new settled ministry. We want to build upon that foundation and create even greater opportunity for growth in 2015. The results of the year-end Members Fund/Pledge Campaign can be found in the Finance Committee report elsewhere in this Annual Report. Thank you to everyone who made pledges this year.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Spery

South Church Preservation Fund Year in Review – 2014

The Meeting House will have a new cedar shingle roof in the fall of 2015. A successful application to the Nantucket Community Preservation Commission written by Paul Stewart, David Barham and Craig Spery will bring a grant of \$250,000 (after Town Meeting approval) for this major historically appropriate project.

SCPF after careful lab tests by Sherwin Williams commissioned the painting of the lower half of the tower. This successful trial run is the first step in the painting of the entire building scheduled for Fall 2015, depending on the success of fund raising.

The new sound system in the historic sanctuary was installed with the careful placement of speakers behind shutters minimizing visual impact. SCPF contributed partial funding and technical guidance.

The Nantucket Book Festival 2014 marked the launch of the updated edition of "The Unitarian Meeting House - A History" published in conjunction with the Nantucket Preservation Trust and its

Director, SCPF Board Member, Michael May. The book was well received and is available at Mitchell's, Bookworks, the NHA gift shop and here at Hendrix Hall (\$20 checks made out to SCPF).

A successful docent program under the leadership of Libby Oldham opened the sanctuary to visitors from the country, and all over the world, during July and August. Peter Richards will head the program in 2015 and welcomes volunteers.

We welcomed two new talented Board members, Debbie Kahn and Pen Austin in 2014 (to be approved by this Annual Meeting).

We note with sadness the death of Curt Livingston a longtime friend of SCPF and especially the Goodrich organ.

We extend our ongoing appreciation to Marina Sutro for her unfailing support of the work of SCPF.

We announce the election of officers for 2015: Craig Spery, President, Paul Stewart, V.P., Susan Hochwald, Sec., and Gwen Richter, Treas.

2015 is the "Year of the Bell", the 200th anniversary of its first ringing from the tower in 1815. An interesting tale! Watch for announcement of the celebrations!

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Beth Splaine, President 2012-2014

Nominating Committee – 2014

Kat Robinson-Grieder, Craig Spery and Nancy Rappaport were tasked with selecting candidates for the 2 Board of Trustee seats vacated this year with the expired terms of Linda Spery and John Rivera. The nominees are Cynthia Csabay and Joanna Greenfield.

We are also recommending that Lora Stewart (who filled out the term for Brian Girard) and Joy Margolis (who filled out the term for Jack Weinhold) be nominated for new, three-year terms.

Nominees for trustees for the South Church Preservation Fund are Debbie Kahn and Pen Austin.

We ask that you consider these candidates for your vote.

We also have selected members to take over our seats on the Nominating Committee. Peter Richards, Haziel Jackson and Nancy Mack have been selected.

Please consider these candidates for the position.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Rappaport

Membership Committee – 2014

Reactivated in 2013, the mission of the Membership Committee is to build and support community.

We work to:

1. Support and recognize current members.
2. Welcome and encourage new members.
3. Recognize summer members and facilitate their participation in congregational social activities, and
4. Encourage **all** members to participate in church activities and governance.

In 2014, the focus for the Membership Committee was on community building social activities. Each season, several small dinner parties, “Seasonal Suppers”, were held simultaneously in members’ homes. In June, the summer Seasonal Supper was an All-Member-Pot-Luck-Cookout at the home of Lora and Paul Stewart. In July, the committee worked with the Board of Trustees to host the second annual Summer Members’ Gathering at the home of Barbara Elder and Jim Sulzer.

There are several other annual fundraising/social activities on the church calendar which individual members hosted during 2014. These included the “Souper Bowl” gathering at Christine Sanford’s home, the St. Patrick’s Day boiled dinner at the home of Paul and Lora Stewart, and the Hungarian Dinner, facilitated by Jim Sulzer and hosted in the Activities Room by Ilse Sangree.

This year we had seven new members “sign the book” including four on Membership Sunday in the Fall. As part of the process, all new members received printed materials from the UUA and our Nantucket UU congregation as well as individual orientation sessions with Reverend Simmons.

The goals for 2015 include:

1. To recruit new members of the committee including at least one young adult and at least one long time member with a historical view of the congregation.
2. To introduce at least one new community building social activity to the church calendar.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora Stewart

The Caring Team - 2014

The Caring Committee was reactivated as The Caring Team in 2014. The mission of the Caring Team is to augment the pastoral care provided by Reverend Simmons and to facilitate a culture of caring within the Meeting House community.

In coordination with Reverend Simmons, The Caring Team will:

1. Facilitate providing meals, transportation and errands for those in need.
2. Help identify needs and determine resources among friends and families.
3. Reach out to parishioners with phone calls, visits and cards when appropriate.
4. Facilitate or provide help with small household chores as needed.
5. Encourage others to participate in fulfilling our mission.

It is clear that this community has a well-practiced history of caring for one another. Many times, when someone in the congregation has faced a time of challenge, the necessary meals, visits and transportation to appointments, church services and other church activities have already been arranged by members of the community without facilitation from the Team. Home visits to community members who are unable to get to the Meeting House is an ongoing priority.

Goals for the coming year include:

1. Recruit at least one new member of the Team.
2. As a way for others in the community to participate, start a "Blue Moon" volunteer list to be called on for help as needed.
3. In coordination with Reverend Simmons, offer at least one workshop or support group that responds to needs within the congregation.
4. Raise funds for the "shawl ministry" in order to eliminate the need for the volunteers to absorb the cost of the yarn.

Many thanks to Nancy Rappaport, outgoing member of the Team, for her thoughtful counsel and valuable guidance over the past year. The current Team is: **Lora Stewart, Chair, Mary Beth Splaine** and incoming member, **David Hall**.

In late 2013, the Shawl Ministry was initiated at the Meeting House. The response of volunteers has been heart-warming. The shawls are knit and crocheted by members of the congregation to be given to parishioners (and close affiliates) in times of challenge. The shawls are meant to convey the care of the whole congregation. Before they are given away, every attempt is made to pass the shawls through the membership for their good thoughts during a "shawl blessing". In 2014, eighteen shawls and one scarf were given away. Marking a happy occasion, a baby blanket was also given to a newborn member of our congregation. The Caring Team seems like the logical committee to "umbrella" the Shawl Ministry. A goal for the coming year is to raise funds for the "shawl ministry" in order to eliminate the need for the volunteers to absorb the cost of the yarn.

The Team welcomes new members and encourages anyone interested to get in touch with Lora Stewart.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora Stewart, Chair

Fellowship Committee - 2014

The Fellowship Committee was newly formed in November and consists of Val Hall, Grace Noyes, Joanne Polster, Tomomi Sato-Jackson, Jan Ellsworth, Barbara Elder, and Linda Sperry. This is an *ad hoc* committee which is called upon as needed; for example, if there is a Sunday needing more food than is expected by the signups. These Sundays have turned out to be rare, since so many members of the congregations have “stepped up to the plate”. This fall we started putting out a basket on the fellowship table for cash contributions, which can then be used for purchasing staples such as coffee, sugar, creamer, etc. This fund has proven to be very helpful.

Coffee Hour has become a vital part of the Sunday morning experience at the Meeting House. It gives people in the congregation a chance to gather in fellowship over coffee or tea and delicious food, and to welcome visitors and new members. People have signed up regularly to bring their goodies, which have included everything from soup to nuts. A recent highlight was the fellowship sponsored by Brad and Kristina Strand following the special New Member service on the Sunday following Thanksgiving Day.

A special thank you goes to Karin Gockel, who does so much work, in her own quiet way, preparing for and cleaning up after Coffee Hour. We are so lucky to have her. And many thanks to Lucretia, our office manager, who always makes sure that there are monthly signup sheets posted, lets me know if nobody has signed up, and then writes personal thank you notes to every person who has contributed.

Respectfully submitted,

Val Hall, chair

Second Congregational Meeting House Society

Unitarian Universalist Nantucket, Massachusetts

Annual Meeting - Sunday, January 26, 2014

Minutes taken by Susan Richards (Clerk)

1. **Call to Order at 12:00pm and Quorum established** – Linda Spery, Board of Trustees President
- According to the by-laws - 25 members are needed to have a forum - approximately 40 members counted.
2. **Opening Words** – Reverend Linda Simmons
3. **Presentation and Approval of Minutes of the 2013 Annual Meeting** – Susan Richards, Board of Trustees Clerk - Unanimously approved
4. **Discussion and Approval of Operating Budget for 2014:** Craig Spery, Finance Committee Chair
- acknowledged the hard work of the other members of the committee - Jack Weinhold, Gwen Richter, Peter Richards, Paul Stewart in-coming Treasurer. Also ex-officio members - President of the Board, Linda Spery and Reverend Linda Simmons - Craig went through the the "snapshot" of the 2014 budget, welcoming questions as needed from the congregants.
***Highlights** - Faro de Luz annual rent went from 12,000 to 18,000, Shirat Ha Yam rent will be going up in increments as well. Question about wedding income - we are being more conservative this year as we didn't reach our goal of 12,000 last year... projecting \$10,000 income from weddings but Craig is hopeful that we will exceed this year due to the excellent work of Lucretia our office manager... Bed and Breakfast could use some more volunteer spaces - a cottage, a room, when you're going away, etc. Fundraising - Our big fundraiser is the Services and Goods Auction which we expect will continue to be successful - Review of Checking, Savings, and investments - Question: Are our investments in sustainable and socially responsible funds - Good question - it's open for all to see and perhaps we can review and be sure....

Question about GTP (Global T Partners) We are receiving monthly funds from them and also Nantucket Energy (new to paying - they haven't been paying up till now although they have been in our tower for several years) Question about Summer Concerts - money will be received in 2014... not in 2013... Contingency Fund of \$10,000 used.

Question about UUA Membership - Board made a decision to be a Fair share member of the UUA....would become eligible for grants and other programs as a fully paying member.... Question from about being a member of UUUNO (Unitarian Universalist United Nations Organization) - suggestion that as a liberal, relatively wealthy congregation, that we think about becoming a member. Rev Simmons - suggested that this could be presented to the congregation in a 4th Sunday service and/or we can devote a collection to this organization.

Questions about LifeSpan program moneys - We have \$2,900 - Comments from Jack and Craig about how we're a "different congregation" in the eyes of the UUA and that we're "liked" by UUA..... and also that this is the first year we are not taking any money from the principle of our

investment fund.

Budget approved unanimously by vote of the Congregation

5. **Election of Board of Trustees Members:** Bob Lehman and Nominating Committee (Chris Lohman, Mary Beth Splaine)
*Lora Stewart to fill the unexpired term of Brian Girard (term ends in 2015)
*New members for 3 year terms: Jan Ellsworth, Steve Estabrook (2017)
*Treasurer, Paul Stewart 1 year (2015)
*Assistant Treasurer, Jack Weinhold 1 year (2015)
* * * **South Church Preservation Foundation (SCPF):** Dave Barham, Craig Spery, Gary Langley, and Mary Beth Splaine renewed 3 year terms(2017)
- Paul Stewart to fill unexpired term of Sissy Girard on SPCF (2016)
*New Nominating Committee -Nancy Rappaport, Kat Robinson Grieder, and Craig Spery... 1 year terms (2015)

Entire slate for all members approved unanimously by vote of the Congregation

Other Business

- Vote on Approval of Contract for Painting of Hendrix Hall - Craig reviewed the process and the logistics - Received bids from contractors 10,000 each from SCPF and Shirat Ha Yam and Faro de Luz has contributed some as well as individual members - looking for additional \$5,000 - Going forward on faith
- Vote on Approval of Contract for Purchase and Installation of New Carpet for Hendrix Hall
- Vote on Approval of Contact for Upholstery of Seat Cushions for Hendrix Hall

All three contracts voted on and approved unanimously by the Congregation

- *Craig thanked the Ministerial Search Committee for their hard and successful work
- *Jack thanked outgoing president Linda Spery for her outstanding work this past year (standing ovation for Linda!)

Adjournment at 12:50pm by President, Linda Spery

Board of Trustees meeting - convened after the Annual Meeting at 1:00

Present: Linda Spery, Jim Sulzer, Lora Stewart, Jan Ellsworth

Paul Stewart, John Rivera, Jack Weinhold, Susan Richards

Absent: Steve Estabrooks (on call at hospital)

Election of Officers - voted upon and approved by Board unanimously:

Jim Sulzer - President

Susan Richards - Vice President

Clerk - open - will revisit this at our next Board meeting

Meeting adjourned at 1:10pm

- **Next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 18, 4:30-6:30pm**

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

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregation.
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregation and in society at large.
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.