

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NEW HAVEN
ANNUAL REPORT
2015-2016



The Unitarian Society of New Haven
700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, CT 06517
Phone: 203-288-1807
Email: office@usnh.org
www.usnh.org

Minister, Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner
Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Jesse Greist
Congregational Administrator, Jamie Ross
President of the Board of Trustees, Holly Hawkins
Chair of the Management Team, David Jones

June 29, 2016

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2015-2016 Board of Trustees Report

Our congregational year started with the excitement of calling Rev Megan Lloyd Joiner and the challenge of starting to work with our Policy Governance structure. The Board's role has shifted to monitoring policy and linking with the congregation to see how our shared ends are being realized. Policy governance was adopted to clarify accountability, responsibility and authority in the roles of our minister, Board, staff, and lay leaders, and this year has seen this put into action. The Board expresses our sincere gratitude to the Management Team for assuming the responsibility of the operational needs of our congregation. One tangible success of this structure was that it allowed Rev. Megan to take a leave knowing that operations would continue. We hope, too, that each of you has felt that your energy, interests and passions were supported and able to thrive within our new structure. The Board hopes that our first full year of policy governance and shared ministry with Rev. Megan has laid a solid foundation for years to come.

To review the Board goals for this year:

Goal #1 - Interpretation of Policy Governance Board policies in collaboration with the Management Team.

Goal #2 – By-law revisions.

How successful were we in meeting the goals?

Goal #1: Policy interpretation is an ongoing collaboration with the Management Team and the Board of Trustees, and will continue over the next year. Financial policies 1.5 thru 1.7 were interpreted. Policy interpretation allows a clear, shared understanding of how the policies will be implemented.

Goal #2 – A By-law revision committee was appointed by the Board of Trustees and includes Bob Congdon, Mary Donohue (chairperson), Bill Goward, Holly Hawkins and Pam Miller. Meetings will be held with the congregation for members to review and provide input on the revisions. The revised By-laws will be presented for approval at the fall congregational meeting.

Other highlights from the year include:

- Approving \$25,000 from unrestricted funds to support hiring 2 staff members per the recommendation of Rev. Megan and the Management Team.
- 3 working groups created within the Board to help develop areas of Policy Governance:
 - Monitoring Group – addresses how the Board monitors our Ends progress and policy compliance
 - Governance Group – to continue policy interpretation and evaluation and recommendation of a Governance coach.
 - Linkage Group – to work with connecting with the congregation in how we are meeting our ends and how USNH envisions ourselves in the future.
- Ministerial Start-up retreat on 1/23/16 with Joe Sullivan, UUA Consultant, that was held with a revised agenda since Rev. Megan was on leave. The Board and the Management Team worked on defining each group's roles within policy governance.

- Supporting the Stewardship Drive by pledging early, and making follow-up contacts with members.
- Retreat on April 16 with Joe Sullivan that picked up on the Start-up retreat with Rev Megan back from leave. The retreat looked back at the reasons we chose Rev. Megan as our settled minister and where the congregation is now in relation to our shared ministry.
- Supporting the Management Team in developing a capital budget and the means to pay for it and calling a special congregational meeting on April 17 in order to present and vote on the capital budget.
- Thank you notes sent to individuals each month coordinated by Merrily Kaplan and Suzanne Miller to show our sincere gratitude to members whose contributions are extraordinary and help realize our mission.

We also want to express our sincere thank you to our members whose terms conclude this year: Past President Mary Donohue, Treasurer, Mary Losee, and Members-at-Large, Merrily Kaplan, John Manning and Suzanne Miller.

Respectfully submitted,
Holly Hawkins, President, Board of Trustees

2015-16 Adult Religious Education Committee Report

Chairperson: P.J. Deak

Members: 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.

ARE Activities held in the 2015-2016 congregational year...

Date	Event Description	# Participants
All Year	<u>Tuesday Conversations</u> - Facilitated by Helene & Bill Goward	various
July 2015	Discussion #1 - <u>General Assembly</u> Actions of Immediate Witness	27

Date	Event Description	# Participants
	In partnership with USNH Social Justice Council & GA Delegates	
July 2015	Discussion #2 - <u>General Assembly</u> Actions of Immediate Witness In partnership with USNH Social Justice Council & GA Delegates	12
Sept 2015	Social Cinema #1 – <u>SELMA</u> In partnership with the USNH Anti-Racism Task Force; with introduction by John Pawelek who marched at Selma	50
Sept 2015	Book Discussion - <u>A God That Could Be Real</u> Presentation, discussion & book signing by Beacon Press Author Nancy Ellen Abrams	30
Oct 2015 thru Feb 2016	14 Session Course - <u>Rise Up and Call Her Name</u> Facilitated by Becky Sandmann; UUA Curriculum; Members had a potluck party after the conclusion of the course. 10-15 attended each session	20
Oct 2015	Discussion - <u>The Return of Anti-Semitism</u> Led by Gwen Heuss-Severance based on an article in the Wall Street Journal	6
Oct 2015	Social Cinema #2 - Double Feature – <u>Here, one small blue state's struggle with immigration & Living in a Broken System</u> In partnership with USNH UUSC Representatives and Christian Community Action – with discussion afterwards with Mothers For Justice and with Filmmaker Jamie Almodovar	35
Oct 2015	Book Discussion - <u>ELITE: Uncovering Classism in UU History</u> by Rev. Mark Harris	14
Oct 2015	Social Cinema #3 - <u>Abrazos</u> by Luis Argueta In partnership with the USNH Immigration & Refugees Task Force; included a diaper drive for JUNTA and a skype interview with filmmaker who was in Guatemala	30
Nov 2015	Slideshow and discussion - Personal experiences <u>volunteering with Project Medishare</u> at a trauma hospital in Port-au-Prince, Haiti Presented by USNH Member Dr. Phil Brewer, in partnership with the USNH UUSC Representatives	11
Dec 2015	Social Cinema #4 - <u>Xmas Without China</u> Presented in partnership with Gwen Heuss-Severance	37
Jan 2016	Social Cinema #5 - <u>The Soloist</u> In Partnership with the USNH Mental Health Awareness Action Group	34
Jan 2016	Social Cinema #6 - Special Event - <u>Salam Neighbor</u> In partnership with USNH Kids' Service Team. This was the Connecticut premier of this film and USNH was one of the first places in the country to screen the film.	55
Jan 2016	<u>Social Justice Fair</u> ARE Social Cinema Participated in the Social Justice Council's Social Justice Fair as a partner organization with many of the task forces and action groups	n/a
Feb 2016	Social Cinema #7 - <u>Roadmap To Apartheid</u>	29

Date	Event Description	# Participants
	In partnership with the USNH Peace Task Force and Jewish Voice For Peace – New Haven	
Feb 2016	Common Read Discussion #1 - <i>Just Mercy</i> by Bryan Stevenson	13
Feb 2016	Common Read Discussion #2 - <i>Just Mercy</i> by Bryan Stevenson	9
Mar 2016	Social Cinema #8 - <i>Living For 32</i> In Partnership with USNH Gun Violence Prevention Action Group & Spring Glen UCC (part of a 3-part series hosted by the two congregations)	52
Apr 2016	Social Cinema #9 - <i>Divide In Concord</i> In partnership with the USNH Environmental Justice Task Force	15
June 2016	Social Cinema #10 - <i>A Place At The Table</i> In Partnership with the USNH Kids' Service Team; including a food drive to benefit the USNH Food Bank	[Future]

2015-16 Buildings and Grounds Committee

This year has been a busy one for the B&G Committee: David Stagg, Martin Gent, Susan Godshall, Gil Belaval, Walter Gayeski, Anthony Clark, and David Jones.

We have continued the process of evaluating the major building systems at USNH and have begun implementing recommendations. A \$144,800 capital budget, prepared by the management team, was approved by the congregation in April. An LED lighting improvement project was completed by Lantern Energy at no cost to USNH. An RFP was issued to switch our original oil fired boiler to a high efficiency gas fired boiler and remove our oil tank from the ground. The contract was signed with Environmental Engineering and will be completed by 9/1/16. Bids have also been accepted for smaller projects including repairing the concrete front steps, replacing the chancel floor, and improving building security.

Future projects in the works include replacing the front doors, reroofing over the lobby/coat closet area, installing solar panels on the roof, repairing our Drivit outer walls, and resealing and relining the lower parking lot. Evaluation of the building with preservation architect Leland Torrence will continue with a goal of establishing a 5 year plan for maintaining the building.

Many other smaller projects have been handled by volunteers: Gil Belaval organized the shed clean up, Terry Vidal, Terry Durham, Patrick Korth, and John Walsh cut and cleared a lot of fallen wood, Lois Smith and Carole Arnold organized our work days, and many other projects were finished by many folks. Thanks for helping make it all happen.

2015-16 Children and Youth Religious Education Committee

Children & Youth Religious Education Committee Report 2015-16

2015-2016 Committee Members: Lurline deVos, Chair (transitioning to Chair Emeritus), Meg Gurley (Rising Chair 2016-17) Vicki Seitz, Secretary (continuing), Patricia McChesney (continuing), Maureen Herbert-Gilmore (continuing), Robb Camm (continuing).

Committee Accomplishments: 2015-2016 has been another productive and enjoyable year for the Child and Youth Religious Education Committee. We continue to have a very positive working relationship with Jesse Greist, our Director of Life Span Religious Education. His interactions are consistently warm, respectful, collaborative, and affirming. His interactional style sets a positive tone for the committee, volunteer teachers, and children and their families in our program. We look forward to our continued work with him.

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

We are extraordinarily grateful to our over 40 volunteer teachers and helpers who have supported the CYRE program by donating hours of their time to our USNH children, youth, and teachers. We are a cooperative RE program which relies on our volunteers. We are also appreciative for the congregants who have supported our children as their Secret Buddies and Read- for Rheylyene sponsors.

The CYRE committee in collaboration with the DRE met the majority of our stated goals in 2015- 2016. The CYRE committee

- Supported our DLRE in his leadership responsibilities managing RE programs for our children and youth;
- Worked with the DLRE to carryout Children's Chapels for the year;
- Continued our penpal/sponsorship of Rheylyene Ogabang, the UU child in the Philippines, and raised funds for her education. We have raised more than the amount needed for the remainder of her education through high school. We are initiating the sponsorship of a second child.
- Continued three intergenerational activities begun last year: a UNICEF kickoff Halloween party, a Community Build Lego night, and the Secret Buddy Program with a Buddy Banquet and continued connections.
- Continue the children's participation in the service. This was greatly facilitated by Reverend 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.
- Recruited teachers to fill any unfilled positions for 2015-2016.
- Is planning, in collaboration with the DLRE, the CYRE Sunday in June 2016 which will recognize children who are Stepping-Up and thank the teacher volunteers.

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

- Teacher recruitment process for 2015-2016 is underway.
- In collaboration with DLRE, we are currently continuing our curricula evaluation by polling past teachers, and modifying, supplementing, and/ or finding new curricula as DLRE and CYRE Committee deem necessary; We are continuing to seek ways to strengthen our intergenerational programs

- Our biggest challenge this year was the integration of YRUU into the CYRE committee.
- We were unable to recruit a youth member, but are delighted to have YRUU advisor Robb Camm's participation on the committee.
- It is also an ongoing struggle to recruit both committee members and teachers. We are hoping that the coming year with Rev. Megan will bring renewed energy to the congregation and enhance members' commitment.

CYRE Goals for 2016-2017:

- Supporting our DLRE in his leadership responsibilities managing RE programs for our children and youth;
- We would like to recruit 2-3 new members and, in particular, another male member. We are very interested in having a youth member from YRUU as they lend a unique perspective. To join contact Meg Gurley, margrettagurley@gmail.com or call (203) 464-2484. When registering their child, parents in particular are invited to join to support this cooperative RE program.
- Working with DLRE to configure Children's Chapels for the upcoming year;
- Continuing to maintain our relationship with the UU's in the Philippines through supporting the education of Rheyline and a second child we hope will come from the Samaka congregation;
- Inviting the YRUU teens to choose one or two from their group to become a youth member of our CYRE committee and striving to find ways to be of support to the YRUU program;
- In collaboration with the DLRE and ministerial staff, carryout a fire drill in October 2017;
- Expanding the Classroom Coffees program to facilitate home to classroom communication and strengthen the children's religious education;
- Collaborating with DLRE in planning CYRE Sunday in June 2017 which will recognize children who have Stepped Up and thank teachers and other volunteers;
- Recruiting teachers to fill any unfilled positions for 2016-2017; Exploring novel recruitment methods.

Cluster Connection: 2016



Cluster Connection: 2016 “We Are Stronger Together”

On Saturday April 9, 2016, USNH was the host congregation for the first Connecticut Cluster Connections event, from 8 am to 4 pm.

There were

- 101 registrants (of whom 5 were UU ministers)
- 12 (of 18) Connecticut UU congregations were represented
- 17 workshops or panel discussions
- 24 presenters from the 12 congregations

Rev. Josh Pawelek of the Unitarian Universalist Society: East in Manchester, CT was the Keynote Speaker. Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner participated in the Opening Ceremony.

The exit surveys were overwhelmingly positive, indicating a real desire to connect with folks from other UU congregations.

We would also like to extend our thanks and appreciation to USNH volunteers who helped make the day successful, especially:

Pam Niles, Al Bosch, Greg Feeley, Carol Cheney, Mary Losee, Lois Smith

Respectfully Submitted,
The Cluster Connection Team

Becky Sandmann
Laura Lytton
Mary Donohue
Robb Camm
Sally Connolly
Sue Linsley

2015-16 Director of Lifespan Religious Education

RE Overview

Children’s and Youth Religious Education at USNH saw several encouraging trends in 2015-2016. While total enrollment was slightly down from previous years,

attendance percentage was considerably higher. This means that there were fewer people that enrolled children, but did not wind up attending.

Adult RE ran a successful class series (Rise Up and Call Her Name), saw a continued rise in attendance, and community presence at Social Cinema events, and ran several successful “one day” workshops, discussions and events. For more information about ARE happenings, see the chair report presented by PJ Deak.

Curriculum

Our religious education curricula follow an alternating year cycle, since most classes are multi-age. In year “A” classes focus in on UU identity, history and values. In year “B” we explore the sources of Unitarian Universalism, including our Jewish-Christian heritage and other “neighboring faiths”. 2015-2016 was a “B” year.

Teachers and Classes

The teaching corps has been wonderful. The teams coalesced quickly, and became largely autonomous as the year progressed. As DLRE, I made it my goal to ensure weekly communication with all teachers and to have all class materials ready for teachers ahead of time. With the help of Pam Niles, this goal was largely met.

As mentioned above, attendance in regular RE classes hovered between 70 and 80 percent this year, which is a marked increase from prior years. Attendance in YRUU also averaged 80% of those registered throughout the year. The Big Questions class, which was geared towards high school age youth ran for one semester only, due to lower than expected attendance. Also, the Spirit Play class, which ran during first service in the fall, was canceled when we moved to one service. Of the seven children that were registered for this class, three began to attend at 11:15.

We had very little need of substitute teachers this year, as most teachers were present on their scheduled days and others on the team stepped up to teach when the scheduled teacher couldn't make it.

Attendance

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

Nursery/Pre-K: 5 per week during regular worship service, 0 during the music and meditation service

Spirit Play (fall only): 3 per week

K/1st grade: 8 per week

2/3rd grade: 9 per week

4/5th grade: 11 per week

6/7th grade: 9 per week

8th grade affirmations: 7 per week (near 100% attendance!)

Big Questions: 3 per week

YRUU: 9 per week

Summary: RE classes and YRUU saw average weekly attendance of 59 students per week, or nearly 80% of those enrolled in classes.

Budget

I was very grateful to have received a generous professional development budget, which allowed me to pay LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association) membership dues, attend two District Run Renaissance Modules, and attend regular DRE “cluster” meetings. The CYRE budget was adequate and was largely used to support special events and initiatives, provide snacks for RE classes, run retreats for YRUU, and purchase curriculum/support materials for regular classes and the Our Whole Lives sexuality education program.

Special Events and Fund-raisers

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

The Halloween party had lower than expected attendance, but was well organized and all attendees enjoyed themselves. Following “Trick or Treat for UNICEF” we sent a donation of nearly \$350 to UNICEF. It has come to our attention that many schools and community organizations run Halloween parties, so we are considering stepping back from having a Halloween party at USNH in fall, 2016. Read for Rheylyene garnered more participation than in past years. The children that participated in all elements of the initiative found the experience quite fulfilling, and raised a total of \$541, which together with prior years’ donations has put us a full two years ahead of our fundraising goals. Due to restructuring of the UUPCC, the annual cost of this program is decreasing, and as such it looks like we may have fulfilled our pledge already to support Rheylyene through High School. We plan to continue exchanging letters and pictures with Rheylyene in the coming years, and may even begin supporting another Unitarian child in the Philippines. The Getting to Know U program was quite successful, with just shy of 40 children and 40 adults signing up to exchange notes and gifts. We again held a “Buddy Banquet” which was attended by over 90 people. In the weeks that followed the banquet, the CYRE committee set aside space in the social hall for adult and child buddies to meet up and share time, snacks and activities. Feedback was positive, and we are looking into ways to further encourage these buddy connections to remain strong outside of “official” activities.

Children’s Chapels

The children’s chapels this year were hugely successful, thanks in no small part to the support of the CYRE committee, and regular volunteers. With an average attendance of 20 children, the Pre-K through 5th graders examined the myriad ways in which we connect to our faith heritage through music, science, story, justice work and our own insatiable curiosity.

Young Adults

While efforts to find a coordinator for young adult activities at USNH were unsuccessful, there was some progress made, including greater access to childcare at congregational activities and meetings, greater attendance at social cinema events, young adult participation in Small Group Ministry, and targeted potluck dinners for parents with young children, and “20-30 somethings”, organized by Rev. Megan and myself. We plan to continue and expand these events in 2016-2017.

2016-2017

Looking ahead to next year, RE priorities/goals include:

1. Recruiting a dedicated teaching team for the 2016-2017 congregational year. We currently have 25 spots to fill. I remain confident that we'll fill them by early August, but it's a high priority. Once filled, I will turn my attention to further developing more effective in-gathering and continued support for teachers, including investigating an online format for teachers in addition to the face-to-face orientation. We will continue to provide CYRE committee liaisons for each teaching team, and weekly check in opportunities to supplement the extant feedback formats.
2. Recruiting and training four additional OWL facilitators by the end of CY2016, and moving ahead with the new class structure for OWL as part of the K-1 and 4-5th grade curriculum, as well as high school OWL divided between two years.
3. Continuing to find ways to work with parents and CYRE committee members to offer safe, positive, inquisitive ways to explore faith formation across the RE spectrum.
4. Further developing ways to bring families and community members together for meaningful exchange and engagement both on Sundays and in special events such as the community builds and “Secret Buddy” program, which will move to fall 2016 instead of spring.
5. Ongoing professional development through participation in the renaissance modules offered by the UUA - the next will be my fifth and should move me closer to my credentialing goals.
6. Continue to work with Rev. Megan to live out the USNH mission through multigenerational services, engaging events and activities and meaningful, well coordinated worship opportunities for all ages.
7. Assuming an ever deeper role in Adult Religious Education, helping to bring three new classes to USNH, more one-day discussions and workshops, and further supporting the successful extant offerings such as social cinema and Common Read.

2015-16 Endowment and Legacies Committee

To support the USNH mission of "Inspiring lives of compassion and generosity," the following goals guided our work this year:

1. Continue 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.
3. Continue to support USNH by providing a distribution of 2% of the endowment value based on a 13-quarter rolling average.
4. Complete the recommendations on cash management being developed by a subcommittee of the Finance Committee and the Endowment and Legacies Committee and submit them to the Board of Trustees for review and approval.
5. Provide access to Committee records and increased transparency about the endowment while protecting the confidentiality of USNH members' financial and estate plans.

Endowment and Senn Fund results to date

The performance from inception to April 2016 of the endowment and Senn funds managed by the committee is described in the charts below:

Fund	Original Value	Value 4/30/16	Growth
1978 Fund	\$41,000	\$202,251	\$161,251
1989 Fund*	\$96,008	\$124,003	\$27,995*
Winchell Fund **	<u>\$357,818</u>	<u>\$557,602</u>	<u>\$199,784</u>
TOTAL	\$494,826	\$883,856	\$389,030

*Since 2013, \$79,000 has been withdrawn from the 1989 Fund to support USNH capital and operating budgets. Prior to 2013, various modest amounts were withdrawn to fund various capital and program costs.

** Established in 2011

Senn Fund*	\$7,915	\$8,099	\$184*
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*Since 2013, \$ 8000 has been withdrawn to support religious education at USNH.

The Senn Fund

In 1999, the Endowment Committee assumed management of the Senn donation as a board-designated fund. The original amount of \$4,500 donated by Blanche and Melton Senn for religious education has grown on average 9% per year to a high of more than \$17,000. After the congregation voted to increase the spending from the fund in recent years, the fund is expected to be completely expended by 2018.

RECENT HISTORY OF THE USNH ENDOWMENT

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. Jean Winchell's will specified that her gift to the endowment could not be used as collateral for a loan. To ensure that we could honor that condition as well as honor long-term members Jean and Herb Winchell, who made such a large gift, the Endowment Committee chose to create the Winchell Fund as a separate fund.

2. Major revisions to the endowment bylaws in June 2012

At a Congregational Meeting in June 2012, 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 income and dividends.
- Distributions may be used to fund, without limitation, existing programs, capital needs, and new initiatives or contingencies.
- The Endowment and 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 could vote to take more or less of a distribution than the amount recommended by the Endowment and Legacies Committee.

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. The endowment principal (the original gift amount) will continue to be preserved and invested while some of the total return can be used annually to support USNH capital and operating budgets.

Legacy Society

The Legacy Society has been established to recognize and honor those members who have made an endowment gift of at least \$10,000 or included a gift of any amount to USNH in their estate plans.

Since last year's annual meeting, the following names have been added to the list of Legacy Society members displayed in the USNH foyer:

John and Helen Wolfe
Charlotte and Fred Flessa Family

Please contact a member of the Endowment and Legacies Committee to discuss your options for supporting the USNH mission.

Fred Morrison, Chair
Bob Congdon
Jeremy Hill
Linda Mehta
John Watson

Mary Beth Congdon, Consultant
Carol Cheney, Consultant
Thea Bourke-Martin, Advisor

2015-16 Finance Committee

Chair: Sandy Frawley
Members: Mary Losee, Greg Seaman

The members of the committee also serve as treasurer (ML) and assistant treasurers (SF, GS), and much of the work this year dealt with supervising bookkeeping and payroll activities during personnel changes. The committee has worked closely with the new contract bookkeeper to identify and implement a better online platform for Quickbooks and to set up a new chart of accounts and reporting schedule for the next fiscal year.

The Finance Committee participated in the process of developing the 2016-17 budget by focusing on realistic projections in the non-pledge income lines.

2015-16 History, Archives and Library

Jane Platt, Chair; Toby Appel, Frank Jonientz, James Platt, Peggy Rae, Yvette Scharf, Joan Silverman

This has been another good year for our committee.

We have continued work on the Dorothy F. Harned library. Over 1,000 titles are databased. All of these have pockets, cards and are stamped "USNH." The cards have the book title, author and category. We plan to shelve the books in categories for ease in finding books, and will have printouts available. In making the room look more like a library, we have cleared out some things that had been stored there. We identified some books suitable for very young children and placed them in a basket for use by those giving child care. We are working on getting photo images

restored, matted, framed and rehung. Our goal is to have a re-opening event in the near future.

We have made progress in several areas in the archives. 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. There had been no systematic record of the art objects in the building. We consulted with Emily Bett and Dody Gall and with their help 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 Zeidenberg sculpture hanging in the stairwell.

Work continues on digitizing the oral histories of longtime members we have on audio cassette tapes. We're about 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, and assisted newsletter staff with information for obituaries of deceased members. I have also assisted the committee which is revising the by-laws by locating early revisions of the by-laws.

Special thanks to Melinda Tuhus for her interviews and to Dody Gall and Emily Bett for their wisdom and advice.

I am grateful to the committee members for their hard work and good humor and for filling in for me when needed.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Platt

2015-16 Management Team

Sandy Frawley, Georgia Jennings, Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner, David Jones, Chair

In May, 2015, the Board of Trustees decided to make the Management Team an ongoing component of Policy Governance at USNH. Since that time, it has been "pedal to the metal" for the Management Team. After Rev. Fritz Hudson left in late June, the MT expanded its lay membership to three people by welcoming Georgia Jennings onto the team for a two year term. With the departure of Congregational Administrator Tisha Ferguson in July, the MT stepped in to carry out the office functions. Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner began work in August, and the MT embarked on an intensive search process to fill the administrator role. Two part-time positions, office manager and operations manager, were proposed and funding was approved by the Board of Trustees. Jamie Ross and Lewis Eisenberg began work at the end of September. When office assistant Leslie Hueffman resigned in

February, the MT hired a part-time contractor bookkeeper, Antonia Baroga, and has worked closely with the treasurers to introduce the USNH Quickbooks system to her. Antonia will continue as our bookkeeping contractor in the next fiscal year, upgrading our Quickbooks set-up, processing all check requests, and preparing regular financial reports. The office manager position was increased to full time to allow Jamie to take on some of Leslie's former tasks related to bank deposit preparation and management of our database, ChurchDB. Reflecting her expanded time and additional responsibilities that she will have next year, Jamie's title has been changed to Congregational Administrator, which was the title of the former full time people in this position. This is continued as a full time position in the next fiscal year. The part-time operations manager position has been discontinued due to budgetary constraints.

Other major activities during the year have included: working with a consultant to review various building systems and priorities for repair and replacement; arranging for urgent building repairs; preparing a capital budget (with great assistance from the Building and Grounds Committee) for presentation to the congregation in April; working with the BoT to interpret and operationalize key Governance policies; working with the Council of Chairs during the year on planning, activities coordination, and budget priority setting; and developing the annual operating budget for 2016-17 for presentation at the June 5 congregational meeting.

2015-16 Membership Committee

The membership committee coordinated activities with the newly hired membership coordinator. Visitor information was tracked and on first Sundays a welcome chat was offered as an intro to UU history and beliefs. In fall and spring a series of workshops were offered to help newcomers discern their alignment with our congregation and to explain its workings. We resumed the practice of writing and posting bios of new members. We set up and staffed a welcome corner in the social hall to provide a quiet place for visitors to speak with a few current members.

2015-16 Minister's Report

What a year it has been! First, I am deeply gratified to be your settled minister. Thank you for welcoming me into this community and into your lives. Thank you also for your ongoing support of my ministry, my family, and me. This year has been challenging, rewarding, and instructive for all of us. Your enthusiasm, service, feedback, and especially your compassion and care for each other and for me this winter have been incredibly moving. Thank you for your understanding, graciousness, and willingness to step up during my leave of absence. I so look forward to celebrating our ministry together at my installation in October (date TBD soon).

My main goals for the year were to provide quality worship services on Sunday mornings, provide pastoral care in partnership with the Lay Ministers, to 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.

To this end, I:

- i. Planned, participated in, and preached in sixteen Sunday morning services and planned and/or participated in seven multi-generational services and three additional services. I consulted with the Worship Committee and worked closely with Jesse Greist, Director of Lifespan Religious Education and Linda Pawelek, Director of Music. In January, we transitioned to a new service arrangement with one main service at 11:15am and a Music and Meditation service at 10:00am led by Bill Braun and members of the congregation. During my leave, the Worship Committee, led by Gwen Heuss-Severance, coordinated Sunday services with guest ministers. I will preach five times over the summer.
- ii. Worked 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 multiple members and friends throughout the year. I made visits to Whitney Center to visit residents. I represented USNH at the Whitney Center Interfaith Thanksgiving Service on November 18, 2015.
- iii. Worked to connect with the congregation through personal and corporate interactions, including small group meetings in fall-winter 2015, participating in one new member course in spring 2016, attending the spring Community Build and the Seder, attending committee meetings and meeting with individual representatives of various committees, piloting a gathering of families with young children and a 20s&30s potluck, and meeting with the YRUU group.
- iv. As authorized by the Board of Trustees, undertook the responsibility of Chief of Staff and worked closely with our Management Team (Sandy Frawley, Georgia Jennings, and David Jones) to carry out the executive functions assigned to us. I have attended meetings of the Board of Trustees and supported their continued implementation of Policy Governance. With the Management Team and Personnel Committee, facilitated the hiring of three new staff members: Jamie Ross, Congregational Administrator; Lewis Eisenberg, Operations Manager, and Laurel Gray, Membership Coordinator.

I have greatly enjoyed working with USNH's staff and the many volunteers that make this place so special. A special shout out to the members of the Management Team who have dedicated themselves wholeheartedly to the service of USNH and been wonderful partners in the work of shared ministry. Lisa Anderson and Susan Meredith have been a stellar "Transition Team." Additionally, I am grateful for the professional support I have in my professional 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 was glad to offer words of welcome to the participants in the Cluster Connection on April 9 and to represent USNH at the Installation of the Rev. Rachel Lonberg at the People's Church of Kalamazoo. I am delighted to offer my services as the minister-of-the-week at Star Island's Life On a Star I from August 13-20.

WORSHIP

Sermons

September 20, 2015 High Holidays "Begin Again In Love"

September 27, 2015 "Thus Do We Covenant"

October 4, 2015 "Conjure the Courage: Empathy and Courage in a 'Black Lives Matter' World"

October 18, 2015 "Tell Me About *Your* USNH..."

October 25, 2015 "Saying No to Say Yes: Connecting to What Matters"

November 1, 2015 "Las Calaveras Sonrientes: A Service of Remembrance"

November 8, 2015 "Who We Have Been: Celebrating USNH Founders"

November 15, 2015 "Awe and Gratitude for Wild Things"

December 13, 2015 "Music Sunday: A Celtic Noel" (Reflection: "On Waiting")

March 20, 2016 "Tripping Stones and Sleeping Giants"

April 3, 2016 "Why We Are Here: Stewardship Sunday"

April 10, 2016 "A Spirit of Abundance"

April 24, 2016 "Come to the Garden"

May 1, 2016 "From Bondage to Wilderness: A Passover Service"

May 8, 2016 "Our Mothers' Keepers"

May 29, 2016 "In Memoriam"

Multi-Generational Services

September 13, 2015 "Healing Rivers: Water Ingathering" (Reflection: "On Becoming a Dolphin")

November 22, 2015 "We Give Thanks"

December 20, 2015 "The Solstice Spiral"

December 24, 2015 "Christmas Eve"

December 27, 2015 "Left Overs: Cleaning out our Cupboards for a New Year!"

March 27, 2016 "Easter Sunday: On Resurrection, Bunnies, and The Empty Tomb"

June 19, 2016 Flower Communion and Ordination of Randall Spaulding

Additional Services

May 13, 2016 Affirmations Service

May 15, 2016 Guest Preacher Bishop John Selders

June 5, 2016 Children's and Youth Religious Education Service

Summer Services

June 26, July 3, July 24, July 31 and August 28

RIGHTS OF PASSAGE

Child Dedication

Kelsey Morgan (May 15, 2016)

Weddings

Linda Barrett & Cookie Polan (April 23, 2016)

Michael Sanger & Paul Levatino (May 1, 2016)

Soule Golden & Fraser Lawrence (non-members) (May 7, 2016)

Moira Flavin & Ian Hardouin (non-members) (June 11, 2016)

Memorial Services

Amy Rood (October 3, 2015)

Andrew Farkas (November 21, 2016)

Terry Lawrence (June 4, 2016)

Joe Cooper (planned for July 2016)

Respectfully Submitted by Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner

2015-16 Music Committee

Music Director: Linda Pawelek

Associate Music Director: William Braun

Children's Choir Director: Linda Pawelek

Committee Chair: Peter Hansen

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

Committee members not returning: all returning as of May 23, 2016

Number of new Committee members sought for 2016-2017: 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.

William Braun is Associate Music Director, having the responsibility to coordinate the music and readings for the newly created half-hour service of meditation and to continue 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.

Linda Pawelek is the Adult and Children's Choir Director. The Children's Choir sings once a month and on a few other occasions during the year: Christmas/Hannukah and our Spring music service and other Intergenerational Sundays. The Adult Choir sings every Sunday and prepares two special music services during the year. As Summer services become more "formalized", Linda works closely with Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner and the Worship Committee to coordinate Staff and volunteer presentation of music. She attended the annual UU Musicians Network Conference in July 2015 and will attend the one in July 2016 in Madison, Wisconsin.

Here are some "highlights" of our 2015-2016 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.

In December we presented "A Celtic Noel" by Edward Thompson, Minister of Music at The Unitarian Church of Westport, CT. It was accompanied by Jim Sirch (from USNH) on tin whistle, Seamus Monahan on ulean pipes and Susan Knapp Thomas on harp 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 Easter March 27, the Choir presented Mozart's joyous "Sparrow Mass" accompanied by Bill Braun on piano with vocal solo quartets of Choir members. Another Octave and Haven String Quarter (and solo members of the Quartet) provided music for several Sunday services.

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

The Choir sang for the memorial services of Andrew Farkas and Joseph Bove. On October 4, we presented a Sundays at Four Concert featuring the Lee Trio on violin, cello and piano, three sisters with local USNH connections.

The Choir will participate in the Ordination of Choir member Randall Spaulding during the June 19 service. Randall is currently a Chaplain at Yale-New Haven Hospital.

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. Ann Levison joined the Committee and Martin Lipnick will join for 2016-17.
4. Sylvia Lipnick has taken over the leadership/coordination of the inventory, cataloging and filing of the Choir sheet music library. This is a huge ongoing project and Jane Platt did a wonderful job for many years with help from Committee/ Choir members. The sheet music file cabinets were moved in September from the rear cloak room to the copy machine room and the office shared by Linda Pawelek and Louis Eisenberg.
5. After 43 years service, the Music Director finally got some formal office space.
6. The Music Director and Worship Committee are clarifying responsibilities and planning music for services in July- August. This includes finding volunteers and possibly pianists outside USNH.
7. Jackie Shapiro and Sylvia Lipnick did an inventory of hymnals. There are about 170 each of the gray and teal books available in the Sanctuary. 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/ memoriam) or money from the Music Fund.
8. All pianos have been tuned as needed. No major refurbishing of any of the three pianos is planned for now.
9. A Sundays at Four concert was held on October 4 featuring the Lee Trio (goal was 3 events). Claire Bien did a wonderful job on publicizing the concert. A reception was held after the event. These are possible through collections at-the-door and contributions to the Music Fund.
10. Linda Pawelek assisted (leading hymns and playing piano) at the April 9 Cluster Conference of Connecticut UU churches.
11. Since 2016-17 will be Linda Pawelek's last year, the Committee is starting the planning with the Minister / Management Team of the search for a new Music Director for 2017-18. This will include confirmation of current Staff duties, possible new duties for new / current Staff and possible consideration of interim staff as an alternative to immediate new permanent staff.

Peter Hansen, Music Chair
Linda Pawelek, Director of Music

2015-16 Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee completed its assigned task of submitting a slate of nominees and was able to do so by mid-May. The Nominating Committee adopted a consensus model for all of its decisions and created a covenant and a Nominating Committee member job description.

The Nominating Committee has begun to create a database of USNH members that will contain information including work experience, prior and current activities and leadership positions at USNH, areas of interest, skills and abilities, and other relevant information.

The Nominating Committee urges the Management Team, Board of Trustees, and Information Technology team to create a single unified USNH database that can be accessed by all those with a need to know.

Next year's goals, exclusive of our basic goal of developing a slate of candidates, are:

- *To develop a timeline for the work of the Nominating Committee
- *To conduct one-on-one interviews with USNH members
- *To implement the Nominating Committee database
- *To act in accordance with any by-law changes

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Trotta, chair
Robb Camm
Ellen Greist
Holly Hawkins
Tina Santoni
Randall Spaulding
Anne Sommer

2015-16 Permanent Committee on Right Relations

Committee Chair: Gail Figliola.

Committee Members: Nancy Apfel, Charisse Hutton, Paul Levatino

Number of new Committee Members sought for 2016-2017: 1

PCRR's Mission Statement:

The mission of the Permanent Committee on Right Relations (PCRR) is to create and nurture a culture that is aligned with the vision of the USNH Congregational Covenant of Right Relations, and to be available to help facilitate conflict resolution within our congregation.

Progress on PCRR goals include:

2. The PCRR met its goal of displaying the Congregational Covenant in prominent places for congregants and visitors to see and attend to. The lobby has a framed edition which was a generous donation. The weekly worship Order of Service started printing it as soon as the Covenant was adopted one year ago, and the USNH Website began showing it as well.
3. The PCRR met with Jesse Greist prior to the start of the program year to determine ways for the Congregational Covenant to be introduced and incorporated into RE classes and staff training materials.
4. A Newsletter column was initiated, titled "Covenant Corner" to highlight various themes of interest related to our right relations promises and offered strategies for resolving areas of misalignments amicably.
5. The PCRR spent the Summer/Fall of 2015 interviewing candidates for restorative practices/mediation training purposes. We ultimately contracted and began training sessions with Consultant, Trainer & Facilitator Joe Brummer, LLC. We have engaged in 4 hours of training thus far. This has been productive and inspirational.
6. Based on training sessions with Joe Brummer, PCRR members have engaged in several Listening Circle Sessions, from February through May. While each session, whether conducted individually or with a committee, has been unique in quality, the common threads have been a desire to apply the the covent's promises toward a goal of repairing harm.

UPCOMING PLANS

Based on our contract with consultant, Joe Brummer, we are pleased to announce the launch of a community-wide training opportunity led by Mr. Brummer and PCRR members over 3 Saturday AM's this Fall, including: Restorative Practices (Sept. 24); Circle Keeping and Dialogue (Oct. 15); and Facilitating Harm and Healing Circles (Nov.12).

Respectfully Submitted by Gail Figliola

2015-16 Small Group Ministry Program

Committee Chair: Susan Linsley

Committee Members: Nancy Brown, Ellen Mahoney, Jean Rosenthal, Paul Trotta, Gwen Heuss-Severance

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

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

Fall Term (October 2015-January 2016) Groups Offered

	Facilitator	Attendees
What I Believe	Greg Berg	6
Love of Nature	Smith & Seaman	5
Eight Spheres	Sue Linsley	4
Tuesday Topics	Dee Arneith, Natalie Keating	5
Thursday Topics	Gwen Heuss-Severance, Nancy Brown	9
Buddhist Lens 1	Paul Trotta	10
Aging as a Spiritual Practice	John Watson	9
TOTAL ATTENDEES.....		48

Groups Offered but did not run:
Buddhist Lens 2, Reading MLK, Jr.

Spring Term (Feb. 2016-May 2016)

Tuesday Topics	Dee Arneith, Natalie Keating	6
Thursday Topics	Gwen Heuss-Severance, Nancy Brown	9
Women’s Spirituality	Jean Rosenthal	7
Family Spiritual Practice	Jesse Greist	4
Buddhist Lens I	Paul Trotta	10
TOTAL ATTENDEES.....		36

Groups Offered but did not run:
Buddhist Lens 2, Building Community, Growing Spirit
Brief Encounters with UU, Then And Now

Evaluation: Fall Term 2015

At the conclusion of the Fall Term, we invited all participants to complete a 21 question on-line evaluation using Survey Monkey. 56% of participants responded. Positive responses mentioned mutual respect and trust, good organization and leadership, appropriate and interesting topics, and fulfilled expectations. Negative responses referenced individuals who talked too much, did not abide by the rules of confidentiality, were often absent, and group cancellations due to weather and competing commitments.

Evaluation: Spring Term 2016 [pending]

2015-16 Social Justice Council

Social Justice Council

Chairperson(s): Dan Gelperin & Luline DeVos

Current Members: Cathy Jackson, Carol Stockton, Steve Jennings, Greg Berg, Christine Durham, Maggie Goodwin

Actions Taken:

Social Justice Network retreat. Members from all the social justice groups participated in a retreat focused on exploring the meaning behind the social justice work that each group does.

Social Justice fair. SJC organized a fair in which each task force and action group gave a brief presentation and interacted with congregants at display tables to explain what they do and invite new participants.

Liaison with Task Forces and Action Groups. SJC members were appointed as liaisons to each task force and action group to promote a better understanding of groups' specific issues and needs to allow more effective support and coordination.

Manage USNH's Social Justice budget. SJC collaborated with the Social Justice Network to make the best use of budgeted resources to support USNH's social justice activities. SJC facilitates spending reimbursement and tracks budget use within and across years.

Goals/ Preliminary plans for the coming year

- Build upon the successful retreat and SJ fair to have even better versions in the coming year
- Improve USNH's Social Justice web presence
- Continue to encourage collaboration and synergy between social justice groups
- Continue to support USNH's Social Justice Ministry for its transformative effects inside and outside of USNH

Name of Task Force or Action Group: Abraham's Tent

Chairperson(s): Robert Garskof and Paul Trotta

Current Members: same

Praxis:

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
Hosted Homeless guests for one week	Jan 18-25th	About 100	Homeless men and women from Columbus House

Reflections:

What were the high points this year?

1. Use of SignUpGenius for sign ups. 2. Excellent procedure for cancelling one day due to a snow storm. 3. Successfully hosting to initial AT group of women. 4. Following procedures very smoothly when a pregnant women needed to go to the Hospital.

What did not go well? We were completely satisfied with all aspects of our performance

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

We should use the Children’s Chapel for the women in to provide more privacy.

Using SignUpGenius was extremely successful

How would I change actions?

Have more than one administrator for SignUp Genius

Goals/ Preliminary plans for the coming year

1. Participate in AT2
2. Continue using our existing procedure for Hosting

Name of Task Force or Action Group: Anti-Racism Task Force

Chairperson(s): Joan Ciano, outgoing

Current Members: Joan Ciano, Lindsay Korth, Sharon McBlain, Ellen McCarthy, Tracy Navarra-Davis, Lois Smith, Melinda Tuhus, Caroline Bridgman-Rees, Pat Perkins

Associates: Laura Fawcett

Praxis:

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
Sacred Conversations on Race with Dixwell UCC- USNH hosting (inclu breakfast) alternating with Dixwell hosting conversations and/or special	ongoing	Congregation	Members of USNH, Dixwell UCC, addtl interested community people.

social justice trainings (3) with Rev. Da Vita Day. 2. Purchased Black Lives Matter buttons.			Attendance varies 22-45 attendees 2. USNH and guests
Co-sponsored w/ local activist Barbara Fair/My Brother's Keeper community panel on Exit Strategies for the War on Drugs	July 28, 2015	Congregation & wider community	Greater Community. @ 50 attendees at a New Haven library branch
co-sponsored Social Cinema presentation of "Selma," invited Dixwell UCC, open to public (paid half of rental fee)	September 2105	Religious Education	Members of USNH; Dixwell; wider community. 45+ attended
Co-sponsored discussions of Common Read "Just Mercy"	February 2016	RE	Members of USNH. @18 attended
Support to make available Waverly Summer reading program	Summer 2016	Waverly Task Force	Waverly TF volunteers & the kids; representing our UU values in community outreach.

Reflections:

What were the high points this year?

All of the Sacred Conversations on Race, especially those that we held at USNH.

The showing of SELMA, which drew in members of the non-USNH community for film and discussion.

The July 2015 community panel event on the War on Drugs. ***NB.** ART members supplied refreshments and serving supplies – we did not request reimbursement.*

What did not go well?

Some long-time members left the team.

Need for leadership turnover – uncertainty for future leadership

Problems with scheduling events with Dixwell – their scheduling and PR networks have sometimes been lacking or have overlooked major church functions on days that Sacred Conversations were scheduled at USNH. Our events were still well-attended and valuable. Need to try to create better connections.

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

Life goes on.

How would I change actions?

Goals/ Preliminary plans for the coming year

Continuing participation in the Sacred Conversations on Race. The newly- revised plan is to alternate months with Dixwell UCC, having only the summer months off. This will mean 5 hosting events at USNH. We have been serving breakfasts that cost approx. \$250 each. If we receive only our requested \$1000 budget, and if we do indeed schedule all 5 breakfast events, we will need more money for that and for BLM buttons, and would be limited if we want to do anything else with Waverly or the community, eg. social cinema. We may need to tap into additional SJ funding to cover the additional breakfasts and the BLM buttons.

Continued sponsoring and supply of Black Lives Matter buttons.

Continuing support of Waverly team in any ways possible. We had hoped to support them financially by co-sponsoring a presentation for the kids by local artist/teacher Hanan Hameen; she is unavailable due to illness, so this year's funding will go to the summer program.

Name of Task Force or Action Group: Columbus House Dinner

Chairperson(s): Robert Garskof

Current Members: Robert Garskof

Praxis:

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
Dinner the fourth Friday of each month at Columbus House	ongoing	Entire Congregation	The homeless of New Haven

Reflections:

What were the high points this year?

Dinners went very well and very smooth. I can not remember when the last time was that I had to buy food at the last min. Our congregation has been wonderful at donations for

CHD.

What did not go well?

The total number of people is fairly small. A solid 10 to 20 people participate every single month, and then a few who are new or infrequent rotate in. It has been hard to take on new coordinators after we had two leave in the last three years.

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

Sign Up Genius saves a huge amount of time, and minimizes mistakes. The free version is great, but is hard to share with others. If we want to share it with a team, we will need the paid version.

The loss of Leslie as a coordinator is huge. We wish her well in her new life in Texas, but we will need multiple people to replace her as she was carrying a very big load of the work.

How would I change actions?

I think the pattern works well. If we can get people to participate in ways other than donations and serving I think we will be in very good shape. I hope the new merger between CHD, AT, and AT2 will go a long way to help with that problem.

Goals/ Preliminary plans for the coming year

Merger with AT and AT2. Recruit at least 5 people to join in the effort. Start to hold regular meetings to organize better across a larger team. Spread the coordination work among at least 5 people.

Group Name: East Rock School Mentors

Chair: Anne Sommer

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), Pat Vidal, Terry 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 four-plus years old. There are currently eight mentors—seven at East Rock Community Magnet School and one at an elementary school in Cheshire.

A few mentors made “Our Faith in Action” presentations during Sunday services at USNH, in August 2015, January 2016 (the day of the Social Justice Fair, in which we participated), and April 2016.

The group also held a mentor gathering in March 2016. 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.

In early June 2016, a couple of weeks before the end of the school year, all mentors and mentees will come together at East Rock School for the 3rd annual mentoring celebration event. This has become an important “community-building” event and is a meaningful and fun time for all mentors and mentees.

Name of Task Force or Action Group: USNH Food Bank Action Group

Chairperson(s): Margaret Ariori

Current Members: Pat Perkins, Liz Appel, Chris Jonientz, Anne Levison, Maureen Gilmore-Hebert, Peggy Rae, Theresa Childs, Dina Domurad, Angie Catalano

Praxis:

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
Delivery of donated non perishable food to Keefe Ctr. Food Bank	Monthly	10 and all contributing congregants	Keefe Ctr. Food Bank and USNH members who need food

Reflections:

What were the high points this year?

Began counting bags rather than pounds of food. Donated 35 bags one month, Anne Levison began doing publicity

Did a table at the SJ Fair and had a number of people sign up but..

What did not go well?

Have more people on the action group than tasks to do at the times they are available. Food deliveries occur during the work day. Others can help organize the shelves.

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

Food Bank is all good.

How would I change actions?

Publicize need for food rather than for members.

Goals/ Preliminary plans for the coming year

Work to maximize contributions of food

Name of Task Force or Action Group: Green Sanctuary

Chairperson: Rod Groff

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

Praxis:

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
Regifting Sale	Annually, Nov/Dec	Nearly all USNH	Individuals, USNH and the Earth
Fossil-Fuel Divestment /Education efforts	Ongoing	10-15	
Assisted coordination of energy audit (lighting) and LED lighting upgrades at USNH	Jul-Jan	5	All USNH

Environmental Films: Xmas Without China and Divide in Concord	Co-hosted with ARE – Dec and Apr	About 30	About 20 USNH and 10 Community members
Actions/Protests: Members participated in marches, fasting actions and protests, primarily related to fracking, proposed pipelines and climate change	Ongoing	5-10	

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 2nd largest fundraiser and an important part of the annual budget.

What did not go well?

- Pollinator Plant Sale did not happen this year. Initially we wanted to partner with Hamden Land Conservation Trust to do this but the potential of too many community members (i.e. cars) and current limited parking situation during the 11:15 service on Sundays led to prolonged discussions, no resolution (regarding parking on Sunday AM) and in the end it was too late in Spring to order the plants.

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

- Regifting sale went well but would benefit with a designated staging room/classroom from mid-Nov through Dec. This year we used a section of the Children’s Chapel but was off limits during YRUU (after 1pm) and also not a lockable space.

How would I change actions?

-Our group is considering trying to focus actions on one or two topical themes each year rather than multiple topics.

Goals/ Preliminary plans for the coming year

- Annual Tag Sale in July is being coordinated as a program of Green Sanctuary beginning July 2016.
- GS would like to find systematic ways to make it easy reduce paper and plastic waste at potlucks and other events; encourage and facilitate increased composting of organic waste
- GS has interest co-sponsoring additional environmental films with ARE Social Cinema

Name of Task Force or Action Group: Immigration and Refugee Task Force

Chairperson(s): Role shared by Sophie Tworkowski, Nancy Brown, Gil Belaval, Sarah Forman

Current Members: Sophie Tworkowski, Peter Schwartz, Nancy Brown, Skip Weldon, Sarah Forman, Tom Hardin, Gil Belaval, Catherine Duncan, Carol Holloman, Craig Machado

Praxis:

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
Junta for Progressive Action: ESL tutoring; donations for ESL books; ESL student presented at Nov. 1 OFA	ongoing	3 USNH tutors	English Language Learners at Junta; approximately 25 people
Recruited attendance for Hartford rally to demand more refugees be allowed in CT	Fall 2015	Approx 10-12	Refugees; forces working to stop anti-Muslim bias
Junta for Progressive Action: Diaper Drive at USNH in connection with Social Cinema	Nov. 6-8, 2015	Numerous USNH members donated total of 2,304 diapers	Low-income families at Junta
Support for resettling refugees—petition and letter-writing; attendance at rallies, contribution to IRIS bicycle drive.	Fall 2015 to present		Refugees in Connecticut
Helped collect household items and with apartment set-up; purchased gift cards for household items for refugee family	Fall, winter 2015-16		IRIS refugee family that USNH Kids Service Team helped move into apartment.
Sponsored presenter, Mohamad Hafez, to speak about Syria and refugees; he also did OFA presentation. IRTF is developing relationship with Mohamad and his wife to help us connect with area Syrian refugee community.	May 1, 2016 Ongoing	Approximately 25 USNH people attended presentation; 8 new USNHers signed up for IRTF activities.	Area Syrian refugees

Reflections:

What were the high points this year? The success of the Junta Diaper Drive; the pride Fanny, a Junta ESL student, took in speaking English during the Nov. 1 OFA presentation; the enthusiastic response of USNH members to the letter-writing/petition campaign to support resettlement of Syrian refugees in Connecticut; Mohamad Hafez’s inspiring and informative presentation.

What did not go well? Not a lot of people want to attend planning meetings, but many are willing to take concrete measures to support immigrants and refugees.

What have I learned from both the good and the bad? Not to be discouraged by small turnout at planning meetings. To involve immigrants and refugees as active participants. To ask the congregation to help in concrete ways.

How would I change actions? Offer more possibilities for action to the congregation, as opposed to planning. Foster face-to-face events with immigrants and refugees.

Goals/ Preliminary plans for the coming year

Recruit USNH people who can help Syrian refugees with practical needs.

Organize social event with Syrian refugees.

Continue Junta ESL tutoring relationship.

Participate in rallies, other efforts to support immigrants and refugees, as identified by community partner groups (Junta, IRIS, Syrian community).

Conduct Diaper Drive in connection with Social Cinema in fall.

Name of Task Force or Action Group: Kids' Service Team

Chairperson: Lurline deVos

Current Members: Dale Hatcher, Lori Soderholm, Elizabeth Howard, Sarah Hendon, and all interested USNH children and their friends and adults.

Praxis:

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
Assisted IRIS in apartment set-up	July 2015	7	Syrian family of 4 and IRIS
Labor Day Fleece Blanket-making retreat	September	16 kids 5 adults	IRIS families
Source to Sea River clean-up	September	22	Connecticut River users
Heifer Intl Farm study trip	October	9 kids 3 adults	Youth attending
39 pies made for Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen	November	24	234 people who receive TG dinners

Creating one and a half homes for refugees	November-February 2	15 kids, 14 adults and countless contributors	An Iranian family and an Iraqi family
Mitten and hat tree	December	4	Waverly kids
"Place at the Table" film and food drive	June		USNH and Keefe Center food banks

Reflections:

What were the high points this year? Above all else the kids felt empowered as they worked to make the world better for others. Partnering with the Immigration and Refugee task force was great. (1) the apartment project as it allowed so many to be involved according to their abilities; (2) the pie-making again wide range of opportunities to be involved; (3) the Heifer trip as the kids learned from the experience including being hungry (4) the river clean-up great bonding on a beautiful day (5) holding the retreat in the Stratford area to allow broader participation

What did not go well? (1) We collected too many appliances for the refugee family based on a list from the Avon UCC congregation. (2) Collection of furniture on moving day was stressful because furniture was in several different locations; if possible rent a larger storage unit or purchase some furniture at Salvation Army. (3)Mitten tree does not engage enough kids.(4) it was cold at Heifer!

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

(1) Keep it simple whenever possible. (2) Plan ahead in detail for every activity. (3) Feeding the kids helps them settle-in. and feel like a community. Always have food and drink available.

How would I change actions?

Increase the spiritual reflection at the beginning or end; send materials home before or after the event for parents to share. Simplify the apartment collection and involve the kids more in the food purchasing. Add apple picking to the pie making project a week or two ahead.

Goals/ Preliminary plans for the coming year

Plans will be similar with the possible exception of the July Apartment set-up. Date of the Heifer trip is to be determined depending on the apartment project which may be a collaboration with another Hamden group.

Name of Task Force or Action Group: Mental Health Awareness Task Force

Chairperson(s): Letty Mc Phedran, Karen Swanson

Current Members: Letty McPhedran, Karen Swanson, Graziela Reis, Marian Katz, Abe Katz, Ellen Mahony, Marc Eisenberg,

Praxis:

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
Hope's Nest- We provide a speaker each month that address mental health issues/ different modalities.	1/11/2015-3d Sunday of the month, 4-6pm.	Participants are USNH affiliated	Benefits USNH group.
Bulletin Board in Social Hall on Stigma/ Recovery	Fall/2015	Participants are USNH affiliated	Benefits USNH individually/ group
Sarau- Talent Show/ Family Night/ Dinner	11/17/15	Open to all members at USNH	Benefits USNH individually and as a group
The Soloist- Social Cinema/ Potluck/ Discussion. Jami Foxx's struggle with mental illness	1/8/16	Open to all participants at USNH	Benefits USNH individually/ group
Social Justice Fair	1/10/16	Open to all participants at USNH	Benefits USNH individually/ group
Mental Health Reform in Brazil- Richard Weingarten, Mark and Grazi Costa- International Forum on Recovery taking place in Brazil in May 2016. They talked about mental illness stories/recovery/ reforms.	1/17/16	Open to all participants at USNH	Benefits USNH Individually
Cluster Connections- We provided a panel discussion about MHAAG	4/9/16	Open to all participants at UU in CT.	Benefits USNH as a group/ individually
Mental Health First Aide Training – Tracy Blanford- 8 hour course, certified trainers, certificate on completion. Offered at USNH.	6/11/16	Open to all participants at USNH	Benefits USNH as a group/ individually. Introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental illness, impact, overviews

			common supports.
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Reflections:

What were the high points this year?

The Sarau was the high point of this year. It was a fun, family event that involved all members of USNH. We encouraged anyone who wanted to sing a song, read a poem, dance, display their art work, young and old. It was a great night of fun! We hope to continue this event on a yearly basis.

What did not go well?

Although Hope’s Nest has been a success, it involves a lot of planning and preparation. In particular, it is very important to make phone calls, trying to drum up interest on a month to month basis. There are times, when we have a number of members attending, and there are times, when there are very few attending.

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

It is important to be well prepared and to do your homework. We do a lot of brainstorming during our monthly meetings, and come up with some great ideas. Ultimately, we all have to work together to make an event a success.

How would I change actions?

Making a firm commitment to follow-through with calling members to let them know about speakers for Hope’s Nest. Set up an information table to become more visible, seek out new members with some good ideas. It is also important to address the congregation, to provide information about our committee, and anticipated events, encouraging new membership.

Goals/ Preliminary plans for the coming year

Reach out to include more members.

Name of Task Force or Action Group: Peace Task Force

Mission Statement

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

Goals

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

encourage letters to the editor, submitted in the name of the individual writer.

Review of goals set for the year 2015-16:

1. Combatants for Peace:

We deepened our connections through meeting 3 combatants for peace at Bruce Barret's home in October.

Their personal witness was unspeakably good. Israeli and Palestinian alike, thru their experience, came to the conclusion that war was not the answer for either country.

Note: we used our projected retreat money as tuition for 2 members. Others attended on their own

2. Jewish Voice for Peace

We continued our collaboration with Jewish Voice for Peace New Haven, and tabled materials from the National JVP. We co-sponsored the film the Roadmap to Apartheid with PJ Deak, an Adult RE Friday night presentation.

We thank Cathy Jackson for being a link to JVP NH for us. We hope to support JVP NH in efforts to get CT to Divest in the coming legislative session.

3. Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East

A. We recruited via table and bulletin board for congregants willing to join a study group using curriculum from Unitarians for Justice in the Middle East. One person responded. We hope to try again this effort in the fall.

B. We gathered petition signatures along with other UU congregations and sent them to UUJME. Petition requested that divestment from targeted companies doing business in the occupied territories be placed on the business agenda of the UUA. The petitions were successful in getting the issue on the agenda. Later UUA decided to divest.

4. Canaan Fair Trade Oils and Products. Thanks to Lindsay Korth, this effort has been successful and growing. It is one aspect of our "What Can I Do" effort. Note: we obtain the products through the Shalom UCC of New Haven. We don't do any mark up on the products. It is not a fund raising effort.

5. Counter Recruiting: Sub Committee

In collaboration with New Haven Friends' Paul Hammer and USNH Steve Jennings, this work is maturing nicely and will continue via the Truth in Recruiting Sub Committee, Steve Jennings, John and Joan Keramis, Ann Singer and Paul Hammer.

Some projects in the works include visits to area High Schools, cooperation with ACLU CT in their legislative efforts to remove the automatic listing of children with the military in favor of an "Opt In" option .

Our monthly meeting is after service on the 2nd Sunday of each month. We table on the 4th

Sunday of the month. The Truth in Recruiting Sub Committee meets on the 4th Sunday of the month, after the service.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen McCarthy.

Peace Task force Members: Ann Singer, Anne Smith, Caroline Bridgman-Rees, Joan Keramis, John Keramis, Lindsay Korth, Mohammed Essa, Nancy Dunne, Ruthann Pearson.

Truth in Recruiting Sub Committee members: Ann Singer, John and Joan Keramis, Steve Jennings, Paul Hammer

Name of Task Force or Action Group: Preventing Gun Violence Task Force

Chairperson(s): Sally Connolly, Darrell McChesney and Hubert Woodard

Current Members: Isla Alexander, Carole Arnold, Roye Anastasio, Chris Berman, Al Bosch, Robb Camm, Sally Connolly, PJ Deak, John Deming, Maggie Goodwin, Ann Levison, Mary Losee, Pamela Miller, Ellen McCarthy, Darrell McChesney, Hubert Woodard (These individuals attend most of our meetings but we have about 20 more who wish to be on our contact list and kept informed of events and activities.)

Praxis:

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
Co-sponsored with ARE the film and subsequent discussion, "Living for 32"	3/4/16	52 people attended	USNH members, friends and larger community (52)
Sponsored a very thoughtful, educational and inspiration presentation with subsequent Q&A: "Toward Safer Gun Legislation" by Angelika Schriever, a gun safety advocate from Spring Glen UCC	5/22/16	13 USNH members/friends and 1 staff person, Dan Florsheim, from Senator Chris Murphy's office	14 people directly but we believe that there will be continuing ramifications

Wrote letters to our 2 national Senators and 5 Representatives emphasizing the need for the Center for Disease Control to be funded for the purpose of conducting gun violence/safety research and obtained 141 USNH members/friends signatures endorsing the action	12/15	141 USNH members/friends who considered the issue and acted upon it	Hopefully, CT elected officials know of constituents' concern for the involvement of the CDC and continue to push for support
Worked with Reverend Megan to add USNH to the list of faith based communities supporting National Gun Violence Prevention Sabbath (Introduction of Offertory and display re: Preventing Gun Violence in social hall)	12/13/15	Unknown but hopefully, USNH members and friends attending reflected on the incidence of gun violence	Unknown but hopefully, USNH members and friends attending reflected on the incidence of gun violence
Attended a rally on MLK Jr Day in Newtown, CT protesting the National Sports Shooting Foundation's sponsorship of a gun fair	1/18/16	3 USNH members attended demonstration, discussed issue with pro-gun advocates and reported back to Committee	## affected unclear, very educational & thought-provoking event
Represented Task Force & USNH at CONECT's Spring Assembly	5/5/16	2 chairpersons attended & were impressed by Sen Murphy's commitment to gun safety legislation & CONECT's anti-gun advocacy, <i>Do Not Stand Idly By</i>	Announcement made at mtg w/200+ attendees that USNH sent representatives
Co - sponsored 2 events w/ ARE & Spring Glen United Church of Christ (movie <i>Making a Killing: Guns, Greed, and the NRA</i> & a presentation by Angelika Schriever)	4/3&4/7	8 USNH members attended	8 people directly benefited from attending the 2 events

Held 5 monthly meetings, since our formal inception in January.	2nd Sunday in each month - Ongoing	Average of 10 -12 members attending each meeting	Individuals attending and greater impact we hope to have in the community
Connected with CONECT staff, Congregation Mishkan Israel members committed to gun safety and Spring Glen UCC members with the intent of coordinating efforts in the future	Initiated in February and ongoing	?? - future impact anticipated	?? - future impact anticipated
Set aside a date (s) in June to discuss & adopt objectives and goals	June	## unknown	## unknown

Reflections:

What were the high points this year?

Our high point was probably the discussion that followed the showing of the Social Cinema movie, "Living for 32" as attendance was very good (over 50) and the questions asked/ statements made were educational and probing.

Sponsoring Angelika Schriever’s discussion, *Toward Safer Gun Legislation* at USNH on 5/22.

Our monthly meetings have also been impressive as we have had excellent discussions, a high degree of involvement by all, reflective suggestions, assumption of responsibilities, & volunteering for activities.

Becoming a Task Force!!!!

What did not go well?

Having just formed this fall with our first monthly meeting initiated in January, there hasn't been enough time to really identify an event that didn't go well.

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

We know that we have a huge amount of self-education to do regarding status of national, state and local legislation, gun safety issues, positions of gun safety opponents; the necessity for making alliances with other like-minded groups especially those in the faith community; the difficulty in selecting issues and actions to focus on; and, the diversity of opinions among

members of our group. We find that it is difficult and often painful to address and explore this issue because of the incidence, horror and extent of much of the violence, the complexity of issues, the depth of extremist views, the values and power of entrenched pro-gun organizations, and the massive amount of work ahead of us.

How would we change actions?

At this point in our development and in reflection, there aren't any changes we contemplate.

Name of Task Force or Action Group: Waverly/USNH Partnership

Chairpersons: Sharon McBlain and June Schafer

Current Members: Current Volunteers with Waverly Youth Programming: Sharon McBlain, June Schafer, Isla Alexander, Jane Platt, Cathy Jackson, Bob Congdon, Mark Loalbo

Praxis:

Actions taken	Date or ongoing	#USNH affiliated participants	Group or who and # benefiting
Waverly Pre-School Reading	October – May on each Wednesday night from 5 – 6PM	Tynicha Drummonds, Sharon McBlain, Isla Alexander, Jane Platt, Bob Congdon, Mark Loalbo, Cathy Jackson,	Up to 8 young children ages 2 – 8 come be read to or to read. Parents are encouraged to come. Children take books home. Volunteers benefit by helping the children and the parents and learning from them.
Little Learners	October through May on each Wednesday Night from 6 – 7:30	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 Each Wednesday night from 6 – 8PM	Tynicha Drummonds, Sharon McBlain, Mark Loalbo, Bob Congdon	12 and sometimes more teenagers meet in a safe environment with adults who care about them. The teens and the volunteers benefit.

<p>Birthday cards for each child and teen</p>	<p>Year round</p>	<p>June Schafer, Tynicha Drummonds</p>	<p>All of the children and teens, June gets joy from knowing how much the children like receiving them.</p>
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Reflections:

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 a 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.

Pre-School Readers – A small core group of children and volunteers came each Wednesday and from 5 to 6PM the focus was on the enjoyment of reading. Each week children could choose a book or two to take home. There were a few Pre-Schoolers, but also children in the early grades who were at various levels of reading competence. We were very happy when several parents came to be part of the activities. The children loved having the attention and time of two men in their lives thanks to Mark and Bob. There was the connection made between Sheemica, a 7 year old who is having a very difficult time learning to read, with Isla and with Cathy. Isla was able to help Sheemica’s mother fill out school forms to have her daughter tested and Cathy has arranged to tutor Sheemica once or twice a week. Personal relationships were forming between volunteers and other parents also. We are hoping to continue in the reading through the summer months

Little Learners - 10 to 12 children ages 3 – 11 participated and enjoyed the weekly crafts and group activities held at the Waverly Townhouses “Learning Center” at 49 Waverly Street. Tynicha was joined each Wednesday at 6 – 7:30 by at least two other parents, Precious Hill, and other teen helper as well as 3 or 4 USNH volunteers to help with crafts, other activities, computers and then refreshments. A high point was the seeing the joy that the children and parents experienced as they enjoyed participating in a regular, positive activity each week right in their neighborhood. They seemed to feel increasing ownership and pride in the programming.

WYLG - Some high points for the teens were the trips to various theater and dramatic performances. Bob, Mark, Sharon and Tynicha and other volunteers enjoyed taking the teens and in the process getting to know them better. Our group was welcomed at the various performances at the Collective Consciousness Theatre at Erector Square and were awed by the two performances at Long Wharf. At the first of the year two over nights were held at USNH, which were great fun. Mark, who is much loved by the teens, has been talking with them about possible volunteer positions or internships they might get in areas in which they have a vocational interest.

What did not go well?

Pre-School Readers - The space is small and the noise level is a problem. Some nights we didn't have enough readers to have one on one with children. It isn't easy to get some of the children to settle in for a session devoted to books and reading.

Little Learners - Overall this programming went very well.

WYLG - The teenagers were very disappointed that they were no longer being transported to USNH each Wednesday for a time away from the neighborhood where they could relax and relate.

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.

How would I change actions?

Arrange more frequent meetings with Tynicha, volunteers, teen leaders and involved community people.

Goals/ Preliminary plans for the coming year

We hope to continue the programming at 49 Waverly Street. We learned as we went along this year and will take advantage of that as we plan for next year. We have been talking some about continuing some programming throughout the summer months. If we are granted the additional funds that we requested that may be possible. At least half of the additional money would need to be an additional stipend for Tynicha.

2015-16 Stewardship Report: Campaign for 2016-17

The Stewardship co-chairs, John Watson and Mary Beth Congdon, in conjunction with Reverend Megan Lloyd Joiner, and supported by Operations Manager, Lewis Eisenberg, committed to "keeping it simple" for this year's stewardship campaign, the first under Reverend Megan's ministerial leadership.

Our theme this year was *Why USNH? Why Are You Here?*

The stewardship campaign was also reinforced by efforts from the Board of Trustees, The Council of Chairs and the Management Team.

The campaign messaging began at Sunday services during the month of March with weekly testimonials from the pulpit from members of the Congregation answering the questions: *Why USNH? Why Are You Here? Why do you Pledge?*

The first Sunday in April, Reverend Megan devoted her sermon to the theme of stewardship and throughout the month the co- chairs made special announcements during Sunday services.

In addition to regular newsletter articles about the stewardship campaign, there were other stewardship oriented email messages to the congregation.

We adapted the letterhead and pledge forms from the past few years. In addition to a general direct mail appeal, a special early letter from the co-chairs and Reverend Megan was sent to members (approximately 30) who had pledged \$5,000 and above during the previous year. A special appeal was also created for Board of Trustees members. The co-chairs also met with the Board at one of their meetings and with the Council of Chairs to talk about needs, discuss the campaign, and ask for pledges.

We commissioned a series of posters each depicting congregational members' photos and responses to the question: *Why USNH? Why are You Here?* We are grateful to the members who contributed testimonials for these posters and to volunteer photographer, Bruce Levison and volunteer craftsman Terry Vidal, who also underwrote the project. By the first week in April, there were approximately 15 posters in the lobby and social hall. Volunteers from the Board of Trustees also staffed a stewardship table in the lobby each Sunday during April to discuss ways to give, receive pledges and thank donors. Members and friends had the option of using paper pledge forms or pledging online.

Personalized thank you letters from the co-chairs were sent weekly to pledgers throughout the campaign.

In April and early May, the co-chairs and a group of volunteers from the Board and Council followed up with calls to families who had not pledged as of yet this year, but had pledged in past years.

A follow-up appeal letter was sent from Rev. Megan in late May to the remainder of this group of non-pledgers. Follow-up emails and calls from the co-chairs to selective non pledgers continued through the end of May.

As of May 24, 2016, USNH has received \$435,159.04 in pledges from 204 pledging units.

Mary Beth Congdon and John Watson
Stewardship Co-Chairs 2016-2017

2015-16 Sunday Morning Team

Committee 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, Kathy Wilson
Committee Members not returning: Robb Camm

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 second USNH picnic in August. Other activities we have been involved in have included the Chocolate Auction, and we also assist with the used book sale.

2015-16 Worship Committee

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

In September 2015, we welcomed the arrival of our new settled minister, Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner and her family.

Goals and Progress in 2015-2016

The Worship Committee met once a month during 2015-2016. Written agendas were prepared in advance of each meeting and minutes were posted in Drop box following each meeting. In addition to working closely with Rev. Megan and coordinating and assisting at the lay-led services, the Committee chose to work on the following goals:

1. Develop a covenant for the Worship Committee reflecting on/adapting the Right Relations Covenant;
2. Find and engage more talent for lay-led services;
3. Plan for the future of Worship Committee succession, membership, diversity, responsibility.
4. Explore the Worship Liaison/Worship Associate's role and responsibility

Below are goals we considered but did not adopt at the time. Nevertheless, they have been worked on or accomplished in the past six months or planned for the coming fall.

1. Use Erika Hewitt's book, *The Shared Pulpit*, as a study guide for the Worship Committee;
2. Delve into other spiritual beliefs and practices;
3. Learn to use Google docs and Drop box.

Rev. Megan's leave of absence (January-March) necessitated changes in the role and responsibilities of the Worship Committee:

1. Chairperson Gwen Heuss-Severance met weekly with Jesse Greist and Linda Pawelek to plan the Sunday worship services. This practice continues on Tuesday mornings with Rev. Megan, Jesse and Linda;
2. Long-range calendar planning: WC members have signed up to be Worship Associate each Sunday through Sept 11, 2016;
3. The WC submitted a budget request of \$4900 for the coming year to cover the cost of guest speakers, flowers, and supplies;
4. Adoption of a worship service template;
5. Adoption of the Worship Associate checklist, detailing responsibilities and tasks;
6. Implementation of a single Sunday worship service at 11:15 am.
7. Addition of Sunday morning "Meditation and Music Program" designed and led by Bill Braun;
8. Development of "prompts" for Our Faith In Action speakers;
9. Joy & Sorrows: experimentation and adoption of The Joys and Sorrows Book to be read each Sunday by a lay minister.
10. "Real Good Embodied Worship" Workshop attended by Gwen, Sue Linsley, Richard Stockton, and Ellen Greist on March 6, 2016.
11. Sharing of Worship Resources from the Shoreline UU.

Worship Services Coordinated By Worship Committee in 2015-2016

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

June 21, 2015:	Melinda Tuhus, Meredith Fahey liaison "Green Sanctuary"
June 28, 2015:	David Schafer, "Climate Change"
July 5, 2015:	John Watson, "Black Lives Matter"
July 12, 2015:	Sue Linsley, "Connections, Covenant and Commitment"
July 19, 2015:	Joanie Messner with Gwen Heuss-Severance, "Reflections on Birth and Midwifery in Everyday Life"
July 26, 2015:	Rev Kayla Parker, Meredith Fahey liaison, "Spiritual Practice"
Aug. 2, 2015:	Tom Hardin & Peggy Myers, "The Spirit of Play"
Aug. 9, 2015:	Greg Berg, Gwen Heuss-Severance, "Blessings"
Aug. 16, 2015:	Gwen Heuss-Severance, "It's About Time"
Aug. 23, 2015:	Liz Appel and Ellen Greist, "The Poets Among Us"
Aug. 30, 2015:	Randall Spaulding & Meredith Fahey, "We Are Family"
Sept. 6, 2015:	Gail Figliola, Gwen Heuss-Severance, "Listening Our Stories Into Action"

Oct. 11, 2015: Ashley Makar (from IRIS) guest preacher.
 Nov. 29, 2015: Gwen Heuss-Severance: "First Things First"
 Dec. 6, 2015: Linda Mehta and Liz Appel:
 "Bah, Humbug! Holidays, Traditions and the Search for Meaning."
 Jan. 3, 2016: Gail Figliola and Rev. Allie Perry; "The Art of Resistance".
 Jan. 10, 2016: Rev. Heather Rion Starr, Meredith Fahey WA; "For the Sake of Whom?"
 Jan. 17, 2016: Chaplain Erica Richmond; Gwen Heuss-Severance WA; "Faithful Steps"
 Jan. 24, 2016: Rev. Cathy Rion Starr; Richard Stockton, WA;
 "Comfortable With Uncertainty"
 Jan. 31, 2016: Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull, Tom Hardin WA
 "Shared Ministry: The Language of Reverence"
 Feb. 7, 2016: Rev. Sue Phillips; Ellen Greist WA; "Claiming and Being Claimed"
 Feb. 14, 2016: Rev. Sarah Stewart; Liz Appel WA; The Middle Way
 Feb. 21, 2016: Chaplain Erica Richmond, Sue Linsley WA; "Where Do We Come From?"
 Feb. 28, 2016: "Your One Wild & Precious Life";
 March 6, 2016: Seminarian TJ Fitzgerald; Richard Stockton, WA; "Nothing Stays Put".
 March 13, 2016: Rev. Kayla Parker; Meredith Fahey WA; "Forever Becoming".
 April 17, 2016: Liz Appel; Gwen Heuss-Severance WA; "The Change Will Do Me Good."
 May 22, 2016: Beth Robins Roth, Richard Stockton WA, "A Heart As Wide As the World".

Committee Members during 2015-2016

Liz Appel, Meredith Fahey, Chair, Loren Fields, Ellen Greist, Tom Hardin, Gwen Heuss-Severance, Chair, Sue Linsley, Linda Mehta, Richard Stockton

It has been the custom for members to remain on the committee for approximately two years. Meredith Fahey joined the committee in late Fall 2013 and rotated off in mid 2016. Liz Appel joined in the Fall of 2014 and rotated off in May 2016. Tom Hardin joined the committee in the Fall of 2013. Gwen Heuss-Severance joined in the Fall of 2013 and became chairperson in Winter 2016. Sue Linsley, Linda Mehta and Ellen Greist all joined the committee in the Fall of 2014. Richard Stockton joined in December 2015 and Loren Fields joined in May 2016.

A special note of gratitude to our Congregational Administrator, Jamie Ross, for her support and hospitality.

Respectfully submitted,
 Gwen Heuss-Severance,
 Chair, Worship Committee