

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NEW HAVEN ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015



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Board of Trustees Report 2014-2015

The Board had a productive year as we moved through our third year of transition. Members of the Board this year were Mary Donohue serving as president, Holly Hawkins as vice president, Mary Losee as treasurer, and Peggy Rae as clerk. Trustees at large were David Jones, Rod Groff, Merrily Kaplan, Dan Gelperin, Russell Heinrich, and Suzanne Miller. Alison Cunningham started off the year serving on the Board as past president, but then resigned to become part of the Ministerial Search Committee. The previous Board had just completed the search for another Interim Minister, and we were very lucky to have the Rev. Fritz Hudson, join us on August 1, 2014.

During this past year, we met at least twice monthly. The first meeting of the month, held on the 2nd Thursday of each month, was devoted to operational business at USNH and the second meeting, held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month was devoted to developing policy governance at USNH.

Associate Minister's Position

The first order of business for the new Board was to determine if the Associate Minister's position, held by Rev. Marion Visel, which was being vacated in July, would be filled. Since we were in a \$35,000 budget deficit at that point, the Board decided to not fill the position for this year. In addition to the financial issue with filling the position, the Board felt that the congregation should not be in search for 2 ministers, and the focus should be on getting a settled senior minister.

Ministerial Search

The Board kicked off its work with the need to establish a new Ministerial Search Committee (MSC). Using the method that the previous Board had established to nominate members for the first Ministerial Search Committee, the Board solicited nominations from the Congregation, reviewed the lists of nominees, and selected a list of candidates who had received at least 2 nominations. After contacting the more than 30 people on the list, the Board was able to identify 7 very qualified individuals who were willing to serve on the Committee. The Board asked the Congregation to vote to accept the slate of 7 as the Committee at a Special Congregational Meeting on September 7, 2014.

The work done by the MSC resulted in a successful search and the unanimous calling of Reverend Megan Lloyd Joiner on May 3, 2015. Rev. Joiner will start her work with USNH in August 2015.

The Board is so grateful to all who were willing to serve on this committee this year.

Special Congregational Meetings

- A Meeting was called on September 7, 2014 to accept the slate of candidates for the Ministerial Search Committee
- A Meeting was called on December 7, 2014 to discuss the budget and to relay the budget priorities the Board heard from the Congregations through budget meetings held in the fall.
- A Meeting was called on May 3, 2015 to vote to call Reverend Megan Lloyd Joiner as our next settled minister. With great joy, the congregation unanimously approved the call and Rev. Joiner accepted.

Annual Fall Meeting and Board Goals

Our Annual Fall Meeting was held on October 26, where the Congregation voted for the approval of a draft compensation package, put together by an appointed Negotiating Team, for a new minister for the Ministerial Search Committee's work. The Board presented its goals for the year, along with the goals of the committees to emphasize all of the work going on at USNH.

The progress towards achieving both of the Board goals has been significant.



Goal #1: To define a proposal for the Executive Team structure we think could work for USNH and to have outlined and adopted the basic policies we need to have in place to operate in Policy Governance by the end of this congregational year.

- Our Policy Governance Meetings in August and September focused on bringing new members up to speed, and starting to work on the actual writing of the policies we are using to define our governing structure. We started to write the policies on Leadership Responsibilities and Limitations. These are the policies that the Board writes to establish the limitations it places on the authority and responsibility of the Executive function in Policy Governance, which for USNH means the limitations on the authority and responsibility of the Management Team. We approved 4 initial policies at our October Policy Governance Board meeting.
- On November 7 – 8, the Board and Rev. Hudson went on retreat with our consultant Laura Park from Unity Consulting at the Mercy Center in Madison, CT. It was here, with much discernment, that the Board drafted the bulk of the remaining policies. Over 50 policies that define our governance processes and the relationship between the Board and the Management Team were drafted and eventually approved at our January Policy Governance meeting. It was also during this retreat that we discussed and discerned what the “Executive Function” at USNH would look like. Although all of our policies were not written, Rev. Hudson strongly encouraged the Board to do an experiment and start acting “as if” we had a fully functioning Policy Governance structure in place. In order to do this, the Board appointed a Management Team to act as our Executive at our November Policy Governance Meeting. The Management Team consisted of the minister (Rev. Fritz), a Board member (David Jones), and an additional appointee (Sandy Frawley). They began their work on December 1, 2014.
- In February, March, and April the Board worked to complete the remaining 16 necessary policies that focus on the Financial Limitations policies, for which we solicited help from the Finance Committee. These final policies, along with a formatted Policy Book were approved at our May 14, 2015 meeting.
- Although the Board feels a tremendous sense of accomplishment at having got through the writing of these initial policies, it should be noted that each of the policies will be reviewed by the Board on at least an annual basis, to ensure that they remain useful and relevant to USNH in its continuing work. Therefore, the policies will be ever a changing and evolving documents. Additionally, although the Board worked to provide information to the Congregation regarding our progress with Policy Governance throughout the year in putting articles in each newsletter and by holding round-table discussions in the Sanctuary, we know there is much more work to do in establishing the linkage between the Board and the Congregation which is necessary in order for Policy Governance to become fully implemented. We plan to establish an annual Congregational Survey, and other activities next year to provide the Congregation with more information and chances for more input.

Goal #2: To educate ourselves and the Congregation about the budgeting process and to obtain congregational input as to how to go about right-sizing our budget.

- At the end of the previous fiscal year (June 2014), the Board presented a deficit budget (about \$-35,000) to the Congregation for approval, with the promise that we would work to re-prioritize and figure out by December, 2014 how we would pay for the deficit and come back to the Congregation. In July, the Rev. Marion Visel left USNH, and the Board made the decision not to fill the position, thus eliminating the deficit.
- The new Board spent the first several months of its tenure educating itself about the financial status of USNH and the budgeting process, through monthly reports from the Treasurer and discussions with the Finance Committee. The Board held several budget round-table discussions in the fall in which the Board tried to elicit opinions on the financial priorities for USNH. The results of these priority discussions were presented at a Special Congregational meeting that was held on December 7, 2014. At this meeting we heard reinforcement from the Congregation about values we hold, as they relate to our financial priorities. In addition to the meetings held in the fall, the Board held more meetings in March to provide a forum for discussion about the budget.



- Under Policy Governance, the Management Team is responsible for creating the proposed budget. The budget is supposed to reflect the values of the Congregation as well as create the means to realize the Ends statements that the Board prioritizes. As part of its work, the Management Team established a Council of Chairs of the Committees, and have brought the proposed budget to the Council for its input, thus increasing the shared responsibility for ensuring USNH's financial well-being with other members of lay leadership and increasing awareness and understanding of the budgeting process. The proposed budget also reflects the Ends priorities the Board and Congregation have established and reflects the information heard by the Board at the budget meetings held in the fall.
- It was revealed, by the diligent work of the previous Treasurer, Greg Seaman, and the Finance Committee, that USNH had considerable assets available in unrestricted funds that had been established over the years. In addition to proposing an operating budget, the Management Team has proposed the establishment of a capital budget and plan to address buildings and grounds maintenance needs through the use of this capital budget. The Congregation had identified the need for a capital budget as an important priority over the past several years, and the Board is grateful that we have some funds with which to finance the capital budget and meet these important needs, and thus has incorporated the establishment of a yearly capital budget into our policies.

Thank You and Appreciation

- Rev. Fritz Hudson - The Board would like to fervently thank Reverend Fritz Hudson for his knowledge, experience, guidance, and challenges to us to embrace Policy Governance and to move the process along. Without his help, the Board would not have achieved the goals we set for ourselves this year. We also would like to sincerely thank him for all of his ministerial efforts this year. His enthusiasm, intellectual stimulation, collaborative manner, and unflappable, loving nature allowed our congregation to prepare to embrace our exciting future. We wish him the best of luck in all of his future adventures!
- The Management Team - In addition to Reverend Hudson, the Board is eternally grateful to the lay members of the Management Team, Sandy Frawley and David Jones, who have taken a leap of faith with us in experimenting this year and establishing a new way for USNH to operate. Their commitment and devotion to this Beloved Community is unquestionable, and their energy and enthusiasm has been indefatigable!!!
- The USNH Staff & Office Volunteers – Thank you to Jesse, Tisha, Oscar, Lesley, Linda, Bill, and the office volunteers for all you do to make this community run! Your daily work allows all of us to pursue our dreams and goals and provides us with an organized office, responsible book keeping, a clean and functioning space, great programs for our children, and beautiful music! We would like to give a special thanks to Pam Niles who helped the Board in numerous ways throughout the year!
- The Committee Chairs & the Committees – In addition to all of the things you do for your committee work, the Board would like to especially thank you for working with the Management Team in establishing the Council of Chairs. This opportunity to involve additional lay leaders in the operational aspects of USNH will allow all of us to make greater progress towards our Mission. We hope that this structure will also allow greater integration and synergies among the Committees.
- The Congregation – The Board has been grateful and appreciative of the trust and support shown by the Congregation this year in our efforts. Your openness and willingness to walk with us down the path of trying new things has provided us all with the energy and encouragement to work towards fulfilling our goals. It has been a great year!

In service and respectfully submitted,
Mary Donohue
President, BOT



Congregational Administrator's Report 2014-15

Tisha Ferguson, Congregational Administrator

Administrative Staff: Leslie Hueffman, Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant
Oscar Adorno, Sexton

Reflections

This year has been one of continued transition, but of increasing forward progress in improving communications, especially electronic media, financial management, and congregational support. We have rebuilt or revised most of the office practices and procedures, and have streamlined the production of the newsletter and other print materials. The new website went live in November of 2014, and is now a reliable resource for the congregation and an inviting public face of the Society.

What we can't do alone, we accomplish with the help of volunteers, who make our days more cheerful and our work lighter. We are so grateful for those who come to USNH to help with the routine tasks as well as the special productions.

Administrative Responsibilities:

- to administer USNH business and operations
- to provide front-office functions
- to oversee daily use and maintenance of the building and grounds
- to manage the congregational calendar
- to coordinate events and activities
- to oversee facility rentals, including the long-term Cuddletime rental
- to maintain congregational membership and financial data
- to produce financial statements and mailings
- to manage USNH accounting systems, receivables and payables
- to design and produce the USNH e-newsletter, weekly calendar and other email
- to produce printed materials: Orders of Service, newsletters, mailings, reports
- to maintain the USNH website

Projects 2015-16

- Implementation of ChurchDB online directory
- Design & maintenance of www.USNH.org
- Mailings and data processing for the 2015-2016 canvass
- Oversight of Buildings & Grounds
- Management of Rentals
- Replacement of high-volume copier with a more cost-effective model
- Reorganization of office workspace, creating a separate volunteer work area and improving privacy and security

Administrative Goals

- Implement new Rental policy & rates
- Implement an online volunteer sign up system
- Implement an online photo archive



Building and Grounds

The B&G Committee lost its Chairpersons early in the year, and most of the building maintenance has been overseen the Administrator. Greg Seaman took the lead in organizing and managing the parking lot repaving. The Management Team has been reviewing the progress of projects and looking at future needs. A number of the older facility fixtures have begun to show their age this year, and have either been repaired, replaced, or will be need attention soon. Annual contracted services that are variable, including oil delivery and snowplowing, will be bid during August and vendors selected for the coming year.

Oscar Adorno, or Sexton, who always does a great job maintaining our offices, meeting rooms, and facilities, has done many small jobs during the year, especially for Cuddletime, working on door locks, window seals, and plumbing.

Work parties in the spring and fall attended to the property to spread mulch, trim plants and tidy grounds. The arbor memorial garden was significantly improved by the work of the Stagg/ Zanoni pre-wedding group.

Maintenance done this year:

- The most notable repair was the replacement of our parking lot and driveway surface, a major capital project, which became necessary when this year's snow plowing took its toll on the old asphalt surface.
- The special gutter over the main entrance was replaced this spring.
- We had holes and leaking seals repaired on several parts of the roof.
- The lift was repaired twice this year, and we anticipate annual maintenance.
- The dish sanitizer motor was replaced.
- The built-in water cooler on the lower level was repaired.
- The windows in the lobby required seal repair, as water was able to get in after their replacement.
- We had a major infestation of hornets in the Sanctuary and Social Hall roofs, which required professional extermination.
- Several of the bathroom fixtures on the lower level have been rebuilt and piping replaced.
- David Stagg spent a good deal of his time and resources to replace the roof fan motor in the Social Hall, so that the room can be used in the warmer months.

Pending projects:

- Repairs to the window frames along the back of the RE and office wing. Water has leaked in several times, causing damage to the office and hall ceiling tiles. We anticipate this repair work will be accomplished over the summer.
- Window A/C unit for the library or Childrens Chapel.
- Rewiring of administrative network with the addition of a Music Director's office and reorganization of equipment
- Repainting of Sanctuary chancel wall (where water leaked this winter)
- Setting up an office for the Music Director, with workstation computer

Longer term projects:

- In-ground oil tank removal and replacement with new oil tank
- Assessment of the outer surface of the main building for repair or replacement



Rentals

Summary

The Rental Committee was disbanded this year; the rental program has been managed by the administrator. USNH continues to attract various rental events, from concerts to private parties, largely by word of mouth, but increasingly through the website.

Our primary tenant, Cuddletime Daycare, LLC. will continue their lease through August 2015, and we anticipate that they will renew their tenancy with us. We maintain a very amicable relationship, and both they and USNH have made continuous improvements to the building and grounds to accommodate their needs. We are fortunate to have them here.

Our regular long-term relationships with Another Octave and Music Haven will continue next year, benefitting both the Society's music program and the community at large. We also will continue to host the Humanist Society's meetings, as well as Beth Roth's Tuesday night meditation class.

Goals for the coming year:

- Reinststate an active Rental Committee to manage the program and assist with event management.
- Implement new, more comprehensive rental policies and better defined rates. The Management Team is currently reviewing proposed new rental policies and rates.
- Create a marketing program to increase rental income.

Respectfully submitted,

Tisha Ferguson
Congregational Administrator



Adult Religious Education Committee Report 2014-2015

Committee Chairs: CathyJackson (14-15) phone: 203.387.4008 email: catherin.jackson@att.net
P.J. Deak (15-16) phone: (203)287-9089 email: phungjs@comcast.net

Committee Members: P.J. Deak, David Schafer, June Schafer
Committee Members Not returning: _CathyJackson
Number of new Committee Members sought for 2015-2016: 4

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Adult Religious Education Committee is to create a learning environment that motivates our Unitarian Universalist congregation to grow spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, and socially for our good and that of the wider community.

This year our "Spiritual" Cinema was changed to "Social" Cinema. This was to reflect our commitment to partnering with the different Social Justice Task Forces and Action Groups this year. We had a very successful program of films this year, occurring on the first Friday of the month. These included:

- 09/14 "The Gospel According to the Simpsons" – with free pizza
- 10/14 "Living on One Dollar" with the Immigration Rights Task Force
- 11/14 "Beyond the Mountain" a collection of UUSC YouTube videos about UUSC projects in Haiti with USNH UUSC Representatives – free Haitian meal
- 12/14 "Robin Williams Remembered" with the USNH Mental Health Awareness Action Group
- 01/15 "Watermark" with UUSC
- 02/15 "The Billboard from Bethlehem" with USNH Peace Task Force & guest appearance from the film maker Bruce Barrett
- 03/15 "Cowspiracy" with the Green Sanctuary Committee
- 04/15 "Diamonds in the Snow" with guest appearance from the film maker Mira Binford
- 05/15 "Ride with Larry" starring former USNH members Larry and Betty Smith
- 06/15 "All Me: The Life and Times of Winfred Rembert" with USNH Anti-Racism Task Force

This year P.J. successfully tried additional methods of advertising our films. As a result, more people from outside of USNH came to Social Cinema. This was especially noticeable for "Diamonds in the Snow". There were 66 people who came for the film "Cowspiracy" followed by over 40 people for "Ride with Larry".

Last fall, the second-part of the curriculum "Cakes for the Queen of Heaven: Part II" was offered for those who had attended the first part last winter/spring. Again, around 10 people saw their way through the entire curriculum. Hopefully, this fall we will offer a second feminist religious education curriculum, "Rise Up and Call Her Name". This will be open to those who completed the Cakes course this year as well as those who took that course many years ago and, of course, newcomers who are interested.

In January and February, a discussion of the book for this year's Common Read, *Reclaiming Prophetic Witness: Liberal Religious in the Public Square* was facilitated by P.J. Deak and Tisa Wenger. This book was written by a UU professor and author, Paul Rasor. There was plenty of advance promotion for this series and a faithful group of about 15 people attended both sessions.

In March, David Schafer offered a 2-part discussion of the Fourth Principle, a responsible search for truth and meaning, sparked by an article published by Peter Morales, UUA President, with a commentary written by David. A fair number of people attended these discussions.

In March, again Cathy Jackson and Vicki Seitz offered Part I of the course, "Spirit of Life" which explores UU spiritually. Again, unfortunately, we did not get enough interested participants to make a viable group, and so we cancelled the course.



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This was to be our second year studying the issue of the Doctrine of Discovery for which we had received a grant from the UUA. Last fall, we made the decision that, given the members of the committee available to work on this project, we would return the grant monies.

I will be stepping down as the chair of the ARE Committee in June. In my place, P.J. Deak will carry the mantle for this committee and he has already started to program for the fall!

This fall, the committee is looking forward to having the able leadership of Jesse Greist who will bring new energy and new ideas to the work of the committee.

We are always looking for new members on the committee. If you have a particular interest, contact either Jesse Greist or P.J. Deak, the chairperson.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Jackson, Chair



Children & Youth Religious Education Committee Report 2014-15

2014-2015 Committee

Lurline deVos, Chair (continuing), Nancy Apfel, Chair Emeritus (continuing),
Vicki Seitz, Secretary (continuing), Patricia McChesney (continuing)
Maureen Herbert-Gilmore (continuing), Meg Gurley (joining in 2015-16)

Committee Accomplishments

2014-2015 has been a productive and enjoyable year for the Child and Youth Religious Education Committee. We continue to have a very positive working relationship with Jesse Geist, our Director of Religious Education. His interactions are consistently warm, respectful, collaborative, and affirming. His interactional style sets a positive tone for the committee, volunteer teachers, and children in our program. We look forward to our continued work with him.

Pam Niles who continues to volunteer to ensure that the day-to-day details of the program are attended to has facilitated the CYRE program's goals. We very much appreciate her dedication to CYRE.

We are extraordinarily grateful to our over 40 volunteer teachers and helpers who have supported the CYRE program by donating hours of their time to our USNH children, youth, and teachers. We are a cooperative RE program which relies on our volunteers.

The CYRE committee in collaboration with the DRE met the majority of our stated goals in 2014- 2015.
The CYRE committee

- Supported our DRE in his leadership responsibilities managing RE programs for our children and youth;
- Worked with DRE to carryout Children's Chapels for the year;
- Continued our penpal/ sponsorship of Rheyline Ogabang, the UU child in the Philippines, and raised funds for her education. We raised more than the amount needed for a year of education and are now two years ahead of our deadline.
- Continued two intergenerational activities begun last year: a UNICEF kickoff Halloween party, a Community Build Lego night in collaboration with the Sunday Morning Team
- Initiated a new intergenerational activity the Secret Buddy program. Children and adults who participated built strong bonds.
- Increase the children's role on the service. This was greatly facilitated by Interim Minister Fritz Hudson who restored having the children return to the front of the sanctuary for the children's message and having those who have Stepped-Up light the chalice.
- Recruited teachers to fill any unfilled positions for 2014-2015.
- Is planning, in collaboration with the DRE, the CYRE Sunday in June 2015 which will recognize children who are Stepping-Up and thank the teacher volunteers.

In addition to meeting our goals, we are continuing to pursue long-term projects:

- In collaboration with the DRE, we continued to push for the implementation of a lockdown procedure; we have succeeded in getting outside doors locked during the week to reduce strangers wandering through the building and potentially assessing vulnerabilities.
- Several projects are ongoing :
 - Teacher recruitment process for 2015-2016 is underway.
 - In collaboration with DRE, we are currently continuing our curricula evaluation by polling



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past teachers, and modifying, supplementing, and/ or finding new curricula as DRE and CYRE Committee deem necessary; --We are continuing to seek ways to strengthen our intergenerational programs

- Our biggest challenge this year was the integration of YRUU into the CYRE committee. We were unable to recruit a youth member.
- It is also an ongoing struggle to recruit both committee members and teachers. We are hoping that the calling of the new minister will bring renewed energy to the congregation and enhance members commitment.

CYRE Goals for 2015-2016

The CYRE committee is looking forward to continuing our work with our DRE, Jesse Greist.

We welcome additional members. We would like 2-3 new members and would like at least one male member. We are very interested in having a youth member from YRUU as they lend a unique perspective. To join contact Lurline deVos, lfdevosphd@comcast.net or call (203) 287-9089. When registering their child, parents in particular are invited to join to support this cooperative RE program.

Our committee goals for 2015-2016 include:

- Meeting with the new minister early in her tenure to ensure adequate attention to the needs of the CYRE program and its children and families.
- Surveying families as necessary to elicit their opinions on relevant issues.
- Supporting our DRE in his leadership responsibilities managing RE programs for our children and youth;
- Working with DRE to configure Children's Chapels for the upcoming year;
- Continuing to maintain our relationship with the UU child in the Philippines. We will continue fundraising through the Read for Rheylyne project, but are hoping to enhance the program by linking the kick-off to her birthday and including a Message for All Ages in the adult worship that references the program. We will also explore incentives for the big readers.
- Inviting the YRUU teens to choose one or two from their group to become a youth member of our CYRE committee and striving to find ways to be of support to the YRUU program;
- In collaboration with the DRE and ministerial staff, carryout a fire drill and a lockdown drill;
- Expanding the Classroom Coffees program to facilitate home to classroom communication and strengthen the children's religious education;
- Collaborating with DRE in planning CYRE Sunday in June 2016 which will recognize children who have Stepped Up and thank teachers and other volunteers;
- Recruiting teachers to fill any unfilled positions for 2015-2016; Exploring novel recruitment methods.



Director of Religious Education Report 2014-15

Children and Youth Religious Education Overview

Children's and Youth Religious Education at USNH saw several encouraging trends in 2014-2015. Classes ran during the second service only, with two new curricula – "You, the Creator of Justice" added for 4th and 5th graders, and "Faith in Music" at the high school level. Programming for youth developed extensively, and the CYRE committee continued to function as a united, well-oiled machine. We had an excellent group of volunteer teachers and support personnel and ran four ambitious, yet very successful initiatives.

Curriculum

The curriculum for this year centered on the history and ongoing development of our UU faith. The curricula used in each class were:

"Wonderful Home" (K – First grade)

"UU Super Heroes" (2nd-3rd Grade)

"Windows and Mirrors", and "You, the Creator of Justice" (4th-5th Grade)

"Riddle and Mystery" and "Heeding the Call" (6th-7th Grade)

"Affirmations: Coming of Age" (8th grade)

"Faith in Music" (9th – 12th grade)

Teachers and Classes

The teaching corps has been wonderful. The teams coalesced quickly, and became largely autonomous as the year progressed. Teams were consistent from K-3rd grade. We did have some turnover in the 4th-5th grade class, with one teacher leaving the team for personal reasons, and two others that were unable to teach often. The affirmations class, which was small to begin with, stopped meeting in person during the second semester and the affirmations team transitioned to teaching in other classes. We had very little need of substitute teachers this year, as most teachers were present on their scheduled days and others on the team stepped up to teach when the scheduled teacher couldn't make it.

My greatest concerns are making sure we follow up with this year's affirmations class next year, to ensure they have an opportunity to continue their faith development and have their needs met by the program. I am also concerned about the low number of young children entering the program. We did two naming ceremonies this year, which was a step in the right direction, but we continue to have a high attrition rate among visitors and new members. This was the reason we had to cancel pre-K classes after December. We have three new families (two of them participated in the naming ceremonies) that regularly attend with young children, and the paid nursery care workers averaged three children per week. There was a good mix of new and veteran teachers, and I felt that they worked well together to support each other.

The YRUU group started the year with five advisers, but shrank to two regular volunteers as the year unfolded. We lost one adviser to the ministerial search committee, and two wound up having work conflicts. I wound up regularly serving as a de facto YRUU adviser. I will seek out five advisers for next year and have faith that this year's mass exodus was a fluke.

Moving forward, I am concerned that few volunteers seek out opportunities to become involved in RE. There continues to be a "stigma" about RE teaching that it will be too much of a time commitment, and/or too difficult for an untrained volunteer to take on. Many choir members and committee members cite these duties as barriers to becoming involved in RE. I plan to work on dispelling these preconceptions as the recruitment process continues to be refined and reworked.

Our Whole Lives

We successfully ran OWL classes for 7-9th graders, 4-6th graders, and K-1st graders this year. The highlights of the program were a high level of registration and participation, new connections formed by



opening the classes to other congregations (we had two students from Shoreline UU participate in the K/1 class), and positive feedback about course content and facilitators.

I plan to run an OWL “summit” on July 19th, 2015 at USNH to address several concerns that arose this year. These include

- recruiting and training more facilitators to relieve the pressure on our current core group
- looking at reducing/restructuring the age range of the older classes to better meet the diverse needs of our children.
- looking at scheduling, including the possibilities of working K/1 and 4-6th curriculum into regular RE class time slot in lieu of a second curriculum, and spreading the high school curriculums out further, eliminating the double sessions.
- evaluating the lifespan efficacy of the sessions by getting feedback from parents, facilitators and teens that have participated in multiple OWL courses, perhaps leading to the elimination of some sessions, and higher emphasis on others.
- Ensuring that the UU philosophical connections included in the supplementary materials are integrated into the class sessions.
- Looking at additional volunteer structures to support facilitators with lesson and materials preparation

Attendance

Attendance was much improved over prior years, with some particular challenges related to the hard winter. Classes and OWL sessions were canceled four times in late January and February. We had 85 children register for classes this year, which is down a bit from last year, but this was balanced out by a historically high attendance rate of 74%. We received over 20 visits, which resulted in an additional 8 children enrolling in classes, including two former members that returned after several years away from USNH.

During the year, six families stopped attending, with all six citing time conflicts and/or children no longer interested in RE classes.

Average attendance breaks down class-by-class as follows:

Nursery/Pre-K: 1 per week during first service, 4 per week during second service

K/1st grade: 7 per week

2/3rd grade: 9 per week

4/5th grade: 10 per week

6/7th grade: 11 per week

8th grade affirmations: 2 in fall, class cancelled for Spring semester

Faith in Music: 7 students per week

YRUU: 9 per week + 1 regular visitor

Summary: RE classes and YRUU saw average weekly attendance of 62 students per week, or 74% of those enrolled in classes. OWL classes averaged 90% attendance in the 7-9th grade class, 72% attendance in the 4-6th grade class, and 88% attendance in the K/1 class.

Budget

I was very grateful to have received a generous professional development budget, which allowed me to pay LREDA membership dues, attend a “Teacher Development” Renaissance Module, attend regular DRE “cluster” meetings, as well as travel to this year’s General Assembly in Portland, OR.

The CYRE budget was adequate and was largely used to support special events and initiatives, provide snacks for RE classes, run retreats for YRUU, and purchase curriculum/support materials for regular classes and the Our Whole Lives sexuality education program.



Special Events and Fund-raisers

CYRE ran four multi-generational initiatives this year: A Halloween Party, which doubled as the kickoff event for our annual UNICEF fundraiser, a “Community Build” game night, which was run jointly with the Sunday Morning Team’s “groundhog gala” event, the annual Read for Rheylyene fundraiser and reading challenge, and the Getting to Know U program, which invited adults and children to engage in a month long interactive deepening of relationships. There was high participation all events, with particularly encouraging involvement in the community build and the Getting to Know U program.

The Halloween party had lower than expected attendance, but was well organized and all attendees enjoyed themselves. Following “Trick or Treat for UNICEF” we sent a donation of nearly \$350 to UNICEF.

Read for Rheylyene garnered less participation than in past years, but the ten children that did participate in all elements of the initiative found the experience quite fulfilling, and raised a total of \$701, which together with prior years’ donations has put us a full two years ahead of our fundraising goals. We plan to continue exchanging letters and pictures with Rheylyene in the coming years, and will sponsor her education through high school.

The Getting to Know U program was quite successful, with 40 children and 40 adults signing up to exchange notes and gifts, culminating in the Buddy Banquet, which was attended by over 90 people. Most feedback was positive, with the biggest suggestion for improvement being a possible restructuring of when the buddy reveal happens, allowing more structured time for buddies to plan shared activities at USNH and beyond.

There were two planned Youth events this year in addition to the usual off-site overnight retreats that the YRUU group takes: A Bake Sale in February, which raised over \$500 toward the second event: a youth service trip to Mastic, NY in late May. This is the second year that the youth traveled to Mastic to work with the Jubilee Recovery Center on projects related to damage done by Super storm Sandy in 2012. This year, 10 youth and three adults from USNH, along with seven members of the Shoreline UU society went on the trip from May 22nd-25th. Funds from the Kathleen McTigue Social Justice fund were also used to subsidize the trip.

Children’s Chapels

The children’s chapels this year were hugely successful, thanks in no small part to the support of the CYRE committee, and regular volunteers. With an average attendance of 18 children, the Pre-K through 5th graders examined UU belief pathways as they filter through the life experiences of justice seekers both within and outside the USNH community, laborers, environmental stewards, members of our congregation, and especially through ourselves and our daily reflections. Children were challenged to identify not just how to aid in seeking justice, but when it is appropriate to intervene.

Additionally, we focused on building our relationship with Rheylyene Ogabang, our pen pal in the Philippines, who kept us well informed about her family, friends, school adventures and challenges she faces growing up.

2015-2016

Looking ahead to next year, RE priorities include:

- Recruiting a dedicated teaching team for the 2015-2016 congregational year. We currently have 23 spots to fill. I remain confident that we’ll fill them by early July, but it’s a high priority. Once filled, I will turn my attention to developing a more effective in-gathering for teachers, including investigating an online format for teachers in addition to the face-to-face orientation. I will be looking into better support structures to keep teachers feeling fulfilled by their experience in CYRE.
- Restructuring OWL to fit the needs and realities of USNH, and using the summit in July 2015 to establish a “six year plan”.
- Continuing to find ways to work with parents and CYRE committee members to offer safe, positive, inquisitive ways to explore faith formation across the RE spectrum.



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- Further developing ways to bring families and community members together for meaningful exchange and engagement both on Sundays and in special events such as the community builds.
- Ongoing professional development through participation in the renaissance modules offered by the UUA
- Building on the momentum established during candidating week with our new Minister, Rev Megan Lloyd Joiner, who has expressed great interest in getting involved with children and youth at USNH. I will also work with Rev. Megan to continue to reshape the DRE job description, building on work done with Revs. Melcher and Hudson.
- Exploring and getting to know the Adult RE program, anticipating it coming under the purview of the DRE in 2015-2016.



Endowment and Legacies Committee Report 2014-15

The Committee focused on the following issues/actions during this Congregational year (July 2014 to June 2015):

1. Endowment Campaign:

At the June 2014 Congregational meeting, the Congregation approved a 10-year Endowment Campaign to grow the endowment to \$2.5 million by 2024. The endowment principal will serve as a permanent savings account, and the funds will provide income for the operating and capital expenses of USNH.

Expanding the membership of the Legacy Society for USNH is an important component of the 10-year campaign. There are 36 members of the Legacy Society for USNH who have contributed \$10,000 or more to the endowment, or have included USNH in their estate plans. (See attached list.)

In December, a mailing was sent to all USNH members describing the Legacy Society and inviting members to join. Since the mailing, four members have joined. In January, Legacy Society members were honored at a lunch at Carol Cheney's home. In addition, a display of Legacy Society members' names will be placed in the USNH lobby. As new members join the Legacy Society, their names will be added to the display.

2. Monitoring the investment performance and distribution of endowment and Board-designated funds:

As of February 2015, the endowment totaled \$949,054. Of this total, \$734,952 is invested with Olson Mobeck and \$214,102 is invested in the UUA Common Endowment Fund. In addition, Olson Mobeck invests the \$17,498 contained in the Senn Fund, a non-endowment fund supporting religious education.

The Committee is recommending a distribution for FY 2015-16 of \$16,255, 2% of the rolling average for the previous 13 quarters.

A report of the funds' performance will be presented at the Fall Congregational meeting. In order to make fund performance more accessible to USNH members, monthly and quarterly financial reports are now available in the USNH office.

3. Reducing the cost of endowment fund management:

We met with our advisor, Peter Kirschenbaum from Oslon Mobeck, to review the cost of the management of our funds. By moving the equity portion of our portfolio to Exchange Traded Index Funds, we will be able to lower our cost from 1.6 to .8 basis points. We are currently evaluating the management cost of our funds invested in the UUA Common Endowment Fund.

4. Drafting and adopting an Investment Policy Statement (IPS):

We are in the final phase of adopting an Investment Policy Statement, (IPS). The IPS will ensure consistent management of the USNH Endowment as committee members change over time. Also, the IPS will provide guidance to our fund managers regarding asset allocation, costs, and risk tolerance.

5. In conjunction with the Finance Committee, develop a cash management plan for Board review and approval:

USNH has approximately \$400,000 in liquid funds (checking and money market accounts plus one CD) that less than 1% interest. In addition, we will receive approximately \$150,000 in unrestricted funds from Arthur Rickel's estate this year. Not having some of these funds invested represents a large "opportunity cost."



A sub-committee, composed of two members from each committee, was charged and has been meeting to review liquid funds held by USNH and explore alternatives for investing a portion of these funds to achieve a greater return at an acceptable risk. Recommendations have been presented to both committees and will be forwarded this Fall to the Board of Trustees for their review, revision, and approval.

6. Fossil Fuel Divestment:

With the UUA decision to divest from fossil fuels over a 5-year period, the UUA portion of our Endowment will be divested. We have reviewed our portfolio at Olson Mobeck and determined that a small portion of the portfolio is invested in fossil fuels. After migrating the equity portion of our portfolio to Exchange Traded Index Funds (see 3 above), we will make a decision regarding this portion of the Endowment.

7. Committee members:

The terms of Thea Bourke-Martin and Carol Cheney on the committee are expiring this year. Thea, an attorney, provided the committee with valuable information regarding estate planning and monitored estates in the probate court in which USNH was a beneficiary.

Carol, a two-term committee member, functioned first as committee Chair, and most recently, as Secretary. In her role as Secretary, she not only provided succinct and thorough minutes but also hosted committee meetings at her home. In addition, Carol provided invaluable endowment development promotional materials and planning.



Members of The Legacy Society for USNH May 2015

Nancy Apfel
Brian Bourke-Martin and Thea Bourke-Martin
Joseph Bove
Brett Burke and Sarah Burke
Carol Cheney
Lisa Comen*
Bob Congdon and Mary Beth Congdon
Sally Connolly
Beth Culler and Fred Morrison
Judson Dowd*
Emily Emerson*
Randolph Erskine*
Hudson Hastings*
Holly Hawkins
Alexandra Hill and Jeremy Hill
Rachel Huntington*
Suzanne LaGarde and David Stagg
Ann Levison and Bruce Levison
Susan Linsley
Ellen Mahoney
Ethel Massey* and William Massey
Susan Meredith and John Watson
Elizabeth Mettler
Margaret Monad*
John Pawelek and Linda Pawelek
Charles Porter
Margaret Rae
Pam Rendeiro*
Cleaveland Rice*
Art Rickel*
Carol Rizzolo and Larry Rizzolo
Greg Seaman and Lois Smith
Kath Schomaker
Blanche Senn* and Milton Senn*
Helen Spaulding*
Sarah Whitson
Horace Winchell* and Jean Winchell*

* Deceased



Finance Committee Report 2014-15

Chair: Sandy Frawley

Members: Russell Heinrich, Suzanne Lagarde, Kathy Lindbeck, Mary Losee, Greg Seaman

Members not returning: Russell Heinrich, Suzanne Lagarde

Number of new committee members sought for 2015-16: 2

2014-15 activities:

The Finance Committee continued its regular monthly activities of reviewing year-to-date financial statements, monitoring the accuracy of financial record keeping, participating in Sunday money counting activities after services, and assisting the Treasurer in reconciling Quickbooks and bank statements.

The Finance Committee participated in the preparation of the 2015-16 operating budget, but did not coordinate the process as it has done in past years. This year the management team organized a process which involved developing and publicizing a “pre-pledge” budget and convening a Council of Chairs to review the status of projected income and requested expenses at two points in time before a draft budget was presented for discussion to the BOT in May. In this new process, the Finance Committee focused its attention on making realistic income projections in several categories.

In addition, the Finance Committee worked on several policy initiatives during the year.

1. The first was a detailed analysis of liquid assets as they are held in both restricted funds and unrestricted reserves. Based on this analysis, a proposal was made to the BOT to establish an operating cash reserve equal to 25% of the annual operating budget and to make other allocations to certain restricted funds, such as a capital fund for building and grounds–related expenses, including both planned repair and replacement and unexpected needs not covered in the operating budget.
2. At the request of the BOT, the Finance Committee undertook a review of Financial Limitations policies that exist in other UU congregations which have adopted Policy Governance. The committee then drafted a set of policies dealing with financial planning and budgeting, financial conditions and activities, grants and contracts, and asset protection which it felt would be appropriate for USNH. These were given to the BOT for consideration during its adoption of policies for USNH governance.
3. Joint committee work is underway by Finance and Endowment & Legacies to explore possibilities for managing liquid assets, both restricted and unrestricted, in ways which could result in higher investment returns than are available in bank instruments. This analysis has considered what is an appropriate level of risk, how to preserve the principal of restricted funds, and how to account for the time frame in which various funds are likely to be needed. A report of this work will be forthcoming to the BOT.



History, Archives, and Library Committee Report 2014-15

Chair: Jane Platt

Members: Toby Appel, James Platt, Richard Platt, Joan Silverman

This has been a productive year for the History, Archives and Library Committee.. With the help of Ken Glick, Dick, Joan and I cleaned out the archives closet and made a list of what's there. In the process we discovered that there is water damage to a corner of the closet, and called it to the attention of Building and Grounds.

The Dorothy Harned Memorial Library had not been organized in several years. Toby, Joan and I have straightened out the books on the shelves in two sections of the Library. We are checking the books for pockets, cards and USNH stamps. We bought a new stamp.

All the books in the Robert O. Bowles collection have been inventoried. The titles, authors and other information for 215 books are now in a database file, making it easier to locate specific books. We are giving thought to adding more titles to the collection.

Work on the general collection is underway (89 books so far) and in the summer we will meet with Jesse Geist and members of the RE committee to organize the Religious Education books.

James and I are continuing to make computer files of a series of taped interviews with long time members. The interviews were made with tape cassette recorders under less than ideal conditions. We have been working on getting the proper volume so the interviewee can be heard. We're almost through doing noise reduction on the files, which results in clearer copies.

We're planning a new set of oral history interviews covering recent past presidents and other active members.

I'm hoping we can digitize the recordings we have of past sermons and services.

We welcome new members, especially those with an interest in USNH history and with library and archiving skills.

Anyone who has questions about our history should feel free to ask us.

As always, I thank the members of the committee for their hard work and dedication.

Jane Platt, Chair



Management Team Report 2014-2015

The management team was formed on 12/1/14 by the board to manage and coordinate the day to day activities of the society in order to better achieve our goals and mission under our new policy governance structure. The members are David Jones, Sandy Frawley, and Rev. Fritz Hudson. While begun as a 6 month experiment, in April the board voted to have it continue.

The initial year of the management team has been spent in organizing ourselves, exploring the workings of USNH (including the finances, budget and physical plant), prioritizing, and coordinating our work with the board, staff, and committees. We began a new process for the budget which includes meeting with a Council of Committee Chairs to get input on the budget throughout the process. This is also part of the way we want to expand the leadership circle at USNH.

In the 2015-2016 year we will be integrating our new minister into the team. It will be an exciting year full of changes for the management team as well as the congregation and staff as we work toward our mission and goals.

Membership Committee Report 2014-15

Committee Chair or Co-Chairs:

David Cross 203-281-4515 DulcimerDavid@gmail.com

Committee Members: Terry Vidal, Barbara Dobay, Theresa Childs, Paula Fullar

Committee Members Not returning: Paula Fullar

Number of new Committee Members sought for 2015-2016: 3

Ideally we would recruit several members each willing to take the lead organizing one component of the activities we plan for the next year, including: Pathways Class, PotLuck/Cottage Meetings, Follow up with individual visitors, Introductory workshops for visitors

The membership committee was revived this year, and created a movable bulletin board to anchor visitor reception after services.

We restarted a system to track visitor attendance, and invited interested visitors to attend two different Saturday workshops that Fritz suggested and helped lead: Your Search and oUUs (intro to the denomination, assessment of fit) and Steps to Join (getting to know how our specific congregation works, and what is involved in membership). Each was repeated 3 times.

We also offered a Newcomer Welcome Chat after services once a month, which involved viewing and discussing a 15 minute UUA video introducing beliefs and history of UUs.

In June we will sponsor a workshop sharing personal stories, in hopes of offering a similar and longer workshop in the fall.

We recruited about 40 members who are willing to occasionally assist with scheduled activities to welcome visitors and new members. The committee seeks more such supporters, and more members!



Music Committee Report for 2014-2015

Committee Chair:

Peter Hansen Phone: 203-248-9642, cell 203-430-6732 Email: phansen@cshore.com

Committee members: Linda Pawelek (ex-officio), Toby Appel, Carol Holloman, Ann Levison, Sylvia Lipnick, Linda Mehta, Jane Platt, Richard Platt, Christine Shadle, Jackie Trimblel Shapiro

Committee members not returning: uncertain as of May 23, 2015

Number of new Committee members sought for 2015-2016: 2 or 3

Music Director	Linda Pawelek
Associate Music Director:	William Braun
Youth Choir Director:	Linda Pawelek

Music continues to be a vital part of USNH services through the leadership of Linda Pawelek and Bill Braun. We are grateful to all the loyal youth and adults who participate in the choirs as well as all the **special musicians** who volunteer their time and talents to help enhance the Sunday morning services. We are fortunate to have an appreciative and supportive congregation. Our goal is to support the worship service and help make it a meaningful hour of the week for those who come to be nourished and blessed with a respite from the fast pace of life.

William Braun is Associate Music Director, having the responsibility to coordinate the music for the first service and continue as pianist and accompanist for the second service. Bill draws upon the resources of our Society, using the talents of individuals and small ensemble groups to provide first service music. He is a brilliant pianist and we are fortunate to have him sharing his keyboard expertise with us each week.

Linda Pawelek is the Adult and Children's Choir Director. The Children's Choir sings once a month at both services and on a few other occasions during the year: Christmas/Hannukah and our Spring music service and other Intergenerational Sundays. The adult choir sings every Sunday and prepares two special music services during the year.

We opened the year with special music by a "pick-up" choir, which has become a tradition, as a result of former USNH retreats. Here are listed some "highlights" of our 2014-2015 year. In December we presented Vivaldi's Gloria accompanied by an instrumental ensemble.

The Choir participated in the Christmas Eve service along with our pick-up orchestra under the direction of Ellie Bond. The Choir also performed at the Canvass Kickoff and after the vote to call Rev. Megan Joiner.

In May we presented Clif Hardin's Requiem, a moving journey of anger, grief, remembrance and gratitude narrated and guided by Rev. Fritz Hudson, our interim minister. We were accompanied by William Braun on piano, Matthew Johnson on percussion, with several soloists from the choir. Another Octave and Haven String Quartet provided music for several services this year.

The choir sang for the Memorial Service of Claire Gallant. We presented one Sundays at Four Concert featuring Philip Boulanger, cellist with the Haven String Quartet, and guest artists. Miki Sawada, Patrick Doane, and Gillian Gallagher., playing works of Debussy, Beethoven and Brahms.

We have developed a relationship with the Haven String Quartet. It is a permanent quartet-in-residence of Music Haven. The quartet's mission is to integrate music and creative endeavor into community life. The



quartet provides access to free music education to residents in New Haven's most marginalized neighborhoods. They use our space to play concerts and in return provide music for several of our Sunday services during the year. It is always a pleasure to hear them.

The Music Committee continues to welcome comments about the Music Program. Much effort is put into the planning and organizing of each Sunday Service. We are always looking for constructive ideas and suggestions. You may direct your comments to staff or anyone on the Music Committee.

Progress on specific Committee goals included:

1. Three new singers joined the Choir.
2. Linda Mehta and Toby Appel are working with the Office staff to update the Music Program content on the USNH website.
3. There are four new members of the Committee.
4. Sylvia Lipnick has agreed to take over the leadership/coordination of the inventory, cataloging and filing of the Choir sheet music library. This is a huge ongoing project and Jane Platt has done a wonderful job for many years with help from Committee/ Choir members. We might have to move some of the music to an office on the upper floor.
5. A quick inventory of hymnals showed that there appear to be enough for most Sunday Service needs.
6. All pianos have been tuned as needed and extra repairs have been done on the Sanctuary piano.
7. A Sundays at Four concert was held on May 31 (goal was 3 events). Claire Bien did a wonderful job on publicizing the concert. A reception was held after the event.

Peter Hansen, Music Chair
Linda Pawelek, Director of Music



Right Relations Working Group Report 2014-15

In the fall of 2014 the Board of Trustees (BOT) charged a committee with developing a plan for right relations at USNH. An initial right relations proposal had been endorsed by the BOT in 2006 upon which the current group was to build.

Right relations, as defined and practiced in many religious institutions, provide a set of guidelines for increased tolerance and acceptance among members for differences, mutual respect, and safety. It promotes an enhanced culture in which we can create a welcoming, respectful, loving and vibrant spiritual community.

The committee, which called itself the Right Relations Working Group (RRWG), consisted of Bobbi Pace, Chair, Paul Trotta, Nancy Lesh, Gail Figliola, Tracy Navarro-Davis, Georgia Jennings, Loren fields, and Bruce Levison.

The RRWG identified as its first task crafting a **Covenant of Right Relations**. The word covenant is derived from the Latin for "come together"; it also means "a solemn agreement" regarding a course of action between parties. A number of groups at USNH had already established covenants, including the BOT. The working group felt it was vitally important to hear from the congregation on their thoughts and needs about what makes them feel safe and respected in our beloved community.

Two Community Conversations were held in January to acquire input from the members of the congregation. The Community Conversations were designed to elicit what congregational members vision of a safe and respectful community would be like--one in which they felt heard. The conversations were attended by more than sixty members, and their comments and feedback have been the foundation of the proposal for a covenant, which is to be presented at the June congregational meeting. The heart of the covenant is that we express our emotions and differences in respectful ways; that we approach disagreements constructively by reaching out to the person with whom we have an issue; that we listen attentively and respectfully; and we acknowledge that differences are inevitable, but need not involve conflict and hurt.

The community conversations were followed by efforts to inform the congregation of ongoing efforts to craft a covenant. There were articles in the newsletter informing the congregation of what a covenant consisted of, the need for one at USNH, and the need for a broader right relations program.

The working group's task was also to develop the charge and structure for an ongoing committee called the **Permanent Committee on Right Relations**. The PCR will foster a program of right relations aligned with the vision explicated in the proposed Right Relations Covenant. The committee will also be available to resolve conflicts that will inevitably arise in the congregation, based largely on the 2006 design for conflict resolution. The PCR will also generate education and training to assist members in fulfilling the objectives of the covenant, including listening attentively, speaking kindly, and valuing differences.

There will 5 members of the new committee and we are in the process of recruiting members.

This is the groundwork for a solid Right Relations Program at USNH.

Submitted by
Bruce Levison,
For the Right Relations Working Group



Small Group Ministry Report 2014-15

Chair: Gwen Heuss-Severance; (203) 668-4758; gheuss@sbcglobal.net

Members: Nancy Brown, Ellen Mahoney, Jean Rosenthal, Paul Trotta

Committee Members Not returning: 0

Number of new Committee Members sought for 2015-2016: 1

Additional Comments/Information: Jean Rosenthal will be away for several weeks in the fall; Nancy Brown will be away for several weeks in the winter. One new member would be very helpful to us for sign ups, recruitment and oversight of SGM facilitators, and evaluations.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY provides an opportunity to consider the meaning of spirituality in your life and a way to join others in the search for intimacy and ultimacy. The format is designed to support connection and community. Newcomers and long-term members find it a good way to get to know a few people better, particularly in a large congregation like ours.

Groups offered in the Fall Term (October 2014-January 2015)

What I Believe; Explorations within Spiritual Community for Women of All Ages; Parents of Young Children (K through grade 6); Buddhist Lens Group (2 sections); Selected Spiritual Topics (2 sections).

Offered but did not run: Parents of Teens (ages 13-18); Individual Growth within a Community.

Groups offered in the Spring Term (February-May 2015)

Explorations within Spiritual Community for Women of All Ages; Parents of Young Children (K through grade 6); Buddhist Lens Group (2 sections); Selected Spiritual Topics (2 sections);

Offered but did not run: Building Community, Growing Spirit; Brief Encounters with UU, then and now.

Evaluation:

At the conclusion of the Fall Term, we invited all 49 participants to complete a 21 question on-line evaluation using Survey Monkey. 28 participants responded, 21 did not. We learned that the majority of the responders had a positive SMG experience characterized by mutual respect and trust, good organization and leadership, appropriate and interesting topics, and fulfilled expectations. In the free-response section of the evaluation, some responders were critical of individuals who talked too much, did not abide by the rules of confidentiality, were often absent, and group cancellations due to weather and competing commitments.

Overall, the Steering Committee agrees that using Survey Monkey was helpful especially in the task of collating responses, and useful. We would like to make the instrument sleeker and figure out how to collate responses by individual small group as well as aggregate.

We sense strong support from Rev. Meagan and look forward to working with her to grow the program by recruiting and training more facilitators and offering more small group opportunities.



Social Justice Council Report 2014-2015

Background: Social Justice Ministry has been essential to USNH's congregational life since our founding. Our current structure was launched in 2010. The SJ Ministry Network comprises a Council and multiple action groups. Groups provide USNH members and friends a path to engagement with specific issues; the Council provides leadership and coordination for the Network. This includes representation to the Board of Trustees, and, this year the new Management Team, regarding policies, budgeting priorities and related administrative functions. The Council also provided materials and coordinated Social Justice-related communications with the Ministerial Search Committee (and celebrates the Search outcome!).

In 2014, the Council met in its annual retreat and formulated goals provided to the Board. These included several that were high priorities this year.

. This year we seek to deepen our understanding, and the congregation's, of USNH's Social Justice Ministry in both historical and denominational contexts

USNH contributed to the Ministerial Search process for several years, and also had many participants in the 2014 UUA General Assembly. The presence of our Interim Fritz Hudson and his frequent underscoring of UU historical context, and the dedicated participation of several USNH members in district and national denominational activities were factors in the Council's growing emphasis on integrating our SJ initiatives with national priorities. This will be increasingly evident in 2015-16.

. The Council continues to support the many direct action groups of the Network. This year we plan to engage directly with each group, using a consistent meeting guide to understand group aspirations, concerns and needs.

. The Council members met with 6 of our SJ Ministry groups/representatives toward this end. Council members found the meetings informative and inspirational, and believe it was helpful for all in clarifying focus, specific goals, and resource needs. It's noteworthy that group initiatives have resulted in increasingly collaborative work between groups, and in external denominational and community organizational contexts.

Groups and other USNH Committees (particularly Adult and Children/Religious Youth) have collaborated to enrich USNH members' educational and intergenerational experiential learning.

. The Council, in collaboration with the groups, evaluates USNH's Social Justice Ministry priorities and shapes our SJ vision of future work. Such evaluation is more than a one-year process; in 2014-15 the Council will attempt to establish evaluation criteria as a first step.

The Council has scratched the surface of what's formally available regarding these criteria. But in Council members' meeting with SJ groups, a sense of the factors affecting good outcomes may prove a valuable unintended consequence. Leaders of one of our legacy programs, the Partnership with Waverly Townhouses, was forthright in sharing concerns about leadership succession and need for the energy and creativity of additional volunteers. The Council, with Waverly leadership agreement, has undertaken an interactive process with current leaders, staff, and volunteers to understand the program's evolution, share what's learned with the program, and support development of next steps. This is a new role for the Council, and everyone involved is deeply committed to a process infused with integrity and transparency. More in the coming year....

. We will continue to be mindful of our accountability to the Board and the Congregation for consistency with our USNH mission, right relations, and thoughtful allocation of resources.

We believe the work described above is consistent with this 2014-15 goal as well.



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We are appreciative of both the Congregation and the Board's commitment to Social Justice Ministry, and more than ever, of the work that is done in USNH's name by the members of our Social Justice groups. We appreciate also the year of committed and creative Council work of Carol Stockton before her going on leave this past year. We hope for our full complement of 7 Council members in the coming year.

Greg Berg
Lurline deVos
Cathy Jackson
Steve Jennings
Dan Gelperin, Vice-Chairman
Lois Smith, Chairman



Group/Task Force	Roles	Members	Sought
Abraham's Tent	Coordinators	Garskoff, Robert Morrison, Fred Trotta, Paul	
Anti-Racism	Ciano, Joan Chair	Bridgman-Rees, Caroline Klaje, Patti Korth, Lindsay Mandeville, Christopher McBlain, Sharon McCarthy, Ellen Navara-Davis, Tracy Snyder, Jill Shapiro, Jackie Trimble Wenger, Tisa (Duff, Patricia, on leave)	Open
East Rock Mentors	Sommer, Anne, Chair	Alexander, Isla (Cheshire school) Bond, Sue Connolly, Sally Grigg, Pat Jennings, Georgia Sommer, Anne Vidal, Pat Vidal, Terry	
Food Bank	Ariori, Margaret, Chair	Appel, Liz Jonientz, Christine Perkins, Pat	Two
Green Sanctuary	Tuhus, Melinda, Chair (completing)	Beleval, Judy Frawley, Sandy Rice, Bill Schomaker, Kath Sirch, Jim	Two-three



		Sobel, Karen Whitson, Sarah	
Immigration Rights	Committee Members	Beleval, Gil Brown, Nancy Forman, Sarah Hardin, Tom Schwartz, Peter Tworkowski, Sophie	Open
Kids Service Team	deVos, Lurline F., Chair Committee	Bettencourt, Tricia Dowcett Hatcher, Dale	An adult sponsor comfortable with flexible model
Mental Health Awareness	McPhedran, Letty, Chair	Byler, Helen (completing) Katz, David Katz, Marion Mahoney, Ellen Navarra-Davis, Tracy Reis, Graciela Swanson, Karen	Welcome
Peace	Contact Person Contact Person	McCarthy, Ellen Pearson, Ruthann Dunn, Nancy Korth, Lindsay Keramis, John Bridgman-Rees, Caroline Singer, Ann	Open



		Smith, Anne	
Protecting Women in the Military	Coordinator	Hugh Woodard	
Waverly Partnership	Co-Chair and volunteer Co-Chair and volunteer Volunteers	McBlain, Sharon Schafer, Sharon Alexander, Isla Beleval, Gil Drummonds, Tynicha Forbush, Lily Gianessi, Carol (completing) Keating, Natalie Levison, Jane Lipnick, Sylvia Lipp, William Loalbo, Mark Pawelek, John Platt, Jane Zalenski, Ray	See report, various roles



ABRAHAM'S TENT Report 2014-15

Coordinating Committee members: Rob Garskof, Fred Morrison, Paul Trotta

Abraham's Tent has been a project of the Interfaith Cooperative Ministries and Columbus House with approximately 15 New Haven area churches and synagogues participating. The short term goal is to provide overnight shelter and food to 12-15 men without homes who are active participants at Columbus House during the winter months, December-April. By taking 12-15 men out of Columbus House these slots are open to newly homeless men who come to the shelter in the winter. The Long Term Goal is to end chronic homelessness in the New Haven Area

This year, our 6th, USNH hosted during the week of March 30-April 6th. We had around 100 volunteers. When you combined the USNH volunteers with those from the 14 other churches and synagogue, well over 1200 people from the New Haven Area are involved with this response to homelessness. On April 12th we also hosted a dinner and moving and well-attended closing ceremony for this years Abraham's Tent.

Abraham's Tent is a response, not the solution, for Homelessness. For the past 7 years there has been a national effort to end chronic homelessness and, according to recent HUD data, even with the recession, the incidents and prevalence of chronic homelessness has slowed. Here in the New Haven Area, The Greater New Haven Regional Alliance to End Homelessness(GNHRAEH) is leading a regional effort to eliminate chronic homelessness for veterans and non-veterans within 4 years, and for families within 10 years.

Our goals for next year are:

1. Provide a week of housing and great food to men without homes, along with other New Haven area congregations
2. Support the implementation of Abraham's Tent 2 . an effort to mobilize the energy in the 15 Abraham's Tent congregations to support GNHRAEH as it seeks to end Homelessness in the New Haven Area in the next 10 years

Fred Morrison



Anti- Racism Task Force Report 2014-2015

Chair: Joan Ciano

Current Members: Patti Klaje, Lindsay Korth, Christopher Mandeville, Jill Snyder, Sharon McBlain, Ellen McCarthy, Tisa Wenger, Caroline Bridgman-Rees

Orienting Members: Jackie Trimble Shapiro and Tracy Navarra-Davis

PREPARATION/GOALS

- Education of our USNH community about antiracism and the ongoing battlefronts for racial justice.
- Increased understanding of the role that white privilege plays in maintaining racism.
- Focusing our task force on a collaboration with Dixwell Avenue United Church of Christ, a liberal, mostly-Black congregation, in sharing “Sacred Conversations on Race,” and mutual anti-racism events. Invited by Rev. Jerry Streets of the Dixwell UCC, we have been participating in this program since summer 2104. It is sponsored and funded by Connecticut Conference of the UCC, and has offered us a unique, ground-breaking connection with the Black community, providing members of both congregations with opportunities to engage in productive dialog on issues of race. Tisa and Christopher have been doing a terrific job as liaisons to the steering committee for our USNH/Dixwell UCC collaboration. As intended, this partnership has encouraged our two congregations to sponsor events that foster multi-racial, multi-cultural gatherings; to explore, take risks, and join together for community, contribution, self-reflection, and fun. This is an ongoing program.

ACTIONS

Anti-Racism Task Force has co-sponsored 4 Sacred Conversations events with Dixwell this past congregational year. A Saturday morning breakfast with conversations on April 25 was facilitated by the Community Healing Network. Our work with Dixwell UCC is extending into supporting this young national organization which is committed to healing the emotional and spiritual wounds of racism. One of our newer ART members, Jill Snyder, is a facilitator for this organization, and co-led the program on Saturday. ART paid the \$750 fee to CHN.

On Sunday May 3, in collaboration with Dixwell UCC, we co-sponsored a concert at USNH of The Afro-Semitic Experience to benefit Christian Community Action. This is a multi-ethnic world jazz group. Both congregations provided refreshments, and approximately 80 people attended. We thank Lurline DeVos for her creative ideas, energy and food-management skills for this and other of our events. She is an honorary member of our team.

Per our request to co-sponsor a film, PJ Deaks will be screening “Selma” for the September 2015 Social Cinema, and ART will split the cost of the film with the ARE. The current plan is to show it on a Saturday afternoon rather than a Friday night, and to invite our friends from Dixwell, Temple Mishkan Israel, possibly other congregations, and of course our regulars from the Connecticut Humanists. ART is happy to be a trailblazer with PJ in expanding these cinema events.

At the last Conversations event, there was a spark of interest in having a joint worship service between the two congregations. We will be exploring this possibility for next year.

2014-2015 REFLECTIONS/Effectiveness

We feel that our collaboration with Dixwell Avenue UCC church this past year has truly carried out the charge by the Board of Trustees, which established the Anti-Racism Task Force in 2001. This is not the



first out-reach to the Black community. USNH has a long-standing relationship with the Waverly Townhouses projects in New Haven, but only a handful of dedicated congregants are hands-on with that important work. The relationship that ART is sponsoring with Dixwell UCC, while less challenging, has given many more of us the opportunity for rare and important sharing with another community of color. We are learning at a heart-to-heart level about the corrosive effects of racism and how it wounds us all.

Special thanks to Sharon and Tisa who always make themselves available for consultation and input. They have been my unofficial co-chairs with their support, wisdom, patience and abiding commitment.

Tisha Ferguson has been a true ally in our work, especially as regards artwork and advertising our Conversations events, going beyond our requests on her own initiative. She is our staunch partner in justice.

Pam Niles has been a magician helping with the bulletin board.

The whole Social Justice Council and Network, as well as Rev. Fritz Hudson, have been very supportive and helpful with our collaboration events. Lois Smith and Barbara Orrock have shared their culinary/hostess wizardry, and the congregation at large has been very positive and supportive.



East Rock School Mentors Action Group Report F2014-2015

Committee or Task Force Title: East Rock School Mentors (Social Justice Action Group)
Committee Chair or Co-Chairs: Anne Sommer 203-773-9404 anne.sommer@earthlink.net
Committee Members (Mentors): Isla Alexander (who mentors a child in Cheshire),
Sue Bond, Sally Connolly, Pat Grigg, Georgia Jennings, Anne Sommer, Pat Vidal, Terry Vidal

Committee Members not returning: Leslie Flowers is no longer an East Rock School Mentor. All mentors listed above are continuing.

Number of new Committee Members sought for 2015-2016: There is no particular goal; "recruitment" of mentors is ongoing.

Additional Comments/Information:

The East Rock School Mentors initiative is a little more than three years old. We now have eight mentors—seven at East Rock Community Magnet School and one at an elementary school in Cheshire (I have also separately recruited two friends who are not affiliated with USNH as mentors at East Rock School). It's been a good year and we have an amazing group of mentors. The newest mentor started in September 2014 (she is one of my two outside friends; she started working with Leslie Flowers' mentee and then, when he transferred to another school, she was assigned a new mentee).

A few mentors made "our faith in action" presentations at USNH during Sunday services in August 2014 and April 2015, and the group displayed information and photographs from the June 2014 mentor appreciation event held at East Rock School on the Social Justice bulletin board in the social hall in August 2014 into September 2014.

The group also held three mentor gatherings (previously called roundtables), in June 2014, January 2015 and May 2015. These are very important opportunities to gather as a group and share our experiences, ideas, challenges, questions, concerns, etc. Nancy Lesh joined us in May 2015, as she had a year earlier, to share her expertise as a social worker who works with children. In June 2015, a couple of weeks before the end of the school year, all mentors and mentees will come together at East Rock School.



Food Bank, Annual Report 2014-15

Committee Chair: Margaret Ariori

Members: Liz Appel, Christine Jonientz, Pat Perkins

USNH members and friends have generously donated food to our own food bank shelves every month. From April 2014 to April 2015, we have delivered 1,600 pounds of food to Keefe Center in southern Hamden. Members and friends are able to use the USNH food bank as needed.

Our job is to keep the shelves next to the coat closet orderly and to make a delivery about once a month. New members would be welcome to join our small team. If you are organized, or have a car, a good back, ideas for donation appeals and/or some free mornings or afternoons in the year for deliveries, we'd be happy for your help.

Green Sanctuary Report 2014-15

Committee Chair: Melinda Tuhus

Members: Judy Beval, Sandy Frawley, Bill Rice, Kath Schomaker, Jim Sirch, Karen Sobel, Sarah Whitson

Our goals and progress 2014-15:

An overall goal is to better integrate the work of the GSC with that of other social justice task forces, and I think we made a little progress on that this year.

Another goal was to hold another successful Re-Gifting Sale, which we did. Also to hold another successful native plant sale, which we did on Mother's Day.

Our efforts to "green" the operations of USNH itself have been less successful. Despite doing quite a bit of research, we have not been able to have an energy audit of the building, nor have we been successful in integrating composting into our operations. We see the former as a problem for the congregation as a whole, the latter more a problem of our committee, that we have not committed to doing the education and actual "dirty work" on a regular basis. Some of us think the composter in the back is much too big for our needs, even were we to compost everything we could.

Through the Spiritual Cinema film we co-hosted, Cowspiracy, we raised the issue of factory farming as a major impediment to reducing our national and global carbon footprint, not to mention its horrible treatment of animals. Perhaps the Committee can pursue this in the coming year, using a UUA curriculum I just learned about.



Immigration Rights Task Force Report 2014-15

Committee Members: Gil Belaval, Nancy Brown, Sarah Forman, Tom Hardin, Peter Schwartz, Sophie Tworkowski

Goals:

- To foster and maintain collaborative relationships with local and statewide immigrant advocacy groups
- To provide volunteer and material support to immigrant and refugee organizations
- To organize educational events relating to immigration for USNH and the community at large
- To inform the USNH congregation about current events and legislation related to immigration
- To participate in local, state, and national efforts to improve the treatment of immigrants through legislation and direct action

Actions and Accomplishments:

- Within USNH
 - Made Offertory Presentations at USNH on September 7, 2014; March 29, 2015; on schedule for June 14, 2015
 - Attended Social Justice Network meetings; participated in SJN Candidate Week meeting with Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner
 - Collaborated with Adult Religious Education Committee to co-sponsor October 3 Social Cinema ("Living on One Dollar"), potluck and related Diaper Drive for Junta families
 - Initiated discussion at Social Justice Council of co-sponsorship November 22 Wage Theft Conference; attended conference
 - Organized class in conversational Spanish for USNH members
 - Displayed a bulletin board on Immigration in the USNH Social Hall during May
- Partnership with Unidad Latina en Acción
 - Supported ULA's Día de los Muertos Observance on November 1, 2014; moved and donated supplies; contributed \$100.
 - Conducted Bike Drive at USNH for ULA; received and delivered 20 bikes
 - Donated \$300 to ULA to support their work with Central American women and children
 - Provided practical support to an ULA member--a Guatemalan teenager who came unaccompanied to New Haven in March 2014--by connecting her with community services, transporting her to medical, dental, legal appointments and Immigration Court
 - Participated in rally to protest deportations of Guatemalan immigrants
 - Contacted legislators regarding deportation proceedings, Trust Act amendments, Wage Theft legislation.
- Partnership with Junta for Progressive Action
 - Tutored adult language learners in English. Three members of our task force volunteer as tutors in weekly classes.
 - Contributed \$435 to underwrite costs of dictionaries for ESL classes
 - Facilitated \$1,000 sponsorship from International Association of New Haven for Junta's annual fundraiser; attended fundraiser; purchased ad in program book
 - Conducted Diaper Drive for Junta families in connection with October 3 Social Cinema; received, delivered 1,407 diapers

Additional Comments/Information:

We meet about once a quarter and are in frequent contact with each other via email. We welcome participation at whatever level individuals can manage and in whichever of our activities are of interest.



Kids Service Team Report 2014-15

Chair: Lurline F. deVos phone: (203) 287-9089 email: lfdevosphd@comcast.net

Committee Members: Dale Hatcher, Tricia Dowcett Bettencourt, Any interested parent, any interested USNH child and friends

Committee Member sought for 2015-2016: one adult sponsor who is comfortable with the flexible model

Goals for 2014-15:

- 1) to increase the variety of activities to appeal to the various interests and proclivities of our youth
- 2) to reach out to more children in the congregation including new families
- 3) to continue to seek out initiatives of other task forces and action groups with which we can partner
- 4) to form a direct person to person relationship with youth whose life experiences are different, preferably youth of Dixwell UCC
- 5) to seek out new initiatives with social justice programs in the greater New Haven community

Successes:

We were very successful in achieving our goals of diversifying our offerings, including more youth, and establishing new relationships with social justice initiatives in the larger community including New Haven Reads, and Christian Community Action Agency. Through our various endeavors we supported the efforts of Abraham's Tent, Waverly, ICM, and East Rock Mentors. Please see the attached list of activities for the year

Challenges:

Our biggest challenge has been bringing our youth together with the youth of Dixwell UCC. We are still attempting to bring this about.

We were also unable to connect with the social justice initiatives of youth in the North Haven UCC, despite a promising early interaction with the minister of that congregation.

Plans for 2015-16:

- . Maintain program as it was implemented in 2014-15.
- . Continue to seek to strengthen youth ties beyond our congregation.
- . Strengthen our relationships in greater New Haven Community
- . If budget permits take a field trip to the Heifer Farm.

Please see list of 2014-15 activities which follows.



2014-15 Kids' Service Team Activities

Month	Activity	Participating	Lead
July 2014	Visit to Dixwell UCC	8 kids, 10 adults	Lurline
Aug.-Sept. 2014	Book Drive	7 kids, 4 adults	Charlotte(youth) & Lurline
September 2014	Connecticut River Clean-up	8 kids, 4 adults	Lurline partnered with Milone & MacBroom
Ongoing	Collection of Pull-tabs	1 kid, 1 adult	Kadence, Anna
November 2014	Pie making for DESK	24 kids, 6 adults	Lurline, Dale, Sarah H
December 2014	Mitten Tree	6 kids, 4 adults	Karl, Lurline, Dale
February 1, 2015	Run for Refugees	5 kids 2 adults	Tricia D, Lurline
February 14, 2015	Food drive	5 kids, 4 adults	Lurline, Sarah B, Dale
Feb. 27, 2015	Knit or Knot again	18 children 7 adults	Lurline, Mary D
April 3. 2015	Abraham's Tent	19 children 4 adults	Lurline, Sarah H.,
June, 2015	Community building with Dixwell UCC youth		Lurline & TBD



Mental Health Awareness Action Group (MHAAG) Report 2014-15

This group's mission is to create a supportive environment at USNH for individuals with mental illness, their loved ones and friends, and to provide opportunities for education about the challenges faced by everyone who is touched by mental illness.

TEAM MEETINGS / ACTIVITIES

In Sep 2014, MHAAG invited Emily McCave from the Out of the Darkness (suicide prevention) organization, to USNH in order to publicize the Out of the Darkness Walk scheduled for Oct. 5 in Hamden. Emily distributed information about the walk after both services one Sunday, and several members of USNH/MHAAG participated in the walk.

The Oct 2014 team meeting was dedicated to preparing the MHAAG-sponsored Social Justice bulletin board in the social hall. Pam Niles posted the board for us, which included a very creative sketch by artist and member Helen Byler. The interactive board was warmly received by USNH members, many of whom contributed to the display, drawing upon their personal experiences with stigma and overcoming stigma. This board stayed up through November 2014.

At the Nov 2014 team meeting we planned the Social Cinema program for December -- the showing of the PBS documentary, "Robin Williams Remembered," after a potluck dinner in the social hall. After the film Karen Swanson led a spirited discussion of Robin Williams' life and career.

In Dec 2014 MHAAG enjoyed a festive dinner meeting at Brazil ID Restaurant in West Haven. The mental health group planned the first Hope's Nest program for January 2015. Hope's Nest is a monthly social hour for USNH members who may feel overwhelmed in the coffee hours after Sunday services. Hope's Nest furthers the goal of MHAAG to make USNH a more welcoming and inclusive environment for people who have experienced stigma.

Hope's Nest meets from 4-6pm on the second Sunday of the month in the Children's Chapel. These gatherings began in Jan 2015 with a quite modest attendance of two (2) in addition to MHAAG members. Participation increased with each of the three subsequent gatherings, with attendance at the most recent Hope's Nest at just over a dozen. Programs have been as follows:

- Jan 2015: A loosely structured "launch" event with Rev. Fritz in supportive attendance.
- Feb 2015: Cancelled due to inclement weather.
- Mar 2015: Speaker Alan Rosenthal, who has successfully lay-led a mental health consumer support group for several years, spoke about and took questions regarding the struggle many people experience when trying to fit into and benefit from support groups.
- Apr 2015: USNH member Elaine Kolb performed some original music accompanied by several deeply personal and uplifting stories about her experiences, passions and struggles, and how they led her to create some of the music that she played and sang for us.
- May 2015: No meeting scheduled (second Sunday was Mother's Day and congregational vote to call new minister).

The May 2015 team meeting was dedicated to developing and preparing a board in the Social Hall, posted for us by Pam Niles, which will stay up through June. We each contributed photographs, poems, quotes, and other images and words which spoke to us of transition, healing and emotional growth, against the backdrop of a springtime (blossoming) theme.



LEADERSHIP

Our founding member, Richard Weingarten, was MHAAG chair from Sep 2014 to Feb 2015, at which time he embarked upon an extended visit to Brazil in order to continue his activist work there and pursue other endeavors as well. Letty McPhedran has been our acting chair from Feb 2015 to current, May 2015. Upon his return from Brazil in May, Richard announced his desire to step down from the chair position in order to better participate in other USNH activities in addition to MHAAG. The team is presently considering a co-chair leadership structure going forward, to be discussed at the June 2015 monthly meeting.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/INFORMATION

We members of MHAAG are happy to be the active group that we are in USNH life and social justice work. We find pleasure and sustenance in our collaborative work to promote understanding and love for our fellow humans, family members, neighbors, etc., in all places on the mental health spectrum.

Miscellaneous Social Justice Information - Annual Report 2015

The Board of the Interfaith Cooperative Ministry , based in New Haven, voted to dissolve that organization after decades of service, given a diminution of volunteers and ability to continue. The formerly titled Downtown Cooperative Ministry broadened its congregational memberships to Greater New Haven at the urging of USNH former minister Rev. Dan Hotchkiss.

USNH's Health Care Reform Advocates and Economic Justice groups suspended activity mid-year, but their concerns are likely to be incorporated under the broader issue of Economic Inequality in 2015-16.



Peace Task Force Report 2014-15

Mission Statement

Our mission is to raise awareness within ourselves, our congregation, our local media and the wider community of specific non-violent groups who strive to end U.S. wars, torture, and illegal imprisonment. We work toward curtailing U.S. militarism and the international arms trade, and reducing the military budget in favor of funding human needs.

Goals:

To continue the mission as stated above with enduring consistency, while making every effort to improve our work through reflective monthly meetings to review and critique our projects through deep reflection in and with inspiration gleaned at our annual retreat, and by continuing to listen, hear, and respond to the efforts of these non-violent peace groups. We encourage letters to the editor, submitted in the name of the individual writer.

Activities

We meet on the second Sunday of each month, and Table after both services every 4th Sunday of the month.

Ongoing Projects

In collaboration with the UCC Shalom Congregation we accept orders, and deliver to buyers, Canaan Fair Trade Oils and related products. This is an ecumenical Palestinian Non-Violent Fair Trade Community and one way to support a positive (and delicious) effort toward peace & fair employment in the midst of a war zone.

For like reason, we share updates on the works and needs of Tent of Nations, Palestinian Education Center.

We support the efforts of the I Wage Peace Organization-- a regional interfaith group lead by Bruce Barrett.

We highlight the efforts of Jewish Voices for Peace (national) in our tabling, and also support efforts of the newly formed New Haven Jewish Voices for Peace Chapter. We encourage, as asked by this group, to ethical dis-investment of American Corporations doing business in the Occupied Territories.

We table and share information of the Israeli Committee against Home Demolition in their constructive and non-violent efforts for peace.

In collaboration with Hartford American Friends Service Committee, we are learning and sharing information about Counter Recruitment efforts of interfaith groups in CT. We hope to interest committed folks who know the issues to become part of teams which visit High Schools in CT to share alternative ways to serve.

We continue to spotlight the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, and are grateful to have rec'd much support from USNH members for action by this group when requested. (Recent efforts by NRCAT helped to get the report on terrorism released by the Senate.) We also garnered interest and support for their efforts against solitary confinement by supporting a Mother's Day Letter Campaign to women in Iraq with Code Pink.

Finally, we anticipate collaborating with Bruce Barrett/ I wage peace.com in an ecumenical Memorial Service for the lives lost in Israel and Palestine. This project is currently in the infant stage.

We support encouraging youth of USNH to participate in the UN/UNO by providing money to the youth



envoy program, now in its second year, thanks to Jesse Greist and the young participants.

We collaborate whenever possible with other groups at USNH including the monthly Film Friday, and on issues of solitary confinement etc. with the Anti-Racism Team.

Ellen McCarthy, Contact person; Ruthann Pearson, Contact person
Nancy Dunn
Lindsay Korth
Joan Keramis
John Keramis
Caroline Bridgman-Rees
Ann Singer
Anne Smith

Protecting Women in the Military Report 2014-15

Hugh Woodard and Sally Connolly have continued to provide displays, information and current news articles and reference materials that address violence against women within the military forces.

Hugh initiated petitions for members' signatures regarding regulations and enforcement within the armed forces.

Additionally, the Action Group developed a letter for USNH signatures calling upon President Obama to issue an Executive Order supporting women in the military academies by creating a pathway within the Department of Defense for redress of discrimination and harassment complaints outside of the academy chain of command.



Waverly/USNH Partnership Report 2014-15

(Waverly Youth leadership Group & Waverly Little Learners)

Committee Chair or Co-Chairs:

Sharon McBlain phone 203-288-4131 email Sharon@mcblainbooks.com
June Schafer phone 203 281 6232 email jschafer313@comcast.net

Committee Members: The Wednesday night volunteers are June Schafer, Sharon McBlain, Tynicha Drummonds, John Pawelek, Gil Belaval, William Lipp, Mark Loalbo, Ray Zalenski, Natalie Keating, Carol Gianessi, Jane Platt, Lily Forbush, Ann Levison, Sylvia Lipnick, Isla Alexander

Advisory members: Carole Arnold, Linda Bray, Suzanne Miller, Georgia Jennings, Wendy McCleod

Committee Members not returning: Carol Gianessi, the lead person for the Little Learners, does not expect to have time to return as the lead person next year, because of her PhD studies at Yale. All others plan to return, as far as we know.

Number of new Committee Members sought for 2015-2016: We always welcome new Wednesday night programming volunteers, particularly people to help with the Little Learners and folks who could help with transportation. We are also interested in people who would like to join us in our planning and advocating for inner-city families. We may be looking for people to do one-on-one mentoring next year. That could be done on other days of the week. We may be looking for help with the Saturday morning pre-school reading, which is in the planning stages.

Additional Comments/Information: Our Goals:

1. To help us overcome racial and economic stereotyping and the accompanying fear of “the other” by establishing long-term, personal, caring relationships.
2. To create a pathway out of the physical and emotional isolation of inner-city low-income, African-American and Hispanic children and families.
3. To promote and develop knowledgeable voters by encouraging and facilitating a deep and personal understanding of each other’s communities.
4. To support the initiatives of the Waverly community adult leadership and families by offering our time, our financial resources, and our networks.
5. To motivate (with programming), support (with tutoring), and reward (with special events) the children for staying in school and getting passing grades.
6. To provide weekly Wednesday night programming for children ages 5–18 with a menu that is nutritious and enjoyable.
7. To work with and offer a stipend to Tynicha Drummonds, Waverly Youth Program Alum, Waverly Mom, mentor and advisor, as long as she is willing and able to be the strong and necessary link between the Waverly inner-city community and our suburban congregation.

Our Progress:

This last year we continued to build upon the foundation of trusting, caring, supportive relationships established during the past 19 years of our Partnership with the Waverly Community. We began the year with a kick-off cook-out in the Waverly courtyard. We saw old friends, met parents and had fun with the children. We were able to hold the now traditional Christmas/Holiday party at USNH for all the children and youth and their families. The party was focused on gifts for the young children, with the teenagers ready to help make the party for the little ones a success. This year some of the Waverly Program alums, who are now parents, came and helped serving food, distributing gifts and creating an extended family atmosphere. At the end of each school semester, as a reward for passing grades and staying in school, we were able to schedule a bus trip to the Waterbury skating rink.



1. The WYLG group was attended each Wednesday night by from 12 to 18 teenagers. At 6:30 three mini-van drivers/program volunteers arrived at 49 Waverly Street to pick up Tynicha and the waiting teenagers. The teens arrived at USNH at 7PM and opened with a meeting in the USNH library. A wide variety of issues were discussed. Some of the activities this year were: an overnight at USNH, and a trip to the New Haven Museum to see the art exhibition of Winfred Rembert, followed the next week by a showing of the Rembert documentary, and followed the next week by a visit from Winfred, who helped the teens make their own tooled leather bracelets. We had a Wednesday visit from Dr. Charles Warner and Charles Warner, Jr., both of whom we had met through the Partnership with Dixwell UCC. Most meetings were concluded with a family style meal in the Social Hall.
2. The Little Learners met at 6:30 each Wednesday at the “Waverly Learning Center” at 49 Waverly Street. 30 children were placed in small groups; the groups alternated every few weeks. 4–10 children ages 5–11 attended each week. Carol Gianessi and the other volunteers provided a focused craft each week, educational computer games, dress-up activities, and reading and math help. A light snack was provided. In addition to our programming, new computers with internet access and parental controls were installed at Waverly for the use of children. A HANH (Housing Authority New Haven) staff member oversaw the use during the first portion of each meeting of the Little Learners.
3. Isla Alexander, Tynicha, and Sharon have been meeting and planning for starting a Saturday morning “Pre-school learning” gathering for preschoolers and parents. Books will be read and distributed.
4. The Waverly/USNH Partnership has been collaborating with the Anti-Racism Task Force and hope to do more collaboration with RE as we support the statement that “Black Lives Matter” and as we expose the twin lies of “Black Inferiority” and “White Superiority.”



Stewardship Committee Report 2014-15

The Stewardship committee members included Carol Cheney, Holly Hawkins and Merrily Kaplan. Our theme this year was Creating Community and Funding Our Future. Our team worked with the newly formed Management Team (MT) this year, as well as Tisha Ferguson, to solicit and manage the annual campaign to raise \$515,575, the pledge goal set by the finance committee and other society leaders. The stewardship campaign plan was adapted from that used for 2014–15 and included:

1. Mid-February—Pre-pledge mailing with proposed budget and an ask to ‘step up’ with a 10% increase to members’ 2014–15 pledge amount.
2. End of February—Mailing with pledge form and invitation to Celebration Sunday on March 1. Members who had pledged in the last three years received the mailing.
3. March 1—Celebration Sunday to kick-off the campaign.
4. March—follow up announcements, newsletters, and a staffed pledge table.
5. Early April—A team of 15 people followed up with 75 families who had not yet pledged this year, but had pledged last year.
6. Mid-April—Mailing to those who had not yet pledged. Included in this mailing was an ‘honor roll’ of the those who had pledged.
7. End of May—a 2nd ‘ask’ for an increased pledge or a one-time gift to close a \$25,000 gap to meet next year’s full budget, based on priorities stated by the congregation:

- Increase Jesse Greist to full-time DRE
- Offer 2% COLA to all continuing staff
- Pay 100% of our dues to Cara Barton District and UUA
- Empower our committees to pursue their plans and activities
- Maintain our facilities

The committee sent personalized thank you letters to pledgers throughout the active period of the campaign, noting the amount pledged and increases in pledge amounts. Members and friends had the option of using paper pledges or pledging online at the USNH website. About 40 pledging units have not yet made their pledges.

Pledge data as of May 19, 2015

Year	Number of pledges	Total Pledge amount	Increased pledge from 2014-2015	Increase 10% or more (not incl. new pledges)	Decreased Pledge from 2014-2015	0 % change	New pledges in 2015-2016
2014-2015	238	\$470,283	N/A	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A



2015-2016	208	\$462,259	121	97; 47% of total pledges	23	48	16
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Sunday Morning Team Report 2014-15

Committee Chair: Becky Sandmann phone: 203.671.2344 email: rlsandmann@sbcglobal.net

Committee Members: Pam Niles, Sally Connolly, Robb Camm, Greg Feeley, Al Bosch, Karen Swanson, Theresa Childs, Amy Wexler, Dee Arneith, Ray Zalenski, Barbara Orrok, George Deming

Committee Members Not returning: All are returning

Number of new Committee Members sought for 2015-2016: We can always use new members to assist with Greeting at the door Sunday Mornings, Welcoming visitors and assisting with helping visitors feel welcomed.

Additional Comments/Information:

We believe that Sunday Morning Team is a gateway for visitors. One of our goals is to reach out and integrate visitors and other new folks. We also want to integrate with other committees, such as when we jointly host events.

Along with our usual Sunday Morning activities, this year we have sponsored "First Sunday's" with either pot luck soups or snacks. We organized a USNH picnic in August that was also a casual welcome for Fritz Hudson. Other activities we have been involved in have included the Chocolate Auction, the Ground Hog Day Community Build, we also assist with the used book sale.



Worship Committee Report 2014-2015

Chair: Meredith Fahey

Members: Liz Appel, Ellen Greist, Tom Hardin, Gwen Heuss-Severance, Sue Linsley, Linda Mehta

The following persons were members of the Worship Committee for part of the 2014 -15 year and rotated off the committee during the year: Greg Berg, Hunter Dudkiewicz, Holly Hunter.

The current terms of committee members are outlined below:

Meredith Fahey: joined the committee in late Fall 2013 and will rotate off in mid 2016. Gwen Heuss-Severance and Tom Hardin also joined the committee in the Fall of 2013.

Sue Linsley, Liz Appel, Linda Mehta and Ellen Greist all joined the committee in the Fall of 2014. It has been the custom for members to remain on the committee for approximately two years.

The mission of the Worship Committee, in collaboration with the ministers and other staff, is to create powerful, meaningful worship on Sunday mornings and on other occasions. The Committee strives for effective, poetically written and artistically integrated services that deal in real religious content. The Committee takes primary responsibility for coordinating Sunday worship when the ministers are not available.

Goals and Progress in 2014-2015

The Worship Committee met once a month during 2014-15. The Interim Minister attended most of the Worship Committee meetings at the beginning of his one year tenure and during the first quarter of the fiscal year, and other meetings as his schedule permitted. Written agendas were prepared in advance of each meeting and minutes were prepared following each meeting.

The Committee accomplished much during 2014-2015:

- Programmed and/or coordinated 21 services that were led by lay persons or guest ministers (see list at end of report).
- Supported the interim minister in several early meetings with the congregation, monitoring attendance and compiling feedback to support plans for conducting worship.
- Provided support for Vespers services by assigning a committee liaison to each Vespers service. There were 3 Vespers services in 2014 – 2015.
- Discussed feedback from the congregation regarding changes in worship services that were made by the Interim Minister. Provided advice and counsel to the Interim Minister regarding this congregational feedback.
- Periodically discussed the order of worship and the goals of worship.
- Continued to use the “Worship Service Proposal Form” to assure effective planning and quality lay-led services. This is the form used by persons interested in organizing and leading a worship service.
- Coordinated with the Minister to shift to his preferred Google docs planning format. This enabled the W.C. to contribute to a single central USNH Worship Planning calendar and incorporate all lay-led services information; including worship leader, worship topic, committee liaison, and other relevant information.
- Continued to maintain an electronic, cloud-based repository of committee documents and resources using Dropbox. There are currently approximately 100 documents in the repository, including updates to standard scripts for welcome/announcements, offertory, and other standard elements of the order of service.
- Requested and received from the Music Director an annual update of a list of USNH musicians who are available to participate in worship services.
- Tested and updated a useful document to be used for lay-led services and vespers programs: “Instructions for opening and closing the USNH building, turning on/off the sound system, adjusting heat, and making photocopies”.



- “Pulpit Training” was provided to members of the committee by the Interim Minister in November 15, 2015. UUA sponsored Worship Training for lay persons was offered in May 2015, and attended by Meredith Fahey.
- Coordinated with a liaison member of the Social Justice Council and utilized the improved scheduling process to confirm Sunday presenters in advance. Consistent and effective messages were delivered, leveraging the guidelines last year for speaking on behalf of USNH’s Social Justice action groups, task forces, and partner organizations.
- Provided assistance and support to the minister in testing and upgrading hearing equipment to better serve congregation members with hearing impairments.
- At the request of the interim minister, members did some very preliminary data gathering and initial research on costs and equipment to provide enhanced audio visual capabilities for USNH.
- Amid significant turnover early in the year, including the rotation off the committee by a chair who served for over two years, and several other experienced members, reconstituted a robust group of 7 members. This required enlisting a new chair and recruiting four new members by reaching out affirmatively to selected potential members to apply for committee membership.

Worship Services Coordinated By Worship Committee in 2013-2014

The following services were coordinated by the Worship Committee. We are very thankful for all of the gifts provided by members, friends and guest ministers in support of these services.

July 13, 2014: Mike Sanger with John Manning, “Love Will Stand”
July 20, 2014: Holly Hawkins, “Conversations – from hurtful, to helpful, to healing”
July 27, 2014: Lisa Andersen with Gwen Heuss-Severance, “Spirituality”
August 3, 2014: Greg Berg,
October 26, 2014: John Pawalek, Holly Hawkins liaison “An American in Iran”
November 30, 2014: Bill Braun with Tom Hardin, “Pilgrimages”
December 28, 2014: Sue Linsley with Gwen Heuss-Severance, “Thin Places”
January 25, 2015: Meredith Fahey, with Linda Mehta, Brett Burke, John Watson, “Keeping the Faith”
February 8, 2015: Ellen Greist with Arjuna, “Facing Our Dragons”
March 8, 2015: Liz Appel with Tom Hardin, Lois Smith, Rob Skeeles, “Waters of March”
June 21, 2015: Melinda Tuhus, Meredith Fahey liaison “Green Sanctuary”
June 28, 2015: Alison Cunningham (or John Watson), Meredith Fahey liaison
July 5, 2015: Liz Appel with Joyce Sullivan, Jim Bond, “Poetry Service”
July 17, 2015: Sue Linsley
July 19, 2015: Joanie Messner with Gwen Heuss-Severance, “Reflections on Birth and Midwifery in Everyday Life”
July 26, 2015: Rev Kayla Parker, Meredith Fahey liaison, “Spiritual Practice”
August 2, 2015: Tom Hardin
August 9, 2015: Greg Berg, Gwen Heuss-Severance liaison, “Blessings”
August 16, 2015: Gwen Heuss-Severance, “Time”
August 30, 2015: Randall Spaulding with Meredith Fahey
September 6, 2015: Gail Figiola, Gwen Heuss-Severance liaison

Submitted by Meredith Fahey, Chair
May 22, 2015

Minister's Report 2014-2015

Rev. Fritz Hudson

We are a diverse multi-generational faith community that
- inspires lives of compassion and generosity,
- nurtures spiritual growth
- cultivates transformative connections, and
- creates a more just world

Here are some of my efforts to help us fulfill this image of ourselves over the past year.

(August 1, 2014 through May 31, 2015+)

Worship

Our agreement gave me responsibility for 33 Sunday services this year. They have included:

- Services devoted to multi-generational ritual and celebration:
 - Water Communion* (August); *Remembrance* (November); *Illuminations* (December);
 - Your One Wild & Precious Life* (March); *Breaking Free* (April); + *Flower Communion* (June)
- Services reflecting on Congregational or Cultural Observances: *Something in the Water?* (August); *Abundance & the Ravages of Savages* (November); *Reclaiming Prophetic Witness* (January); *Earth Teach Me* (April); *Maternal Models: Mother Jones?* (May);
- Services addressing Ministerial Transitions: *After Hello?* (August); *Whose Am I?* (August); *In Quest* (September); *Contemplating Change* (September); *How Minds Change* (October); *When Hearts Change* (October); *Change in Our Spirit* (October); *Who's in Charge Here* (April);
- Services interpreting Choral Presentations: *Vive Vivaldi* (December); *A Restive Requiem* (May)
- A Service celebrating the Society's History & Leaders: *After the Great Companions* (November)
- Sermons in support of our Trustee's prioritized Ends:
 - * Respect: *How Open the Door* (January)
 - * Compassion: *Carriers* (February)
 - * Generosity: *For Members Only, For Now* (February); *For Everyone, Forever* (March); *Living Large* (May)
- Sermons on moral & spiritual practices: *Pregnant with Peace* (December); *Busy Being Born* (January); *Conscience's Care* (March)
- Sermons exploring UU Identity: *Through Discipline?* (September); *An Inheritable Faith?* (November); *Humanists Evolving* (March)
- Church Passage Ceremonies: *Ministerial Search Installation*; *CYRE Teacher Installation*;

My worship leadership partners have included:

- Music Director **Linda Pawelek**, in planning, arranging & leading musical dimensions of all services;
- Associate Music Director **Bill Braun** in providing superb piano contributions to almost all services, and arranging occasional guest musician contributions to services
- Our Director of Religious Education: **Jesse Greist**
 - * In co-leading multi-generational services
 - * In co-leading Sunday Ceremonies: *Namings*, *CYRE Teacher Installation*
 - * In making Sunday "Message for All" presentations for almost all services
 - * In co-leading the Christmas Eve service
- Minister Colleague: **Rev. Josh Pawelek** in a pulpit exchange with the UU Society of Manchester to reflect on the 50th Anniversary of the Selma AL March

I have met and consulted with the Worship Committee on a regular basis.

Minister's Report 2014-2015

Rev. Fritz Hudson

Personal Ministry

I have conducted these personal rites of passage:

- * Namings: *Catherine Dunn* (December), *Owen Messing & Alexander Messing* (January)
- * Wedding: *Emily Stagg & Chris Zannoni* (May)
- * Memorial Services: *Ann Butler* (August), *Frances Maley* (October),
Madeline Erskine (December), *Claire Gallant* (February), *Gwen Wexler* (June),

I have

- * provided several pastoral counseling sessions and made many personal support visits & phone calls.
- * coordinate personal support efforts with our Lay Ministers.

Public & Community Ministry

I participated in the Whitney Center Annual Interfaith Service of Remembrance

I served as Worship Leader for the Annual Abraham's Tent Closing Worship.

I participated in an interfaith consultation to expand the services of Abraham's Tent

I served as resource presenter to the Unitarian Universalist students at Yale Divinity School

I attending a Clergy Training session with CONECT (Congregations Organized for a New Connecticut) and consulted with its Lead Organizer to facilitate USNH's affiliation.

Educational Ministry

In partnership with the Membership Committee, I co-led lead programs to grow and strengthen our membership.

- *Your Search and oUUs* - 3 sessions [November, January, March]

- *Steps to Join?* - 3 sessions [December, February, May]

I provided consultation to the Small Group Ministry Steering Committee

UU Association Ministry

I continued my service as UU Ministers Association Continental Good Offices Trustee.

I participated in the Connecticut Cluster and the Clara Barton Chapter of the UU Ministers Association

I participated in the UU Association sponsored conference in Birmingham AL

and the march in Selma AL associated with the 50th Anniversary of the March for Justice.

I represented USNH at the Ministers' Installation at the Unitarian Society of Hartford.

I facilitated ministerial connections with the Unitarian Universalists of New Haven

Society Governance

I worked extensively with the Board of Trustees to foster their adoption and implementation of Policy Governance. As authorized by them

- I have undertaken the responsibilities of Chief of Staff

- I have partnered with their appointed Management Team Members **David Jones & Sandy Frawley** to structure and carry out the executive functions delegated to us.

- I have partnered with Congregational Administrator **Tisha Ferguson** to upgrade and regularize support for the Society's work.

Interim Ministry

My specific efforts to fulfill my role as Interim Minister will be reported in the Final Progress Appraisal to be delivered to the Board of Trustees on June 11, 2015 and made public thereafter.

As my first Interim Ministry congregation, you have been a joy to serve. THANK YOU!