

# UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NEW HAVEN

## ANNUAL REPORT

2016-2017



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Georgia Jennings, Chair of the Management Team  
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Jamie Ross, Congregational Administrator

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## Board of Trustees

Daniel Gelperin; President, Peggy Myers; Vice President. Kathy Garner; Treasurer, Pamela Miller; Secretary, Bobbi Pace, Bernice Marie-Daly, Russell Heinrich, Pat Trotta, Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner; ex-officio, Holly Hawkins; Past President

The Board has two main roles- envisioning ways to further USNH's mission ("We are a diverse multigenerational faith community that inspires lives of compassion and generosity, nurtures spiritual growth, cultivates transformative connections, and creates a more just world"), and making sure USNH operates within our bylaws and policies. Additionally, the board is working hard to improve governance at USNH as we become more familiar with policy-based governance.

This year the Board of Trustees;

Conducted listening sessions and received written responses to questions that help the Board refine its understanding of important issues at USNH. (See summary of listening sessions in congregational meeting materials.) This is part of the Board's continuing emphasis on asking how we are living up to our mission and understanding how to focus our efforts.

Interviewed all past and present members of the Management Team to understand the challenges, and how to make the Management Team sustainable. Service on the Management Team is currently quite demanding and the Board is committed to understanding ways to make the Management Team model sustainable.

Monitored USNH's compliance with our financial policies.

Following thorough research by the Finance Committee and taking into account input from the Management Team, changed policy on the size of operating reserve from 25% to 15% of operating budget.

Started a voluntary second meeting per month that is focused on improving governance.

Read Dan Hotchkiss' "Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership" together. The ideas in this book have been quite valuable in outlining a less rigid, more collaborative policy-based governance that we think is a better fit for USNH. We are still learning and practicing, but feel confident that we have a good model to follow.

The Board is grateful for the chance to be of service to USNH's vibrant community in pursuit of our shared mission. We would love to hear members' thoughts about improving USNH. Our names and emails can be found in the social hall and on the USNH website, and we can collectively be reached at [board@usnh.org](mailto:board@usnh.org).

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Board of Trustees,

Dan Gelperin

## Management Team

Georgia Jennings; chair, Rev Megan Lloyd Joiner, Gwen Heuss-Severance, David Stagg.

**Management Team; A group of individuals, of which one is the minister, who are delegated authority by the Board of Trustees to run the day to day operations of the congregation and to ensure that the mission of the congregation is being fulfilled. The function and authority of the Management Team is shared equally by its members. (From our Policy Governance Handbook.)**

We began the year in July 2016 with David Jones as lead member and Georgia Jennings as recorder. David Stagg joined the team in August 2016. David Jones ended his session in December 2016. Georgia assumed leadership role and David S became recorder. Gwen Heuss-Severance joined the team in February 2017. Georgia is our liaison to the Finance Committee and attends their meetings.

In August, we requested quotes for snow removal during the upcoming winter and selected Keating Property Services based on their price and excellent references. In October the joint project with B&G of conversion

from oil heat to gas heat for our main building was completed along with removal of the old oil tank and installation of a new high efficiency gas boiler.

At the suggestion of the Council of Chairs we purchased the institutional version of SignUpGenius for use in requesting and scheduling volunteer help for a wide variety of USNH functions.

Working with Jamie (our Congregational Administrator) we developed a new scheme for charging for rentals in September. We agreed that Jamie should have latitude and discretion to create special arrangements. Oscar (our Sexton) will supervise major outside rentals. There will be a separate charge for this to be paid directly to Oscar.

In October a Music Committee was formed to search for a new Music Director. This committee included Rev Megan as Chief of Staff and David Stagg representing the Management Team.

At the fall congregation meeting, David J presented a B&G update and Georgia presented the Committee Reports.

In November we organized the "Stewardship Discussion Circles" held in the Social Hall. Each table was hosted by a representative from MT, BoT or Endowment and attendees were asked to provide comments on each of three specific topics.

In December we approved a project to convert the lighting in the building to LED. The project cost of ~\$20,000 will be paid back over 5 years, but the cost should be covered by decreased electricity usage. Also in December, in collaboration with the Finance Committee, we met with a representative from the bank to begin discussions about refinancing the mortgage in July 2018. The Board of Trustees invited present and past members of the Management Team to discuss how to sustain the MT structure in place or to revise it. Jane Ferrall began work with us as Membership Coordinator. An early task was to develop a consistent "branding" image. Rev Megan and Jane designed a set of email alias addresses to facilitate the sending of emails to various committees and redesigned many of our brochures. We also began work on replacement of the panels in our lighted sign to include details of our services and to welcome everyone.

Following investigation of leaks in the Sanctuary roof by B&G, we determined that the roof needed to be replaced as soon as possible. The Board agreed to a proposal from the Management Team and the Finance Committee to pay for it from Gifts and Donations. The Board also approved a sole source contract with Seal-Tite following their excellent work in the replacement of the Lobby Roof.

Rev. Megan created an informal arrangement with Mishkan Israel to permit the use of 20 parking spaces at the lower end of their parking lot.

Our daycare tenant raised concerns about the security of our building. We replaced the entire locking mechanism in the front door so that the door will reliably remain locked during normal daily use.

We began work on a new website based on a recommended theme designed by the UUA. The initial layout is complete and we are currently migrating some content from the existing website.

We chose a site for the new Black Lives Matter banner.

In March we worked with Jamie to redesign the Newsletter to shorten it and present the most important information first.

A great deal of our effort this year has been the development of a proposal for a cash management plan including reduction of the Operating Reserve. Integrated with this has been our proposal for an operating budget for 2017-18 and a Capital Budget for 2017-18. These proposals were reviewed with the Finance Committee, Endowment Committee, Council of Chairs and the Board of Trustees in preparation for presentation to the congregation at the June meeting.

# Minister's Report

Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner

Let me begin with deep gratitude to the members and friends of USNH for your continued support and enthusiasm for my ministry among you.

My main goals for the year were to provide high-quality worship services on Sunday mornings, hire and onboard a Membership Coordinator, prioritize my workload and practices that led to work/life balance, and work closely with the Stewardship Team on a successful stewardship campaign. In addition, I wanted to be sure to continue to provide quality pastoral care in partnership with the Lay Ministers, connect with you as individuals and as a community, and to undertake the ministry of administration and governance in partnership with the Board of Trustees and the Management Team.

Highlights for me this year include

- i. Preaching and leading worship on Sunday Mornings including nineteen sermons (with two more planned for Summer 2017), participating in ten services at which we welcomed a guest or which fell outside of Sunday morning, and planning and participating in seven multi-generational services. I consulted with the Worship Committee and worked closely with Jesse Greist, Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Linda Pawelek, Director of Music, and Worship Committee Chair, Gwen Heuss-Severance.
- ii. Working closely with our Lay Ministers, especially co-chairs Sarah Whitson and Susan Meredith, to coordinate pastoral care and pastoral visits. I provided pastoral support to members and friends throughout the year including visits in my office, at homes and in hospitals or rehab centers. We hosted Rev. Allie Perry and Lois Smith for trainings with Lay Ministers.
- iii. Connecting with the congregation through personal and corporate interactions, including a forum called "Third Thursday With Rev. Megan" which took place on the third Thursday of each month at which a small group discussed the theme of the month. I led one new member course in spring 2017, attended various multi-generational events including the Mad Hatter Party and the Passover Seder. I attended committee meetings and meetings with representatives of various committees, continued our gathering of individuals and families with young children at our 20s&30s potluck, and met with the YRUU group.
- iv. Working closely with our Management Team (Georgia Jennings, David Jones (until December 2016), David Stagg, and Gwen Heuss-Severance (starting January 2017)) to carry out the executive functions assigned to us. Additionally, attending both regular and additional meetings of the Board of Trustees and supporting their continued interpretation and implementation of Policy Governance.
- v. With the Personnel Committee and Music Director Search Committee, hiring three new staff members: Jane Ferral, Membership Coordinator, and Jeffrey Douma and Erika Schroth, Co-Directors of Music (starting August, 2017). I also attended a "Staffing and Supervision" workshop led by the Rev. Susan Beaumont on October 24-25, 2016.
- vi. Raising more funds this year than last year's stewardship campaign and working with Mary Beth Congdon, John Watson, Laura Lytton, and Dana Capasso on the campaign.
- vii. My October 22, 2016 installation service.
- viii. The deaths of Phillip Wexler and Alexandra Hill.
- ix. The installation and dedication of our Black Lives Matter banner.
- x. The congregation's participation in the White Supremacy Teach-In on April 9, 2017 and May 7, 2017.

I remain in awe of the dedication of all the members and friends who make USNH happen. From Sunday morning volunteers to dedicated Lay Ministers. From members of the Management Team to those who, without fail, show up, rakes in hand, for clean-up days. All our Religious Education teachers and everyone serving on a committee or leading a small group. Members of our Social Justice Ministry working to make our community and our world more just. USNH is full of life these days thanks to all of you.

I was grateful for the feedback provided by the congregation, the Committee on Ministry and the Board of Trustees for my first renewal application for preliminary fellowship with the UUA. My application was approved. I have continued my professional support relationships with my clergy coach, the Rev. Larry Peers and my preliminary fellowship mentor, the Rev. Carolyn Patierno.

In terms of service to our Unitarian Universalist Association, I have been a regular attendee at our Unitarian Universalist Minister's Association chapter meetings, I attended our UUA North East Regional Assembly in April 2017, and I was glad to represent USNH at the Installation of the Rev. Jeanne Lloyd of the Shoreline Unitarian Universalist Society (Madison, CT).

### **Sermons**

September 18, 2016 "Belonging and the Movement for Black Lives"  
September 25, 2016 "Casting our Lot (When So Much Has Been Destroyed)"  
October 2, 2016 "Faith and Forgiveness: A High Holidays Service"  
October 16, 2016 "What's God Got to Do With It?"  
October 30, 2016 "Día de los Muertos: A Service of Remembrance"  
November 6, 2016 "The Spirit of Democracy"  
December 4, 2016 "Wondering, Wandering, Worshiping"  
December 11, 2016 (Music Sunday) "Filled With Good Things" (homily)  
January 15, 2017 "Staying Woke"  
January 22, 2017 "Now More Than Ever"  
January 28, 2017 "New Year All Year"  
February 5, 2017 "Forgiveness: Love That Sets Us Free"  
March 5, 2017 "Strong Roots, Growing Branches"  
March 26, 2017 "Here Together"  
April 9, 2017 "Stars in the Desert and Other Terrible Blessings"  
April 23, 2017 "So Much More Than Beauty: Covenanting With The Earth"  
April 30, 2017 "Mostly Music Sunday" (homily)  
May 14, 2017 "Our Mother's Gardens"  
May 21, 2017 "Getting to Know You"

### **Multi-Generational Services**

September 11, 2016 "Many Waters, One Stream: Water Communion and In-Gathering"  
November 20, 2016 "Plenty and then Some" (Thanksgiving)  
December 18, 2016 "The Light Returns"  
December 24, 2016 "Light One Candle and Follow a Star" (Christmas Eve)  
February 26, 2017 "Wild and Precious Life"  
April 16, 2017 "Lo, the Earth Awakes Again" (Easter)  
June 18, 2017 "A Communion of Flowers"

### **Additional Services**

October 22, 2017 Installation Service  
October 23, 2017 Guest: Rev. Kathleen Green  
November 13, 2017 Guest: Rev. Chris Antal  
February 19, 2017 Guest: Rev. Audette Fulbright Fulson  
March 12, 2017 Guest: Rev. Audette Fulbright Fulson  
April 9, 2017 Closing Service for Abraham's Tent  
May 7, 2017 Guest: Sierra-Marie Gerfao  
May 12, 2017 Affirmations Service  
June 4, 2017 Children's and Youth Religious Education Service  
June 11, 2017 YRUU Youth Service

### **Summer Services**

July 23, 2017

August 20, 2017

## **RIGHTS OF PASSAGE**

### **Weddings**

Mary Smith and Jaclyn Decaro (visitors) (January 12, 2017)

Amy Stevens and Ken Glick (March 10, 2017)

### **Memorial Services**

Joe Cooper (July 21, 2016)

Phillip Wexler (February 19, 2017)

Alexandra Hill (June 3, 2017)

## **Adult Religious Education Committee**

Chairperson: P.J. Deak

Members: Maggie Goodwin, Deb Pascale, David Schafer, June Schafer, Becky Sandmann, Barbara Orrok,

Staff: Jesse Greist

**WHAT MOVES US** - The Adult Religious Education Committee strives 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.

The Adult Religious Education Committee provides opportunities for spiritual growth, fostering connections and commitment to USNH and Unitarian Universalism and developing the foundations for action for justice through a variety of classes, courses, and one-time events.

The Goals & Objectives of the USNH Adult Religious Education Committee are...

1. *Partnering* with other groups within our congregation to create intentional spaces for sharing and growing our knowledge about spiritual issues, social issues and UU identity.
2. *Inviting* participation in these intentional spaces by individuals & organizations in the New Haven community beyond our congregation so as to encourage a social justice and interfaith (including no faith) spiritual discourse among USNH members and those in the wider New Haven community.
3. *Fostering* open dialogue and discourse, in these spaces with these participants, to encourage the reflection portion of a praxis striving towards greater & more effective action on social justice and interfaith (including no faith) spiritual issues.

Advertising for most ARE activities was via the following methods, with the goal of reaching a wide audience: flyer, bulletin board, website, facebook, email, USNH Newsletter, New Haven Register calendar section, Post-Chronicle calendar section and word-of-mouth.

Dates and times for events were varied throughout the year so as to provide options for those who wish to attend ARE events. See list below.

ARE partnered with Becky Friedkin this year to manage a mini-version of the book cart almost every Sunday in the Social Hall. We focused on books related to social justice issues and conducted 4 book discussions this year rather than the usual 1 or 2. As of April 27<sup>th</sup>, the ARE Book Cart has turned a profit of approximately \$750.

ARE has maintained a bulletin board of upcoming events in the social hall all year long – sharing the space with the UUA, UUSC and UU UNO representatives.

ARE has collaborated with Jesse Greist all year long to maintain the ARE webpage on the USNH website so that all events are listed and are kept current.

ARE conducted 23 activities in the 2016-2017 congregational year including a 14 week course and a 2 session discussion for a total of 37 events between September 24, 2016 and June 3, 2017 with a wide variety of partner organizations...

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event Description</b>	<b>Partner Organization(s)</b>	<b># Participants</b>
Saturday 09/24/2016	Social Cinema – September REFUGEE	USNH Immigrants & Refugees Task Force; P.L.A.C.E.; IRIS; Wilbur Cross Students Media Lab	53
Sundays 09–10/2016	UU History “Porch Talk” series hosted by Sierra Marie Gerfao (2 Sessions)	Yale Divinity School Student Sierra Marie Gerfao	4 & 0
Monthly	ContinUUm Writers Workshop	USNH Member Steve Evans	10 signed up. 5-7 / session
Weekly	Tuesday Conversations		10-12 / session
Friday 10/21/2016	Social Cinema – October Merchants of Doubt	USNH UU-UNO Envoy	12
Sundays 14 Weeks	Becoming Women of Wisdom Facilitated by Becky Sandmann		Approx 12 per session
Sunday 10/30/2016	Book Discussion Guns Don’t Kill People, People Kill People and other Myths About Gun Violence	USNH Gun Violence Prevention Task Force; USNH Book Cart	15
Friday 11/18/2016	Social Cinema – November Newtown	USNH Gun Violence Prevention Task Force; Film maker Maria Cuomo Cole	51
Saturday 12/17/2016	Social Cinema – December Ava Duvernay’s 13 <sup>th</sup>	Anti-Racism Task Force; Peace Task Force; Waverly Netflix	49
Wednesday 01/04/2017	#1 Discussion Session Election 2016: Where Do We Go From Here? Facilitated by Maggie Goodwin Using modified UUA curriculum	Social Justice Council; Legislative Action Group	20
Sunday 01/22/2017	Film Screening Defying The Nazis	UUSC Representative	10
Saturday 01/28/2017	Social Cinema – January The True Cost: Who Pays The Price For Our Clothes	Green Sanctuary Committee	15



Monday 02/13/2017	#2 Discussion Session Election 2016: What Will You Do Going Forward?	Social Justice Council; Legislative Action Group	8
Sundays 02/19/2017 02/26/2017	Common Read Book Discussion The Third Reconstruction by Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II (2 Discussion Sessions)	UUA	23 & 23
Saturday 02/25/2017	Social Cinema – February Love & Mercy	Mental Health Awareness Action Group	33
Saturday 03/25/2017	Social Cinema – March Traces Of The Trade	Anti-Racism Task Force	30
Monday 03/27/2017	#3 Discussion Session Putting Our Values Into Action	Social Justice Council; Legislative Action Group	7
Sunday 04/23/2017	Presentation Serving the Needs of Refugee and Undocumented Children By Edwin Colon	Immigrants & Refugees Task Force; Center for Children's Advocacy	20
Saturday 04/29/2017	Social Cinema – April Burning Bridges	Right Relations Committee; The International Institute for Restorative Practices	21
Sunday 05/07/2017	Book Discussion The Drone Eats With Me By Atef Abu Saif	Peace Task Force; UU UNO Envoy; Shalom UCC	Future
05/21/2017	Presentation Get Schooled: Equity in School Funding	Local State Representative Mike D'Agostino	Future
Saturday 06/03/2017	Social Cinema – June Arrival	YRUU	Future
Sunday 06/11/2017	Book Discussion Hillbilly Elegy by JD Vance Facilitated by Craig Machado		Future

## Building and Grounds

David Jones, Chair. Martin Gent, David Stagg, Susan Godshall, Anthony Clark, Gil Belaval, Walter Gayeski.

We have have had a busy year. The biggest job completed was putting a new roof on the sanctuary after leaks began. The job was completed by Sealtite roofing for \$47,000 and is warrantied for 15 years. The replacement of the original oil heating boiler with a high efficiency gas boiler was completed by Environmental Engineering for \$57,000. In our first winter using the new system we saved about half of what we had spent in the prior year.

Also completed this year was the replacement of the “guts” of the front door so that it would open and lock properly. Total cost was under \$2,000.

A large part of the year has been spent in considering the replacement or upgrading of the Dryvit which covers the exterior of the social hall and RE wing. It is beginning to deteriorate and will require work in the near future. We are working with preservation architect Leland Torrance to determine the best long range course. Also this year AED/CPR training was completed so that staff and some volunteers are trained in their use. In the next year we are also planning to provide electrical upgrades on the first floor, replace the roof air conditioning units, put in new concrete steps, and clear some brush which is breeding ticks.

## **Children and Youth Religious Education Committee**

Committee Members: Meg Gurley, Chair (stepping down due to move), Patricia McChesney (transitioning to Chair), Vicki Seitz, Secretary (continuing), Lurline De Vos (continuing), Robb Camm (continuing), Robyn Genzano (continuing), Jamie Johnson (continuing), Sarah Northrup (continuing.)

Committee Accomplishments:

2016-17 has been another productive and enjoyable year for the Children and Youth Religious Education (CYRE) Committee. We continue to have a very positive working relationship with Jesse Greist, Director of Lifespan Religious Education (DLRE.) His interactional style sets a positive tone for the committee, volunteer teachers, and children and their families in our program. He approaches USNH's CYRE challenges with creativity, knowledge, and care. We look forward to our continued work with him.

Pam Niles continues to volunteer to ensure that the day-to-day details of the program are attended to and 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 religious education program that relies on our volunteers. We are also appreciative of the congregants who have supported our children in many ways, including as their Secret Buddies.

The CYRE committee in collaboration with the DLRE met the majority of our stated goals in 2016-17, including

- Supporting our DLRE in his leadership responsibilities managing religious education programs for our children and youth;
- Working with the DLRE to carry out Children's Chapels for the year;
- Continuing our relationship with Rheylyene Ogabang and Lezter Rico, the UU children in the Philippines. We did not have to raise funds year due to strong support in the past giving us enough money to cover this year's sponsorship.
- Continuing two intergenerational activities begun two years ago—a Community Build Lego night and the Secret Buddy Program, which included a Buddy banquet. We were excited to note continued connections between children and youth and adult Buddies even after the end of the formal program. We also launched a new intergenerational activity with the Sunday Morning Committee, the March Mad Hatter party. The Sunday Morning Committee has expressed a willingness to continue the party and we join them in this desire.
- Continuing the children's participation in the service. This was greatly facilitated by Rev. Megan who continued having the children sit in the front of the sanctuary for the children's message and having those who have Stepped Up light the chalice.
- Recruiting teachers to fill any unfilled positions for 2016-17.

In addition to meeting our goals, several projects are ongoing:

- Teacher recruitment process for 2016-17 is underway.
- We continued to work to include introverts and engage children who have Stepped Up beyond ushering and chalice lighting.

- Our biggest challenge this year continued to be the integration of YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) into the CYRE committee.
- We were unable to recruit a youth member, most likely owing to the early-morning timing of our meetings. We continue to explore ways to involve the youth in our committee.
- We are supporting our DLRE with OWL classes at age grade groups K/1, 4/5 and 7/8.

## Committee on Ministry

Members; Lisa Anderson, Susan Meredith, Carolyn Pressley, Bruce Levinson, Rev. Megan

The primary focus of our committee this year was to support and to serve as a sounding board for Rev. Megan as she establishes her ministry at USNH. We met every 6-8 weeks for approximately an hour and one half. In the Fall of 2016 we completed the Committee on Ministry Evaluation for the UUA Ministerial Fellowship. All members of the congregation and congregational leaders were contacted to provide feedback. The information was synthesized and shared with Rev. Megan. The COM also assisted with the installation Ceremony for Rev. Megan. In April, three members of the Committee participated in an excellent seminar at Westport UU with members of COM committees from area UU churches in New York and Connecticut to explore the various ways committees are structured and serve our communities. The Committee plans to discuss how we can share this learning with our congregation and its leadership so we can continue to develop our support of the ministry of Rev. Megan and the ministry of the congregation.

## Director of Life-span Religious Education

### CYRE Overview

The Children and Youth Religious Education program ran smoothly this year, with the CYRE committee, teachers, volunteers, USNH staff, parents/guardians, youth and children collaborating weekly to create diverse, vibrant programming.

### Curriculum

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

- “Celebrating Me and My World” (Pre-K)
- “Wonderful Home” and “Our Whole Lives” (K – First grade)
- “UU Super Heroes” (2nd-3rd Grade)
- “You, the Creator of Justice” and “Our Whole Lives” (4th-5th Grade)
- “Heeding the Call” (6th-7th Grade)
- “Affirmations: Coming of Age” (8<sup>th</sup> grade)
- “Young Religious Unitarian Universalists” (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade)

### Teachers and Classes

The teaching corps has been reliable, flexible and all around wonderful. The teams coalesced quickly, and became largely autonomous as the year progressed. Teams were consistent from K-5<sup>th</sup> grade. We did have some turnover in the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade class, with one teacher leaving the team after the first semester, and two others that were unable to teach often in the Spring. We ended the year supplementing the curriculum with workshops offered by community members to lighten the load for the two remaining teachers. The affirmations class, which had seven students in September, shrank to four students during the year. The three students that chose to not complete the course cited disinterest in the class and other personal reasons, but continued to be active in the USNH community in other ways.

My greatest concerns are making sure we follow up with this year’s affirmations-aged students to ensure they are aware of opportunities available to them, including but not limited to the YRUU youth group, membership at USNH, teaching in the RE program and participating in Sunday worship. We welcomed several new families

into the RE program this year, but I continue to be concerned about the number of families that visit and don't return, or "disappear" after a couple of visits. I will continue to work with the membership coordinator to monitor and evaluate this situation.

The YRUU group had five advisers, with one stepping away in the spring. The advisers have worked well with the group and continue to refine the balance between adult and youth leadership within the group. They met weekly, with high attendance in the fall, and spring, with lower winter attendance. The group was committed to developing youth worship and engaging in social justice. This year, the group signed on to serve at Columbus House three times, and participated in the Kids' Service Team pie making day in the fall. The DLRE, YRUU group and CYRE committee worked together to address the need for an updated policy for YRUU overnights and regular meeting activities.

Moving forward, I continue to be concerned (although less so than in prior years) that few volunteers seek out opportunities to become involved in RE, especially parents/guardians. 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, newer parents and people committed to other USNH committees cite these 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 the first half of the OWL classes for 7-8<sup>th</sup> graders, and the whole curriculum for 4-5<sup>th</sup> graders, and K-1<sup>st</sup> graders this year. The highlights of the program were a high level of registration and participation, convenience of scheduling by running the K-1 and 4-5 program during RE class time and the 7-8 program after service. There was positive feedback about course content and facilitators across the board. In fall 2017 the high school class will continue with the second half of the curriculum for 8-9<sup>th</sup> graders.

### **Attendance**

Attendance was much improved over prior years, though the main barrier continues to be conflicts with youth sports, choir groups, theater etc., which meet more and more on Sunday mornings. We had 91 children register for classes this year, which is up a bit from last year. We received over 30 visits (not counting "one time" visits, ie- visiting grandchildren), which resulted in an additional 14 children enrolling in classes, including two former members that returned after several years away from USNH.

During the year, six children stopped attending classes, three of them due to a move or time conflict, and three due to disinterest in class (though they continued to attend USNH. Average attendance breaks down class-by-class as follows:

Nursery/Pre-K: 8 per week

K/1<sup>st</sup> grade: 8 per week

2/3<sup>rd</sup> grade: 7 per week

4/5<sup>th</sup> grade: 11 per week

6/7<sup>th</sup> grade: 10 per week

8<sup>th</sup> grade affirmations: 7 in fall, 4 in spring

7/8<sup>th</sup> grade OWL: 9 students per week

YRUU: 9 per week

**Summary:** RE classes (including OWL) and YRUU saw average weekly attendance of 60 students per week, or 66% of those registered. 7-8<sup>th</sup> OWL classes averaged 90% attendance.

### **Childcare**

In fall 2016 we bid farewell to Arianna Marino, who had worked in our nursery for four years. We welcomed Maria Carmen Magaña for a short time and subsequently hired Sarah Grant to work in the nursery alongside Jenn Russenberger. Apart from Sunday mornings, childcare was offered for a variety of meetings, conferences and events this year, and feedback was extremely positive from parents. We were likewise grateful to Cathy Jackson for providing childcare for our "20's and 30's" potluck dinners.

## **Budget**

I was very grateful to have received a generous professional development budget, which allowed me to pay LREDA membership dues, attend two "Teacher Development" Renaissance Modules, attend regular DRE "cluster" meetings, as well as travel to Liberal Religious Educators week at Star Island (July 15-22, 2017). The CYRE budget was adequate and was largely used to support special events and initiatives, provide snacks for RE classes, run retreats for YRUU, run background checks on new RE volunteers, and purchase curriculum/support materials for regular classes and the Our Whole Lives sexuality education program.

## **Special Events and Fund-raisers**

The CYRE committee and DLRE organized and ran three major social events this year:

- Getting to Know U – Buddy Program
- Community Build
- The Mad Hatter Tea Party (a collaboration with Sunday Morning Team)

See the CYRE committee report for details

## **Children's Chapels and worship**

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 25 children (double the attendance of prior years!), the Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> graders examined UU belief pathways as they filter through the life experiences of justice seekers, both within and outside the USNH community. We shared the stories of laborers, environmental stewards, faith seekers, musicians, the Earth herself and members of our congregation, finding inspiration for our own faith development and daily reflections.

Additionally, we focused on building our relationship with Rheylyne Ogabang and Lezter Rico, our pen pals in the Philippines, who kept us well informed about their families, friends, school adventures and challenges they face growing up.

## **Adult Religious Education**

In the interest of avoiding redundancy, I refer readers to the annual report from ARE committee chair PJ Deak, which details the majority of ARE classes, events and workshops.

It was a pleasure for me this year to co-organize bi-monthly potluck dinners for the burgeoning "20's and 30's" group with Rev. Megan. Attendance was high (with one exception) and many younger adults cited these dinners as integral to their feeling welcomed into the USNH community.

It was also my pleasure to work with Steve Evans to co-create the ContinUUm writer's group, which met monthly to share poetry and prose based loosely on the USNH worship themes. This has proved to be an intimate, safe space for reflection, creativity and support. A collection of pieces from this group will be added to the USNH library over the summer.

## **Small Group Meetings**

In Fall 2016, we ran ten Small Groups, with over sixty participants and in Spring we ran eight small groups with fifty-four participants. Feedback about the groups that ran both in the fall and spring was positive, and attendance was high. Small groups at USNH continue to offer essential community building opportunities and a spiritually nurturing atmosphere.

The Small Group Steering Committee will at the end of this year see 100% turnover, as Susan Linsley, Gwen Heuss Severance and Nancy Brown step away. However, the committee welcomed six new members this spring and has worked to address concerns about the renaming of the program, as well as ongoing questions about "closed groups" and guidelines for facilitators.

## **DLRE Professional Development**

I took the opportunity in November of 2016 to become a trained OWL facilitator, which led directly to my joining the 7-8<sup>th</sup> grade OWL teaching team. I also attended the Adult Religious Education Renaissance Module in Hartford, which was my 5<sup>th</sup> module. I will continue attending Renaissance Modules and working with the UUA towards becoming a credentialed Religious Educator in 2017-2018.

I attended 5 DRE cluster meetings this year, and was part of monthly phone conferences with peers from CT, NH, MA and RI. I will attend Liberal Religious Educators week this summer at Star Island.

## **Endowment and Legacies Committee**

**Fred Morrison, Chair.** Bob Congdon, Jeremy Hill, Linda Mehta, John Watson, Carol Cheney; Consultant, Mary Beth Congdon; Consultant

### **Goals**

To support the USNH mission of “Inspiring lives of compassion and generosity,” the Endowment and Legacies Committee goals for this year were to:

- Conduct the USNH Endowment Campaign to grow the endowment and other investments to \$2.5 million by 2024 by promoting opportunities for USNH members and friends to make current and legacy gifts, and by reducing management and investing costs while improving portfolio performance
- Conduct a recognition event for current and prospective Legacy Society members
- Support USNH by providing a contribution of 2% of the endowment value based on a 13 quarter rolling average.

### **Endowment results for year ending March 31, 2017**

Total endowment funds have increased from \$877,737 to \$1,001,737

- The above includes new gifts totaling \$25,520
- This equates to an annual increase of 14.1%
- Or, excluding new gifts (investment results only), an annual increase of 11.2%

### **Recent history leading to the Ten-Year Endowment Campaign**

#### **1. Winchell Fund**

The Winchell Fund was established in 2011 with a bequest from Jean Winchell of approximately \$400,000 that nearly doubled the size of the USNH endowment. To honor long-term members Jean and Horace Winchell for making such a large gift, the Endowment & Legacies Committee chose to create the Winchell Fund as a separate endowed fund. The Winchell Fund has a current value of \$602,063.

#### **2. Major revisions to the endowment bylaws in June 2012**

At the June 2012 congregational meeting, the bylaws pertaining to the management and use of the endowment funds were amended as follows:

- Distributions may be made from total returns including appreciation, not just from income and dividends.
- Distributions may be used to fund, without limitation, existing programs, capital needs, and new initiatives or contingencies.
- The Endowment & Legacies Committee proposes an amount to be distributed, but does not determine how the money will be used. Instead, the uses for the distribution are determined during the process of developing an operating budget and a capital budget and then approved, or modified, at a congregational meeting. The congregation can vote to take more (as long as the principal is not depleted) or less of a distribution than the amount recommended by the Endowment & Legacies Committee.

#### **3. Ten-Year Endowment Campaign**

At the June 2014 annual meeting, the congregation approved a campaign to grow the endowment to \$2.5 million by 2024. As a guideline, some financial experts

recommend that to be financially secure, nonprofit organizations need an endowment at least 3–5 times the annual budget—hence our goal of an endowment of at least \$2.5 million.

A campaign brochure was developed and sent to USNH members.

We invite you to imagine what it would be like today if USNH had an endowment of \$2.5 million and used 2% of the endowment's value to support the USNH budget each year. In this hypothetical scenario, USNH would be receiving \$50,000. Imagine the programs and functions that could be maintained or expanded and the new initiatives that could be undertaken to fulfill our mission if USNH was receiving \$50,000 annually from our endowment.

#### **4. Legacy Society for USNH**

The Legacy Society for USNH was established to recognize and honor those individuals who have made an endowment gift of at least \$10,000 or have included a gift of any amount to USNH in their estate plans. The following USNH members joined the Legacy Society this year, and their names are being added to the Legacy Society display in the lobby:

Claire Bien, Margaret Goodwin

Priscilla & Jason Gaines, Peggy Myers

Susan Godshall, Philip Wexler

#### **For more information**

Please contact a member of the Endowment and Legacies Committee to discuss your options for supporting the USNH mission with an endowment and/or a legacy gift.

## **Finance Committee**

Chair: Greg Seaman after Nov. 2016, Sandy Frawley before that.

Members: Kathy Garner (treasurer), Mary Losee, and Susan Godshall.

Sandy Frawley, although no longer living near Hamden, assists with review of documentation. Other members of the committee also serve as assistant treasurers (ML, GS) and can write checks if needed.

Major work this year has gone into preparing for refinancing the mortgage in June-July 2018, analyzing whether it makes sense to refinance early and whether Endowment Funds can be borrowed to pay part of the mortgage. (The Finance Committee analysis indicates that refinancing early does not save money. Analysis of borrowing Endowment Funds continues.)

There has also been supervision of the contract bookkeeper and payroll and benefits. The Finance Committee worked with the Management Team to develop the 2017-18 budget by providing historical values in the non-pledge income lines and modifying with current committee needs.

## **History, Archives and Library Committee**

Jane Platt, Chair; Toby Appel, Dody Gall, Frank Jonnietz, James Platt, Peggy Rae, Yvette Scharf, Joan Silverman

We have completed work on the Dorothy F. Harned Library. Over 2,000 books have been processed. The books have pockets and cards and are stamped "Unitarian Society of New Haven." They are shelved by category for ease in finding books. Clutter has been cleared and portraits of Dorothy and Herbert Harned, Sr. and Robert Bowles have been restored and hung with short biographical captions. We have entered the book information into a database, set up a sign-out system, and printed a catalog. We hope to have the database searchable on our website soon.

We continue to organize and store items in archival format (acid free folders etc.) We're working on finding more space and maximizing use of the existing classroom closet space. We have identified, sequenced and labeled many photo images of people and events in the Society's history. Frank is making digital files from recordings of worship services from past years.

On April 23, 2017, we had a re-opening reception that was well attended and calls attention to the fact that the Dorothy F. Harned Library is, at last, ready to be explored and enjoyed by all.

There had been no systematic record of the art objects in the building. With the help of Emily Bett and Dody Gall we are locating, photographing and listing them. A database identifying the artist, medium, donor, dates, and location of each work will be created. Examples of this art are the Tree of Life Quilt in the Social Hall and the Zeidenbergs sculpture hanging in the stairwell.

Work continues on digitizing the oral histories of longtime members we have on audio cassette tapes. We're more than halfway through. We can email a file to anyone wishing to listen to them. Melinda Tuhus' recent interviews include Shirley Biewald, Ed Biewald, Bill Goward, Helene Goward and Caroline Bridgman Rees. We plan to expand to past presidents and other longtime members.

I have made a presentation on our early history for the New Member classes. I have also assisted the committee which is revising the by-laws by locating early revisions of the by-laws.

I am grateful to the committee members for their hard work and good humor.

## **Kitchen Project (KP) Committee**

In winter 2017, the Management Team supported formation of a group to consider future kitchen/pantry remodeling. The MT mandate was to develop alternative proposals for modernization. One alternative was to include removal of the partial wall separating the two spaces, the other to remodel with the wall unchanged.

"The KP Committee":

Anthony Clark, Linda Barrett, Pam Niles, Becky Sandmann, , Paul Trotta

David Stagg (Management Team) and, Lois Smith, Chairman.

(Sally Connolly, Robert Garskoff and Bobbi Pace are also active contributors.)

The above represent these skills and experience: environmental/energy-use/construction design; catering; culinary/restaurant design and equipment; USNH current and potential use.

The group met Jan-May, and also toured and interviewed leaders at a Presbyterian church in New Haven with more modern, but generally similar, kitchen/storage space.

USNH initial goals, and criteria for an efficient, aesthetically pleasant space were established.

David Thompson, USNH member and Architect, also did an initial evaluation of the relevant space and consulted with the group in May.

Next steps include:

- . Needs assessment, to include the congregation, staff, renters, and community users (probably Fall, 2017)
- . Receipt of a *preliminary* design, from David Thompson, to enable budget estimates to be made
- . Review of progress with the Management Team, especially as regards potential resources and funding processes.

Note: It is NOT anticipated that any significant remodeling can occur in FY 2017-18. The intent is to actively communicate and engage with congregation and staff throughout this process!

For the committee, Lois Smith



## Membership Team

David Cross, Christine Durham (ch), Jane Ferrall (membership coordinator), Patrick Korth, Joan Lane  
Terry Vidal

This year, we have in place a 'welcoming path' for visitors who are looking for a spiritual home. Our Welcome Corner is staffed weekly on a rotating schedule. Additionally, other USNH members often help in welcoming new visitors in the corner. The Welcome Corner is now a regular weekly announcement in the order of service and in the welcome from the pulpit.

First Sunday Welcome Chats have 'hosted' an average of 5 visitors and the occasional long term members. This chat offers opportunity to get to know visitors a little more with a focus on questions about USNH and the UU denomination. A short introductory movie is shared and we also hand out the new UUA magazine 'Seeker' which was designed for people new to the denomination.

Follow up phone calls have been made to repeat visitors to offer a more personal welcome and 'thank you' for visiting.

Membership has also continued to support/liaise with the Social Justice Council by sending out information about social justice groups to those visitors who indicated interest. Due to the fact that we often are the first to connect with new visitors and learn a little of their interests, this has become an easier way to start connecting them to groups.

'SignUp Genius' has been used to schedule for the Welcome Corner, BBQs and breakfasts. The signup has also invited congregational members who have indicated support for membership team activities.

One 'New to UU' series was offered and well attended in February/March. This three Sunday (2hrs/each) session covered the following themes:

1. 'Your Search and Ours': facilitated by Reverend Megan. Stories of personal spiritual journeys were shared and a brief overview of Unitarian Universalist history presented. Jane and Richard Platt presented a slide show history of USNH.
2. 'Where do you fit in?' at USNH. Jesse Greist presented information about the RE program. The Board of Trustees, the Management Team and Finance shared information on the administrative side of USNH. Pam Niles led a tour of USNH.
3. 'USNH and the Greater Community'. Lurline Devos and representatives from social justice groups shared information about their work.

In addition to visitors and potential new members, these sessions were also attended by several long-standing members. This New to UU/New to USNH series will be offered in Spring and Fall next year.

Throughout the year, the Membership team gathered biographical information and photos of all new members to share on the social hall bulletin board and through 'Constant Contact'. We hosted three new member recognition celebrations where actual membership book signing took place before recognition during the morning service. We have started a new tradition of presenting a book, 'The Unitarian Primer' and a wallet card after each member signs the USNH membership book.

The New Member Breakfast and recognition has proved to be an easier way for us to have members sign the membership book rather than trying to schedule random times during the year. The breakfast also is a way for new members to meet one another and have time for conversation.

To support our new members and create more personal connections, we have also started to focus on promoting fellowship and community within the congregation. To this end, we sponsored three successful Summer BBQs on the first Sundays of July, August and September. It is hoped these will become a permanent fixture on the summer calendar.

We sponsored a 'Lunch and Linger' Sunday where guests could stay later after lunch to visit, chat and play games. This was a new and untested venture. While the event was well attended and received positive feedback, we feel more publicity will be needed to promote the 'Linger' after the 'Lunch'. It is the hope that between Sunday Morning Team and Membership we can coordinate and publicize more First Sunday Lunch and Linger opportunities throughout the coming year.

Another goal we have started working on is to promote membership connection beyond USNH walls. We are presently putting together township/neighborhood contact information. This will be shared with the Worship Committee to help with carpooling. However, the ultimate goal for membership is that members will know and hopefully connect with others who live nearby them.

In an effort to reach out to the general public, our membership coordinator has posted events to the USNH Facebook page and handed out 'invitation tickets' to visitors to attend various activities such as Lego night.

In summary, the membership Team continues to strive towards achieving our goals of providing a path to membership, integrating new members into the congregation and promoting fellowship and community.

## Music Committee

Director of Music and Director of Adult and Children's Choirs: Linda Pawelek

Associate Director of Music and Pianist/ Accompanist: William Braun

Committee Chair: Peter Hansen Phone: 203-248-9642, Email: [phansen@cshore.com](mailto:phansen@cshore.com)

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

Committee members not returning: all returning as of May 7, 2017

Number of new Committee members sought for 2017-2018: 2 or 3 (including some who are not singers or musicians, but who value the importance of music in USNH services and activities)

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 and other USNH activities. 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.

Linda Pawelek is retiring in June 2017 after 45 years as Director of Music. She will be missed for her compassion, enthusiasm and outstanding ability to motivate, nurture, teach and get the best from everyone she conducts or assists. She has been the Adult and Children's Choir Director. The Children's Choir sings once a month and other occasions during the year: Christmas/Hannukah, a Spring music service and Intergenerational Sundays. The Adult Choir sings every Sunday and prepares two special music services during the year. Linda works closely with Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner and the Worship Committee to co-ordinate Staff and volunteer musicians for regular and summer services. She attended the annual UU Musicians Network Conference in July 2016 in Madison, Wisconsin.

William Braun is Associate Director of Music. He coordinates the music and readings for the half-hour service of meditation and continues as pianist and accompanist for the traditional second service. Bill draws upon the resources of USNH, using the talents of individuals and small ensemble groups (and his own talent) to provide early service music. He is a brilliant pianist and we are fortunate to have him sharing his keyboard expertise with us each week..

Here are some "highlights" of our 2016-2017 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. The Adult Choir sang at the Installation of Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner in October including an anthem written for Megan by David Schafer.

The Choir also sang and joined Rev. Megan at the Hamden Interfaith Thanksgiving service in November at Grace & St. Peter's Church and at the closing service held in April at USNH for all participants in Abraham's Tent's 2016-17 season.

In December we presented Pergolesi's "Magnificat" accompanied by the Haven String Quarter with vocal soloists from the Choir. The Choir participated in the Christmas Eve service along with our pick-up orchestra under the direction of Ellie Bond.

On April 30, the Choir presented Mostly Music, a special service featuring seven of Linda Pawelek's favorite anthems accompanied by Bill Braun on piano and including favorite quotes about music suggested and read by Choir members. The Children's Choir also sang. This was a celebration of Linda's 45 years of service at USNH. The new Co-Directors of Music, Erika Schroth and Jeffrey Douma, (starting in August 2017) were introduced and the Search Committee was introduced and thanked by Rev. Megan. (See separate Search report.)

Another Octave and Haven String Quartet (and solo members of the Quartet) provided music for several Sunday services. Many other USNH members sang or performed for the early meditation services and regular services, including Rich Zelisko and the Folk Group (led by Barbara Dobay). Christine Shadle, Randall Spaulding, Jordan Groff, Linda Pawelek and Bill Braun provide music or accompanied hymns for summer services. Carol Holloman sang and Bill Braun played piano at the memorial service for Joe Cooper.

Four members of the Children's Choir, Deva Trotta-Smith and Isaiah, Aniah and Kiki Phillips attended the UU Children's Choir Camp held concurrently with the UUMN Conference in July 2016 in Madison, Wisconsin. This was a great honor for them and Linda Pawelek.

Three Sundays at Four Concerts were presented: January 15, baritone Christopher Grundy and pianist Bill Braun; February 5, flutist Sergio Pallotelli and pianist Bill Braun; March 26, a special concert in honor of Linda Pawelek, created and coordinated by Bill Braun. This featured a composition by Linda's son Nathan and surprise performances by Nathan, Bill Braun, cellist Angela Lee, pianist/composer Istvan Bracz, the Haven String Quartet, singers Moira Malone, Carol Holloman, Peggy Rae, Peter Hansen and Terry Vidal, all people who have been mentored, supported or conducted by Linda for many years.

We have developed a relationship with the Haven String Quartet, the 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 perform 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. Two new singers joined the Choir. Between 30-40 regularly rehearse on Thursday nights and sing at Sunday services, including occasionally a few "Friends" of USNH.
2. Linda Mehta and Toby Appel are working with the Office staff to update the Music Program content on the USNH website.
3. Martin Lipnick joined the Committee in 2016-17.
4. Sylvia Lipnick has taken over the leadership/coordination of the inventory, cataloging and filing of the Choir sheet music library. Jane Platt did a wonderful job for many years with help from others.
5. The Music Director and Worship Committee are clarifying responsibilities and planning music for services in July- August. Money was added to the 2017-18 Music budget to cover a few paid outsiders in case enough volunteers can't be found to accompany hymns.

6. There are about 170 each of the gray and teal hymnals. We will do an estimate of what would be an adequate number to provide a more even distribution throughout the Sanctuary. More books would be purchased using contributions (honorary/ memorial) or money from the Music Fund. This might depend on any change back to two Sunday services.
7. All pianos have been tuned as needed. We are still reviewing the need for major refurbishing of any of the three pianos or shifting of locations in USNH.
8. Three Sundays at Four Concert were held on January 15, February and March 26. Claire Bien did a wonderful job on publicizing the concerts. A reception was held after the events. These are possible through collections at-the-door and contributions to the Music Fund.
9. The Committee is assisting with the June 17 Linda Love Fest gala celebrating her career.
10. The Committee and Choir assisted Linda Pawelek with the October Installation of Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner.
11. Since 2016-17 is Linda Pawelek's last year, the Committee met with the Minister / Management Team to start a search for a new Music Director for 2017-18. We met with Associate Director Bill Braun to confirm his current duties and assess his interest in the Director's position. (He was not, based on expected duties.) In November Rev. Megan and the Committee decided to search for a "permanent" Director rather than a "Temporary/Interim" person. We decided that Rev. Megan would appoint a Search Committee rather than having the whole Music Committee do the search. Rev. Megan appointed the Search Committee including herself, four from the Music Committee and two others outside, but with experience in the Music program or parent of members of the Children's Choir. (See separate Search Committee report.)
12. Related to the Search process, the Committee developed a survey for all USNH members about the Music program to assist new Music staff, Rev. Megan and the Music / Worship Committees in planning Sunday services and integrating music into all aspects of USNH activities. Linda Mehta led this effort and will soon provide results from about 105 replies to Survey Monkey and hard copies.

## Music Director Search Committee

Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner and the Music Director Search Committee are pleased to announce the selection of Jeffrey Douma and Erika Schroth as Unitarian Society of New Haven Co-Directors of Music starting in August 2017. They will jointly conduct the Adult Choir at rehearsals and Sunday services and prepare and lead the Children's Choir. They will report to Rev. Joiner and supervise other music staff.

Jeffrey Douma is Professor of Choral Conducting at the Yale University School of Music (since 2003) and Director of the renowned Yale Glee Club. He is also Music Director of the Yale Alumni Chorus, Founding Director of the professional Yale Choral Artists and Artistic Director of the Yale International Choral Festival (affiliated with the Festival of Arts and Ideas).

Erika Schroth is Director of Choral Music, music theory and musical theater at Hopkins School in New Haven. She is also an accomplished pianist, both as a performer and teacher.

Erika and Jeffrey were the Interim Directors of Music at USNH during Linda Pawelek's sabbatical leave in 2005-2006. They have extensive experience in choral conducting and teaching of academic and church groups and students at adult, college and grade-school levels. Each has a Bachelor of Music degree from Concordia College and a Master of Music degree from University of Michigan. Jeffrey also has a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from University of Michigan.

Jeffrey and Erika have been active members of USNH since 2006 and have two children, Sofia and Will. The Standing Music Committee met with Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner several times in autumn 2016 to prepare for Director of Music Linda Pawelek's retirement in June 2017 after 45 years of service. Rev. Megan and the Committee recommended a search for a "permanent" replacement rather than a temporary/ interim person. They also decided that Rev. Megan should appoint a separate Search Committee rather than having the whole Music Committee conduct the search. She appointed seven people including herself, four from the Music Committee, a frequent performer at services and a parent of singers in the Children's Choir. The Music

Committee developed questions for a congregational survey led by Linda Mehta to assist the search, the new Director, Rev. Megan and the Music and Worship Committees.

The Search Committee used guidelines for selecting and hiring Music Staff from the Unitarian Universalist Association and the UU Musicians Network (UUMN). These guidelines advise thoughtfulness when considering internal candidates including congregational members. USNH personnel policies permit hiring of members in “rare and unusual circumstances”. The Search Committee believes that the abilities, experience, availability and enthusiastic interest of Jeffrey and Erika provide such a situation. Rev. Megan had been advised by retiring Director of Music, Linda Pawelek, of the Schroth-Douma’s interest in the position and the Committee decided unanimously to pursue this opportunity before posting the position. The Committee held thorough interviews with both candidates, discussed an updated job description with them, collected their CV/ bios, contacted references and believes that they are the right people to sustain, grow, and nurture the USNH Music Program.

Associate Director of Music William Braun will continue in that position with the same duties he has now. We are confident that these three talented people will be a superb Music Staff for USNH. We thank the Standing Music Committee which started the search process with Rev. Megan and also Linda Mehta for leading the preparation of the Music Survey.

From the Music Director Search Committee: Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner, Peter Hansen (Chair), Carol Holloman, Colin Phillips, Christine Shadle, Jackie Trimble Shapiro, Rich Zelisko and liaisons Bobbi Pace (Personnel) and David Stagg (Management Team).

## **Permanent Committee on Right Relations**

Gail Figliola – Chair. Nancy Apfel, Charisse Hutton.

THEME: BRINGING OUR COVENANT TO LIFE

The PCRR sponsored three Saturday AM workshops to introduce congregants to the **Circle Practices for Restorative Conversations** on Sept. 24th, Oct. 15th, and Nov. 12th. Facilitated by consultant Joe Brummer, each workshop taught participants skills for circle keeping, restorative dialogue, building relationships through community conversations, and addressing harm and healing.

We provided 3 newsletter articles called **Covenant Corner** to feature activities sponsored by the PCRR and to highlight various aspects of the Congregational Covenant.

We attended one new member session to make known the PCRR’s presence in the USNH community, to share a **responsive reading of our Congregational Covenant**, and to encourage new members to attend an upcoming Social Cinema evening sponsored by the PCRR.

We partnered with ARE Chair to sponsor a Social Cinema event titled, **Burning Bridges: A Documentary** about a grief stricken community’s experience dealing with anger and moving toward healing by using the Restorative Practices model. The PCRR held a post screening discussion in a **Community Building Circle**.

The PCRR facilitated one large **Restorative Dialogue** circle with the Small Group Steering Committee that was requested by Small Group attendees, to discuss the process used to change the name of the SG-M from Ministry to Meeting.

The PCRR facilitated several small **Restorative Dialogue meetings** to discuss misunderstandings and to work toward agreements for covenantal action.

We held one Community Building Conversation Circle on a Sunday AM for sharing and connections.

The PCRR accepted resignation of member Paul Levatino, gratefully acknowledging his many contributions to the activities of the PCRR.

## Personnel Committee

Chairpersons: Jean Rosenthal, Bobbi Pace

GOALS for 2016-2017: To support the USNH mission by enhancing congregational infrastructure, for 2016-2017 the Personnel Committee had a goal of providing support functions on personnel issues as requested by the Board of Trustees, Management Team, or Head of Staff.

ACTIVITIES for 2016-2017: The Committee provided support for search efforts for both the membership coordinator and music director. We reviewed USNH salary and benefits compared to UUA guidelines. We reviewed USNH personnel documents to ensure that USNH complies with all requirements and reorganized the personnel files. We continued to develop revisions to the Personnel Policy Manual to clearly define policies to reflect best practices and to conform with USNH governance, which we expect to complete and have presented to the Board in 2017-2018. We monitored certain benefit reporting.

## Small Group Meetings

Chairperson: Susan Linsley

Mission Statement from Previous Report

In a large congregation such as USNH with its bounty of paths to involvement, achieving intimate and meaningful connections can be challenging. The goal of Small Group Meetings is to support members in making such connections at USNH.

Goals:

- Finalize the roster of groups and facilitators for the fall 2016-spring 2017 terms: October through mid-January 2017, and mid-February through May 2017
  - Organize the three week sign-up process and publicize it to the congregation
  - Provide training and support to facilitators
  - Conduct evaluations of the Small Group Ministry at the end of each term
  - Recruit new members to the Steering Committee
- 

At the time of my resignation from chairing this committee, all of the goals [see below] from the last gathering have been met. Six new members joined the Steering Committee. With the one remaining previous member they can re-focus and re-center the concept and philosophy underpinning Small Groups at USNH.

- Finalize the roster of groups and facilitators for the fall 2016-spring 2017 terms: October through mid-January 2017, and mid-February through May 2017
  - Organize the three-week sign-up process and publicize it to the congregation
  - Provide training and support to facilitators
  - Conduct evaluations of the Small Group Ministry at the end of each term
  - Recruit new members to the Steering Committee
- 

## Social Justice Ministry

### Anti-Racism Task Force

Chairperson(s): Tracy Navarra-Davis (Report written by Sharon McBlain)

Current Members: Tracy Navarra-Davis, Joan Ciano, Maggie Goodwin, Elana Muzzay ; Heidi Zavatone-Veth ; Joan Ciano ; John Keramis ; Kenny Foscue ; Laura Fawcett ; Lindsay Korth ; Melinda Tuhus ; Michele DeMusis ; Pat Perkins ; Richard Cho ; Sarah Strong ; Sharon McBlain ; Sue Bond ; Caroline Bridgeman-Rees

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
"Black Lives Matter" banner initiative	September to	USNH	USNH Congregation

	present	Congregation	
Purchase and distribution of Black Lives Matter pins	September to present	USNH Congregation	USNH Congregation
The USNH Anti-Racism Task Force invited all members and friends of USNH to three facilitated conversations with members of the Dixwell Avenue United Church of Christ, a predominantly African-American congregation.  The facilitator was Judy Feinstein who was referred by <a href="http://www.everyday-democracy.org">www.everyday-democracy.org</a>	March 18 April 22 May 20	30 or more member of USNH	The folks who participated benefitted as well as other folks who learned from those who attended

### What were the high points this year?

1. The placement of the Black Lives Matter Banner in the yard at USNH. The discussions that led up to the congregational decision were an important part of this initiative.
2. The workshops with facilitated by Judy Reinstein were enlightening and educational and for those who were able to attend they seemed very worthwhile.

**What have I learned from both the good and the bad?** I have learned that our congregations cares deeply about racial issues and would like to figure out how best to make a difference. I have learned that there are a lot of individuals who have found ways to be involved with these issues and take action other than by joining the ART. All of these efforts are worthwhile and to be encouraged.

The hard lesson has been realizing how difficult it is to find a common goal and to work toward it with others. The other hard lesson that seems to need to be learned over and over is the amount of effort it takes to work effectively together with people of other religious beliefs and cultures.

### How would I change actions?

Not sure just what direction to take.

### East Rock School Mentors

Chair: Anne Sommer 203-503-4746 [anne.sommer.editor@gmail.com](mailto:anne.sommer.editor@gmail.com)

Current and Continuing Members (Mentors): We have an amazing group of dedicated mentors: Isla Alexander, Sue Bond, Sally Connolly, Pat Grigg, Georgia Jennings, Anne Sommer (now mentor to two students), and Pat Vidal—plus two other honorary members, friends of mine, whom I recruited from outside USNH to be mentors at East Rock School.

**Additional Comments/Information:** The East Rock School Mentors initiative is five-plus years old. There are currently seven mentors—six at East Rock Community Magnet School and one at an elementary school in Cheshire.

1. ERSM made an “Our Faith in Action” presentation during Sunday services at USNH in October 2016,

and another one is scheduled for June 2017.

2. The group also held a mentor gathering in April 2017. These gatherings are very important opportunities to come together as a group, reflect on the work we are doing, and share our experiences, ideas, challenges, questions, concerns, etc.
3. We are currently planning the 4th annual mentoring celebration event that takes place at East Rock School at the end of the school year. This has become an important “community-building” event and is a meaningful and fun time for all mentors and mentees.

## Food Bank

Chairperson(s): Margaret Ariori, Liz Appel

Current Members: Teresa Childs, Dan Domurad, Maureen Gilmore Hebert, Christine Jonientz, Ann Levison, Peggy Myers, Pat Perkins, Peggy Rae

Praxis:

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
Collection of donated food which is delivered to the Hamden Food Bank at the Keefe Center	Monthly		Small number of USNH members and the general community

Reflections:

What were the high points this year?

An increase in donations due to the generosity of the congregation. Having the basket in the lobby helped plus other groups encouraging donations (The Soup Sunday group). Giving suggestions gathered from the Keefe Food Bank and promoting in the Weekly News. Very much helped by Jamie's pictorial skills.

What did not go well?

An attempt to increase visibility in the congregation by handing out stickers to those who brought in donations. A bust!

The last time it was done, 6 stickers were handed out and there were 250 members attending the service. We have a way to go.

What have I learned from both the good and the bad?

We need to keep coming up with new ideas to promote this effort.

How would I change actions?

No change, just keep plugging away

Goals/ Preliminary plans for the coming year

Increase the amount of food donated by getting more members of the congregation to bring in food.

## Green Sanctuary

Chairperson(s): Rod Groff/Maggie Goodwin; Current Members: Judy Belaval, John Deming, Sandy Frawley, Rod Groff, Ann Levison, Bernice Marie-Daly, Bill Rice, Kath Schomaker, Jim Sirch, Willow Sirch, Karel Snoble, Melinda Tuhus, Sarah Whitson. Maggie Goodwin, Dan Wade



<b>Actions taken</b>	<b>Date or ongoing</b>	<b>#USNH affiliated participants</b>	<b>Group or who and # benefiting</b>
Regifting Sale and Yard Sale	Annually, Nov/Dec	Nearly all USNH	Individuals, USNH budget and the Earth
Fossil-Fuel Divestment education, recycling information, Climate change education and legislative awareness programs and Sunday activities at USNH	Ongoing	Nearly all USNH	ALL USNH
Completed coordination of energy audit (lighting) and LED lighting upgrades at USNH	Ongoing	1	All USNH
Environmental Films co sponsored with ARE	Fall and Spring	About 35	About 20 USNH and 15 Community members
Actions/Protests: Members participated in marches, actions and protests, related to fracking, proposed pipelines, climate change and other environmental concerns	Ongoing	5-10	ALL USNH

**Reflections:**

**What were the high points this year?**

-Regifting Sale was again very successful with many participants donating/purchasing items. The sale is USNH's 2<sup>nd</sup> largest fundraiser and an important part of the annual budget. Also did the summer yard sale.

**What did not go well?**

Leadership change moving to a more shared leadership model that took some adjustment and lapses in coordination.

**What have I learned from both the good and the bad?**

- Regifting sale and annual tag sale went well but need more education for participants to understand the benefits to the earth of recycling gifts at the holiday time and reusing already purchased items in the summer.

**How would I change actions?**

-Our group is will continue to focus on the wider environment issues bjt hope to as well to explore next steps to making our own USNH site and community more conservation aware. Hope to work with other social justice groups and committees in the church to become a more Eco friendly and environmentally focused at USNH.

**Immigration and Refugee Task Force**

Chairperson(s): Co-facilitated by Sophie Tworkowski, Nancy Brown, Sarah Forman

Current Members: Isla Alexander, Gil Belaval, Nancy Brown, Sarah Forman, Tom Hardin, Carol Holloman, Craig Machado, Pat Perkins, Peter Schwartz, Sophie Tworkowski, Dan Wade, Skip Weldon, Heidi Zavatore-Veth and

Associate members: 33 others

<b>Actions taken</b>	<b>Date or ongoing</b>	<b>#USNH affiliated participants</b>	<b>Group or who and # benefiting</b>
Teach English Language Learners at Junta for Progressive Action	Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30 during school year	5	Survival and beginning English Language Learners, approx. 20
Increase understanding of Islam, refugees: Social Cinema film, <i>Refugee</i> , followed by panel discussion-- PLACE/IRIS/Adult RE/IRTF collaboration	Sept. 24	50 people	USNH members, community people
Two presentations about Islam by Muslim Coalition of Connecticut	Sept. 25, Oct. 30, 2017	Approx. 50	Members of USNH
Conducted Sunday service	October 9, 2017	7 IRTF people involved in service plus refugees from Iraq, Congo	Congregation present that day
Create opportunities to interact with refugee families: Conversation group with Syrian refugees	6 sessions, June-July at New Haven Library	10 Kids Service Team kids and parents; 20 IRTF members, associates	5 newly-arrived refugees
Bowling Parties (12/16 and 4/17);	12/16/16, 4/14/17.	25	Approx. 50 people
Concert at Hamden Library;	3/17	10	25
Active members of Refugee Resettlement Coalition	Since November 2016	2, plus numerous UNSH members	Iraqi family, arrived 4/25/17
Advocate locally, nationally for immigrant, refugee rights: vigil at Hamden Town Hall; training with other faith communities about sanctuary, accompaniment; initiated letter-writing campaigns to local, national representative to support immigrants, refugees	ongoing	Approx.. 20	Indirectly, refugees and immigrants
Partner with other USNH task forces to achieve IRTF objectives: Collaboration with Adult Religious Education re			Approx. 100 people

Social Cinema, speakers; Kids Service Team –activities with refugee families; other Social Justice Network members join in vigils, marches, demonstrations. Support the UUA Declaration of Conscience			
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**Reflections:**

**What were the high points this year?** Learning about Islam from the Muslim Coalition’s excellent speakers; the arrival of the refugee family and the initial contacts with them; taking part in the Bowling Parties and seeing the moms and kids having fun and interacting; seeing English language learners in the Junta classes gain confidence and speak more English.

**What did not go well?** At the second Bowling Party it became clear that we should have done some advance orientation about rules at the bowling alley. For future social/cultural events IRTF members should find out any rules/expectations of the venue in advance and brief the participants in both Arabic and English.

**What have I learned from both the good and the bad?** That interaction with people from other cultures is rewarding; that many congregation members don’t like to attend meetings, but they will pitch in in concrete ways, e.g. driving, contributions of goods for the refugee apartment; that it is a responsibility of “cultural companions” to orient the newcomers to customs and expectations.

**How would I change actions?** Plan for advance briefing, orientation of newcomers if we are attending public events.

**Kids’ Service Team**

Chairperson(s): Lurline deVos

Current Members: Pablo deVos-Deak, Arlo Hatcher, Sammy Hendon, Rebecca McChesney, Isaiah Phillips, Aniah Phillips, Kiki Phillips, Tatianna Phillips, Katlyn Soderholm, Elizabeth Soderholm, Eric Soderholm, Mia Northrop, Quinn Northrop, Jonah Heiser, Douglas Attardo, Meg Gurley, Dale Hatcher, Sarah Hendon, Mary Donohue, Sarah Northrop, Tricia Mangold-Heiser, Patricia McChesney and any and all USNH youth and friends who wish to participate.

<b>Actions taken</b>	<b>Date or ongoing</b>	<b>#USNH affiliated participants</b>	<b>Group or who and # benefiting</b>
Began creating IRIS apartment by moving donated furniture to storage	August 2016	5	Refugee families number unknown
Source to Sea River clean-up	9/24/16	20	Everyone who enjoys the Ct river
IRIS coat drive	October 2016	Unknown # donors; 5 youth	Refugees
Thanksgiving Pie making For the Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen	11/20/2016	25	Shut-ins and people attending DESK community dinner
Mitten tree for Waverly families	December 2016	Unknown # donors; 5 youth	Waverly residents
Bowling with refugee children	Christmas break 2016	15	Refugee children and USNH participants

IRIS Run for refugees	February 2017	5 runners; donor # unknown	IRIS
Making fleece blankets for refugees and homeless families	February 2017	20	Refugee and homeless families
Preparing and serving dinner for Abraham's Tent guests	April 2017	15	Abraham's Tent guests
Bowling with Refugee children	April 14, 2015	10	Refugee families
Creating a home for the refugee family	April 14-16	12 kids;7 adults	The Al-Saadi family
Supporting refugee children	ongoing	12-15	The Al-Saadi family
Refugee potluck	5/21/2017	TBD	Refugee families
Limulus project	June 2017	TBD	Science/horseshoe crabs

**What were the high points this year?** The high point this year was the opportunity to share in the sponsoring of a refugee family and to have a number of interconnected events that support refugees. This focus allows us to revisit the same social justice topic several times.

**What did not go well?** Cooking for Abraham's Tent conflicted with the timing of the OWL class. Times were rearranged but space was crowded and conveying the meaning of the event was challenging.

**What have I learned from both the good and the bad?**

From the good, it is great to have an overarching theme while maintaining diverse activities that are well liked, ie. The river clean-up and pie-making.

Bad: be aware of the impact of the physical setting on the activity of the group.

**How would I change actions?**

Going forward I would find a different way to work around the challenges of space and time at USNH.

**Mental Health Awareness Task Force**

Task Force Members: Letty McPhedran - Chair, Carmen Baker, Claire Bien, Marc Eisenberg, Tom Hardin, Abe Katz, Marian Katz, Ellen Mahoney, Graziela Reis, Justin Smith, Karen Swanson, Pat Vidal

We had a very successful 2016-17 year. Our group grew to 12 people throughout the year.

Hope's Nest, a supportive social hour with a talk each time continued once a month.

We ran a support group led by a DBSA (Depression Bi-polar Support Alliance) trained peer, Alan Rosenthal for a core group of 6 people.

Marc DeGregorio started a NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Family to Family group of seventeen people. He has a waiting list for the Fall session, so we know it will continue.

On October 30 we had 50 viewers for our annual Sarau, a cheerful, community building festival with dinner, featuring talents offered by volunteers in a talent show. Next year's date is Saturday Sept. 23.

Our First Annual Symposium on Mental Health Awareness- Building a Just Society: Creating Inclusive Communities for All took place on Dec. 3. Next year it will be on Saturday October 14.

Our movie choice was shown in February: Love and Mercy

We participated twice in Our Faith in Action

Next year we continue all these events and add a four hour training for leaders of Hearing Voices groups.

The remarkable outcome of this group is that each person takes on responsibilities that support our programs and the work is completely shared within the group.

## Preventing Gun Violence

Chairperson(s): Sally Connolly, Darrell McChesney, Hu Woodard

Current Members: Hubert Woodard, Darrell McChesney, Sally Connolly, Pamela Miller, Ann Levison, Gwen Heuss-Severance, Maggie Goodwin, John Deming, PJ Deak, Albert Bosch, Carole Arnold, and Roye Anastasio

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
Held Monthly Meetings	ongoing	10	Members of Mtg and congregation (in the long run)
Attendance at All Souls UU Church in New London & then reached out to all UU congregations in Connecticut to gauge interest in gun safety issues	ongoing	1 PVG member attended All Souls	Some interest among responding congregations - potential for future involvement
Participated in Connecticut Against Gun Violence (CAGV) Annual Meeting and became an official ally of CAGV	Sept 22	7	6 PVG members directly benefitted but knowledge gained will hopefully affect larger community
Co-sponsored with ARE the book discussion of "Guns Don't Kill People, People Kill People and Other Myths about Guns and Gun Violence"	Oct 30	15 attendees	Very good discussion
Co-sponsored with ARE @ Social Cinema "Newtown: What Remains After All Is Lost"	Nov 18	51 attendees	Good discussion among all who attended.
Attended CAGV presentation on legislative agenda at Westport UU congregation	February 10	5	Helped our committee plan subsequent advocacy activities (minimum # influenced 12)
Publicized and encouraged legislative advocacy among congregational members	March 12, March 19 and April 9	Unknown but transpired in Social Hall during coffee hour. Approximately 55 postcards written and sent to legislators re: gun safety legislation	Individuals who sent postcards and perhaps the legislators who received them (# unknown)

Supported CONECT's presentation at the Liquor Commission in Hartford re: revocation of Slyce's liquor license	April 2	2 PVG members	Reported back to PVG committee, CONECT appreciated USNH support at hearing
Attended UUA-UN Seminar and reported back to congregation	April 6-8	2 adult members of PVG TF and 2 youth (non PVG)	Knowledge gained to be shared with PVG members
Sponsored "Commonsense Gun Legislation and Safer Communities" Forum with CAGV and 2 Hamden legislators	April 9	50	Committee members, USNH members and friends, 1 CONECT member
Attended presentation on the Sandy Hook Parents v. Remington Court Case at Norwalk Community College with Atty Koskoff and Senators Blumenthal and Murphy	April 19	2 members of PVG	Obtained info re: court case to be used in future advocacy by PVG
Held preliminary discussions with Mental Health Awareness re: a Seminar on gun violence and mental health in 2017-2018 & other issues related to developing a Suicide Prevention & Gun Safety pledge	Late winter & ongoing	TBD	TBD

**What were the high points this year?** The high point was the presentation on, "Commonsense Gun Legislation and Safer Communities" on April 9th at USNH with Ron Pinciario of Connecticut Against Gun Violence, and representatives Josh Elliott and Michael D'Agostino. While attendance was not as high as we would wish, the speakers were excellent, the information conveyed critically important and the question and answer program enlightening.

Additionally, the showing of "Newtown: What Remains After All is Lost" was well-received albeit painful and the ensuing discussion thoughtful.

Finally, the members who came to the discussion of the "gun myths" spoke cogently, asked excellent questions and raised salient points—it was very informative and helpful to us as we continue our work.

**What did not go well?** We initially hoped to sponsor a forum in the late fall but had difficulty contacting the potential speakers. We learned that we needed a much longer planning period. There wasn't anything that "didn't go well" except we would have liked more folks to have attended the event on April 9th.

**What have we learned from both the good and the bad?**

How do we publicize and encourage attendance at USNH Social Justice events? What type of outreach works best? How do people wish to learn about issues? What type of activity draws people in and moves them to deeper involvement? Rev Megan's publicizing of an event/activity and her support are clearly valued by the congregation and lend credence to an event.

**How would I change actions?**

We had hoped to co-sponsor the April 9th event with Mishkan Israel and Spring Glen UCC but neither of their Social justice Committees had adequate time to consider. We need to involve them earlier in planning if we

wish to engage them in co-sponsoring. However, we were pleased that CONECT, CAGV, Mishkan Israel and Spring Glen UCC publicized the event through their venues.

We neglected to invite ALL the Hamden legislators to the event on the 5th - what was going to be just a presentation by CAGV, morphed into invitations to Hamden Police Chief Ryan, and representatives Elliott and D'Agostino but at that time we should have included Representatives Porter and Walker. Currently, Representative Porter is scheduled to discuss her position on HB 6200 and she may be joined by Senator Winfield and Representative Walker at our May 14th meeting to which we are inviting USNH members.

## UUSC Representative

Chairperson(s): P.J. Deak

Current Members:

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
OFA talks	2	Congregation	
Haiti Hurricane Relief fundraiser	10/2016	Congregation	UUSC Haiti Hurricane relief fund
Bulletin Board	Ongoing	Congregants in Social Hall	Whole Congregation
Distribution of free UUSC Declarations of Human Rights	12/2016 – 4/2017	Congregants in Social Hall	
Screening of Defying The Nazis	01/2017	10	

**What were the high points this year?** Fundraising for Hurricane relief in Haiti – over \$1,200 raised.

**What did not go well?** I had too many other commitments and was not able to focus on the UUSC / UUCSJ as much as I would have wanted.

**What have I learned from both the good and the bad?**

I need to find someone else to help support the UUSC publicity

**How would I change actions?** Not sure at this time.

## UU-UNO Envoy

Chairperson(s): P.J. Deak – Adult Envoy

Current Members: Pablo deVos-Deak – Youth Envoy  
Arlo Hatcher – Youth Envoy

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
Maintained a Bulletin Board of continuously updated UU-UNO and United Nations related materials from September thru June	ongoing	Congregation members during Coffee Hour every Sunday	All of USNH
Book Discussion of UN Spring Seminar Related Book – <i>Guns Don't Kill People, People Kill People and other myths about</i>	10/2016	15 attendees	Partnered with Gun Violence Prevention Task Force and Adult

<u>gun violence</u>			Religious Education
Book Discussion of UN Spring Seminar Related Book – <u>The Drone Eats With Me</u>	05/2017	Future	Partnered with peace Task Force , Adult Religious Education, and reached out to community groups / other liberal congregations
Attended UN Spring Seminar	04/2017	5 – PJ, Pablo, Arlo, Lurline deVos and Sally Connolly	
Planned and executed UN Service with guest speaker Bruce Knotts	02/2017	100+	USNH benefitted by having first hand experience with the director of the UU UNO as a guest speaker AND by becoming a blue ribbon congregation; and the UU UNO benefitted because we raised a whole bunch of money for them (\$1,200+)
OFA talks			
Petition to support Immigrants and refugees			

**What were the high points this year?** UN Service at USNH (despite the snowstorm) with Bruce Knotts was a big success... and other congregations have been impressed enough with the service we crafted for the UNO that at least 3 other congregations have used our entire service script when Bruce has subsequently spoken at their church.

And.... the UNO Spring Seminar was a big success – great location, convenient for youth and presenters – good partnership with UUSC and UUCSJ – excellent speakers and strong, informative programming... plus great worship music.

**What did not go well?** Convincing youth from USNH YRUU to attend the UN Spring Seminar, Convincing task forces that it would be a good use of some of their funds to support their members attending the UN Spring Seminar – the subject was right on target with their missions and would have allowed them to network with UUs and others from across the country who have similar interests... but their perceptions of what their funds were for did not allow for them to connect with the broader world of social justice and resistance education.



## Waverly/USNH Partnership

**Chairperson(s):** Sharon McBlain and June Schafer

**Current Members/Volunteers** Sharon McBlain, June Schafer, Tynicha Drummonds, Mark Loalbo, Isla Alexander, Jane Platt, Cathy Jackson, Bob Congdon, Naomi Polanetska, Tisa Wenger, Sophia Wenger, Melinda Tuhus, Lily Forbush

<b>Actions taken</b>	<b>Date or ongoing</b>	<b>#USNH affiliated participants</b>	<b>Group or who and # benefiting</b>
Waverly Focus on Reading at 49 Waverly Street	Year round with during congregation year and continuing through the summer months on each Wednesday night from 5 – 6PM	Tynicha Drummonds Isla Alexander Jane Platt Cathy Jackson Bob Congdon Sharon McBlain Mark Loalbo Naomi Polanetska Tisa Wenger Sophia Wenger Lily Forbush Jackie Shapiro Melinda Tuhus	Children ages 2 - 12 come to listen, participate and enjoy reading. Parents and community members are welcome. The children are encouraged to take books home. The volunteers get the benefit of interacting with the children and learning about their lives, joys and challenges
Supervised Activity Programming at 49 Waverly Street	Year round on each Wednesday night from 6 – 7:305 – 6PM	Tynicha Drummonds, Sharon McBlain, Cathy Jackson, Mark Loalbo	Regular supervised on site activities for about 15 children ages 3 – 11. Activities include seasonal crafts and organized outdoor activities
Waverly Youth Leadership Group	October 2015 – May 2016 Ongoing mentoring with Tynicha Drummonds, Mark Loalbo, Bob Congdon and Sharon McBlain	Tynicha Drummonds, Sharon McBlain, Mark Loalbo, Bob Congdon	The 12 and sometimes more teenagers attend plays by the Creative Consciousness Theatre and take advantage of other cultural opportunities and are accompanied by adults who care about them. The volunteers benefit too.
Birthday cards for each child and teen	Year round	June Schafer, Tynicha Drummonds	All of the children and teens, June gets joy from knowing how much the children like receiving them.
2 Skating trip to Waterbury Rink to encourage academic effort and reward success	One Fall and one in the spring	Tynicha Drummonds  Mark Loalbo	Families and children benefit from this supervised, positive, community building activity

PEP (People Empowering People) Training	2 Sessions (Fall & Spring) sponsored by CCA (Christian Community Action)	Tynicha Drummonds Sharon McBlain	The 6 – 8 teenage girls meet every Tuesday for 2 hours. PEP is a personal, family and leadership development program with a strong community focus

**What were the high points this year?** Tynicha along with the children, teens, Volunteers, Waverly parents and Housing Authority folks worked to together to create many positive experiences and effective programming this year. All of the children including the teenagers look forward to their own birthday card from Grandma June, with a \$1 bill in it. Some high points were

1. The fun the children and volunteers had with the Puppet Theater and Puppets that were donated by Jessie Greist
2. The progress toward literacy made by many children, but the stand out was Sheemica who with the help of Isla, Cathy and Jane who worked with the child and parent to facilitate intervention with the school. Sheemica is now a reader!
3. The mentoring relationship that have developed between Bob and Mark and some of the teenage boys and girls. This involves one on one conversation and help with job hunting, resume writing, etc.
4. The success of the group reading session for the younger children. A big word of appreciation to Isla, Jane, Cathy and others for making this happen
5. Although yet to be instituted, we are all looking forward to the new “Reading Incentive Initiative”. With the help of Naomi, a professional therapist, Isla, a skilled reading specialist as well Cathy and Jane, professional educator we are anxious to see if more children will be motivated and enthusiastic about reading.
6. Tynicha Drummonds is always a high point. Thanks to her we have increased the participation and feeling of ownership of the programming by the parents and others in the Waverly Community. Thanks to her there is always clear communication between the volunteers, parents, children and Housing Authority.
7. The PEP programming for the teenage girls has also been a high point.

**What did not go well? Focus on reading hour -** The space is small and the noise level is a problem. The number of children attending and participating in the 5 – 6 reading hour diminished. **WYLG -** Thanks to Tynicha the teenagers stay connected and supported. Mark and Bob also have forged meaningful relationships with many of the teens. We all wish we could do more.

**What have I learned from both the good and the bad?** I have learned that there is an ongoing interest on the part of the Waverly Community as well as on the part of USNH to keep this relationship and programming going. I have learned that that is a continuing stream of caring, capable people from USNH who take their turn stepping up to participate In the lives of the Waverly children and community. I have learned that the parents and families value the programming and want to see it continue. I have learned that the personal relationships that develop when you work together for the good of children are positive, meaningful and educational.

**How would I change actions?** But we are attempting to address this issue by instituting the reading incentive plan. Tynicha is on board and we are expecting some success. It isn’t easy to get some of the children to settle in for a session devoted to books and reading.

We also are hoping to keep the teens involved and work with them to take advantage of opportunities that come their way. Arrange more frequent meetings with Tynicha, volunteers, teen leaders and involved community people.

## **Stewardship 2017-18 – Strong Roots, Growing Branches**

Mary Beth Congdon and John Watson again co-chaired this year's campaign for the operating budget. We were assisted – BIG TIME – by Laura Lytton and Dana Capasso Stivers. Rev. Megan Lloyd Joyner also served ex officio and contributed concept and technical expertise as well as drafting some of the written materials.

In agreement with the Management Team we relied very largely on electronic communications – newsletter, emails, and the like. Only the major appeal, including the pledge form, went out by “snail mail” just before the climactic Celebration Sunday. Of course, we sent hard copies of all mailings to members and friends who do not use email or other online communications. This “primarily electronic” campaign obviously saves postage money and, we hope, increases visibility.

We also tried to stress and make simpler the means of online pledging (PayPal and Vanco) available on our web site, usnh.org. By the way, any who use those avenues to make your pledge, please be aware that while they are convenient, they do charge USNH 3% of your pledge amount. Please consider either (1) adding 3% or so to your pledge or (2) making your pledge payments via a direct monthly/quarterly/whatever payment through online checking at your bank. (No charge to you or USNH!)

In addition, we held two events: One we called a Sustainers Event, to which we invited a group of givers, large and small, who have faithfully supported USNH through the years. We wanted to thank them as representatives of a larger group whose generosity continues to sustain us. The second was a luncheon and serenade open to all held after the service on Celebration Sunday. We hope a good time was had by all.

These, and many other steps in our campaign, would simply not have been possible without the help of volunteers, too many to name here. You know who you are – the Sunday crew, gratitude speakers at services, mailing teams, etc. Thanks.

There are nearly infinite opinions about the best way to run these annual campaigns – theme/no theme, numerical \$ goals, specific asks (Can you increase X%?), and so on. This year we decided, again with input from the Management Team, to announce a specific pledge goal, \$482,000, based on a tentative budget.

As of this writing, we haven't made it. It is typical for some pledges to be delayed and for some additional pledges to come in throughout the year (new members, old ones returning, change of circumstances, etc.). And a goal is, of course, an aspiration. Some theories even say, more or less, “If you make the goal, you didn't set it high enough!”

That said, here are the up to date numbers for the stewardship campaign for fiscal year 17-18:

Number of pledges (individuals and families) received: 227 (about 20-25 pledges from last year still outstanding)

Total amount of those pledges: \$444, 526

Includes pledges from new members: \$19,612

Stewardship Committee: Mary Beth Congdon, Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner, Laura Lytton, Dana Capasso Stivers, John Watson

## **Sunday Morning Team**

Chair: Becky Sandmann Committee Members: Pam Niles, Sally Connolly, Greg Feeley, Al Bosch, Karen Swanson, Theresa Childs, Amy Wexler, Dee Arneith, Ray Zalenski, Barbara Orrok, George Deming, and Michele DeMusis.

**Number of new Committee Members sought for 2016-2017:** We can always use new members to assist with the tasks on Sunday Morning and with other activities we host. This activities include: Greeting at the door Sunday Mornings, Welcoming visitors and assisting with helping visitors feel welcome. As well as organize coffee hour.

**Additional Comments/Information:** We believe that Sunday Morning Team is a gateway for visitors to become comfortable at USNH and to eventually become a member. One of our goals is to reach out and integrate visitors and other new folks. We also believe that working with other committees, as in hosting joint activities, will assist visitors and new folks with getting connected at USNH.

Along with our usual Sunday Morning activities, this year we have sponsored “First Sunday’s” with either pot luck soups, salads or snacks. We organized a third USNH picnic in August. Other activities we have been involved in have included the Chocolate Auction, assisting with the used book sale and cosponsoring the Mad Hatter multigenerational gathering.

### **Sunday Morning Team**

**The 2016-2017 goals for the Sunday Morning Team are as follows.**

- To provide support on Sunday mornings with:
  - Greeting
  - Ushering
  - Supervising coffee hour
  - Welcoming visitors, collecting information from them, and assisting them to feel welcome, especially during coffee hour
- To further assist with making a community by:
  - Organizing monthly pot luck soups or snacks or salads on the first Sunday of each month
  - Assisting with the planning of the annual Chocolate Auction which is also a fund raiser for USNH
- To assist Membership Committee and Membership Coordinator in order to increase membership and further welcome visitors by:
  - Maintaining visitor nametags, lists and data regarding the number of times folks visit USNH in order to know who might be interested in joining and/or participating in various activities at USNH
  - Assisting with possible new member activities as needed and/or requested
- To assist with member/visitor support and information:
  - Maintain pamphlets in the lobby for visitors, guests and USNH members
  - Facilitate and order supplies for the kitchen
- To further USNH goals we are working with other committees and groups to plan for a multi-generational fun activity in March, 2018, which we would like to see become an annual event.

## **Worship Committee**

Loren Fields, Tom Hardin, Gwen Heuss-Severance (ch), Sue Linsley, Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner, Linda Mehta, Deb Pascale, Jim Peters, Rich Stockton

**The goals of the Worship Committee for 2016-2017:**

- 1. To support our minister and congregation by helping to provide high quality Sunday Worship Services.**

The Committee’s monthly meetings focused on the calendar, the selection of the monthly themes, the advance planning of the Worship Associate schedule, and developing and refining guidelines for the elements of the order of service (OOS): the gathering, welcome and announcements, the chalice

lighting, the Our Faith in Action speaker, the reception of the offering, reading from the Book of Joys and Concerns and connection and meditation. As chairperson of the Committee, Gwen joined Rev. Megan, Director of Lifespan Religious Education Jesse Greist and Music Director Linda Pawelek on Tuesday mornings to plan the Sunday services. For the coming year, the Committee considered 2 subscriptions for UU theme-based ministry programs and has agreed to share the cost of a subscription to *Soul Matters* with Rev. Megan.

**2. To help locate and support guest ministers and lay members who serve as Worship Leaders when our minister is absent; and to explore and incorporate a variety of spiritual beliefs, expressions and practices in our worship services.**

A. The lay-led and guest worship services since June 2016:

July 10, 2016: Gail Figliola & Gwen HS, *What does home mean to you?*

July 17, 2016: Greg Berg & Tom Hardin: *Faith*

August 7, 2016: Rich Stockton: *Teihard de Chardin and the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle*

August 14, 2016: Lurline DeVos, PJ Deak, Randall Spaulding & Gwen HS: *The Report from GA*

August 21, 2016: Gwen HS & Sue Linsley: *Rejoice in the Land*

Sept. 4, 2016: Alex and Jeremy Hill, Sue Linsley, *Navigating the changes*

Oct. 9, 2016: *Immigration Rights Task Force*

Oct. 23, 2016: Rev. Kathleen Green & Rev. Megan, *I doubt it*

Nov. 11, 2016: Rev. Chris Antal, Rev. Megan, Peace Task Force, *On Resistance*

Nov. 27, 2016: Rev. Randall Spaulding: *Spirit of thanks, soul of justice*

Dec. 11, 2016: Tom Hardin, Music Sunday: *Filled with good things*

Jan. 1, 2017: Sue Linsley and Gwen H-S: *The Optimism of Uncertainty*

Jan. 8, 2017: Beth Roth, Loren Field, *Taking Refuge*

Feb. 2, 2017: Bruce Knotts, PJ Deak, *UUs and the UN*

Feb. 19, 2017: Rev. Audette Fulbright Fulson, *Love is the water that wears down the rock*

March 12, 2017: Rev. Audette Fulbright Fulson, *Who/se are we?*

March 26, 2017: John Pawelek, Linda Mehta, *The miracle of life on earth*

April 2, 2017: Ann Levison, Melinda Tuhus, Tom Hardin, *Green Sanctuary*

May 7, 2017: Sierra Maria Gerfarro, Rev. Megan, *Where does it hurt?*

May 28, 2017: Rev. Randall Spaulding, Rich Stockton, *What is saving you now?*

B. During the summer of 2017, The Worship Associates are responsible for planning 8 of the 11 Sunday services and are currently recruiting worship leaders and musicians.

**3. And to plan for the future of the Worship Committee through recruitment of new members, training and service participation.** We appreciate the gifts of longtime committee members Liz Appel and Ellen Greist who resigned this year. In March and April we welcomed two new members, Jim Peters and Deb Pascale. Rich Stockton will chair the committee beginning June 2017. Some members attended workshops on worship planning and sermon preparation and together we read *The Shared Pulpit* by Erika Hewitt and appreciated Sue Linsley's synopsis of *Worship That Works* by Arnason and Rolenz. In addition to 2 facilities training sessions with the sound system, lights, and keys, Rev. Randall led us and interested worship leaders in an on-campus worship training in October 2016.