



Unitarian Universalist
Meeting House
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Nantucket Unitarian Universalist Newsletter - May 2016

COMMON PATHWAYS *

By Reverend Linda Simmons

Situated Understanding

I have learned so much teaching the World Religion class these last seven weeks. I should really say facilitating as we have all taught each other so much. Each week we read a different chapter of *A History of God, a 4,000 Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam* by Karen Armstrong.

The chapter on Islam was one of the most challenging for us, not because it was difficult but because our assumptions about what constitutes religious freedom and women's liberation made our ability to be present with our studies difficult.

One of the first things to come up during our talk on Islam was the oppression of women. The burka and hijab are seen as garments of male patriarchy and ownership. With further research and study, we found that Muhammad, the founder of Islam and its prophet, encouraged women to play active roles in political community and that the Qur'an gave women rights of inheritance and divorce in the 7th century. Western women had nothing comparable until the eighteenth century. We also learned listening to an interview <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1QfgDkFR5E> with Reza Aslan, an Islamic author and scholar, that in the predominately Muslim countries of Turkey, Bangladesh and Indonesia women have rights equal to men and are represented in government and in Turkey, are heads of state.

Before we made statements about liberation or peace and attached them to a religion, we learned to pause and consider that one cannot say that the Qur'an (or the bible for that matter) is a book of peace or violence, only that there are people of peace and violence. One cannot say that Islam oppresses women, only that there are Islamic and quite a number of other countries, religions and cultures that support laws and/or practices that oppress women. One cannot say *anything* about Islam, Christianity, Judaism or any other religion without situating these statements in a time, place and a people.

We learned, not that truth is relative, but that truth is situational and that our situation as white Americans leads us to accept some things easier than others as true.

I found a cartoon on line while doing research on Islam. It has 2 pictures, one on each side of a divide. Both are of women looking at each other with side-long glances with judgments in bubbles above their heads. One woman is in a bikini with wide, dark sunglasses. The other is in a burka. The woman in the bikini is saying: *Everything covered but her eyes, what a cruel, male-dominated culture!* The woman in the burka is saying: *Nothing covered but her eyes, what a cruel, male-dominated culture!*

May our situated understanding as Unitarian Universalists—at this time, on this island—offer us the courage to learn beyond our assumptions and so reach through our limitations into the great richness and beauty of life's many expressions.

*Nantucket is full of common pathways, some known by many, others known only by a few. Our Meeting House brings us together, traveling over many pathways, some common, some not, as we learn to walk with each other even when the ways are unfamiliar and unmarked.



JOIN US AT 10:45 A.M.
EVERY SUNDAY

Sunday, May 1
"The Grace of Beltane"

Rev. Linda Simmons
Hendrix Hall

Sunday, May 8
"Mothers and Witnessing"

Rev. Linda Simmons
Hendrix Hall

Sunday, May 15
Lay Led Service
Hendrix Hall

Sunday, May 22
"Spiritual Journeys and Covenants"

Rev. Linda Simmons
Hendrix Hall

Sunday, May 29
"Remembering Memorial Days at the UU Meeting House"

Rev. Linda Simmons
Historic Sanctuary

Families Welcome!
Religious Education for Children Every Sunday

BOARD OF TRUSTEE'S MONTHLY REPORT

by Jan Ellsworth, Board of Trustees President

The Board of Trustees met on April 19, 2016. The April agenda included:

1. Rev. Linda's monthly reports, She is working with one of our young parishioners to develop and implement a junior youth group (ages 8-12).
2. The Board began an ongoing reading of *Vision, Mission, and Covenant: Creating a Future Together*, developed by UUA. This month we discussed the historical content of these concepts. Our goal is to learn what we need to possibly develop and/or update these documents for our congregation.
3. Paul Stewart presented the January – March treasurer's report. We continue to show a balanced budget. Paul and the Board discussed open positions on the finance committee, development of a pledge committee that would meet year round and a task force to look at our liability insurance.
4. Christine Sanford presented an update on the progress of the AR/kitchen renovations. Next steps are completion of the lighting upgrade (recessed lighting with dimmers are planned), followed by painting the AR in the fall.
5. Jack Weinhold presented a discussion on the 4th of July Declaration of Independence reading. There are concerns that not all voices are heard. Jack is also hoping to find a new volunteer to head this annual tradition after this year.
6. On April 17th, our quarterly Share the Plate donation was made to Meals on Wheels in honor of David Glidden as requested by his family in lieu of flowers. The Board will take suggestions for local non-profits that will benefit from our support.
7. With regret the Board accepted the resignation of Joy Margolis from the Board. The opening on the Board was referred to the nominating committee – Susan Richards, Christine Sanford and David Hall. We are hoping to have a replacement by the May meeting. We thank Joy for her participation and will miss her greatly.
8. The Board held its spring retreat on April 9th. After listening to a Podcast by Doug Zelinski (from 2011 GA), we discussed and began to develop Board objectives for 2016/2017 based on the seven principles or sources. There will be more information to come on this.



*Have a wonderful
Daffodil weekend.*

*I can be reached at
ellsjan@verizon.net.*



Items continue to be collected for Syrian Refugee families that we will be delivering to Worcester on our field trip on May 25. Please bring donations to the Meeting House Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.—12 p.m. or on Sundays during service.

MAY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thursday, May 5, 5:30 pm—6:30pm

Beginners' Meditation—Parsonage, 10 Fair St.

Thursday, May 5, 6:30 pm—8 pm

Drumming—Activities Room

Thursday, May 12, 6:30 pm—8:00 pm

Drumming—Activities Room

Saturday, May 14, 9:00 am—2:30 pm

Nantucket Behavioral Task Force Family Awareness Workshop on Addiction—Hendrix Hall and Activities Room

Sunday, May 15, 1:00 pm—5:00 pm

Nantucket Behavioral Task Force Family Awareness Workshop on Addiction—Hendrix Hall and Activities Room

Thursday, May 19, 6:30 pm—8:00pm

Drumming—Activities Room

Saturday, May 21, 2:00 pm—3:00 pm

Debby Merritt Memorial Service—Sanctuary

Wednesday, May 25, Time TBA

Field Trip to Ascentria in Worcester to deliver items donated to the Syrian Refugees

Thursday, May 26, 6:30 pm—8:00 pm

Drumming—Activities Room

Sunday, May 29, 2:00 pm—3:30 pm

Kirtan Chanting—Activities Room

Come Join Us at The Meeting House!

7th Principle Project/Green Sanctuary

by Gary Langley

Thanks to Jack Weinhold for printing the Food Rescue banner complete with a fetching logo and other materials for the first annual Spring Fest. We will now have them at the ready for other public presence opportunities.



The Food Rescue project is off and running. We are still in the pilot program stage insuring that we have a smooth running procedure before expanding the project. We have made 7 food pick-ups from the Corner Table Culinary Center in the last few weeks with deliveries to the Food Pantry, the Police and Fire Station (in thanks for their efforts regarding David Glidden) and Sherburne Commons.

The third year of our Community Garden effort has begun with digging in the beautiful, rich, soft, sun backed soil - always such a forward and hopeful exercise. We look forward to another connective and successful growing season with 50% of the proceeds going to the Food Pantry.

Our field trip to Ascentria in Worcester on May 25th to deliver our donated goods for Syrian refuge families and visit with our Lutheran brothers and sisters and learn more about the projects they are engaged in at Ascentria is shaping up nicely as we have received a multitude of needed items. We'll be meeting some folks from the UU Fellowship in Falmouth, MA there too who have also been collecting some items for refugees.

There is still plenty of time to donate and seats available in the cars going to Worcester on the 25th if you would like to join us. Thank you all for your generosity.



Food Rescue Table during Sunday Coffee Hour
7th Principle Project also staffed a Food Rescue Nantucket table at the Nantucket Eco Group Springfest on Saturday, April 23. Thanks to all the volunteers who made this event a success!



**Debby Merritt
Memorial
Service**
Saturday,
May 21
2:00 p.m.—
3:00 p.m.
Sanctuary

The Best of God and Human

Goodness
Joy
Light
Hope
Action
Aspire to be better
Merciful
Gratitude
Inherent worth and dignity
Understanding
Integrity
Beneficent
Compassion
Love
Empathy
Patience
Forgiveness
Pluralism
Inspiration
Appreciation of form and beauty
Acceptance
The ability to choose
Cry tears
See one another in light

During one of our last classes on World Religion, the question was asked of those around the table: If you had to choose two of the best qualities of god and human, what would they be? These words are what we came up with. The word size reflects the number of times the word was mentioned.

First Quarter 2016 Treasurer's Report

	A	B	C	D	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q		
1	Treasurer's Report: Pledges, Funds, and General Operating Budget												
2	My goal is to put this information in the May, August, November, and February Weathervanes. Paul P. Stewart, Treasurer, Paul@PLPDD.com												
3	2016 Pledges			1/1/2016	Net Change	3/31/2016	2016 General Operating Fund					Budget	Actual
4	Amount Pledged			\$ 72,878	\$ 3,400	\$ 76,278	Income less related expenses			Annual	YTD	YTD	
5	Number of Pledges			58	4	62	<= Pledge Payments Received			\$ 81,033	\$ 20,258	\$ 22,348	
6							Sunday Plate and Gifts			\$ 10,974	\$ 2,743	\$ 7,316	
7	Funds ('R'estricted, by 'D'onor)			1/1/2016	Net Change	3/31/2016	Rentals (Pars, FdLuz, CSHY, wed, HH ...			\$ 80,670	\$ 18,168	\$ 17,241	
8	General Operating monies CapeCod5			\$ 5,003	\$ 1	\$ 5,004	FUNdraising (Auction, 4thJuly, etc.)			\$ 17,446	\$ 350	\$ 390	
9	General Operating monies NanBank			\$ 28,281	\$ (8,549)	\$ 19,731	Income from Endowment and Banks			\$ 38,616	\$ 9,654	\$ 15,002	
10	Subtotal General Operating Rows 8:9			\$ 33,284	\$ (8,549)	\$ 24,735	Income from Sanford Fund			\$ 10,000	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	
11	R Parsonage Capital Maint. NanBank			\$ 17,810	\$ (17,635)	\$ 175	Principal taken from Endowment			\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	
12	R Minister's Discretionary NanBank			\$ 1,394	\$ -	\$ 1,394	total Income less related expenses			\$ 238,738	\$ 53,673	\$ 64,797	
13	R RE Committee NanBank			\$ 389	\$ -	\$ 389							
14	R Sabbatical Provision NanBank			\$ 2,000	\$ 500	\$ 2,500							
15	R Social Action NanBank			\$ 58	\$ -	\$ 58							
16	R Membership Committee NanBank			\$ -	\$ -	\$ -							
17	R Sanctuary Sound System NanBank			\$ (1,901)	\$ -	\$ (1,901)							
18	R Activities Room Reno. NanBank			\$ 1,800	\$ (86)	\$ 1,714							
19	RD Organ Playing NanBank			\$ 175	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,175							
20	RD Organ Maint. + NanBank			\$ 1,486	\$ -	\$ 1,486							
21	Subtotal All Bank Accounts Rows 8:20			\$ 56,495	\$ (24,769)	\$ 31,726							
22	R Capital Reserves Vanguard			\$ 849,503	\$ 3,079	\$ 852,582							
23	R Working Reserves Vanguard			\$ 389,065	\$ 1,410	\$ 390,475							
24	R Capital Reserves UJ CEF			\$ 94,595	\$ (174)	\$ 94,421							
25	Subtotal Reserves Rows 22:24			\$ 1,333,163	\$ 4,315	\$ 1,337,478							
26	RD Organ Maint. + (est. 2011) TIAA-CREF			\$ 67,837	\$ 991	\$ 68,828							
27	Subtotal all 'Endowment' Rows 22:26			\$ 1,401,000	\$ 5,306	\$ 1,406,306							
28	Total all above Rows 8:27			\$ 1,457,495	\$ (19,464)	\$ 1,438,032							
29													
30	RDP Sanford Trust (est. 1910) BNY-Mellon			\$ 246,908	\$ 1,092	\$ 248,000	<== Sanford Trust is a right to income but we don't 'own' the principal.						

This first quarter of 2016 saw a number of good things occur for the Society's finances and related assets:

1. The parsonage roof was replaced at a cost of \$18,600 (cell D11).
2. We received a surprise gift of \$5,100 from the Nantucket License Plate "Low Numbers Auction" (cell Q6).
3. We received a generous donation to support organ playing this Summer (cell K19).

In addition, the South Church Preservation Fund completed reroofing the meeting house, a project largely paid for by a \$250,000 grant from the Nantucket Community Preservation Fund and the 2015 Town Meeting. Thanks especially to Craig Spery for overseeing this project.

Furthermore, the CPC and 2016 Town Meeting voted to support improved and more historically appropriate lighting for the sanctuary, a project which will occur later this year. Thanks to David Barham for his research and work leading to this grant.

Sermons for May

May 1: “The Grace of Beltane” - Rev. Linda Simmons

This weekend is the celebration of the ancient holiday of Beltane, which is about new beginnings, fertility, letting go of the old and making room for that which is yet unknown in and around us. It sounds so wonderful, but how do we make room to do this? How does one let go of winter’s burdens and create room for the lightness of the not yet known? This sermon will explore the sacrament of starting where we are and making room for what arises with grace and patience.

May 8: “Mothers and Witnessing” - Rev. Linda Simmons

In the study of ancient Greek at divinity school, I learned that the word *martyr* means *witness*. In this sermon, I will explore the role of witnesses and motherhood in history and offer that witnessing can be a powerful act of reconstituting the world.

May 15: Lay Led Service

May 22: “Spiritual Journeys and Covenants” - Rev. Linda Simmons

Join us as Alison Van Fleet Levine gives her spiritual journey, others make commitments to membership, and we explore what makes covenant sacred to us as a liberal faith. Please join us after service for *A Taste of Iran*, a sampling of Persian tea and sweets, and a slide show and presentation from Martey Rhine, a recent traveler to Iran which includes: History—Persian Empire and Islamic Revolution; Art and Literature—carpets, miniatures, and poetry; Mosques—architecture and stunning tile work; Iranian people, culture and food.

May 29: “Remembering Memorial Days at the UU Meeting House” - Rev. Linda Simmons

Join us for our first service upstairs in our beautiful sanctuary. We will reflect on Memorial Day services given here in the past as well as remember those from our island who fought in the Civil War, the war from which Memorial Day came while asking the question: How does the way we remember those who gave their lives in war change us?

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

~ The inherent worth and dignity of every person.

~ Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

~ Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.

~ A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

~ The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

~ The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

~ Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

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Church Staff

Rev. Linda Simmons, Minister ~ **Edward B. Anderson, Minister Emeritus**

Diane T. Lehman, Music Director ~ **Lucretia Voigt, Office Manager** ~ **Jen Dunbar, Lead RE Teacher**

Ed Sullivan, Sexton ~ **Chuck Gieg, Bookkeeper**

Board of Trustees

Jan Ellsworth (*President*), Val Hall (*Vice President*), Paul Stewart (*Treasurer*), Steve Estabrooks (*Clerk*)

Cynthia Csabay, Joanna Greenfield, Clay Twombly, Lora Stewart

Church Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - noon

Minister's Office Hours: Tuesday, 10 a.m. - noon and by appointment