

# Annual Report

## 2018



Second Congregational Meeting House Society

Unitarian Universalist

Nantucket, MA

**January 27, 2019**



## 2018 Board of Trustees

	<b>Term Ends</b>
Val Hall, <i>President</i>	January 2019
Susan Richards, <i>Vice President</i>	January 2021
Peter Richards, <i>Clerk</i>	January 2020
Paul Stewart, <i>Treasurer</i>	January 2019
Nancy Mack	January 2019
Joanne Polster	January 2020
Alison Forsgren	January 2021
Kat Robinson Grieder	January 2021
Rev. Linda Simmons	

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

## 2018 Staff

Rev. Linda Simmons, *Minister*  
Rev. Ted Anderson, *Minister Emeritus*  
Barbara Elder, *Music Director*  
Leyah Jensen, *Religious Exploration Lead Teacher*  
Sherlly Morocoima, *RE Assistant*  
Emma Young, *Office Manager*  
Chuck Gieg, *Bookkeeper*  
Janelle Morocoima, *Sexton*

## **Table of Contents**

2018 Annual Meeting Minutes	4
2018 Summer Meeting Minutes	6
Minister's Report	8
President's Report	10
Clerk's Report	12
Music Director's Report	12
7 <sup>th</sup> Principle Project	14
Archives	15
Building & Grounds Committee	15
Caring Team	16
Coffee Hour	17
Committee on Ministry	18
Docent Report	18
Fundraising Committee	19
Lay Led Service Committee	20
Membership Committee	22
Noonday Concerts	23
Religious Exploration Committee	23
Nominating Committee	25
Pledge Campaign Committee	26
Finance Committee & Treasurer's Report	27
South Church Preservation Fund Report	28

Second Congregational Meeting House Society Unitarian Universalist  
2018 Annual Meeting Minutes  
January 28, 2018

- I. Meeting called to order at 12:02 by President Val Hall and Quorum established by Clerk, Peter Richards
- II. Chalice Lighting and Opening Words - Clay Twombly and Reverend Linda Simmons - Presentation of chalice pins to outgoing members - Lora Stewart, Christine Sanford, Cynthia Csabay (not present), and Joanna Greenfield (not present)
- III. Clay Twombly moved to approve the 2017 Annual Meeting minutes and Michelle Whelan seconded - Unanimously approved.
- IV. Treasurer Paul Stewart presented the 2018 Budget Presentation, Paul stated that finances are not the only measure of a congregation but if they were... we're definitely doing very well... healthy surplus for 2017.... 3 things to do with \$29,000+ surplus - hold aside \$20,000 just in case because of uncertainties (Faro de Luz issue below in questions) - by summer meeting we should know if we need it and \$8,000+ towards renovation of AR - continue - new floor, column repair

Questions and discussion:

- Return on endowment? Grown from 1.2 to 1.4 million (\$200,000 grown in real dollars) - we use that return to support our budget...
- Income uncertainties? - Faro de Luz (\$21,000/year) - going thru personnel issues... minister asked to leave... have been without a minister since last summer... we should know how things are going for them by summer 2018
- Paul talked about funds... \$\$ for purposes - Food Rescue for fridge received \$20,000
- Craft Fair - more than 2½ times what we budgeted... Lora always advocates for low budget estimates - so there's not too much pressure and it's okay if we don't make it - bad weather
- Tower rental for antennae, etc. (Verizon is one of our renters, used to be T-Mobile) - several years of not knowing what's going to happen) Fire suppression is in the tower (Verizon) - well protected in tower only - originally paid us \$800,000 to put stuff in tower and continue to give us \$10,000 a year - we have had a 2nd opinion of an independent engineer who says we're okay for now and we're not near "the limit"
- Is completing the painting of the church in the plans? Paul and Angus (SCPF) working on new windows replacement - once that's done we'll do the painting... Thanks to SCPF who funds the big building projects
- Lora questions where are the areas that we could spend more money for the well-being of the congregation - parsonage repair/maintenance - office manager doing great - we could use more clerical support - Music Committee - RE cut this year... Youth group only funded for spring not fall - Contingency/Slack fund - 2% of budget but only .67% of the budget this year to make budget work -
- Organ playing/maintenance fund - separate \$75,000 dedicated to just organ
- Directed donations - Some people pledge and then add a directed donation towards a specific thing
- Discussion of having fund-raising geared towards a specific need - easier possibly but it can be trickier to allocate funds in budget and keep track of...

John Rivera moved to approve budget and Jim Sulzer seconded - approved unanimously

- V. Election of Board of Trustees Members (Susan Richards) - Nominees - Kat Robinson Grieder, Alison Forsgren, Susan Richards, Nancy Mack (1-year term) Carl Borchert moved to approve and Angus MacLeod seconded... approved unanimously.
- VI. Election of Treasurer (Susan Richards) - Nominee - Paul Stewart. Peter Richards moved to approve and Clay Twombly seconded - approved unanimously
- VII. Election of South Church Preservation Fund Board Members (Susan Richards) - Susan Hochwald, Paul Stewart nominees - Carl Borchert moved to approve and Janet Emack seconded - approved unanimously
- VIII. Election of Nominating Committee (Susan Richards) Nominees - Lora Stewart, Christine Sanford, Janet Emack. David Hall moved to approve and Peter Richards seconded - approved unanimously
- IX. Social Action Updates
  1. Immigration Resource Center (Rev Linda Simmons) - has been open since June - first Monday of every month - 5:30-7:30pm - big binder of resources - most people come to ask about legal services... they have a lawyer on call... "Tired of living in the shadows" - is the most common refrain
  2. Food Rescue: (Gary Langley) - starting 4th year - to reduce food waste and food insecurity on Nantucket - Food pantry services 800 people a week... 20 tons of food for the last 3 years (most comes from Bartlett's) - 16 volunteers now - from congregation and community - Gary reviewed how the group is collaborating with other groups on island - main collaboration with Sustainable Nantucket - Walk-in cooler donation of \$20,000 for a walk-in fridge/freezer - partnering with Sustainable Nantucket with Farm to School programs for gleaning... Initiative towards composting on a larger scale with Nantucket schools - talks have gone on with superintendent...
  3. Indivisible Nantucket: (Teena Loftin, Alison Forsgren) - started right after the 2016 election - supporting resisting the Trump agenda - 6,000 groups all over the USA - 2018 elections a big focus
- X. Adjournment/Extinguishing the Chalice: Clay Twombly moved to adjourn and Peter Richards seconded - Unanimously approved and meeting adjourned at 1:15pm

Second Congregational Meeting House Society Unitarian Universalist  
2018 Summer Meeting Minutes  
August 5, 2018

- I. Susan Richards, VP of BOT and substituting for president Val Hall, put out call to order and a quorum was established at 12:16pm. Peter Richards, BOT clerk, took notes.
- II. Reverend Linda read the opening words and the chalice was lit.
- III. Paul Stewart, Treasurer, presented a brief report along with his usual all-encompassing spreadsheet. He referred to his summary stating that all is in good order: both our funds and our reserves are doing well. Our annual budget is proceeding close to plan. Paul sees no significant concerns in any of these areas. Gary noted it's now been five straight years we've operated under a balanced budget, without drawing from our endowment.
- IV. Presentation/Discussion of Parsonage Capital Plan
  - Jack Weinholt led a discussion on the future of the parsonage, noting the Parsonage Alternatives Committee will be put "on hold" until the Parsonage Renovations Committee can do their work. A renovation plan with pricing on a number of concerns: insulation, cellar, windows, etc. An architect needs to be chosen and a detailed plan needs to be developed and approved... this could take many months.
  - Jim Sulzer commented what a great gift the women sewing committee provided to the congregation all those many years ago, and hopes that we keep and preserve the parsonage. This feeling was echoed by several other members present today.
- V. Motions to be voted on
  - Motion #1- Parsonage Capital Maintenance Fund: Paul moved that the \$20K of "Income Insurance", that had been set aside in January to cover 2018 income uncertainties or for later disposition, now be transferred to the Parsonage Capital Maintenance Fund. Kristina Strand seconded the motion and it passed unanimously! (12:45pm).
  - Motion #2: Board of Trustees' Mission Proposal  
Kat Robinson Grieder reviewed the history and development of the Mission Statement that began during the BOT retreat in the spring of 2017. Kimberley Debus was instrumental in getting us refocused during the BOT retreat held in the Parsonage this February. A series of three congregational chats, called "Mission Matters", were held and from those we were able to develop and refine the statement that we submit for approval today.

### **Our Mission**

Working toward a more just and inclusive society,  
our congregation supports spiritual growth and service  
with open doors, minds, and hearts:

*Open doors* for welcoming our diverse island  
communities and visitors;

*Open minds* for exploring differing ideas  
and beliefs;

*Open hearts* for deepening our connection  
with others and ourselves.

- Mary Beth complimented the work done on the statement and looks forward to its continuing use in the Sunday service and out in the community. Carl Borchert liked it being compact, short and sweet and loved all the input that went into it. Katherine St. Juste loves the appropriateness of the verbiage; Jim Sulzer thinks it's worthy of being transformed into marble! Rev. Linda thanked the process and how everyone came together to make it happen. Jack Weinhold will work on getting a banner made so that we may proudly show our new Mission Statement at home and away!
- The motion to adopt the new mission statement was seconded and our mission statement was approved unanimously! (12:52pm)

## VI. Social Justice Updates

### 1. Food Rescue: Gary Langley

- The new walk-in cooler was finally completed 2 weeks ago and is up and running and located on Sustainable Nantucket's community farm, thus expanding and deepening our partnership with Sustainable. This project was the result of FRN receiving a \$20,000 donation to procure refrigerated storage space from an anonymous donor who is UU Meeting House congregant. The installation of solar generated power will be forthcoming to create a self-contained unit.
- After a successful pilot program last year of installing a collection bin in Wauwinet for renters to drop their non-perishable and unopened food as they leave the island, we began a similar program in Madaket this year.
- It is estimated that in the last 3 years FRN has received and distributed 30 tons of food that would have otherwise found its way to the waste facility. With this refrigerated store FRN can expand their operation to include additional pick up days at Bartlett's Farm, accept additional donations at Stop and Shop, seek out new food donors and create new initiatives.
- FRN welcomes anyone interested in becoming part of the important social justice action.

### 2. Make It Stop: Randi Allfather

- Randi reported on the Make It Stop movement, briefly reviewing a number of efforts with which they've become involved. She states that about 7-10 people make up the core group that have become involved with Make It Stop.

### 3. Immigration: Rev. Linda Simmons

- Rev. Linda reported on the Immigration Resource Center which is open in the AR on the first Monday of each month. She noted that they have not had many people come in over the past three months. There was real concern that they might not be able to continue.
- Rev. Linda has been working along with Debbie DuBois and Vanessa Rendeiro. They've gone out into the community to determine what the people want them to do for them — to seek new ways that they can help people in need.
- There are many issues that the Immigration Resource Center addresses and connects people to appropriate referrals to manage including wages not being paid, immigration statuses not being renewed, unfair rental practices, and issues of abuse, etc. It should be noted that island employers have vested interests in immigrant workers and those immigrant problems become employer problems.

## VII. Adjournment and Extinguishing of Chalice

The meeting ended with a chalice closing read and extinguishing of the chalice at 1:20pm.

*Respectfully submitted, Peter H. Richards, Board of Trustees, Clerk - August 10, 2018*



## Minister's Report

I have served as your minister now for five and a half years. I continue to marvel at how much I learn each year about what matters. Every step I take here is fruitful, enriching, formative. Thank you for offering me this opportunity to engage so whole heartedly with all of you and this island's diverse people.

This year I led worship services and offered sermons on 33 Sundays. The topics were wide ranging and included themes such as: *Comfortable with Uncertainty*, *The Spiritual Art of Getting Lost*, *Climate Change and Religion*, *Finding Common Ground* and *Accountability and Mercy*. We also welcomed some guests to our pulpit. Senator Bill Keating and Rep. Dylan Fernandes spoke on our *Swords into Plowshares I* service and Jessica Mindich from [Raise the Caliber](#) spoke at our *Swords to Plowshares II*. Billy Sherry, local artist and sculptor, made us a chalice out of repurposed guns which he dedicated to Larry Miller and Mary Jane Halliday during these services. I shared the pulpit with Rabbi Gary Bretton Granatoor and enjoyed his topic, *Chanukah's Message to America Today*, in which he spoke of the need to not only accept but celebrate and protect difference. We also had our *Blessing of the Animals* on Sunday September 30 outside in front of the sanctuary doors where the rain held off for one more year.

After I returned from my 2-month sabbatical to Nepal and India in mid-April, I enjoyed searching through my [blog](#) for insights to bring you all. Some of those sermons were entitled: *The Razor's Edge*, *The Dance of Leela*, and *The Shadow Unveilers*. I also had a book group that met for 3 sessions at the Atheneum, and Gary and I did a presentation of our journey there as well with all of his gorgeous photos to which over 65 people came.

In addition to my Sunday morning responsibilities, I officiated eleven weddings and five memorial services.

We have been blessed this year to have Barbara Elder as our Music Director. She has brought the breadth of her experience, understanding of Unitarian Universalism and her beautiful talent to play in creating a strong and thoughtful music program for us each Sunday and during the Noon Day Concerts. I look forward to working with Barbara this year. Please see Barbara's music report for a more thorough explanation of her good work.

The Religious Exploration Committee and Leyah Jensen have been busy doing the good work of building a community of peace and thoughtfulness with the children. With more than an ounce of creativity, Leyah continues to delight and bless our children while showing them what ethical living looks like. Please see the enclosed RE report for more information on this vibrant work of the UU Meeting House.

We welcomed 6 new members in 2018: Bobbi Sylvia, Marion Martin, Tyler Johnston, Susan Berman, Joanne Polster and Cinda Gaynor. How blessed we are to include them in our community!

We started a Communications Campaign this year with Bess Clarke, Alison Forsgren, Jack Weinhold, Emma Young and me on the team. Each year, an anonymous funder has given me \$5,000 to use to grow involvement and enthusiasm about our Meeting House society and as they have said, "extend the light of my ministry." This year we are using those funds (and some

advertising dollars in the general budget) to hire Jasmine Takanikos, a Social Media Strategist (and a UU!) who started a company called [Brand Human](#) to help us develop a logo, branding message, advertising strategy and put together a new website. The mission of Brand Human is: “An acknowledgement that we must explore and discover the complexities of humanhood when cultivating successful brands, Bodies, and Businesses.” We are very excited to be working with Jasmine.

Our social justice work through the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle Project continues to be a corner stone of our Society. The Immigration Resource Center, Food Rescue, Make it Stop, and other community outreach and support as it arises, remains strong and vibrant. The Immigration Resource Center, IRC, under the auspices of the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle Project, opened officially the first Monday of June 2017 and has been open the first Monday of every month from 5:30-7:30pm. We continue to serve island immigrants; supporting them with legal advice through our pro-bono lawyer, offering referrals and building bridges.

Food Rescue continues to be a dynamic program on island run with Gary Langley as Director who will give a more detailed report on the pages herein.

Make It Stop was instrumental in the Families Belong Together rally held on the town hall green in late June that brought over 350 people out to speak about the injustice of separating children from parents. I stood on a bench and told people I was worried for the American soul, that it was time to reclaim the ethics we have worked so hard to build and live into as a nation over these last few centuries. We marched down Federal, to Main and then down South Water. It was a beautiful event full of courage and solidarity. Make It Stop is also working to bring [Under the Gun](#) to the Atheneum. More to come on this.

I devote a large part of my ministry to pastoral care. I am the chaplain with Palliative and Supportive Care of Nantucket (PASCON) and serve many of our island residents as such. I am also the chaplain of the Cottage Hospital and sit on the Ethic Committee there. I also make numerous house and hospital calls to our congregants as well as see many folks who come to the parsonage for tea and conversation. I continue to learn much about compassion, presence, love, forgiveness, hope and community from showing up in this way with so many of you. This part of my ministry blesses me deeply.

We completed our Year to Live class that met once a month for a year, and began on October 4, 2017. We met to discuss death, which is really a discussion of living wholeheartedly, and to live one year to the fullest. Class topics included: forgiveness, making peace with our lives, exploring concepts of death, and writing our obituaries and eulogies. We concluded the class with a “celebration of life” for all participants at Beverly Hall’s home. We each gave a portion of our eulogies and then there was song, poetry and much laughter. Our program for this service was beautiful-featuring pictures of all of us on the front.

I began a [Neighborhood Project](#) film and discussion series at the Meeting House as well. We meet once a month for a potluck and then view of a provocative film and engage in discussion. These films, developed by The Nantucket Project staff, are meant to inspire, challenge and move. Many moving and unexpected conversations ensue.

I am a member of the Interfaith Council and a board member on the Nantucket Community Alliance. I am also the Grievance Officer for Nantucket Housing Authority and a member of the Ethics Committee at the hospital.

I extend my thanks to members of the Board especially President Val Hall, Vice President Susan Richards, Treasurer Paul Stewart and Clerk Peter Richards; and to Finance Committee members Paul Stewart, Nick Miller, Peter Richards, Jim Sulzer, and Jack Weinhold for their extraordinary talents and commitment to the congregation. Committee chairs and members deserve equal thanks as well– Religious Exploration Chairs: Susan Richards and Lora Stewart; Lay Led Service Committee Chair: Val Hall, Building and Grounds Chair: David Hall; 7<sup>th</sup> Principle Project Chair: Gary Langley; Caring, Nominating and Membership Committees’ Chair: Lora Stewart; South Church Preservation Fund Chair: Paul Stewart; Chair of the Docenting Program: Peter Richards; Coffee Hour Aficionado Extraordinaire: Val Hall and Manager of Church Archives: Joanne Polster. And last but not least much gratitude to our staff: Barbara Elder, Music Director, Emma Young, Office Manager; Leyah Jensen, RE Lead Teacher, Sherly Morocoima, RE Assistant and Janelle Morocoima, Sexton -- for their continued service and devotion. I also thank my colleague, Ted Anderson, *Minister Emeritus*, for the blessing of his friendship.

Thank you all for your giving, loving, and showing up. The work we do and empathy we give transforms lives. It is a great honor and privilege to serve as your minister.

*Rev. Linda Simmons, Minister*

## President’s Report

2018 was an eventful year for the Board of Trustees. New members elected at the 2018 Annual Meeting were Susan Richards, Alison Forsgren, and Nancy Mack, who were elected to replace Lora Stewart, Christine Sanford, and Joanna Greenfield. Michelle Whelan then resigned after Annual Meeting, and Nancy Mack agreed to complete her term. Members who continued their service were Val Hall, Paul Stewart, Peter Richards, Kat Robinson Grieder, Clay Twombly, and Rev. Linda Simmons. Clay later resigned in May, and was not replaced. The group elected Val Hall President of the Board for a second year, and past President Susan Richards agreed to be Vice President and future President.

For the first two months of 2018, the Rev. Kimberley Debus, Sabbatical Minister, was our spiritual leader. She assisted us in constructing a new Agenda format, and guided us during the Board’s Annual Retreat in March, where we discussed a new Mission (later approved during our Summer Congregational Meeting, after three “Mission Matters” meetings where congregants could give their ideas for wording.) We also reviewed our congregational goals and decided to discuss one goal each month in more detail. When Rev. Linda Simmons returned from her Sabbatical to India and Nepal, she re-assumed her inspirational leadership. Some of the major actions taken by the Board in 2018 were the following:

- Planning and completing the new Activities Room floor, with help from several volunteers, and lunches prepared by Lora Stewart and Rev. Kimberley Debus.
- Assigned Board liaisons for each Committee.
- Approved the summer Noonday Concert Series, directed by Barbara Elder.
- Further elucidated the role of Office Manager, upon the resignation of Lucretia Voigt and subsequent hiring of Emma Young. Interviews for the position were held by Rev. Linda Simmons, President Val Hall, and Treasurer Paul Stewart.
- Formed the 10 Fair Street and Parsonage Alternatives Committees to develop strategies for future use of the Parsonage.
- Formed a Parsonage Garden Task Force to work with Shirat Ha ‘Yam in formulating a yard and garden plan to be presented to the Board.
- Approved Rev Linda’s contract for another year.
- Set the Summer Members’ Gathering for August 1, the Summer Congregational Meeting for August 5, and the Goods and Services Auction for August 18.
- Approved a Share the Plate collection for August 12 (Rohyngia Refugees).
- Voted to not offer space at any cost for political candidates’ campaigns (due to IRS regulations on charitable organizations).
- Approved extending the contract of Barbara Elder, Music Director, until May.
- Formed a Communications Committee to get our message “Out There”.
- Formed the Pledge Campaign and Pledge Appreciation Task Forces.
- Completed Minister of Church evaluation.
- Approved Congregational Handbook change on how we count members for the UUA. An Active Member is defined as one who has signed the book and has pledged or given some other kind of gift. Further, they should live on Nantucket unless the Meeting House is the only congregation to which they belong.
- Awarded the contract for painting the Activities Room to Bob Lehman, and voted by email the color choice for the AR walls.
- Approved a one-year rental contract for Faro de Luz.
- Approved the 2019 budget draft, which will be voted upon by the congregation at the Annual Meeting on January 27, 2019.

It has been a pleasure, a privilege, and a lot of fun to work with the dedicated people who make up the Board of Trustees. I could never have completed the last two years as President without their help, especially that of officers Susan Richards, Paul Stewart, and Peter Richards. And my special appreciation goes out to our wonderful Rev. Linda Simmons, who has helped me grow so much as a leader. We are truly blessed to have her!

*Val Hall, Outgoing President*

## Clerk's Report

The Clerk's Committee includes Peter Richards (Clerk), Paul Stewart (Treasurer), Susan Richards (President), Lora Stewart (Membership), and Reverend Linda Simmons. A meeting was held on January 7, 2019 to review the membership list to finalize the exact membership count under new UUA guidelines. The final count was 71 members. This will be further discussed during the annual meeting of the congregation on Sunday, January 27, 2019.

Overall attendance in 2018, combining totals from both the Sanctuary and Hendrix Hall, was 2,471 over 51 weeks, for an average of 47.7 per week. That is a slight (2.4%) decrease from 2017's total. The RE attendance totaled 213 yielding an average of 4.2 children per week. Interestingly that's an increase of 2.4% over last year.

Separately, the attendance average for the Sanctuary in 2018, over a period of 18 weeks, was 56.5, while the average was 43.1 for Hendrix Hall over the 33 weeks of services held there.

Note that 2018 was the first year since 2014 that there were no major winter storms causing the church to be closed and cancelling the Sunday service.

Finally, the annual "Blessing of the Animals" was held on September 30th. While there was a good turnout, we do not count the attendance because it is held outside on the front steps and sidewalk area with many casual onlookers stopping by and leaving at random.

We happily report that the "weather gods" were with us once again, making this the sixth straight year of good weather for this annual blessing service by Reverend Linda Simmons! A good time was had by all and \$400 was raised from the offering and donated to Nantucket Island Safe Harbor for Animals!

*Peter Richards, Clerk*

## Music Director's Report

This has been an unexpected, joy-filled and fulfilling year for me as the new "old" music director of this church. Unexpected because we did not think I would be music director for the full year; Joy-filled because, well I've had fun; fulfilling because we have risen to some challenges musically and logistically together.

Over the 52 Sunday services of 2018, I was music leader for 80% of them with additional music leaders covering 20% of the services. Many thanks to Mollie Glazer, Jacob Butler, Susan Berman, Rob Dunbar and Matt Hutchinson for taking the reins on the Sundays I was not there. Their ability and willingness to fill in allows me to visit family off the island and helps me to stay in the role of music director. It also opens a new music dimension within our church and creates an opportunity for additional musical contributors.

With 63% of our services downstairs and 37% upstairs, the music program is divided between our treasured spaces. In the intimate downstairs setting of Hendrix Hall, the choir was seated close to the piano as part of the congregation during the service and then stood in

formation during the anthem. When we moved upstairs to the main sanctuary, the choir returned to the loft and sat near the Goodrich organ for most of the services to help lead the hymns from an acoustical advantage. Sometimes the choir moved closer to the pulpit to sing an anthem with the piano. There was a flow for the music upstairs being sometimes in the loft and sometimes in the front of the church. This added to more possibilities to the music offerings.

The congregation sang 153 hymns this year. We sang 90 hymns one-time only and 35 hymns were repeated two, three or four times. Our most often repeated hymns were “Blue Boat Home,” “Let it be a Dance,” “There is More Love Somewhere,” “Spirit of Life,” “Wake Now My Senses,” “Just as Long as I have Breath,” “Mother Spirit, Father Spirit,” “Meditation on Breathing,” and “May I Be Filled with Loving Kindness”. Rev. Linda and I have made a conscious effort to introduce more varied hymns into our services.

The UU Choir was comprised of 14 singers, 4 of whom were seasonal members. Many thanks to the singers who contributed so many musical gifts to our church throughout the year: Cynthia Csabay, Al & Cheryl Fuller, Valerie Hall, Polly Miller, Phaedra Plank, Haziel Jackson, Jim Sulzer, Jeffrey Thomson and Nancy Tobias. We also are grateful to our summer seasonal member participants: Flora Newberry, Priscilla Roosevelt, Anne Rosen and Kathy Vassell. They attended Thursday rehearsals in order to prepare for the Sunday services. The Choir sang anthems at 71% of the services singing a total of 37 anthems; 18 brand new ones and 19 from our choral library. Among our favorite new anthems are “Like a River in My Soul,” “The Way of Peace,” “Shout Allelu!,” “Love is Little,” “The Spangled Heavens,” “This Little Light of Mine,” and “Will There Really Be a Morning?” We hope to keep circulating these in our revolving choral library.

Guest artists contributed to our services a total of 20 times this past year. This included vocalists and instrumentalists. Special thanks to Carson Cooman, organist extraordinaire who is also composer in residence at Harvard University. Members of our church community enriched our music through their offerings including sopranos Phaedra Plank, Cynthia Csabay, and Nancy Tobias, composer and baritone Elliot Levine, singer-guitarist Paul Connors, guitarist Jim Sulzer, saxophonist Bill Schutt, song writer Chris Hanson, the singing family of Faisal and Emily (Hall) Abid, trumpeter Richard Loftin and cornet and early music specialist Flora Newberry. We also invited guest artists Susan Buerkle, flutist and Libby Veilleux, soloist, to join us. A big thank you to Susan Berman and Ray Saunders, Rob and Jennifer Dunbar who serenaded us during our annual Animal Blessing service. Diane and Bob Lehman continued their July 4th music performance and we hope to keep them involved this next year.

Memorials and Weddings – Church member Elizabeth Oldham’s Memorial service included the choir with many former members returning to the island to sing “Welcome Song,” “Linden Lea,” and “Laudate Dominum,” with Greta Feeny as soloist and Marcia Hempel on the organ. Libby’s daughter Maia chose all the music. Maia is remembered as being one of the first people that this music director met on the island. Church member Larry Miller’s Memorial service came at a time I was not on island and I am grateful to Diane and Bob Lehman who played for the service. There were two large weddings in the fall that were upstairs. In one, the

Goodrich organ was played and in the other, a piano trio (violin and cello) were used. I played for both those weddings. There were also two memorial services in the spring and early summer that Jacob Butler was able to play. Thank you to him for his help.

There were many musical paths to navigate this year and in review I realize that some of it was due to the amount of variation I was experiencing in my role as music director. Rev. Linda and I were together for a total of 25 out of 52 services. I was music leader for 4 services with our sabbatical minister, 9 services with different lay-led leaders and 2 services with guest ministers. There were also 12 services led by other music leaders which I helped organize.

Hopes and dreams for this next year – I plan to continue working on identifying improvements needed for our upstairs sound systems and solving some of problems that make it difficult for people to hear speakers. We also will be working on removing illegal copies of music from our files. Although it is painful to do, we need to keep only the copies we have properly purchased. This will be a continuing project as it takes time and money to make it happen. There have been many musicians contributing to our church this year with their time and talents. One goal is to continue including people musically for services growing the possibilities. I also hope to involve our choir and music program in a public performance for the benefit of the church this year. I am thankful for the commitment our choir members have given. Stay tuned for more! I have enjoyed working with Rev. Linda and the Lay-Led Committee and I am enormously grateful for the members of the choir and all the musicians who have enriched our services musically.

*Barbara Elder, Music Director*

## 7<sup>th</sup> Principle Project

Food Rescue Nantucket (FRN) had another year of growth, initiatives and new ideas. Over the past year our volunteer base of support has grown to 16.

In July 2018, we completed construction of our walk-in cooler, located at Sustainable Nantucket's farm, which has allowed us the refrigerated and freezer space to accept more donations. We have increased our pick-ups from restaurants, as they close for the season, and have increased the amount of left-overs we receive from events such as the Wine Festival and from Stop and Shop, a newly established relationship with the mid-island store has resulted in daily donations.

We have also completed a successful Summer season with a food bin at each end of the island for renters to deposit their unopened, non-perishable food items.

Toward the end of 2018, we began talks with the Nantucket Schools and the Nantucket Food Pantry about a pilot program to reach out to students experiencing food insecurity, whose families don't access the food pantry. The initiative would consist of identifying those students, offering weekly food items and creating a distribution network.

For 2019, FRN is discussing the idea of writing a grant for a 3-year pilot program to hire a part time person with the skills necessary to take the organization to a new level of effectiveness and innovation.

Additionally, we have received a very generous \$9,000 anonymous donation from a congregant for the complete installation of a solar energy system for our new walk-in cooler. It is scheduled to be up and running in late Spring of this year.

FRN is grateful to be under the auspices of the UU Church, as this arrangement has allowed for the success of the program to date. We would welcome more volunteers and ideas you may have to enhance the work of FRN.

*Gary Langley, Director, Food Rescue Nantucket*

## Archives

With the permission of the Board, I am in the process of withdrawing and discarding financial records from the early 1950s to 2008.

These records contain budgets, bank statements and cancelled checks, invoices for operating and other administrative expenses, et. al.

By law we must retain records for only the previous 7 years but I am stretching it a bit.

I am once again going through and reviewing these files to make sure that they do not contain any possible archival material.

After that is completed, I plan to review and update the existing archival files and to revise the finder's aid or index to the files.

*Joanne Polster*

## Building and Grounds Committee

The Building and Grounds Committee has been ever busy keeping the UU Meeting House, now 210 years old, and the parsonage, up to snuff. Minor and more major repairs have taken place over the last year. As Building and Grounds Chair, I have worked hard to address building needs as they come up. Our group includes Dennis Simmons, Angus MacLeod, Paul Stewart, as consultant, and Rev. Linda, ex officio.

Besides keeping the lights on, the toilets from overflowing, the windows from blowing out, the doors from locking shut and the place from falling down in general, below is a more specific list of what has been accomplished this past year:

UU Meeting House & Parsonage Repairs & Maintenance

- Replaced the AR floor! Looks beautiful.
- Repaired leaks in the Meeting House roof.
- Replaced broken windows in tower and AR
- Participated in ensuring the tower strengthening went well, which it did.



- Managed repairs at the parsonage: storm doors that needed to be planed, toilets and sinks that needed repair, and other small jobs as they arose.
- Passed another Fire Inspection
- Installed a new AR back door

I am sure there are items that are forgotten on this list as so many jobs come up and are taken care of that never hit the meeting notes. Here's to another year of our building remaining sound. Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

*David Hall*

## Caring Team

The mission of the Caring Team is to augment the pastoral care provided to members of the congregation by Reverend Linda Simmons and to help facilitate a culture of caring within the Meeting House community.

In coordination with Reverend Simmons, the Caring Team:

- Facilitates providing meals, transportation and errands for those in need.
- Reaches out to parishioners with phone calls, visits and cards when appropriate.
- Facilitates or provides help with small household chores as needed.
- Helps identify needs and resources among friends and family.
- Encourages others to participate in fulfilling our mission.

A priority for the Team and Reverend Simmons is to reach out to community members who are unable to get to the Meeting House. The majority of home visits are made by Reverend Simmons, but these are augmented by the Team as needed.

Sadly, this year the congregation lost Larry Miller and Libby Oldham; two very special long-term members. Larry was a leader in the congregation for social action/social justice and set a fierce example in opposition to gun violence. Libby Oldham was an admirer and defender of many of Nantucket's historic treasures; most especially the Second Congregational Meeting House Society and the building in which we gather for services. Both Larry and Libby are remembered fondly and missed.

In September, the year-long class, "One Year to Live," which was facilitated by Reverend Simmons, concluded. This class was well attended by both members of the Meeting House and by members of the wider community. In class, participants examined their lives to date and planned for their future (including their deaths). The class ended with a joyous "memorial service" filled with a short eulogy for each participant, lots of music and poetry and, of course, delicious food. The need for this kind of offering, where people have an opportunity to take a closer look at mortality, had been felt for some years. We are grateful to Rev. Simmons for facilitating this class.

Under the umbrella of the Caring Team, the Shawl Ministry is dedicated to knitting and crocheting shawls for Meeting House members and their loved ones who are facing illness or

other challenges. This group has been quietly knitting/crocheting away this year and has succeeded in replenishing the stock of shawls waiting for recipients. Most participants knit at home, but with the formation of the Saturday morning Craft Group, another venue is available if anyone wishes to create a shawl. Since the Shawl Ministry was started in the fall of 2013, fifty-four shawls have been given to provide comfort for those in need! The Shawl Ministry is grateful for the yearly budgetary allocation to the Caring Team. Some of this money helps to defray the cost of yarn for the shawls.

Alison Forsgren has been a wonderful addition to the Team this year. She has provided ongoing concrete support for a number of parishioners. In addition, her historical knowledge of island non-profits (including hospice), work with the elderly and knowledge of the connections between people who have lived on Nantucket for a long time has been invaluable.

David Hall is a valuable member of the Team. Though he is not called on often, he is always ready to help elders with odd jobs. In addition, David's open heart and friendly demeanor make him easy for new people to approach.

In 2019, the Caring Team hopes to:

- Recruit one more member of the Team.
- Continue to support and augment the pastoral care provided by Reverend Simmons.

*Lora Stewart, Chair*

## Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour is a special time for conversation and fellowship after the service. It not only allows people a chance to meet visitor and to socialize, but also to discuss what they just experienced in the service and to make connections about congregation matters. The more hospitable the Coffee Hour (and the more food!), the longer people seem to stay. So, this time really matters. It is part of our spiritual practice and supports our mission of Open Doors, Open Minds, and Open Hearts.

Meeting House members Brad and Kristina Strand, who live in California but attend services here as often as possible, have given a generous donation to fund our Coffee Hour. This allows us to buy items such as coffee, tea, sugar, and creamers, as well as to supplement the times when Coffee Hour is a potluck. In addition, their generosity has allowed us to hold special events after service, such as the Pledge Luncheon and birthday celebrations. There is also a weekly donation basket on the food table which brings in \$40 to \$50 a month in additional funds for supplies. These donations are greatly appreciated.

Many people have been willing to host coffee hours or to bring goodies to share. These include Joy and Greg Margolis, Tomomi and Haziell Jackson, Gary Langley and Linda Simmons, Justine Connors, Joanne Polster, Cynthia Csabay, Polly Miller, Cinda Gaynor, Al Fuller, Paul and Lora Stewart, and Peter and Susan Richards, among many others. And the members of the Board of Trustees host coffee hour once a month. Still others are always there to participate in

cleanup. The “cleanup crew” consists of Joanne Polster, Tomomi Sato-Jackson, Cheryl Fuller, Colin Leddy, David Hall, and others.

I would like to thank Brad and Kristina, and everyone else who have helped make Coffee Hour a vital and enjoyable part of our Meeting House.

*Val Hall*

## Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry continued to work closely with Rev. Linda and the Board of Trustees to ensure that the congregation understood the purpose of Rev. Linda’s two-month sabbatical and for the congregation to be able to share in the sabbatical journey of reflection, growth and renewal.

A widely distributed color brochure, written and designed by the committee and Rev. Linda, provided a map and overview of her travel route through parts of Nepal and Northern India, and her intention to learn from the people and places amidst whom she traveled.

With this vivid image in mind, the congregation was invited to follow Rev. Linda’s Feb. 7 – April 9 journey on her blog and to read *The Royal Ghosts* by Samrat Upadhyay along with a study guide and questions. Her blog posts shared heartfelt depictions of the daily reflections, growth and renewal that Rev. Linda was experiencing, placing readers right alongside her through Gary Langley’s mesmerizing photography.

Upon their return three book discussions reflecting the complexities of Nepalese society and a PowerPoint presentation about what Rev. Linda and Gary learned during their travels took place April 30, May 7, May 14 and May 21. Rev. Linda continues to include the breadth of her sabbatical experience in her sermons and in her spiritual leadership of our congregation.

The Committee on Ministry, Board of Trustees and Rev. Linda gathered to debrief upon her return. The intention was to gain the perspective of the minister, congregation, and congregation. Questions for consideration reflected on ways the sabbatical benefitted or may have presented difficulties, what would have been done differently in hindsight, and what one learned about oneself and how it would be enacted in one’s ministry.

*Cheryl Creighton, Chair*

## Docent Report

As with the summer of 2017, the gorgeous weather during this past July and August was the major factor in the low number of people visiting our sanctuary. It seemed as though every day was sunny, hot and humid. Most people must have been out on the water or at the edge of it. There were not many rainy or cloudy days when we usually see more visitors.

The total for July 16-September 2, 2018 was 358. In 2017 we had nearly 900 visitors (484/408) over the two months, and even that number was down significantly from 2016 because of the great weather throughout most of that summer as well.

We lost 11 docents this year compared to the team we had over the previous two summers. Some moved off island (Linda & Craig Sperry), a few had conflicting schedules this summer, and others just needed a break after serving for many years. We didn't start this year until mid-July because of Peter's 8-day hospital admission at NCH.

Our team this summer consisted of returning "veterans" Paul Stewart, Susan and Peter Richards. We welcomed newcomers Jim Sulzer, Marion Martin and Kathy Tyrer. Thanks to all team members for their participation and we hope they'll consider returning next summer. Due to the shortage of team members, we cut back to having two 2-hour shifts of 10-Noon and Noon-2pm. As in previous years, Thursdays included the Noonday Concerts throughout the summer.

One member we wish to recognize and gratefully thank is Libby Oldham, who passed away in late June. Libby kept us honest with our history and was part of the docent team for many years. We couldn't thank her enough for all the help she provided — she certainly will be missed.

We'll look towards hopefully rebuilding our docent team for this coming summer. Won't you please consider becoming a member? There's no need to memorize dates as notes are always available. It's very satisfying when you see the reaction of visitors as they enter our beautiful sanctuary. If you are interested, please contact Peter Richards at [cobbleland@aol.com](mailto:cobbleland@aol.com).

*Peter Richards*

## Fundraising Committee

Previously, the Fundraising for the Meeting House Operating Budget was loosely overseen by the Membership Committee. Thankfully, in 2018, a separate Fundraising Committee was launched with Alison Forsgren as the Chair. The committee is still being built and, to date, has Alison Forsgren, Lora Stewart and Kat Grieder working on next year's contributions to the Annual Operating Budget.

The model for fundraising has been for each activity to be overseen by one or more people. In 2018, Susan Richards and Val Hall organized the annual St. Patrick's Day dinner. Jack Weinhold, once again, coordinated the 4th of July reading of the Declaration of Independence with his able "right-hand woman," Cynthia Csabay coordinating the readers and doing the narrating herself.

Given other people's schedules, Alison Forsgren, single-handedly organized the summer auction. This is the biggest fundraiser of the year for the Meeting House and too big a job for one person to do alone, so this should not happen again! This year the name of the auction changed from the "Goods and Services Auction" to "By the Sea, An Auction to benefit the Unitarian Meeting House". The First Congregational Church lent us their plywood and pew protectors (pipe insulators) and the live and silent auction items were displayed upstairs in the sanctuary instead of in the Activities Room (as in years past). Also new this year was the addition of an online auction site to promote items and allow for absentee bidding

Contributions to the Operating Budget from Fundraising in 2018 were:

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. St. Patrick's Day Dinner (Susan Richards, Val Hall)                                       | <b>\$60.00</b> (net)     |
| 2. Fourth of July reading of the Declaration of Independence (Jack Weinhold, Cynthia Csabay) | \$4,000.00 (gross)       |
| (new projector purchased, video made, and raffle taxes paid from gross)                      | <b>\$2,476.00</b> (net)  |
| 3. "By the Sea" - summer auction (Alison Forsgren)   | <b>\$13,041.00</b> (net) |
| 4. Summer Concert series (Barbara Elder)   | <b>\$1,106.00</b> (net)  |
| 5. Stroll Craft Sale (Kat Grieder, Alison Forsgren, Lora Stewart)                            | \$2,567.00 (gross)       |
| (\$100.00 for maps of all the stroll church sale)  | <b>\$2,467.00</b> (net)  |

**Net total for fundraising \$19,150.00** (net)  
(plus a new projector)

*Alison Foresgren, Chair*

## Lay Led Service Committee

As in past years, the Lay Led Service Committee has planned and officiated one Sunday service each month, in addition to hosting and introducing the seminarians who served in Linda's place for three Sundays during February. The committee consisted of Val Hall, Kat Robinson Grieder, Peter Richards, and Susan Richards, with much help from Ezra Descarfino, Britt Martinez, Nancy Rappaport, Haziel Jackson, John Merson, and Jack Weinhold. Wonderful music was provided each month by Music Director Barbara Elder and the Meeting House choir. Here are the topics and service leaders/guests by month:

- January: Kat led a service called "Outstanding Women Who Inspire Us," with guest speakers Melissa Murphy, Paul Connors, and Michelle Whelan. They each described how the life of one such woman touched each of them. Leyah Jensen read a story about one of our own outstanding women, Madaket Millie.
- February: Val introduced guest speaker, Rev. Dawn Fortune, friend and colleague of our Sabbatical Minister Kimberley Debus, who officiated at a service called "What Price Freedom?" Rev. Dawn is an activist for sexual and gender minorities, and for social justice, anti-racism, and anti-bullying causes.
- March: Val, with much assistance from Ezra Descarfino, led a service on the celebration of the visual arts, featuring guest speakers Madeleine Hay, Beth Morris, Ritch Leone, and Beverly Hall. These artists and art teachers shared their perspectives. Jim Sulzer added his lovely guitar music, and our beloved Grace Noyes did the readings.
- April: Britt Martinez led a service called "Alive, Awake, Alert, Enthusiastic (People Reading Poetry)." Poets and poetry-lovers Grace Noyes, Jim Sulzer, Susan Richards, Phaedra Plank, Val Hall, Sally Obremski, Lucretia Voigt, Paul Connors, Joy Margolis, Kat Robinson Grieder, and our own Rev. Linda read their favorites.

- May: This was a children’s service called “Being UU Everyday: the 7 Principles According to Our Children.”
- June: Haziell Jackson planned and led a service called “Our World is One World” dedicated to the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Organization (UUUNO). He, Phaedra Plank, and Skyler Kardell performed a skit written by Haziell. A Share the Plate collection was received for the organization.
- July: Kat was the liaison for a service called “Carving Coastlines and Other Lessons in Commitment,” prepared and officiated by Rev. Janet Newton. In the service she asked us how we can stay committed to those things we value when the world around us constantly challenges that commitment. Janet Newton, a lifelong Unitarian Universalist and former English teacher, lives on Martha’s Vineyard.
- August: Val led a service dedicated to the persecuted Rohingya refugees who have fled their native Myanmar for camps in Bangladesh. This was a family affair. Dr. Ruhul Abid, founder of Health and Education for All (HAEFA) dedicated to providing health care to the refugees, gave the sermon and subsequent presentation after the service. Val’s daughter Emily, with husband Faisal Abid and sister-in-law Tanaz Abid, provided the music and the Coffee Hour refreshments. Guest organist Carson Cooman played the Prelude, Postlude, and an Offertory piece written by Carlotta Ferrari especially for this service. A Share the Plate collection was received for HAEFA. We also had an unexpected visit from U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren, who spoke briefly to the congregation.
- September: Val co-led this service, called “Civil Disobedience,” with guest speaker John Merson. Writings of Mahatma Gandhi and Robert Frost were read. Elliot Levine, here for the Jewish High Holy Days, sang two solos, one of which was in Hebrew.
- October: Kat co-led this service with Nancy Rappaport called “A World Without Violence” in Honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Carla Zenis joined Nancy for the sermon and a deeply touching memorial candle service.
- November: Val co-led this service, called “Happiness in the 4th Dimension” with Jack Weinhold. During the service, Jack taught us lessons about learning to live in the present. Both Mitch Blake and Phaedra Plank did readings, and Nigel Goss, substituting for Barbara, played music for the service.
- December: Peter and Susan planned and led this last service of the year based on the last lines of Mary Oliver’s poem, “A Summer Day.” She asks the reader, “Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?” Several members of the congregations gave their answers to that question, including Val Hall, Paul and Lora Stewart, Jim Sulzer, Joanne Polster, Kat Robinson Grieder, and Mitch Blake. Jack Weinhold and Mary Beth Splaine, who are spending the winter in California, provided their answers by email.

It was a busy and rewarding year for the Lay Led Service Committee. We would like to thank all of you who generously participated in these monthly services, and hope that some of you will be willing to do so in the coming year.

*Val Hall, Chair*

## Membership Committee

The mission of the Membership Committee is to build and support our community. We:

1. Support and recognize current members
2. Welcome and encourage new members.
3. Recognize summer members with an annual social gathering and facilitate summer members' participation in congregational activities.
4. Encourage all members to participate in church activities and governance.

Throughout 2018, social activities were organized to encourage community building. Our Sabbatical Minister, Rev. Kimberly Debus, organized "Friday Frolics." These were pot luck suppers followed by various activities including: movies, game nights and even a fun-filled Karaoke night. These were very well received and there are rumors that more such evenings are in the works.

In March, Susan Richards and Val Hall coordinated our annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner. It was held in the AR for the third year in a row.

Our 6th annual Summer Members' Gathering was held on August 1st. Many thanks to Barbara Elder and Jim Sulzer for offering to host once again. Thanks also to Lora Stewart for coordinating the evening and to the Board of Trustees for bringing wonderful appetizers. This special evening provides an opportunity for summer members to get to know the Board and to visit with Rev. Simmons and her husband, Gary.

Many thanks to John Merson for organizing an evening of Fall Seasonal Suppers in several homes (including one in his own home). These are always very popular and are frequently requested. Anyone who would like to coordinate one of these or some other social activity, feel free to speak to Lora Stewart or Susan Richards

Rev. Linda helped to coordinate a couple of gatherings with members of the other congregations with whom we share the Meeting House. It is hoped that members of this congregation will increase participation as we live our mission of Open Doors, Open Minds and Open Hearts.

In addition to dreaming up some fun, the members of the Membership Committee participate in helping the Clerk complete the annual census for the UUA.

The Membership Committee currently consists of two people: Lora Stewart, Chair and Susan Richards. The committee would welcome another member or two. If interested, please see Lora or Susan.

Recently, there have been many requests for social activities. Our goal for the coming year is to increase the number of these social gatherings. PLEASE, coordinate one. There is help available and it is the best way to build community!

*Lora Stewart, Chair and Susan Richards*

## Noonday Concerts

The Noonday Concerts started with financial help from Nantucket Looms for \$250. We were grateful for the help. In 2018, we had ten concerts on Thursdays at noon beginning on June 28. We heard organist Isaiah Williams, New Orleans ragtime pianist Anuraag Pendyal, clarinetist Nick Davis and cellist Nathan Watts, jazz pianist Matthew Hutchinson, singer-guitarist Jacob Butler, soprano Noell Dorsey and pianist Stephen Yenger performing music composed by Jeffrey Thomson, Bill Schutt's Delaware Valley Saxophone Quartet, organist Carson Cooman, classical guitarist Jim Sulzer and songwriter-composer Mitch Blake. Every Thursday provided something new in our upstairs sanctuary.

There were 217 people who attended the concerts. We took in \$1,659 in our donation basket. We paid the performers \$1,500. We give 2/3 of the donations to the church general fund which is approximately \$1,106.00. We now have \$1,662.16 to start the next year with.

We hope to continue these concerts. The concept for the concert series is to provide a weekly opportunity to attend a concert and experience the main sanctuary of the church filled with music for a half an hour. The concert design is simple, allowing people to walk in off the street, come on break during their lunch, enjoy thirty minutes of musical enrichment during their busy summer time. Our sanctuary has so much to offer for the musical spiritual soul - a wonderful piano, historic organ and beautiful acoustics. The goal of the concerts is to serve a thriving downtown summer population and provide momentary calmness, enjoyment and serenity in our sanctuary with music.

Next summer, there will be 8 Thursdays in July and August (not including July 4 which is reserved for the reading of the Declaration of Independence). We will plan on 8 concerts then for the summer.

*Barbara Elder*

## Religious Exploration Committee

In 2018 our RE program featured two strong Tapestry of Faith curriculum units as well as a wonderful children's service in the Spring. In early summer we bid a temporary goodbye to our RE leader Leyah Jensen who returned to us in the Fall with her new baby, Beau! We ended our ACK-tion youth program, at least for now, but the community service projects that were such an important part of that program will definitely continue and be expanded upon in our 2019 RE program.

Highlights:

- Curriculum theme for January through June 2018 (continued from September of 2017) was "Signs of Our Faith: Being UU Everyday" from the UUA Tapestry of Faith Curriculum. This curriculum is described on the UU website: "*Signs of Our Faith guides children to do their best to live faithful lives every day. It presents fourteen traits or values that most Unitarian Universalist love, including the quest for knowledge, reverence for life, supporting one*



*another on our faith journeys, and public witness. Children examine how their lives do and can exhibit these traits and values, and come to understand that their faith is a living faith whose histories and teachings are fortifications for living faithfully in a complex world.”*

- Children’s service on May 20th: “Being UU Everyday: The Seven Principles According to Our Children” - This service was created, coordinated, and led completely by the children and Leyah. From Lora Stewart presenting the “Stoles of Leadership” to the children (stoles that were made earlier in the year by the children) to the children reflecting on “Things to be Happy About,” from the singing and signing of the Hymn “Spirit of Life” to the skit/sermon “Principle Cats “written by Rowan and Eva Blake and performed in great style by all the RE children and Leyah! This service was the culmination of several months of preparation by our small and enthusiastic group of RE children.
- Curriculum theme September - December 2018: “Heeding the Call: Qualities of a Justice Maker” - UUA website description of this program from the Tapestry of Faith curriculum: *“As Unitarian Universalists, we are called not to admire justice from a distance but to live right in it, under its roof. This curriculum offers a unique opportunity to engage youth in the critical work of developing skills as Unitarian Universalists committed to social justice. It encourages youth to reflect on their own lives while also making connections to the lives lived by others. It is under this roof that the youth become Justice Makers. Justice does not come into being automatically. Individuals must work together, learn together, listen together, laugh together, and heed the call together.”*
- ACK-tion Youth Group: This group began in January of 2017 under the inspirational leadership of Leyah and ended its run in June of 2018. Community service merged with art was the theme throughout the course of this program. Some examples are: \*made workbooks and tiny bears to send to children in Syria \*made buffalos for National Day of Mourning (Native American gathering on Thanksgiving) \* Created a mural for the African Meeting House \* Cooked soup for Faro de luz \*Painted with Our Island Home residents \* Baked Valentine cookies for Academy Hill residents.
- Summer program: Another relaxed and welcoming summer program in June and July with substitute RE teacher Katie Ponce along with help from RE committee members Lora Stewart, Michelle Whelan and Susan Richards. RE children (our “regulars” along with visiting summer children) worked on art activities and as well as in-town walking field trips
- September Coffee Hour Baby Shower and October Welcome Baby celebrations for Leyah and baby Beaumont!
- Christmas Stroll tree - UU “Open Doors” theme on the corner of Orange and Main!
- Behind the scenes work by the RE committee with monthly meetings to plan curriculum and support the RE program.

Our Religious Exploration program and our families continue to be very fortunate to have the creative talents and enthusiasm of our RE Lead Teacher, Leyah Jensen as well as the reliable Sunday presence of our supportive RE Assistant Sherlly Morocoima!

*Susan Richards, Lora Stewart and Michelle Whelan*