

Nantucket Unitarian Universalist Newsletter - December 2015

COMMON PATHWAYS *

By Reverend Linda Simmons

Scaffolding



The scaffolding on The Meeting House is impressive. It is quite an art to put these supports in place, layer by layer, rung by rung. I have a desire to climb to the top when I look up at it all and look out over our beautiful island. I'll try to contain myself!

This scaffolding will keep those who come to put on our new roof safe, allow them access to their work, and give them something to hold onto when the winds kick up.

There is a French Flag that graces the front of the scaffolding. This solidarity with France reminds us that it is one world, and we are one people. This does not make what is happening easier to understand, to integrate, to accept. There are questions about how to respond to all of this in a world in which we are all complicit. Knowing what we know about what contributes to the development of terrorism, how do we move forward? With weapons, armies, education, development of struggling economies, support of Muslims who are advocating peace? How do we maintain our humanity in the face of this all?



Looking up at the scaffolding this morning, I thought: This is what we have, this conversation of our humanity, these agonizing questions, these fears and this grief. All of it held together by the many supports that a community provides: the railings, the strong planks, the crossbars, the ropes. This is how we hold on as these winds blow. Hand in hand. Heart to heart. Holding each other up while we ache, question, mourn and shape understanding.

This is how we go on.

**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, Dec. 6
"Tragedy and Redemption"

Rev. Linda Simmons
Hendrix Hall

Sunday, Dec. 13
"The Miraculous"

Rev. Linda Simmons
Hendrix Hall

Sunday, Dec. 20
"Light into Darkness"

Rev. Linda Simmons
Hendrix Hall

Sunday, Dec. 27
"The Secret O' Life"

Lay Led Service
Susan and Peter
Richards
Hendrix Hall

Families Welcome!
Religious Education
for Children Every
Sunday

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Music of the Season....A UU Perspective!

by Susan Richards, Board of Trustees President

One of the things that has always drawn me to our Sunday services is the wonderful music.... I'm sure many would agree with me as our musical director does such a marvelous job choosing the music, the in-house and guest soloists, leading the choir, and of course her impeccable musical performances grace our Meeting House just about every Sunday. No doubt about it, we UUs love our music....a love that becomes even more pronounced as we head into the winter holidays with all its musical abundance. So, it shouldn't really surprise us that two of our most well-known songs of the season were actually composed by UUs.... "Over The River and Through the Woods" and "Jingle Bells"... by Unitarian author and human rights activist Lydia Maria Child and Unitarian minister and abolitionist James Lord Pierpont respectively.....

Interestingly enough both Child and Pierpont have Massachusetts roots and both songs were composed in the mid 1800's. Child was inspired by her own childhood memories of Thanksgiving at her grandparent's house and Pierpont was remembering the seasonal races between neighboring Massachusetts towns of Malden and Medford in "one-horse open sleighs"....

Both "Over the River and Through the Woods" and "Jingle Bells" created a real "template" for our Americanized version of the holidays and how we celebrate them. The power of music in the form of these two songs is displayed throughout the season and beyond.

So, as a music-loving UUer if you happen to be part of a holiday sing-a-long, humming a holiday tune, or simply enjoying a seasonal melody on the radio, and one of these songs comes up, you have a fellow UUer to thank! Enjoy!

The Year of the Bell Play Friday, December 18, 6:30 p.m. Hendrix Hall

The Year of the Bell Play was written by Ted Anderson and is being produced by Cynthia Csabay. There will be a raffle before the play and 10 lucky folks will climb the tower stairs to ring the bell 20 pulls each until it has been rung 200 times for this 200th anniversary that marks its installment in the UU Meeting House Tower. We will all go outside and toast this ringing, weather permitted, and then go to the parsonage for hors d'oeuvres and holiday cheer.

Religious Exploration in December

By Susan Richards, RE Committee

As always, December is a busy and happy time for the UU RE kiddos! All month we'll be collecting spare change, counting it up, and then deciding as a group who we want to give it to.

Sunday happenings:

- **December 6th - Hannukah** - We will read a story about the holiday, talk about the menorah, and play the dreidel game.
- **December 13th - The Gift of Giving** - What gifts can we bring to others? We can share ways we can help our community and bring love to others in need.
- **December 20th - Christmas** - We will share how people celebrate all kinds of family traditions and sing carols.
- **December 27th - NO RE CLASS** - Children are welcome to stay with their families for the service.

Save the Date! Community dinners will be starting again in January! Our first one will be on Friday, January 15th from 5:30-7pm in the AR..... Plenty of pasta and fun!

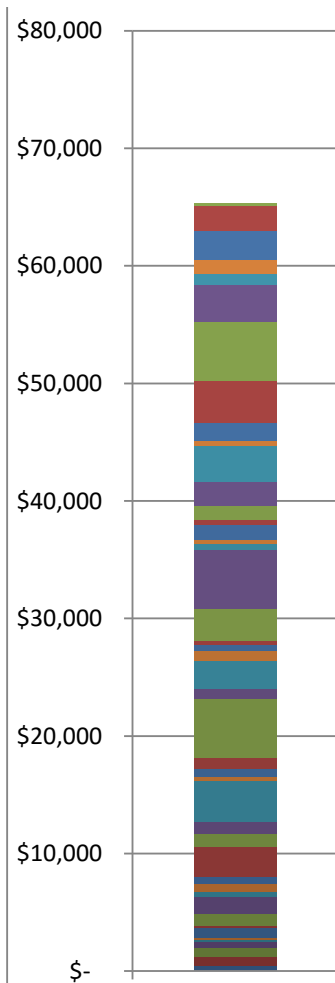


Meeting House Craft and Gift Sale

As I write this, I am very busy putting the final touches on the gift baskets for our upcoming Stroll Craft and Gift Sale. The crafts and jewelry are beautiful and the baskets are a colorful assortment at many price points. I want to thank everyone who has contributed items for the baskets and white elephant table, those who have come to help with beading and basket assembly at my house and, most especially, those who have donated their hand-made crafts and treasures. We have had fun working together. The sale is an opportunity to have fun together and to raise money from the wider community for our Meeting House operating budget. I hope you will come check it out on **Saturday, December 5th from 9 AM -3 PM**. In the meantime, spread the word!!

In gratitude, Lora Stewart

2016 Pledge Progress Report



We have received generous pledges from numerous members and friends (each colored block in the stack represents an actual pledge, to scale), and we're still in the process of contacting others for their pledge. The goal is \$80,000 and as of November 25 we have recorded a total of \$65,268 as shown.

Contact me at Paul@PLPDD.com if you would like to pledge by e-mail.

Thanks to all!

Paul P. Stewart - Treasurer

Grassroots Nantucket

By Gary Langley



Our 7th Principle Project

Remembering
Who
We
Are

The 7th Principle Project/ Green Sanctuary (7PP/ GS) had their first meeting since the congregation voted on our 2 main initiatives. Twenty one folks from the congregation were in attendance and the focus was how to best organize ourselves to get these projects moving forward. To that end, we decided to have 3 task force teams:

- Strategic Team - Responsible for preparing the application to the UUA for candidate status in the 7PP/GS Program, creating surveys for various congregational assessments, and being a clearinghouse for our future action plans in 4 main areas of church life:
 - Environmental Justice
 - Worship and Celebration
 - Religious Exploration
 - Sustainable Living.Will also attend other team meetings and keep track of our progress.
- Food Rescue Project Team - To determine the scope of the project, explore partnering possibilities with appropriate island organizations, determine the size of the volunteer force necessary to see the project take root, and create an action plan for completing the project.
- Building Materials /Recycling Team - To determine the scope of the project, explore partnering possibilities with appropriate island organizations, determine the size of the volunteer force necessary to see the project take root, and create an action plan for completing the project.

Each team will conduct its initial meeting and report back to the larger group in a schedule December 6th meeting at 12:30 in Hendrix Hall.

We are excited as this 7PP/GS takes shape and hope more folks from the congregation and outside the church will join us. Thanks you to all who are involved so far!



Sermons for December

December 6: "Tragedy and Redemption" - Rev. Linda Simmons

The ancient Greek Tragedies have so much to teach us about suffering and redemption. This sermon will explore Aeschylus' play *Prometheus Bound* and pose questions about punishment, resistance, and redemption.

December 13: "The Miraculous" - Rev. Linda Simmons

National Geographic recently had an article about sightings of Mother Mary and the miracles that surround these visions. The world is surely in need of the miraculous. What are miracles and can we participate in their happenings?

December 20: "Light Into Darkness" - Rev. Linda Simmons

The solstice is upon us. Darkness and light dance around us and within us. Can there be peace on earth? Where and how do we find it? This sermon will explore beauty and the eschaton and ask: Is there a way to be here together that can offer love and peace to our bruised and beautiful world?

December 27: "The Secret O' Life" - Lay Led Service / Susan and Peter Richards

Do you think you know the secret of life? Through the music of James Taylor and the insights of congregation members we will be exploring this question and sharing our collective wisdom.

Note: There will be no RE class on this Sunday. Children are welcome to stay for the service.

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.

Second Congregational Society Unitarian Universalist

11 Orange Street - P. O. Box 1023

Nantucket, MA 02554

(508) 228-5466 (Office)

www.unitarianchurchnantucket.org

office@unitarianchurchnantucket.org

On Facebook: www.facebook.com/Nantucket-Unitarian-Universalists-75824801619/

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

Susan Richards (President), Jan Ellsworth (Vice President), Paul Stewart (Treasurer), Steve Estabrooks (Clerk)

Cynthia Csabay, Joanna Greenfield, Joy Margolis, Jim Sulzer, Lora Stewart

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

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

December Calendar of Events

Saturday, December 5

Christmas Stroll Craft Sale, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Hendrix Hall

Saturday, December 12

Memorial Service celebrating the life of Edith Andrews, 11:30 a.m. , Hendrix Hall.

Sunday, December 13

Memorial Service celebrating the life of Karen Borchert, 1 pm. The service will be held upstairs in the unheated Sanctuary. Please dress warmly.

Friday, December 18

Year of the Bell Play and festivities afterwards at the parsonage, 6:30 p.m., Hendrix Hall

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Caroling, gathering at the UU Meeting House after the red ticket drawing downtown. Join us as we spread holiday cheer and love to our island's elders.

