



Annual Meeting  
of  
The North Parish  
of  
North Andover  
May 19, 2013



*Celebrating Our Tenth Anniversary as a  
UUA Welcoming Congregation*

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*Lee Bluemel, Senior Minister*

## Warrant

### Annual Meeting of the North Parish of North Andover Sunday, May 19, 2013 North Parish Meeting House

Greetings! The Annual Meeting of the North Parish of North Andover will be held on Sunday, May 19 at 10:15 a.m. following a single 9:00 a.m. service. The Parish will act on the following articles:

**Article 1** To receive and place on file the reports of church officers, committees, church organizations, the Minister, Director of Religious Education, Youth Programs Coordinator, Music Director, Membership Coordinator, the Parish Council and the Board of Trustees;

**Article 2** To accept the following slate of new Trustees and Officers for 2013-2014:

Trustee:	Dan Gerron	Three-year Term
Trustee:	Deb Olander	Three-year Term
Treasurer:	John Lewis	One-year Term
Clerk:	Carol Carbonell	One-year Term
Collector:	David Blanchard	One-year Term
Moderator:	Peter Race	One-year Term

**Article 3** To see if the Parish will vote to amend the Bylaws by adding "Section 16 : Endowment" as shown in the attachment so titled, and then renumbering each of the current Sections 16 through 21 as Sections 17 through 22.

(2/3 vote required)

**Article 4:** To see if the Parish will vote to establish a new and separate group of funds, to be known as the "North Parish Endowment"

**Article 5:** To see if the Parish will vote:

(a) To adopt the attached "Endowment Investment and Distribution Policy" as the Policy governing the administration, management and distribution of moneys allocated or contributed to, or earned by, the North Parish Endowment, and

(b) To instruct the Endowment Committee to initially seek to invest the North Parish Endowment in the Common Endowment Fund of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

**Article 6:** To see if the Parish will vote to initially establish the three Endowment Funds described in the "Endowment Investment and Distribution Policy" in the following amounts, using moneys transferred from North Parish investment reserves :

- 1) The Unrestricted Reserve Fund : \$10,000 (50% of the initial balance)
- 2) The Building Reserve Fund : \$5,000 (25% of the initial balance)
- 3) The Social Outreach and Reserve Fund: \$5,000 (25 % of the initial balance)

**Article 7** To accept the following slate of Endowment Committee members (these are normally three-year terms. At the outset, they are staggered to minimize annual turnover):

Steve Hartel	Three-year Term
Peter Reed	Two-year Term
Pat Edmonds	One-year Term

**Article 8** To review and vote on the annual budget proposed by the Board of Trustees for the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

**Article 9** To act upon any other business that may properly come before the meeting.

NOTE: Childcare will be available during the Annual Meeting until it is adjourned

Respectfully submitted:



John H. Van Drie  
Chair, Board of Trustees

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## Biographies of Officer Nominees

### DAN GERRON – BOARD OF TRUSTEES – 3-year term

Dan, his wife Liz and his daughter Abby began attending North Parish in 2009, when they moved to North Andover from Albany, New York. In addition to Abby, who is a 6<sup>th</sup> grader at North Andover Middle School, Dan and Liz have a son, Matt, who is a junior at University of Massachusetts Amherst. Dan is a member of the Design Task Force that is working with the architects and the construction contractor for the expansion of the building. Dan oversees corporate development at Woburn-based Monotype Imaging, a publicly-traded software company.

### DEB OLANDER – BOARD OF TRUSTEES – 3-year term

Deb has been a member of North Parish for 20+ years. She has served on and chaired the Religious Education Committee, redesigned and led the Coming of Age program, and is currently a member of the Immigration Task Force, recently having led a study group on immigration as a moral issue. After a career in systems engineering and management consulting in the high tech world, Deb made a mid-career switch and now enjoys teaching high school mathematics. She lives with her husband Joe Ferguson in Andover, and enjoys visits to Washington, DC where her son Ryan works on Capitol Hill and her daughter Taryn attends The George Washington University.

### JOHN LEWIS – TREASURER – 1-year term

John started attending North Parish in December 2011 after a long search. He became a member of the next class in March 2012. Carol and John got married in June 30, 2012. He is a graduate of Suffolk University in 1980 and has been working in the accounting and finance field for 33 years. In his prior life (Methodist), John was very active in finance, trustees, fund raising, stewardship and mission projects (Maine). Carol and John play active roles in Bread & Roses serving dinner on Saturday nights. John is also on the investment

committee. He has a loving granddaughter, Alexa, who comes to church with Carol and John at 9:00 am. They also just got a rescue dog from PA. She is an 11 month old Coonhound and her name is Fernie. In his spare time, he likes renovating the house. There is always a project going on. As a fund raising project, he sold Christmas and Easter candy.

#### DAVE BLANCHARD - COLLECTOR – 1-year term

Dave is married to Beth and has 2 daughters Shannon 22 and Meaghan 18. Dave has been the Executive Director of both Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Lawrence and Lowell. He is now a supervisor at Lahey Behavioral Health's Tewksbury Treatment Center, an alcohol and drug detox program. Dave remembers bringing the weekly collection up the hill to collector Harry Dow's house after every Sunday service at the request of his father, The North Parish's Minister Rev. Dave Blanchard. At age 12 Dave recalls armed robbers lurking behind every tree and gravestone in the cemetery on the way up Academy Road, the walk was often more of a run.

#### CAROL CARBONELL - CLERK – 1-year term

Carol has been a member of North Parish for over 9 years. She has taught RE, served on the Worship and Music Committees, and has worked on a variety of church projects. Carol has an M.S. in Rehabilitation Counseling, and worked for many years in high tech marketing communications. She has lived in North Andover for 20 years and currently lives with her new husband, Ben Tittler, and her children, Elise and Alex.

#### PETER RACE – MODERATOR – 1-year term

Pete is married to Ruth for 60 years this September. They have two sons, who live in Topsfield and Newton Highlands. They have been coming to North Parish for 42 years. Pete's involvement includes at least 26 years on the Music Comm., one term as Trustee, and about 19 years as Moderator. Pete also participated in the 350th Planning Committee and was Choir Director for a couple of years. Pete is returning as Moderator for another one-year term.

## **Warrant Article Reports - 2012-2013**

### **Article 3 “Article 16: Endowment”**

The Parish shall have a separate Endowment to assure the long range financial future of the Parish, to help the Parish manage and survive financial emergencies, and to fund capital needs and special projects that further the mission of the Parish.

The Endowment shall be governed by an Endowment Committee, which shall oversee and administer the Endowment in accordance with an Endowment Investment and Distribution Policy passed by a 2/3 majority vote of those members present and voting at an Annual or Special Meeting of the Parish. This Policy shall provide for the protection of the corpus of the Endowment over the long term.

The Endowment Committee shall consist of three members of the Parish, elected by the congregation. Except in the initial terms of each member, when shortened terms will enable a staggered rotation of members, the term of each Committee member will be three years. No Endowment Committee member may serve more than two consecutive 3-year terms. After a lapse of one year, former members can be re-elected. No Member may serve on the Endowment Committee while also serving as the Treasurer, Collector, or as an elected member of the Board of Trustees. No employee or paid staff of the North Parish may serve on the Endowment Committee.

A unanimous vote of the members of the Endowment Committee is needed to carry any motion or resolution, all of which shall be recorded in writing. The Endowment Committee shall elect its own chairperson, and shall report to the Board on a quarterly basis and to the Congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

The Endowment Committee is empowered, acting through its elected chair, to oversee, manage and administer the assets of the Endowment pursuant to the Endowment Investment and Distribution Policy. The Endowment Committee shall act in its sole judgment and discretion as it deems wise and prudent, without further approvals.

The official address of the Endowment and the Endowment Committee shall be the business mailing address of the North Parish; complete financial records of the Endowment shall be held at the Parish office.

Endowment Committee members shall not be held liable for any losses incurred by the Endowment except to the extent that such losses arise out of acts or omissions of willful misconduct or gross negligence. Each member shall be liable for his/her own acts and omissions of willful misconduct or gross negligence and not for the acts or omissions of other members. No member of the Endowment Committee shall engage in any self-dealing or transactions with the Endowment in which the member has direct or indirect financial interest. Endowment Committee members shall refrain at all times from conduct in which his/her personal interests would conflict with the interest of the Endowment.

## **Article 4 “Resolution To Implement The North Parish Endowment”**

WHEREAS, stewardship involves the faithful management of the gifts of time, talent, and money, including accumulated, inherited, and appreciated resources; and

WHEREAS, we can support the religious mission and work of the North Parish of North Andover through transfers of property (such as cash, stocks, bonds), charitable bequests in wills, charitable remainder and other trusts, charitable gift annuities, pooled income funds, and assignment of life insurance and retirement plans; and

WHEREAS it is the desire of the North Parish to enhance its long term financial stability and to encourage, receive, and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with the loyalty and devotion expressed by the gift grantors and in accordance with the policies of the North Parish:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Parish shall approve and establish a new and separate group of funds to be known as the “North Parish Endowment”;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Bylaws of The North Parish of North Andover shall be amended to incorporate therein as Section 16 the attached “SECTION 16 – ENDOWMENT” and to renumber each of the current Sections 16 through 21 of the Bylaws as Sections 17 through 22;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the attached “ENDOWMENT INVESTMENT AND DISTRIBUTION POLICY” shall be adopted by the Parish as the Policy governing the administration, management and distribution of moneys allocated or contributed to, or earned by, the North Parish Endowment, and that the Endowment Committee, who shall be responsible for overseeing and administering the North Parish Endowment in a manner consistent with the Endowment Investment and Distribution Policy, shall initially seek to invest the North Parish Endowment in the Common Endowment Fund of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the three Endowment funds described within the Endowment Investment and Distribution Policy shall initially be established at the following amounts, using moneys transferred from existing North Parish investment reserves:

- 1) The Unrestricted Reserve Fund: \$10,000 (50% of the initial balance)
- 2) The Building Reserve Fund: \$5,000 (25% of the initial balance)
- 3) The Social Outreach and Service Fund: \$5,000 (25% of the initial balance)

THIS RESOLUTION, being recommended by the Board of Trustees and accepted at the Annual Meeting of the Parish held on May 19, 2013, is hereby adopted.

## **Article 5 Endowment Investment and Distribution Policy**

### **A) GENERAL**

1. The fundamental principle in managing the Endowment is to preserve the corpus.
2. The Endowment Committee shall oversee, manage and administer the investment and distribution of the assets of the Endowment as a prudent fiduciary, with the objective of preserving capital while seeking to earn total returns consistent with moderate risk investments and prevailing market conditions. The Committee shall use reasonable efforts to invest the assets of the Endowment in a socially responsible manner, as determined in its sole discretion. The Committee may (but shall not be required to) use the Common Endowment Fund of the Unitarian Universalist Association as a strategy to achieve these objectives.
3. Distributions from the Endowment shall only be made in accordance with specific funding requests approved by a majority of the members in attendance at a duly called Meeting of the Parish. In order to protect and preserve the corpus of the Endowment over the long term, the Committee shall not distribute money in excess of 4% per year of the total market value of the assets of the Endowment. The total market value shall be determined by averaging the total market value of the Endowment on the last business day of each of the thirteen immediately preceding calendar quarters. If less than 4% is distributed in one year, the Committee may distribute more than 4% in a subsequent year, so long as the distributions do not exceed 4% on a cumulative basis. Requests for distribution of accumulated, undistributed funds may be subject to a delay in the distribution of the funds to accommodate a prudent and orderly redemption or sale of assets required to meet the request.

4. The Committee may provide for such professional counseling on investments or legal matters as it deems to be in the best interest of the Endowment, and may incur such expenses as are reasonably necessary in the execution of its duties. The expenses shall be paid from the Endowment.

5. This Endowment Investment and Distribution Policy may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at an Annual or Special Meeting of the Parish.

6. Irrevocable gifts of cash and marketable securities will be gratefully accepted into the Endowment. Gifts of other assets or gifts with retained interest may or may not be acceptable. Determination of acceptability on non-cash and/or retained interest gifts will be made jointly between the Board of Trustees and the Endowment Committee. The Endowment Committee reserves the right to convert accepted gifts to investment vehicles consistent with the remainder of the Endowment, consistent with the terms of the gift.

7. Gifts and bequests to the Parish may be allocated to the Endowment and added to any of the three funds described below. Undesignated gifts shall be attributed to the Unrestricted Reserve Fund. The Endowment Committee is empowered to receive, and manage temporarily, significant funds received as gifts to the Parish and designated for a specific purpose until such time as that purpose is fulfilled. At the direction of the Board, the designated gift shall be added to the corpus of the Endowment and maintained as a unique fund. It shall share proportionally in any increases and decreases in the value of the Endowment. Any specifically designated fund shall be exempt from the distribution restrictions that apply to the original three funds. The minimum funding to establish a specially restricted unique fund is \$10,000, which may be the result of one or many gifts. Restrictions placed by the donor on any such gifts are not subject to modification, unless the restriction placed on the fund can no longer be honored due to changes in the Parish rendering the intent of the restriction meaningless or impossible, in which case any remaining balance shall, upon a confirming vote of the Congregation, be transferred by the Committee into one of the three core Endowment funds.

#### B) THREE FUNDS

The Endowment comprises three funds, which shall be held and invested as a single entity. The Committee shall separately account for each of these funds, attributing to each its proportionate share of changes in investment values, as well as tracking gifts to and distributions from each of the funds. The distribution limit defined above shall be applied on a fund by fund basis. The need for and use of the allowed distribution from each of the three funds is determined by the Congregation, in conjunction with its customary budgeting process.

The three funds are:

- 1) The Unrestricted Reserve Fund;
- 2) The Building Reserve Fund;
- 3) The Social Outreach and Service Fund.

#### C) UNRESTRICTED RESERVE FUND

Distributions from the Unrestricted Reserve Fund may be used for any purpose to further the mission and work of the Parish, but shall not be used for the ordinary and customary operating expenses of the Parish.

#### D) BUILDING RESERVE FUND

1. Distributions from the Building Reserve Fund shall only be used to help pay for major capital expenditures and significant improvements related to the buildings and grounds of the Parish.

2. In addition to the permitted distribution, the Committee may from time to time loan money from this Building Reserve Fund to the Parish to help advance a particular improvement project on such terms, at such rates of interest, and in such amounts as the Committee deems appropriate.

#### E) THE SOCIAL OUTREACH AND SERVICE FUNDS

Distributions from the Social Outreach and Service Fund shall only be used to further the mission of the North Parish in supporting individual and collective service to the larger community. This fund is not intended to support activities for the North Parish community itself, but is for social responsibility efforts in the broader community.

## Staff Reports – 2012-2013

### Report of the Minister

*I light our chalice today in loving memory of the following members  
who have died since our last Annual Meeting:*

*Richard Wilson (5/6/1939 – 9/7/2012)*

*Martin Sinacore (1/16/1953 – 11/13/2012)*

*Priscilla Adami (1/20/1924 – 12/3/2012)*

*Ilse Schenk (2/10/2013)*

*Claire McCarron (4/23/1934 – 4/20/2013)*

*“We covenant together to be a welcoming spiritual community, where all are safe and free to search for spiritual meaning in their own ways...”*

This year was a joyous one in many ways— as we have celebrated Life and Love through worship, music, and milestone celebrations, as we have gathered together for all-congregation events including Sunday services, the Ferry Beach Retreat, the Red Bow Fair, the Christmas Concert as well as many mid-size events and small group meetings. I hope you have felt uplifted at North Parish this year, as I have.

It has also been another troubling year of war and national tragedies that hit close to home, such as the Newtown school shooting and the Boston Marathon bombing. I am reminded in these times of the value that our congregation offers simply by offering sanctuary and refuge to all those who seek it, including ourselves.

It was also a sorrowful year due to the loss of some beloved members, named above. Many of us also lost parents and siblings, and several of us had significant and unexpected health crises. My thanks to the Caring Team, the Shawl Ministry and the congregation which, in these past months, have offered such significant ministry that is often hidden from sight, but lasts deeply in the heart. As one whose

father passed away this year, I can testify to the care of this congregation. Our goodbyes at the end of this year extend to members who are moving away, including 35 year members (and former DRE) Martha and Don Bancroft, to whom we give thanks for their extraordinary commitment over three and a half decades.

Our caring for others may begin “at home”, but must extend also beyond our walls for us to live up to our Mission... and I’m glad to say that it does.

***“Through active personal involvement, we advocate for social justice in our local communities, our nation and our world...”***

It has been said that the purpose of the church is to change society’s values, and our members have done a lot this year to share their generosity of spirit, their convictions of human equality and our radical interdependence. This year we celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the People’s Pantry food ministry, our tenth anniversary as a UUA GBLT Welcoming Congregation (complete with a video history) and eight years since “our” Jericho Road Lawrence became a 501C3 in order to address economic inequalities through volunteer matches with non-profits.

We continued our traditional hunger ministries-- through People’s Pantry, monthly Bread and Roses meals and youth service projects. We continued our whole-congregation ethical commitments to being a Green Sanctuary and a GBLT Welcoming Congregation, the latter by offering leadership in the Merrimack Valley Welcoming Congregations Coalition and the McVagly Youth Group. We also continued to develop and honor youth social action leaders and raised \$14,000 in special collections.

This year the Social Action Council tried out a new strategy of determining special foci for the year. This year’s new focus was on Immigration Justice, and a small but mighty team made tremendous strides in involving the whole congregation in this issue, joined by the children and their families during the month of January in a semester on immigration and identity. My thanks go out to all who have participated in outreach at any time throughout the year; you have made the spirit of love and generosity tangible in the wider world. As our Green Sanctuary and GBLT Welcoming Congregation commitments have been met primarily by a very few dedicated volunteers, I hope others may feel called to help lead in the year ahead.

***“We encourage all to participate in congregational governance...”***

This year was an intense year in terms of laying the groundwork for a stable and vibrant future for the congregation. Involved in this effort were the **Visioning Team**, the **Design Task Force**, the **Capital Campaign Feasibility Team**, and the **Endowment Team**. All of these groups completed their very challenging work in order to share it with the congregation for our May and June voting meetings. A simple definition of leadership is “taking responsibility”. I’d like to thank all those who have taken responsibility for a piece of this complex but oh-so-important puzzle! We are now poised to make critical decisions about the future of our ministry together.

We also laid some additional critical foundations for both staffing and our physical plant, by moving forward with the goal of finding a Ministerial Intern for the 2013 – 2014 year and by tackling a major Meeting House repair. I worked closely with Ministerial Intern Task Force last summer and fall, and in January we were able to confirm that Seth Robinson will join us in September as a half-time intern for two years. The Task Force also secured a UUA grant in addition to the initial \$10,000 grant to cover this position, and I am especially hopeful that we may be able to expand adult classes and small

groups thanks to Seth's presence. Meanwhile, House and Grounds managed the replacement of a main beam in the north wall of the sanctuary, at the cost of over \$27,000 to date. We at North Parish get to "enjoy" both the rewards and challenges of being stewards of our historic Meeting House.

In addition to all the leaders and groups I have mentioned above- whose names you'll find elsewhere in this Annual Report- I'd like to thank the Board and Parish Council members. Of special note are those stepping down at the end of their terms: Board Chair John VanDrie and Board member Karen Letourneau who have both served for the past three years, as well as Treasurer Peter Reed who has served for the past four years. Peter began his service as Treasurer and Board member by uncovering embezzlement by a former administrator, and through his years of service has made tremendous strides in updating, clarifying and documenting our financial procedures, policies, record-keeping and fiscal oversight. The Board and I can't thank him enough for his dedication and good work.

This year, in addition to serving on the Board and Parish Council, I met regularly with and was closely involved with the efforts of the Stewardship Team, the Capital Campaign Feasibility Team and the Personnel Committee. I consulted with and met with the Nominating Committee, Visioning Team, various Standing Committees, the Caring Team- and led the Staff Team. In addition to writing sermons and newsletter columns, I wrote substantial content for our new website, our internship materials and the Capital Campaign Feasibility Case Study.

***"In the Unitarian Universalist tradition, we covenant to take responsibility for the spiritual growth of ourselves and our children..."***

It strikes me that reading this report so far, one might get the impression that worship was a minor part of what we do here at North Parish! In fact, Sunday worship is the most common, collective, unifying experience of the congregation.

I thank the Worship Committee which organizes summer services and has worked with me to integrate lay-led worship and guest preachers into our worship year, intentionally recruiting excellent speakers who can offer different points of view than my own. I also thank all those who have raised "here-and-now" questions about our collective life, some of which have been incorporated into worship, such as accessibility, immigration justice, stewardship and visioning.

My hope is always to cover a wide variety of topics, questions, human needs and sources of wisdom through worship, and I always *welcome* your feedback, ideas and input into this aspect of our life together. Many thanks to all those who have participated in the worship experience this year—from leading, to providing music or words, to simply being part of a receptive congregation.

To stay engaged with the denomination and my own professional development, this year I attended the Institute for Excellence in Ministry (with a focus on theme-based preaching and small groups), my bi-annual UU ministers' Study Group, UUMA and local clergy meetings, the DRE Start-Up Seminar, a Faith Development seminar and MBD District Convocation. I also continue to serve as the official "mentor" for the Rev. Meg Soens, meeting with her once a month as part of my collegial commitments.

There are so many ways in which North Parish members DO take responsibility for our collective spiritual growth, and I thank all those who have contributed, not only to worship but as RE volunteers, youth program volunteers and small group leaders of all kinds.

I must also share my gratitude to- and pride about- the dedicated and hard-working North Parish staff team. While the majority of the congregation encounters the staff only on Sundays, there is a tremendous amount of hard work being done behind the scenes all the other days of the week. The professionalism, creativity and dedication of the entire staff team is to be lauded; each one of them has been integral to the smooth workings of the congregation and the fulfillment of our Mission. I celebrate their contributions and their time on staff:

Membership Coordinator Carolyn Zimmer --nine years  
Music Director John Middleton-Cox- six years  
Congregational Administrator Kim Tracy- four years  
Nursery Assistant Forrest Lennhoff- three years  
Director of Religious Education Sara Schwindt- two years  
Youth Coordinator Tu Le- two years  
Nursery Supervisor Kerry Ann Ezpeleta- two years  
Nursery Assistant Elise Carbonell- two years  
Sexton Bob Maimone- two years  
Youth Choirs Director Erin Lane- one year

This year, it was a delight to welcome Youth Choirs Director Erin Lane to the staff and even more of a delight to see the results of her musical ministry with the children and youth. As we close the year, we regretfully say goodbye to three of our staff who will be stepping down: Tu Le, Forrest Lennhoff and Elise Carbonell. I offer Tu my deepest thanks for her work with the Junior and Senior youth over the past two years and wish her the very best as she pursues law school and her legal career. We also offer Forrest and Elise our deepest thanks for their presence with the littlest ones, as Elise moves on to college and Forrest to his senior year in high school. I am most grateful for *all* of their contributions to our multigenerational “welcome table”.

### ***Our Vision for the Future:***

It was greatly affirming for me to read the Visioning Report that came out earlier this year. It was clear from that report that the congregation is well aligned with our current direction, and wants to keep expanding and deepening all that we are. It was wonderful to see both the alignment and the passion.

After a 368 year long history, it is natural to assume that the survival of the congregation and its embodiment of Unitarian Universalism in the Merrimack Valley is guaranteed. Yet declining and closing churches in many denominations remind us that it takes intentionality, deep commitment and our very best thinking to ensure not only the survival but the vitality and relevance of a centuries-old congregation.

Each successive generation is faced with an overall question: Shall we diminish and fade? Or shall we move decisively and boldly forward, trusting the future and each other perhaps even more than we have before? We, too, are presented with such a question again this year, given the results of the Visioning and the plans for an accessible, welcoming and more spacious physical plant. I believe this congregation is capable of amazing things not just in the past but also in the future, and that we are invited and called to co-create and embrace our full potential as a UU congregation. We have the potential to become even more diverse, welcoming, empowered and powerful, in our own time.

As for myself, I have realized this spring that my ministry is now the third longest ministry at North Parish since 1850. Of course, the Rev. David Blanchard holds the record as he was here for 32 years, and there was a Rev. Noyes who was here for 20 years from 1884 to 1904. But all other ministries since 1850 have been between 6 and 13 years (including the Rev. Bean who had two separate ministries of 4 and 11 years respectively). Little did I realize at the start of the year how significant it was to break the 13 year barrier as a North Parish minister!

Across denominations, the average parish ministry is about seven years... so you'll need to let me know if I've overstayed my welcome! While there can be downsides to a long ministry—including boredom and/or complacency in the congregation—there are also tremendous gifts including long term relationships, the chance to make connections across generations, a deepening sense of institutional history and identity, and the ability to spend more time on deepening and expanding the ministry instead of dealing with ministerial turnover. As I officiate at more and more weddings for the young men and women whom I first knew as youth in the congregation, I realize how quickly time has flown since I joined you in the fall of 1999.

It is a privilege to be serving as your minister, in this, my 14<sup>th</sup> year at North Parish.

In faith and fellowship,  
The Rev. Lee Bluemel

### **Rites of Passage officiated by the Rev. Bluemel, June 2012-May 2013:**

#### **Dedications**

**Nathan Gaspar** (4/21/13)

*(In addition, we observed Kindergarten, Second Grade and Fifth Grade milestones and Coming of Age of 9<sup>th</sup> graders this past year.)*

#### **Weddings**

**Carol Ann Rabs and John Lewis, Jr.** (6/30/12) members

**Kate Cooper and Ryan Sawyer** (10/13/12) daughter of members

**Emily Bider and Michael Rossetti** (11/10/12) daughter of past members

**Paul Festino and Jason Poisson** (3/2/13) equal marriage newly legal in ME (also RI, DE!)

#### **Memorials**

**Richard Wilson** (9/15/12) member

**Martin Sinacore** (1/19/13) member

**Priscilla Adami** (1/20/13) member

**John Freeman** (4/24/13) father of member Pam Munro

**Claire McCarron** (5/16/13) member

# Director of Religious Education

## Sara Schwindt, Director of Religious Education

I would like to thank Kristin Hunt, the RE committee, and our incredible volunteers for their tireless work and creativity in crafting a meaningful experience for our children and youth. For all their support and for making North Parish a top-notch work environment, thanks to my colleagues, Rev. Lee Bluemel; Carolyn Zimmer; John Middleton-Cox; Kim Tracy; Tu Le; Kerry Anne Ezpeleta; and Bob Maimone. And of course, many thanks to the entire North Parish community, for welcoming me and my family and making the past two years such a positive experience. This truly is a fantastic community in which to work!

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT A GLANCE

There are currently 116 children enrolled in the Religious Education program (nursery through grade twelve). In addition, we have five children who are regular attendees but are not enrolled, and another fifteen to 20 “friends and visitors” (children who have attended at least once this year, but are not regular attendees and are not enrolled). The total number of children participating in RE this year, therefore, is between 136 and 141. This is very similar to the size of the program last year.

Average Sunday-morning attendance is as follows:

Nursery: 8-12	Junior Youth Group: 8-12
PreK-5: 30-35	Senior Youth Group: 10-15
	Coming of Age: 5
	OWL: 15

One issue that needs to be addressed is the high number of babies and toddlers in the nursery, particularly at the 9:00 service. A likely solution will be splitting the nursery for the coming year and establishing a separate space as a “toddler room” supervised by RE volunteers, and using the nursery exclusively for infants. The exact configuration of the nursery next year will become more clear once 2013-2014 RE registrations come in and we gain a better idea of what combination of babies and toddlers we can expect. In the meantime, the abundance of young children coming into the RE program bodes very well for the future of the program!

## CURRICULUM

This year, the RE program paused in its previous use of a three-year curriculum rotation (World Religions/UUism/Judeo-Christian Traditions) and tried the UUA’s new *Tapestry of Faith* program. This series of curricula, with offerings from Kindergarten through adults, including multigenerational curricula, offers a more wholistic integration of all three of the above-mentioned curriculum areas. The response to this year’s curricula has been very positive, and the RE committee has voted to make a permanent change to the *Tapestry of Faith* program. One particular strength of this curriculum is that the program is available to anyone online, meaning that parents will be able to see for themselves at any time what their children will be learning in religious education. This allows me to respond to a common piece of feedback from elementary RE families, namely a desire for increased knowledge of the curriculum to allow parents to draw connections at home between spiritual development in and outside of church. I plan to use the Religious Education page on the new North Parish website to offer another “link” between church and home. There is already a calendar on the Elementary RE page where families can see a summary of what their children will be learning about each Sunday; over the coming months I will add information about RE events, links to outside resources that families may

find helpful in their home spiritual development, and more. Combined with our online Religious Education registration form, I look forward to having a simple, easy-to-access central location for any necessary information or paperwork that parents might need.

One other very positive development this year was the integration of a January “intersession”, where we paused in the curriculum and did an all-ages unit, written and led by Heather McNeil, on immigration and identity. This intersession gave the children a chance to be involved in a significant and meaningful way in North Parish’s Immigration Initiative, and was received extremely positively by both children and adults. The Heritage Potluck that capped off the month was attended by a very large group of North Parish community members, both from within and outside of the RE program. I fully anticipate that the 2013-2014 church year will feature another January session on a topic of central importance to the North Parish mission.

The elementary RE classes have recently finished their curricula and will spend the last five weeks of the RE year in an all-ages “Green Food” unit that will focus on healthy eating and preparing food that aligns with our Seventh UU Principle, “Protecting Earth’s Lifeboat”.

For details on youth curricula, please see the Youth Programs report.

### **PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS and RE INVOLVEMENT IN CHURCH INITIATIVES:**

#### **Service Projects:**

Pajama/Book Drive  
MLK Service Weekend  
Cor Unum Serving  
Children’s Garden  
Birthday in a Box  
Senior Youth Group Service Trip  
Bread and Roses Cooking  
SYG Helping with North Andover Trail Work  
JYG Emmaus House Volunteering and Drive

#### **Multigenerational/Multicultural Programming:**

Halloween Haunted House  
SYG Babysitting  
Question of the Month Board  
Red Bow Fair Participation  
Senior Youth participation in elementary RE classes  
Earth Day Celebration  
SYG Fancy Dinner

#### **Worship**

Christmas Pageant  
SYG/COA Services  
Bridging  
UU Heritage Weekend in Boston (COA)

### **STAFFING AND HIRING**

I would like to acknowledge the outstanding work done by our Youth Programs Coordinator, Tu Cam Le, over the last two years. Tu's organizational abilities and "people skills" have made her an extremely valuable asset to the youth programs and RE in general, and she will be greatly missed. We wish her the very best in her current position and future pursuit of her law career, in which she will undoubtedly shine!

The Religious Education committee has voted to re-configure the part-time RE staff position from a Youth Programs Coordinator to a part-time RE assistant. This will allow me the flexibility to provide support to both the elementary RE classes and the youth programs that meet on Sunday mornings, and to be more of an active presence in both Coming of Age and Junior Youth Group.

I would also like to acknowledge Forrest Lennhoff, who after two years as our nursery assistant will not be returning in the fall. Forrest has been a beloved fixture in the nursery, displaying great reliability, professionalism and aptitude for childcare, and working with him has been a very positive experience. The babies and toddlers will miss him!

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

One of the greatest benefits of living within miles of Boston is the wealth of outstanding professional-development opportunities available. In the fall, I attended the LREDA (Liberal Religious Education Directors' Association) annual conference in Virginia, and that experience alone yielded a number of beneficial resources and actionable ideas to bring back for use at North Parish. I look forward to the following professional-development opportunities:

- \*Renaissance modules (workshops) in: UU Identity; Multicultural Religious Education and Curriculum
- \*LREDA (Liberal Religious Education Directors' Association) Fall Conference, October 2013
- \*Continued participation in local DRE covenant groups and professional networks

### **LOOKING AHEAD.....**

After the success of last summer's children's programming, we plan to offer this type of programming again. Summer children's activities will involve the children's garden; cooking and eating healthy, local foods (again, using the children's garden as a resource); and arts and crafts. All of these activities will tie into discussions of the Seventh UU Principle, "Caring for Earth's Lifeboat".

\*One significant change from last year is that we do not have Woburn Grant money to fund summer personnel assistance this year. We hope to have funding for a nursery attendant.

The Senior Youth Group is planning for a service trip to Staten Island, New York, to provide Hurricane Sandy relief in June. We are assisted by Rev. Susan Karlson of the UU Church of Staten Island, who is deeply involved in Occupy Sandy—Staten Island.

### **2013-2014 GOALS**

- \*Family Survey to gauge the level of satisfaction and engagement among RE families and to identify targeted areas for improvement
- \*Continued strengthening of Senior Youth Group; increased engagement of DRE with Coming of Age and Junior Youth Group
- \*Senior Youth Group trip to General Assembly in 2014
- \*Increased alignment of RE practices with Green Sanctuary and UUA Ethical Eating guidelines

\*Continued participation in Renaissance Modules and workshops offered through the UUA; bringing ideas back for practical implementation at North Parish

\*Exploration of ways to expand RE beyond the traditional “Sunday-morning” model—online options, weekday evening gatherings, use of social media, etc.

## **Youth Programs Coordinator**

### **Attendance:**

Junior Youth Group: 8-12

Our Whole Lives: 15

Coming of Age: 5

Senior Youth Group: 10-15

### **Accomplishments of Past Year:**

- Junior Youth Group (6th-8th grades) successfully organized and hosted the following fundraising event: Halloween Party/Haunted House.
- Junior Youth Group (6th-8th grades) successfully organized and hosted the Emmaus House Drive. Items collected were donated to Emmaus House, a homeless community in Haverhill, MA.
- Junior Youth Group (6th-8th grades) helped out with the Red Bow Fair fundraiser by busing tables.
- Junior Youth Group Neighboring Faiths (6th-8th grades) group visited the following faith communities: Mormon, Trinitarian UCC, Calvary Baptist, Unitarian Universalist, and Islamic. Each Neighboring Faiths unit consists of a fun lesson on the faith, a visit, and a wrap-up, often including a cooking session.
- The Junior Youth Group volunteered at Emmaus House and helped prepare for the opening of Emmaus House’s newest food pantry.
- Our Whole Lives (8th grade) successfully completed their curriculum, which includes group discussions and presentations relating to topics of sexual education. The curriculum this past year was enriched with guest speakers with experience on topics specific to the discussions.
- Coming Of Age (9th grade) volunteered to serve meals at Cor Unum Meal Center in Lawrence.
- Coming Of Age (9th grade) organized and went on a UU heritage trip to Boston, where they created lasting bonds with the mentors and each other and learned about their UU roots.
- Coming Of Age (9th grade) organized and led the COA service on May 5, 2013 to showcase their individual credos and share their accomplishments with the Congregation.
- Coming Of Age (9th grade) participated in the Groundwork Lawrence Earth Day Clean Up on April 27, 2013.
- Senior Youth Group (9th-12th grades) organized and led the Kids’ Mall portion of the Red Bow Fair, which consists of the following stations: cookie decorating, face paint, arts and crafts, basket drawing and games.
- Senior Youth Group (9th-12th grades) successfully organized the following fundraisers: Pancake Breakfast and group babysitting for the congregation during various nights.

- Senior Youth Group (9th-12th grades) organized and led the Youth Led Service on March 10, 2013. The service consisted of a sermon, musical pieces and readings, all delivered by the Senior Youth.
- Senior Youth Group (9th-12th grades) led the “Undies Sundays” Drive, which collected diapers and children underwear for those in need.
- Senior Youth Group (9th-12th grades) organized the Fancy Dinner fundraiser, a three-course meal with musical accompaniments by the Senior Youth. Proceeds will go toward a service trip to New York City in June 2013.
- Senior Youth Group organized a service trip to New York City in June 2013 to provide relief for Hurricane Sandy victims.

### **Future Projects/Goals:**

- To better integrate Neighboring Faiths into the Junior Youth Group curriculum and encourage further exploration of other faiths.
- To increase attendance among the Junior Youth and ensure that meaningful time is spent during every session.
- To continue to strengthen the Senior Youth Group programming by providing positive incentives for potential participants to join.
- To establish a set of goals and objectives for the Senior Youth Group, with the hopes of guiding the youth to develop a clear vision of the Senior Youth Group’s essential role within the Congregation.
- To continue to emphasize the importance of social action and service both within and outside the local community.
- To encourage leadership initiatives among all the youth within the individual youth groups, the Congregation and the community as a whole.
- To provide a safe and welcoming space for youth to reflect and embark on their faith journeys.
- To foster and maintain a cohesive community where the youth could build lasting friendships and provide support for each other in a safe setting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tu Le, Youth Programs Coordinator

## **Music Director**

### **Worship Experience:**

The Music Program continues to strive to support the worship experience for the congregation. Finding volunteer musicians and choosing the music selections that can complement the spoken word continues to be of the utmost priority. Occasionally, music can move the listener past the boundaries of time and space and lend the soul comfort, raise excitement, help to heal and foster compassion.

### **Volunteers:**

Our congregation relies on the talents of musicians of various genres and instruments. Many of these volunteers participate as a matter of spiritual practice. Using our talents and training in a way that can move the emotions of the listener can be a most rewarding experience. Our service music is not a performance. We are not showcasing our talents, but using our talents to move the spirit.

**Adult Vocal Choir:**

The Adult Vocal Choir continues to provide music for a quarter of the services. They rehearse three times per month. The group continues to be open to all adult participants regardless of experience and training. They have been able to vary their styles drawing from top 40 commercial hits, to traditional African, to new settings of classical music.

**Handbell Choir:**

The Handbell Choir planned to perform at 3 services this year. It is a group of 7 – 11 members. The ability to read basic music is needed in this ensemble. They add a sweet variety to the services.

Other ensembles and soloists are lay led such as; Java Ice and Aering. They contribute to the music of the services without adding to the workload of the Music Director. Many thanks go out to these hard working volunteers.

**Children's Choir:**

Erin Lane has joined us this year as the Youth Choirs' Director. She has restarted the Children's Choir. Her rehearsals have continued to be consistent and open to all kids in grades 1-6.. She has made herself quite available while communicating effectively to parents, kids, and staff. The music selections she has chosen have enhanced the services while keeping the young singers interested and excited to sing. Many parents are thrilled with her work. Her positive and hard working nature has served us well in her first year.

**Teen Music:**

The North Parish teens continue to serve in providing music. From time to time, various teens have played instruments such as the guitar, drums, trumpet and they have sang solos and small group songs. This has been a great way to enhance the Bridging Service, COA Service, and the Junior Youth Service. Once again, Erin Lane has taken the lead in the rehearsing and support of these musical selections.

**Music Committee:**

This year, Co-Chairs Steve Vail and Alison Will helped to bring back the Holiday Concert. Together we raised nearly \$2000. This will help support the purchase of new choral risers. The Music Committee is looking for more members to serve. I look forward to continuing to work with the Music Committee chairs Steve and Alison next year.

**In Conclusion:**

The Music Program at North Parish continues to work hard to maintain the high standards and expectations of the members and friends who attend services. We are always open to new and returning musicians of all ages and abilities.

Respectfully submitted  
John Middleton-Cox, Music Director

**Youth Choirs Director**

I began at North Parish Church in September of 2012. I enjoy leading the Children's Choir and also have helped the Senior Youth musicians with various solos, duets and small group ensembles for services.

The North Parish Children's Choir is for children in grades 1-6. For this year, the Choir had between 17-20 singers. The Children's Choir meets once a week on Sundays. This year there were 2 rehearsals, 10:15-10:45 & 12:15-12:45 to accommodate as many children that wanted to participate in choir after their RE classes. The Children's Choir performed at various services throughout the year. Specifically, Thanksgiving Service, December, March 3rd service, Easter, Mother's Day and Bridging Sunday in June. In addition, the Children's Choir sang at the Holiday Concert in December. The Youth has been involved in sharing their musical talents with the church as well. Members of the SYG sang duets together for November and December Services in addition to the Holiday Concert in December. Additionally, I helped coordinate and rehearsed music with the SYG musicians for their SYG Service in March and the CoA service in May.

I have truly enjoyed my first year at North Parish Church. I look forward to working with the Children's Choir next year and will continue to try and foster more participation from the Junior and Senior Youth group members.

Respectfully submitted,  
Erin Lane, Youth Choirs Director

## **Congregational Administrator Report**

### **Accomplishments of Past Year:**

- Continued working on new NP website layout, content and coordination along with Carolyn Zimmer. It is such a thrill to have the new web site! All information is up to date, the site is attractive and staff has the ability to change all pages.
- Technology – we do have an offsite back up with Crash Plan, our server setup has served us well especially the ability to share documents and the new website has been launched. Carolyn and I are working on incorporating the IVolunteer sign up application for all of our Sunday volunteer opportunities.
- Worked closely with House and Grounds co-chairs, Debb Putnam and Don Schemack.
- Managed sexton, Bob Maimone
- Maintained the financial records, timely bill paying, accurate recording of parishioners' donations and pledges, tracking of funds from fundraisers, special collections and rentals. Sent out year-end statements and pledge statements. Many thanks to Peter Reed, our outgoing treasurer for his guidance in these matters for the past four years.
- Weekly production of NP's communication tools- the E-News, Website front page, Order of Service and maintenance of the NP calendar.

### **Future Projects/Goals:**

- Looking forward to working with our new treasurer and collector
- Continued work on website content

A special thank you to Rev. Lee Bluemel and my co-workers - it is great working with you and the website is gorgeous! And a thank you to all parishioners who enrich my work here. It is a privilege to serve this congregation as your administrator.

Respectfully submitted,

## Membership Coordinator's Report

North Parish's membership remained relatively flat in 2012-2013. As in previous years we saw almost an equal number of new members join the North Parish community as those retiring and/or moving away from the area. In January 2013 we reported 342 members to the UUA. However, the congregation is approximately 600 parishioners when you take into account our children, youth, young adults, newcomers and friends.

As membership coordinator I am fortunate to work with so many supportive and appreciative people. I would like to thank:

- My colleagues Rev. Lee Bluemel, Sara Schwindt, Kim Tracy, John Middleton-Cox, Erin Lane, Tu Le, Kerry Ann Ezpeleta and Bob Maimone for creating such a supportive work environment.
- Membership Committee members Lianne Patenaude, Brian Lafferty, Cheryl Herland and Karen Careri for warmly welcoming our visitors and new members.
- Program Committee members Keith Connors, Liz Hsu, Stephanie Murphy, Liz Anderson, Steve Anthony, Anna Choir and Mary Lou Monteiro for hosting fun, community-building events.
- Small Group Facilitators Nancy Adrian, Kate Gilligan, Chris Schena, Chas Bicking and Keith Connors for leading our small group ministry groups.
- Social Action committee members Kevin Reid, Heather McNeil, Donna Cloney, Cindy Cook, Liz Elowe, Deb Olander, Stephanie Harrington, Lynn Langton, Terrie Reid, Jennifer Bauer and Tad Bickford for helping North Parish carry its faith out into the world.
- Caring Team friends Kim Adami, Nancy Adrian, Leslie Lemire, Lora Stewart and Linda Villalobos for supporting our members in times of need.

### **Accomplishments:**

#### Powerchurch Upgrade/Redesign

Over the summer of 2012 the church office upgraded the membership database to Powerchurch Plus 11.5. I took this opportunity to redesign the data, which resulted improved reporting.

#### Communications

In an effort to increase visibility in the community, I wrote press releases each month highlighting our guest speakers, events and social action initiatives. Thank you to Dave Kovner of the Marketing team for forwarding these on to his media contacts. I also created fliers for guest speakers and program events which (thanks to Denise Vanvooren, Kim Adami, Anna Choi, Cindy Cook and Cara Forcino) were posted at local colleges, libraries and eateries. My biggest accomplishment, though, was the creation and launching of our new website! Thanks to Nanette Savides and Kim Tracy for their support in making the new site a reality.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carolyn Zimmer, Membership Coordinator

# Governance Reports – 2012-2013

## The Board of Trustees

We can look back at this year and feel proud of our accomplishments, confident that we have fulfilled your expectations, and have lived up to the trust you have placed in us.

All things considered, the Board had a comparatively easy job, given our ability to rely on a very competent and engaged Staff, and a fantastic corps of volunteers leading and participating in the various Committees, Task Forces, and other teams of North Parish. For all of you, we are very grateful.

We kicked off the fiscal year with a vigorous day-long retreat in July, ably facilitated by Kathy Paganas O'Neill. One starting point for our discussions was the chapter "The Job of the Board" from the book *Governance and Ministry – Rethinking Board Leadership* by Dan Hotchkiss of the Alban Institute. From this emerged a common understanding of what our role is, and how we as a team should function. After brainstorming dozens of possibilities for annual Board goals (festooning the walls with dozens of flip chart pages), we focused down to four succinct goals:

- 1) finish the Visioning process begun in previous years
- 2) oversee the Design Task Force (DTF)
- 3) launch and complete a Capital Campaign Feasibility Study (CCFS)
- 4) revitalize the finances of North Parish

John Van Drie agreed to serve as Board Chair. Justin Nealey took on the role of Parish Council Chair. Each of the other Trustees volunteered to take on one of the four goals: for goal #1, Cheryl Bacheller and Karen Letourneau jointly led the Visioning team; Ann Manson took charge of goal #2, acting as liaison to the DTF; for goal #3, Nancy Cottrill, formed and led the CCFS team; and Brian Elowe, working with the Finance Committee, took on goal #4.

Detail on our accomplishments against each of those goals is given in detail below.

Finally, we acknowledge three people whose terms on the Board are ending. Peter Reed has served as Treasurer since 2008, and has done a magnificent job in organizing our finances, establishing crisp policies and procedures, and providing timely and accurate reports to the Board, facilitating our decision-making. The 3-year terms are ending for Karen Letourneau and John Van Drie.

### *Visioning*

We are pleased to report the visioning process that began in 2011 was completed and a final report was presented to the congregation in March 2013. The purpose of visioning was to get a sense of what we value as a congregation. The information gathered by visioning conversation groups will be used to revise our mission statement and be the basis for future strategic planning. The findings were based on 20 visioning conversation groups consisting of 121 adult members and 24 youth. The groups ran for 90 minutes and were lead by two members of the visioning team, who documented all the feedback. The notes from these groups were transcribed, sorted by theme and summarized into a report that was presented to the congregation.

We learned that we care deeply about the community we find at North Parish and want to share it with others. Participants valued the opportunity to have individual spiritual journeys in a supportive accepting community that encourages diversity and a free thinking philosophy. We are grateful for our talented staff, proud of our focus on children and youth, treasure the opportunities to enjoy music in our spiritual practice and embrace our history of social action by increasing hands-on service activities. We recognize the need for long term financial stability to achieve our future goals. Themes that emerged from the visioning process include; the desire to grow individually and collectively, to build stronger connections with each other and the larger community, and to include service as part of our spiritual practice .

#### *Design Task Force (DTF)*

The DTF, led by Debb Putnam and Fred Glore, has been a dedicated and high functioning team. We are very fortunate to have the experience, knowledge and commitment of the task force members. In addition to providing the DTF with a Board liaison, a member of the DTF leadership provided updates and perspective at almost all of the regularly-scheduled Board meetings. One of the Board's challenges this year was to ensure that everything came together in time to provide the congregation with the information it needs to make an informed decision on the project at the special meeting in June. This included ensuring that the time lines for developing detailed design and costs of the build out were met, understanding of the congregation's ability and willingness to fund the project, and planning to obtain financing if needed. In late winter, the Board initiated bi-weekly meetings with the DTF, the CCFS, and the Finance Committee to help coordinate those dependencies and activities.

#### *Capital Campaign Feasibility Study*

The Board voted to engage professional guidance to determine if we have the financial and philosophical commitment as a congregation to pursue the proposed building project. Leadership of this project was undertaken by Nancy Cottrill. Two companies were researched and interviewed for this task, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and The Giving Collaborative (TGC). The TGC is a company that works solely with non-profits on feasibility studies and capital campaigns. They were recommended highly by a former church member that had worked with them on a project. When the UUA and TGC were compared, the TGC was far superior in their timely response, delivery of a complete proposal and estimate, and availability. We have been quite pleased with their efforts so far. They have conducted close to 30 interviews (contract was for 20-25), they have run two focus groups, and have distributed an e-survey to all members.

The feasibility study report will be presented to the Board in May. Following the Board's discussion of this report, we will present our recommendations to the congregation of whether to go forward with the building project at a special meeting in early June, to ask you to vote on whether or not to proceed.

#### *Revitalizing our finances, in conjunction with the Finance Committee*

While much work still remains, preliminary ideas along various lines were explored, and one very specific, concrete action emerged: the proposal to create an Endowment, which we've put before you in this year's Warrant. This was a joint effort by Pat Grimm, who provided the general framework advocated by the UUA, Peter Calkins, the Finance Committee, and Board liaison Brian Elowe. At a recent fundraising seminar held by the Mass Bay District of the UUA, we were surprised to see that roughly 80% of the congregations represented there had formal Endowments. Our view is that a

formal Endowment is one critical element of fiscal responsibility, and helps to ensure the long-term financial health of the church.

The costs of maintaining a 200-year-old structure became vividly apparent this year, with the repairs to the steeple and wall. We depleted the Plant Fund during the previous building project, and have been struggling to restore that through the annual budget. In recent years, House and Grounds has requested \$10,000 each year to go to the Plant Fund; we've usually allocated only \$6,000 in our annual budget.

This year we confronted the consequences: the costs of the repairs (over \$27,000 to date) exceeded the balance of the Plant Fund; only with an anonymous gift were we able to pay for those repairs without tapping our reserves. Creative ideas are needed here, and some preliminary ones were brought to our attention. A Building Reserve Fund in an Endowment could also help with major repairs.

The Board has also set a target of steadily reducing our annual budget deficit, the amount we draw down on our investment reserves. While in recent years we have brought the deficit down to an acceptable level, 4.5%, we've set a more ambitious target this year, 3%, with an intention to make stepwise improvements in subsequent years until we finally reach a balanced budget, i.e. one that has no deficit. As of May 1, pledging is still short \$10,000 to allow us to hit that 3% target.

The Board of Trustees

John Van Drie (Chair) Cheryl Bacheller, Nancy Cottrill, Brian Elowe, Karen Letourneau, Ann Manson, Justin Nealey, and non-voting members Peter Reed (Treasurer) and Lee Bluemel.

## **Parish Council**

The Parish Council had an active year. In lieu of a report the Parish Council members request you look at each Parish Council committee's individual report.

Justin Nealey, Chair and Trustee

## **Task Force Reports - 2012-2013**

### **Design Task Force**

Shortly after the report of the Space Task Force was received at the 2012 Annual Meeting, your newly elected Board of Trustees convened a new Task Force named the Design Task Force (DTF). This Task Force was charged by your Board to carry the findings from the Space Task Force into the next phase of addressing our ongoing space challenges along with our mandated accessibility requirements. This group was assembled from a number of the Space Task Force members and the Old Center Hall Task Force and some additional volunteers who represented certain skills that fit well with the charge of this group.

The charge that this group had was to advance the findings of the Space Task Force into a thorough design that responded to the many space needs and challenges confronting North Parish; needs that had been well vetted by a pre construction analysis by the previous task force. Due to a very limited timeline, the DTF met through the summer of 2012 and embarked on identifying a preconstruction contractor who could work along with our architect to advance

the design and refine cost estimates. The DTF sought firms through trade references and our past construction experience. The process included reviewing a number of firms and then preparing an RFP (Request for Proposal) to five firms that the DTF felt offered us the best level of experience and knowledge. All five firms enthusiastically presented very good proposals and created a very difficult challenge to the DTF to select one. Three firms were interviewed and were asked to present any additional information that might become important to our final decision. The proposals were very carefully evaluated for many different criteria- a preliminary cost estimate, their experience, their approach/process, examples of similar work, and intangibles - and a final decision was made to work with Windover Construction of Manchester, MA.

Once Windover was selected Peter Calkins and Debb Putnam met with them and the architects to address the design requirements and the construction issues. Particular recognition needs to go to Peter Calkins and Debb Putnam for the time that they committed to these meetings. Peter offered his extensive architectural experience to the process and Debb offered her intimate understanding of our facility. While this process was going on, the DTF felt that it was important to continue to keep the congregation informed of the progress and to also make available the opportunity for as many voices to be heard as to how the design and plans impacted the North Parish. The DTF requested your Board to establish an Advisory Committee to the DTF and invited representatives of all committees and program groups including members of the Senior Youth Group, Religious Education, Crossroads Coffeehouse, Sangha and People's Pantry. The group met a number of times with the DTF and reviewed the plans and offered suggestions that might make the overall design better or identified areas that might not be addressed as well as should be. The Advisory Committee provided more eyes on the design and provided some very positive suggestions that were incorporated into the project. The Advisory Committee members were asked to report to their various committees for additional input and education and this allowed for more members to become knowledgeable about these plans. Through this series of meetings, Windover Construction was able to provide a preliminary construction budget that has allowed the Finance Committee and Capital Campaign Feasibility Study group to begin to focus on the financial aspects of the project.

In an effort to inform as many of the congregation as possible to the project, the DTF offered informational meetings to the congregation to present the most current version of the design of the project. Various times during the week and on Sundays were offered and a number of members attended these meetings. What was particularly encouraging was the very positive reaction from every member who attended and some of the written comments that were sent to the DTF that reflected the excitement and positive tone that was felt. Additionally, the North Parish website has a section that is dedicated the DTF's architectural drawings along with other information including a very important document regarding what would occur if we did not move this project forward. The bulletin board in the Parish Hall also has posted all of the information along with drawings.

Your Design Task Force has worked very hard this past year to get the congregation to the point of being able to have a very well defined building plan that the members can vote on. This is the culmination of a series of Task Forces addressing the physical space needs of our church that started over eight years ago when we were unable to fully address those needs during the last restoration and renovation. It is the belief that what has been designed for presentation to

the Special Meeting for the building project is the ***most effective plan to answer many of the needs that we have in as cost efficient method as possible***. The Design Task Force had a very full year that spent many hours working on the needs of the church. It has been a diverse group of individuals that spent time listening to one another, professionals and the congregation to arrive at the point we are for Annual Meeting and the subsequent Special Meeting.

The Design Task Force recognizes that this is a defining moment in the history of our church. It is our hope that every member of the North Parish will take the time to become fully informed on the needs and the solutions that must be addressed.

Respectfully submitted,

The Design Task Force- Debb Putnam and Fred Glore, co-chairs, Peter Calkins, Darnell Canada, Dan Gobeil, Dan Gerron, Don Schemack, Michele Sherry

The Advisory Committee- Kim Adami, Molly Bicking, Donna Cloney, Caroline Cole, Keith Connors, Carol Grandon, Stephanie Harrington, Dana Hirst, Laura Howell, Mark Lemire, Beth Manson, Veronica Monteiro, Mary Ann Perry, Kathy Slade, Terrie Reid, Ron Zelle

## **Visioning Team Final Report Spring 2013**

The final report is attached at the end of this document.

## **Committee Reports – 2012-2013**

### **Caring Team**

#### **Accomplishments of Past Year:**

- In coordination with others, provided focused support to parishioners in times of crisis.
- Visited church elders in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, hospitals and those that are homebound.
- Visited parishioners who had suffered illness, injury or a loss within their family.
- Sent over 100 notes to parishioners to acknowledge a joy or sorrow.
- Worked with other small groups within the church to coordinate meals and babysitting for families in need.
- Provided or helped facilitate rides for parishioners to medical appointments, to attend church services or to attend other church related programs.
- Revitalized the shawl ministry, recruited knitters and reinstated monthly group gatherings. Delivered 19 prayer shawls to parishioners for their comfort in times of need.
- Assisted with Memorial Services.
- Organized and ran annual luncheon for church elders.

#### **Future Projects/Goals:**

- Team members will be catalysts/models for sensitive offers of help in times of need.
- In support of our ongoing goal to encourage a broader sharing of our care for one another throughout the church community, the Team will continue to look for help

from and collaborate with small affinity groups to provide support for parishioners in need.

- Continue to expand the Prayer Shawl Ministry.
- Expand Caring Team Library
- Provide opportunities for training to Caring Team members
- Assess needs/wishes of the community and offer workshops and speakers around such topics as grief support, mental illness, parenting/child development.
- Recruit at least two new members of the Team during FY11.
- Establish regular bi-monthly Team meetings to encourage cohesiveness, facilitate communication and promote achievement of goals

**Co-Chairpersons:** **Leslie Young-Lemire and Kim Adami** Term of office: 1 year  
(July 2013 –June 2014)

**Committee Members:** **Jackie Orent-Nathan, Nancy Adrian, Linda Villalobos**  
(July 2013 – June 2014): and Rev. Lee Blumel (ex officio)

**Outgoing Members:** Lora Stewart

**Incoming Members:** Linda Villalobos (September 2012)

## Crossroads Coffeehouse

### Accomplishments of Past Year:

- In our 24<sup>nd</sup> season, (October 2012 to May 2013), we continue to bring the very best affordable live music to the Merrimack Valley while having fun, building community, and raising some money for North Parish.
- Mother Nature's February blizzard cancelled our February show- the annual dance party- but we were able to reschedule the band for our May show. Our music included Grammy-winner pop icon Janis Ian, cellist Kristin Miller, Session Americana, folksingers and salsa band Los Sugar Kings.
- Outreach: We post flyers, send out press releases, calendar notices and post to numerous websites. Our audience comes from all over; most are not affiliated with the church. Each show brings in folks who have never been to Crossroads before including folks from North Andover. Our audience reflects the church's success at being a Welcoming congregation.
- Provided a complimentary ticket for each new NP member on Membership Sundays. Crossroads pays the performer for each ticket used.
- Volunteers: In addition to committee members, we could not have a show without our concert volunteers thanks to Lorryn Kincaid, Nancy Bodwell, Chas Bicking, Molly Bicking, John Poelker, Cindie Kazmer, Don Schemack.
- Crossroads offers a great variety of homebaked desserts; special thanks to our perennial bakers- Leslie Young Lemire, Jennifer Recklett Tassi, Jan Olsen, Robin Morgansen. Other bakers included, Jan Zink, Ann Lu, Anna Choi, and many other occasional bakers. Thanks to all.
- Green Sanctuary: We are very proud of our commitment to being a Green Sanctuary most significantly evidenced by our use of real plates, silverware and mugs. We salute our kitchen volunteers who do all washing by hand since OCH does not have a functioning dishwasher.

- While this report is written with one show to go, Crossroads expects to meet its fundraising goal of \$2,000 while maintaining a reserve needed to operate without funding from North Parish.

### **Future Projects/Goals:**

- Continue our success: offer eight shows starting the first Saturday in October and then the second Saturday November to May.
- Expand and improve our publicity including social media such as Facebook.
- Recruit new committee members, volunteers, and bakers so that more folks can have the fun we have had this season.
- We will be planning to move back to the fully accessible Parish Hall upon the completion of the NP Building Project in time for our 2014-2015 season.

Chairperson: Carolyn Cronin

Term of Office: TBD

Committee Members: Kim Adami, Jeff Chitouras, Jan Jones, Mark Lemire, Chris Schena, Jenny Shaw, Steve Vail, Ron Zelle, Jan Zink, Alison Green

Outgoing Committee Members: none as of this report

Incoming Committee Members: usually determined over the summer

## **Finance Committee**

### **Overview:**

The official charter of the Finance Committee (hereinafter “FC”) as stated in the Bylaws defines three areas of responsibility.

1. To advise the Treasurer on matters pertaining to management, tracking, and reporting of financial activity.

The FC accomplishes this by reviewing the balance sheet and income statements at each meeting. We compare actual to budget in each category to see if the church is on track, and we explore any large deviations from budget for an explanation. We assist with the categorization of expenses, reserves, and income. We look for opportunities to improve financial efficiency. For example, we recently saved the church money by having the church switch over to a lower cost payroll provider.

2. Oversee the banked and invested funds and authorize changes in the investment portfolio consistent with the investment policy of the church as determined by the Board.

We assist with money movement strategies regarding various bank accounts and accounts at other financial institutions. The FC selects appropriate money managers and replaces them when appropriate. We monitor the investment portfolio to ensure compliance with the church’s Investment Policy Statement. We benchmark the performance of each manager and of the entire portfolio. We make strategic decisions regarding when and where to invest cash. We also monitor the expenses associated with the management of the portfolio. We facilitate the conversion of donated securities into cash.

3. With input from the parish Council, prepare and submit a draft budget to the Board.

The Council solicits input from the various church committees regarding budgetary needs/wishes for the upcoming year. The Council then provides the FC with this information and we prepare a draft budget. The vast majority of the church’s expenditures are fixed in nature and somewhat out of our control, so that portion of the draft budget can be prepared fairly quickly. The remaining portions of the draft budget cannot be prepared until the Council provides the FC with the needs/wishes of the

various other committees. Historically, this cycle begins in February and culminates at the annual meeting in May.

### **Other Significant Activities:**

This year the FC worked on some additional projects, including:

Establishing a formal endowment. While the North Parish does have investment reserves, we do not currently have a formal endowment. The FC worked extensively with the Board to research and conduct due diligence on various ways the North Parish might establish, fund, and manage an endowment. We crafted and submitted to the Board for approval the language and documents necessary to make this happen in 2013. The final proposal must be approved by the congregation at the Annual Meeting.

Explore financing alternatives relative to the Design Task Force (DTF) recommendations. The FC has been heavily involved in analyzing the potential financing needs associated with implementing the DTF's recommendations. This is still in process since the DTF recommendations are not yet finalized nor approved by the congregation.

### **Investment Portfolio:**

The North Parish investment portfolio was up 8.9% for calendar year 2012. During this period our performance benchmark balanced composite index (70% S&P 500 and 30% LBGC), was up 12.49%. The year-end value of the portfolio was \$701,776. The value of the portfolio at the end of March 2013 was \$735,893 representing a gain of 4.97% during the first quarter. During the same period our performance benchmark was up 7.32%. As of 4/30/13 the portfolio value was \$749,096 representing a year to date gain of 6.85% through the end of April.

The lower-than-benchmark return for 2012 and early 2013 was due primarily to a larger than average allocation to cash. This is in preparation for transferring our portfolio to daily management by the UUA. Once the entire portfolio gets reinvested, we expect to return to benchmark returns. The FC will continue to be responsible for overseeing the non-endowment investment portfolio, but has decided to hire the UUA to perform the daily investment management. One benefit of this change will be the alignment of the portfolio with UU social values.

### **Conclusion:**

The FC has conducted its routine tasks as required by the Bylaws and believes the budget, income statement, and balance sheet to be in good order (although this is not the formal audit). We believe the assets and investments of the church have been managed prudently and to good effect. We believe the working relationship between the Board and the FC on financial matters has been strengthened and look forward to furthering the church's financial goals going forward.

### **Membership:**

Chair: Steve Hartel

Members: Peter Calkins, Brian Elowe, Jerry Hall, John Lewis, Peter Reed

## **House and Grounds**

### **What we do**

Some of our House & Grounds (H&G) work involves outside contractors (equipment maintenance, clapboard repairs, inspections). Members of our committee arrange and supervise this work. Our part-time sexton takes care of day-to-day cleaning, stocking basic supplies, and assists (as needed and available) with set-up for special events. Volunteers (some are members of the committee who

manage ongoing tasks *and* some are “friends” who respond to a need) do much more. Without their efforts the cost of maintaining our historic property would be much higher.

Everyone in our congregation has many demands on our time – jobs, family, other volunteer, health and recreational commitments. All of us can contribute to the care of our space, whether the effort is as small as picking up a piece of trash, mopping up a spill, pulling a weed, or showing up for a work day project. If you have initiatives you think we should address, particularly if you are willing to help make them happen, please talk to any member of our committee. *Many hands make light work! All efforts are welcomed!*

### **Why we need a Plant Fund**

The biggest challenge H&G faced this year was repair to the north sanctuary wall and the depletion of our Plant Fund. The Plant Fund is a rolling reserve that we fund with contributions from our annual budget. The fund pays for significant yet periodic building needs such as painting, systems replacement (our aging boilers), and structural repairs. During the last renovation \$80,000 was transferred from the Plant Fund to cover exterior painting of our buildings. Since 2002, contributions to the fund have been reduced from \$12,000/year to \$6,000/year due to shortfalls in the annual budget.

Last fall, during ongoing repair to rotting clapboards on the exterior of the sanctuary wall, our contractor discovered significant rot to the underlying sheathing and a major support timber, accumulated damage from many years of slow leaks. While we have and are still addressing the cause of the leaks, the resulting rot had weakened the timber such that it created a bow visible in the interior, compromising the wall and its support of our beautiful Gothic windows.

Four different vendors were involved in the repair – structural engineers who saw that the designed solution met safety and functional requirements; the foundry who designed and oversaw manufacture of the engineered steel beam that will replace the rotted vertical post; architects consulted on the repair; and the steeplejacks who installed the beam and will replace/repair the exterior clapboard.

This is an extensive and expensive project. Due to reductions to our Plant Fund allowance over the past few years, the costs for the wall repair exceeded the fund’s balance. This time, a private donor stepped up to fund the gap.

In the fall (pending Plant Fund availability) we wish to add additional insulation to the sanctuary attic and complete wiring to an exhaust fan in the attic – the last of the remediation efforts to address conditions that create the leaks. We will wait on final repairs/painting to the interior wall until we are satisfied that the issue has been resolved.

### **Accomplishments of Past Year**

Repairs/maintenance completed/ongoing with outside contractors include:

- Inspections to the heating and life safety systems (kitchen stove, sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers), elevator
- Snow removal services for Old Center Hall and Meeting House sidewalks and driveways, and the roof over the north wall of the sanctuary
- Brush removal and mowing services in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Burying Ground
- Tick abatement in the woods abutting the gardens and playground

- Initial engravings on the Memorial Wall

Projects completed/ongoing with members and “friends” of the H&G committee:

- Working with other church committees, outside groups, and individuals on storage issues and instructions on our systems (thermostats, phones, dishwasher)
- Providing updates to the Board of Trustees and congregation, as needed, regarding the condition of our building and grounds and anticipated needs
- Participation with the Design Task Force on plans for a new Parish House that would house our programs and offices
- On-going repairs and monitoring of our heating systems. One of the two redundant boilers that heat our Religious Education wing has been shut down and condition of the second unit is tenuous. Both will need replacement soon (and would be replaced in plans for the new building addition).
- Full-scale cleaning and reorganization of the Parish Hall kitchen
- Documenting procedures from ServSafe, a training program on the safety practices of preparing and handling food. We anticipate rolling this training out in (at a minimum) a written form to various groups who use the church facility.
- Maintenance and improvements to our gardens and grounds
- Miscellaneous repairs to our building and contents including repairs to music bookcase in the balcony, repair of upholstered chairs in the parlor, painting touchups
- Partnering with the North Andover Historical Society on a \$30,000 grant proposal to the North Andover Community Preservation Committee for completion of a master preservation plan and initial preservation work on gravestones in the historic Second Burying Ground owned by North Parish and located just up Academy Road (North Andover’s Annual Meeting – May 21, 2013). This proposal (and rationale behind the master plan) is part of our long-term goal to transfer ownership of the Second Burying Ground to the town of North Andover or other appropriate steward for this historic community resource.
- Continued investigation of a new road sign to provide better visibility and identification of our church (accessible, welcoming, Unitarian-Universalist). This project, which would have been a Plant Fund expense, has been tabled for lack of funding.

*Co-chairs:* Debb Putnam, Don Schemack

*Members:* Liz Anderson, Tad Bickford, Molly Bicking, Anne Ericson, Pat Grimm, Dana Hirst, Jim Kazmer, Meg Marcoux, Dick Slade, Steve Vail, Leslie Young-Lemire, Ron Zelle

## **Marketing Team**

No activity to report.  
David Kovner, Chair

## **Membership Committee**

### **Accomplishments of Past Year:**

#### Annual Membership Review

Each January the Membership Committee conducts an annual review of North Parish’s membership

in preparation for the UUA Certification of Membership Report. The certified membership number is used to:

- (1) calculate North Parish's Fair Share contribution to the UUA's [Annual Program Fund](#) for the following fiscal year;
- (2) determine total UUA Mass Bay District dues; and,
- (3) determine the number of [voting delegates](#) who may represent North Parish at the 2013 UUA [General Assembly](#).

In conjunction with staff (Rev. Lee Bluemel, Kim Tracy and Carolyn Zimmer), the committee conducted its annual culling, which resulted in 294 active families totaling approximately 600 parishioners. This number includes **342 members for 2013** (which was reported to the UUA in February) as well as some 70 friends, 40 newcomers and 150 children, youth and young adults. During this process, twelve Members were moved to Associate Member status due to lack of participation over the last two years and nine Associate Members were moved to Archived Member status (as per their direction to due moves, etc.).

#### New Members/Recognition Sunday

During the 2012-2013 church year, we welcomed 13 new members, some of whom participated in the New Membership Recognition Sunday held on March 20, 2013:

- Marie Bourgeois
- Dale Burton
- Gary Cooper
- Alex Grecoe (COA)
- Jessie Harris
- Jen Humm
- Kimberly Lennarson
- Kirk Olson
- Sherry Refugio
- Sally Russo
- Linda Sharar
- Glenda Stewart
- Jay Stewart

#### New UU Class

The committee held two "Exploring UU" classes – one in the fall and one in the winter. Both classes were offered at 12:30 pm (following the 11:00 service); lunch and childcare were provided.

- Fall 2012: 6 participants; 3 of which became members
- Winter 2013: 15 participants; 6 of which became members

#### Other Membership Activities

##### **Welcomes:**

- Coordinated membership representatives to greet people at the door on Sunday morning and converse with visitors during coffee hour.
- Congratulations notes.

##### **Connects:**

- Forward new member interests to committee chairs. (Carolyn sends an email to appropriate lay leader based on guest registration form or membership application).
- Supported the Program Committee by sending personal invitations to various events. (Carolyn has done this by email and eVites).
- ...outreach calls to visitors, new members and members we have not seen in a while (Carolyn has done this by phone, email and postcards).
- ....cleaning up at the Holiday Potluck/Sing-a-Long sponsored by CAKES XV.

**Communicates:**

- Keeps congregation informed of membership events via eNews and Messenger submissions.
- Invite the COA class to join the church as members.

**Future Projects/Goals:**

- Evaluate and define purpose of membership committee.
- Recruit committee members with a goal of gaining representation from various populations of the congregation (youth, families, singles, empty-nesters, retirees, etc.).

**Chairperson:** Lianne Patenadue (since Sept. '09)

**Term of Office:** 1 yr.

**Committee Members:**

Lianne Patenaude (2008), Cheryl Herland (2009), Brian Lafferty (2010), Karen Careri (2011), Carolyn Zimmer (staff liaison)

**Outgoing Committee Members:**

Lianne Patenaude, Cheryl Herland, Karen Careri and Brian Lafferty

## **Ministerial Internship Committee 2012-2013**

Following the congregation's affirmative vote with the support of the Board of Trustees for the North Parish to become a teaching church last spring, the Intern Committee began the process of finding our first intern. Using the UUA suggested procedures we advertised, interviewed and eventually selected the North Parish's first ministerial intern Seth Robinson. Seth is highly qualified and received glowing recommendations from both Harvard Divinity, where he is half way done with his program, and the Unitarian Universal Church of Reading where he has completed Field Work.

We look forward to welcoming Seth here this September to begin his two year half- time internship. The committee also secured a grant from the UUA to support our new ministerial internship program. And we will be reapplying next year hoping for additional UUA funding.

Currently we are applying to become a Field Study Site for Divinity students within the next two years.

Many thanks to our hard working and enthusiastic Intern Search Committee including Wally Anderson, Cindy Cook, Kevin Reid, Kathy Slade, and Anne Low. While we say thanks and goodbye to Kevin and Cindy we are excited to welcome Carol Weldin and Tad into our next phase. For the next two years, this committee will offer support, facilitate wider church understanding of the role of

an intern as well as facilitate communication with the several committees etc. We will also have an evaluative role to play at the end of each of the intern's two years.

Reverend Lee has supported this new program with enthusiasm for which we are thankful. Together Lee, Seth, the committee and you will ensure the success of our newest effort. Praise be!

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Low

## **Music Committee**

The Music Committee was happy to revive the Holiday Concert this year, with over 50 performers playing to a nearly full house. The net proceeds were just shy of \$2000 and are split between the music program and the operating budget.

The funds from the concert plus some from our operating budget make it possible for us to finally purchase new risers, which has been a goal of this committee for a number of years. The new risers will be safer than the ones we have, with railings on the side and most importantly the back, alleviating anxiety among the men in the back row who would be seriously injured if they took a wrong step off the back of our current risers.

Members of this committee served last summer on the search committee for the Children and Youth Choirs Director, and were delighted to bring Erin Lane on board in this new position. Erin hit the ground running in the fall, and to date the Children's Choir has performed 5 times. They will also perform in May for Mother's Day. The group, for children in grades 1-6, varies between 17-20 singers. Youth Singers in grades 7-12 have performed as duets & solos under Erin's direction, and she also helped coordinate SYG Musicians for the youth-led Service in March. We are all pleased with her success at engaging our youth and creating a vibrant program. Her work with the children dovetails nicely with the wonderful music programming that John oversees.

Next year, the music committee will work toward increasing the number of active committee members. We look forward to continuing the holiday concert. We will work with Erin to support her in developing the teen choir. In addition, we will be working with the music director to serve as liaisons for guest musicians and aid in operating and editing the recordings for services.

## **Nominating Committee**

### **Accomplishments of Past Year:**

Identified Dan Gerron and Deb Olander as nominees to fill three-year terms on the Board of Trustees (outgoing members: John Van Drie and Karen Latourneau). Identified John Lewis as nominee for Treasurer, one year term (outgoing Treasurer Peter Reed). Identified Dave Blanchard as nominee for Collector, one year term (outgoing Collector Chris Donahue). Confirmed several current officers as nominees to continue in their positions: Carol Carbonell, Clerk, One-year Term; Peter Race, Moderator, One-year Term. Identified several people for Capital Campaign Team.

**Future Projects/Goals:** Continue to refine the nomination process and record keeping. Increase activity in helping committees to fill key positions.

**Committee Members:** Chair Nancy Lennhoff, member Carol Weldin, board liaison John Van Drie.

## Personnel Committee

### Accomplishments of Past Year:

- Assisted in the hiring of the Youth Choir Director by reviewing and finalizing the job description, determining the appropriate salary, and preparing the offer letter.
- Assisted the Ministerial Intern Search Committee in the hiring of the Intern, and participated in the interview and selection process.
- Finalized the Job Description for the Membership Coordinator.
- Reviewed and revised the sick time policy to more accurately reflect the needs of part time staff members.
- Developed a spreadsheet with staff salary histories from 2006 to 2012 to help in developing our salary recommendation to the Board for the coming church year.
- Made a recommendation to the Board to adjust the salaries of the Membership Coordinator and the Sexton to bring them to a more appropriate position in their salary range.
- Provided consulting advice to the Senior Minister on Personnel questions as they arose during the year.

### Future Projects/Goals:

- Continue to review the job descriptions for the staff members on a regular basis, and make revisions, as needed.
- Assist in hiring a new Religious Education Assistant for the coming church year.

Chairperson: Kevin Reid

Committee Members: Cathy Bakkensen, Adam Hamel, Lee Bluemel (Ex Officio)

## Program Committee

### (Get With The) Program Committee

#### Accomplishments of Past Year:

The goal of the committee again this year was to offer a mix of family-friendly and adult-only events; to create opportunities for North Parish members who might not otherwise participate in events to try something new; and also to reach out to the broader community with open events. We executed five major events this year with one smaller, fundraising events.

September 2012: “Welcome Back Picnic”. The Welcome Back Picnic occurs on the first Sunday of the new church year. Instead of hosting the traditional barbeque we decided to make this year’s event a picnic to simplify the tasks required of committee members and volunteers. By hosting a picnic instead of a BBQ, we saved time and effort of having to secure and haul gas grills to NP and having to secure volunteers to cook. The picnic allowed parishioners to bring their favorite foods while we supplied the drinks and desserts, the tables, and the music led by James McDaniel and Aiden Olsen.

Overall, the picnic was well received but we will contemplate the pluses and minus of a picnic verse a BBQ as each has its good and bad points. No matter which direction we take, the one non-variable is hosting the event as it's clear by the comments and the large number of attendees that the NP community really looks forward to this welcoming event. We agree and see the "Welcome Back BBQ" as critical to making all feel welcome and part of a large and caring family!

November 2012: Beer Tasting (adult only). Our 2<sup>nd</sup> beer tasting featured hearty German food fare starting with fresh-baked bread sticks, made-from-scratch split-pea soup, authentic German sausages from Karl's Sausage Kitchen, potatoes and sauerkraut. The evening ended with coffee and dessert. This year the tasting focused on the depth of selected IPAs and featured several beers appropriate for the fall. Charles Leinbach led

the sing-along on his accordion with old time favorites such as "'Roll Out the Barrel"! Steve Anthony selected the beers for tasting and served as the host. A great time was had by all.

December 2012: Sock Hop. We hosted another New Year's Eve Sock Hop with DJ, Brian McAvoy, making it our second annual. The evening ran from 6 pm to 9 pm with a break at 8 pm (in consideration of the young attendees) for a special New Year's countdown and toast of sparkling cider. The NP children dance the entire time ensuring sleepy children on the way home allowing parents the freedom to ring in the New Year with their adult friends. Where the Sock Hop is such a popular event, especially families with young children, we will probably make it a mainstay in the menu of yearly events.

March 2013: Second Annual Word Play (adults only) with hosts Pat Sajak (NP member - Keith Connors) and Vanna White (NP member - Denise Van Vooren), child care was provided. The event ran from 7 pm to 9 pm with four major games on the half hour, Concentration (rebus play with trivia questions), Celebrity (clue giving game), Reverse Charades and "Win, Lose or Draw" (a Pictionary guessing game). This year's crowd was about triple from last year with almost 50 total participants.

April 2013: Traditional New England Barn Dance. The "barn" dance, a wonderful intergenerational event and the pinnacle activity in a week that celebrated NP's 10 years as a Welcoming Congregation to the GLBT community, concluded our year. The group "Two Fiddlers", a renowned husband and wife team from NH, led participants in a variety of traditional country, line and contra dances. The dance ran from 6:30 pm to 9 pm with a slide presentation shown during the break highlighting NP's actions on its way to becoming a Welcoming Congregation. Not many parishioners took advantage of the dance but those who did come filled up the floor space at OCH. All had a good time, especially the children.

Other Activities: In February, we featured four how-to demonstrations on making Biscotti, Kimchi, Potstickers and Chocolate Mousse, each demo was presented by a NP member. Greg Marley presented a talk on 'Foraging for Mushrooms'. This event was held as a fundraiser and publicized to the greater community.

Program committee events were posted on the North Parish website, on the NP Facebook page, posters, notices and handouts in the OOS.

### **Future Projects/Goals:**

The goal continues to be to host five major events for the community, a mix of adult-only and family-friendly events. We would like to continue momentum from past events, and occasionally add new events to keep interest engaged.

**Tentative 2013 – 2014 event schedule:**

September 2013 – Welcome Back Event (all ages)

Late October 2013 – Historic Tour and Harvest Dinner (all ages)

December 2013 - Sock Hop

February 2013 – Multi-cultural event including a component on learning to cook native dishes. We will aim this event to coincide with a church-sponsored multi-cultural event (all ages)

April 2014 – Word Play (or Nerd Play, if you prefer) adult only, babysitting provided

When it comes to leading the above planned events, we will organize ourselves similar to this past year with different members agreeing to sub-chair each event thereby spreading the leadership role among more members.

We also will continue to focus on inviting people to assist in a single event of interest to them to include more people in the process, and spread the work out over a larger group.

We're very grateful to North Parish folks who helped by lending their enthusiasm, ideas and talents, to all who baked and brought food, helped with setup and cleanup, taking tickets, decorating etc. And of course big thanks to everyone who attended and made the parties worthwhile.

**Committee Members:**

Chairpersons: Liz Hsu, Keith Connors and Stephanie Murphy.

Outgoing chairperson: Liz Hsu

Committee Members for 2012-2013: Stephanie Murphy, Steve Anthony, Keith Connors, Anna Choi, Liz Anderson, Liz Hsu, Mary Lou Monteiro and our newest member, Ed Wang.

We have a list of candidates we've identified to invite to join the committee as a full member, or to offer assistance for specific events. We will continue to recruit through the summer and church year.

## **Red Bow Fair**

### Successes of 2012 Fair

- Over 150 members shared their talents to create the Fair,
- North Parish was transformed into a holiday wonderland,
- Net Fair revenues exceeded \$32,000,
- Computerization of Silent Auction & Volunteer Management procedures.

### Aspirations for 2013 Fair

- Maintain church-wide participation
- Maintain reputation as family friendly, affordable, fun holiday event
- Grow the numbers of attendees from outside North Parish family
- Continue transition to online volunteer sign up while preserving paper options, as needed

- Use technology in a manner that encourages personal interactions
- Explore ways to enhance profitability

#### Future dates

- October 6 Kick Off Meeting. Newcomers invited.
- December 1 Fair set up begins
- December 7 **Red Bow Fair**

The stars of the Red Bow Fair are the Committee Coordinators, who spent countless hours organizing volunteers, donations, and table space. Thank you especially to all of them: Bill Putnam(Culinary Corner), Bob Weldin (Books & Media), Carl Mellin (Culinary Corner), Carol Weldin (Outside Crafters & Computer Operations), Caroline Cole (Computer Technology), Carolyn Cronin(Volunteer Coordinator), Crowell Freeman (Trees), Debb Putnam (Outside Crafters), Donna Cloney(Holiday Décor); John Weaver (Treasurer), Julia Henderson (Internet Publicity), Keith Wentzel(Lunch), Liz Gerron (Silent Auction), Leslie Young-Lemire(Baskets), Lianne Patenaude(Publicity), Leslie Young-Lemire/Lynn Wentzel(Celebration), Loretta Middleton (Granny’s Attic), Tu Le (Kids Mall), Mary Lou Monteiro (Quilt Drawing); Nancy Adrian (Wine Drawing); Nancy Grice(Wine Drawing); Nancy Sarro (Toys) Regina Jesser (Quilt Drawing); Kim Adami(Country store), Sandy & Mike Garron (Greens & Wreaths), Beth Manson(Kid’s Mall),Senior Youth Group (Kid’s Mall), Susan Haltmaier(Operations).

## Religious Education Committee

The Religious Education Program at North Parish continues its revival under the strong and sure leadership of Sara Taetle-Schwindt, our DRE, Tu Le, our youth coordinator, Kerry Anne Ezpeleta, our nursery supervisor, and our nursery assistants. We are so grateful for the many volunteer coordinators and teachers who make all of our programs successful. To the Sunday elementary teachers, chapel assistants, Coming of Age leaders, Senior and Junior Youth group leader, Our Whole Lives leaders, and the many others who contributed their time, talent and money to the RE program, THANK YOU!!!! We also want to wish Tu Le well as she leaves North Parish and continues in her future endeavors.

This past year we strengthened many of the initiatives which have been started or revived in the past few years. Our accomplishments include

- Continued support of RE staff and volunteers.
- Continued support of the revitalization of the Junior and Senior Youth Groups, including supporting a senior youth service trip to New York City to help those affected by Hurricane Sandy.
- Continued support of intergenerational activities and nurturing relationships between the children, youth and adults of our congregation.
- Continued support of a service/social action component through RE programming, including the MLK family week-end of service.
- Participation in the development of plans to renovate the new RE wing.
- Continued work towards providing a safe and secure environment for RE children and their families.

- Provision of curriculum review as well as help establish RE guidelines with the DRE.

#### Future Projects/Goals

- To advocate for the approval of the RE wing renovation and to serve as a conduit between RE families and the Design task force. The Re committee would like to provide support to this project however possible.
- To continue in the direction and spirit of developing a strategic plan for RE in the next coming years. While this was an initial agenda item for last year and we have regularly reviewed our plans and projects, we are now at a point where we may want to formalize these efforts.
- To support professional development of RE staff as well as to support DRE's efforts at supporting the RE volunteers.

Chairperson: Kristin Hunt

Term of Office: 2012-2013

Committee Members: Kathy Slade, Laura Howell, Cara Marshall, Kim Herrera, Gayle Green, Carol Lewis.

## Social Action Council

### Accomplishments of the Past Year:

This year the Social Action Council (SAC) helped to coordinate several groups working on Social Justice issues; The Immigration Justice Task Force, the Welcoming Committee, including the celebration of North Parish's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a Welcoming Congregation, and the Green Sanctuary Committee. More details about the work of these groups are contained later in this report.

As part of our mission, the SAC works "to connect people with people and with organizations to do this work; and to create opportunities for the sharing of information, engagement, and action." Through the Social Action Calendar, which is updated at least once each month, we provide members with opportunities for volunteering. This calendar is posted on our SAC bulletin board in the Parish Hall along with flyers, and news clippings, which are updated regularly. You can also find our Social Action Binder by the bulletin board which lists descriptions and contact people for various organizations supported by members of our church. We share upcoming opportunities in The Messenger and Enews. We plan to have a social action calendar as well as the information on organizations listed in the binder on the new North Parish website.

The Friends of North Parish team, which includes online pledges and collections from services on October 14, raised just under \$1,200 for the Lazarus House Ministries Hike For Hope. Proceeds go to the Capernaum Place, a transitional housing program which provides the transition from a homeless shelter to a permanent home. Guests of the facility receive life skills and job training, job search assistance, childcare and support from a social worker to take the next step to independent living.

A group from of volunteers from North Parish: Jan Jones, Chas Bicking, Denise Van Vooren, Jerusha Ryan and Donna Cloney recently painted the PEACE Room at the Lawrence YWCA, which will be used to counsel women and children in their domestic violence program. Thank you also to Caroline Cole who donated supplies and to White Street Paint in North Andover for donating two gallons of paint, stain and a paint brush.

In January we coordinated the Martin Luther King Jr. weekend, which included a North Parish table at the Merrimack Valley NAACP Martin Luther King breakfast, and groups from NP which helped at the Lazarus House kitchen and at Cor Unum.

As a congregation, we give generously to the wider community. We gave over \$12,000 in Special Collections over the four months of October 2012 through January 2013, to the following organizations: Lazarus House Hike for Hope, Student Immigration Movement, UU Mass Action, UUA Disaster Fund, Sandy Hook School Support Fund, YMCA of Greater Lawrence, Minister's Discretionary Fund, Guest at Your table/UUSC, Lawrence High School Performing Arts Academy.

## **Immigration Justice Task Force**

Around 11 million undocumented immigrants are living and working within U.S. borders without a path to citizenship. According to the Unitarian Universalist Association, the US focus on enforcement-only policies has not reduced that number, but has led to the tearing apart of families, human rights abuses and even death.

The Social Action Council took on this cause; Kevin Reid, Deb Olander, Liz Elowe, Cindy Cook, Joan Kulash became the Immigration Justice Task Force.

To help educate the congregation, the task force did a number of things. We organized a home viewing and discussion of *Lost in Detention* in August of 2012; at Ferry Beach weekend, we showed video of Maria Hinojosa delivering the Ware Lecture on the subject of Immigration Justice at the 2012 UUA General Assembly. We also prepared a book and film list, and led two 6-session study circles using the UUA curriculum. We invited Jesse Jaeger of UU Mass Action to preach on the subject of Immigration Justice on November 4, 2012, and collaborated with the program and music committees for the Martin Espada service in January. We supported the book and movie group's discussion of the film *The Visitor*, which deals with the mistreatment of an undocumented family living in New York. In collaboration with RE, we included the children of our congregation who were working on their family immigration project. Heather McNeil developed a wonderful curriculum on this topic and worked with Sara Schwindt during the month of January to teach our children about ancestors and immigration. We also attended three events at Lawrence High School: Mayda del Valle's poetry slam presented by the White Fund, Ernesto Quiñones discussion of activism in today's world and what small actions we might be able to take in order to bring change, and the LHS Theater Group's production of *Circle Games*.

To change the immigration system, the task force took these actions: We worked with DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) volunteers organized by the Student Immigrant Movement to assist eligible young people in the Lawrence community in filling out their applications to remain in the US and achieve documented status. We attended a vigil at the ICE Detention Center at the Suffolk County Jail on November 4. We participated in a protest of Fidelity's investments in the private prison business on January 31, 2012, at Fidelity's headquarters in Boston. We brought Irasema, an immigrant from Latin America who lives in Lawrence, and her 3 children to an Immigration Forum at the UU Church of greater Lynn January 27 and accompanied Irasema's family to the ICE office to be witnesses for fair treatment at Irasema's detention check-in on January 28. We organized postcards for Immigration Justice: For 3 Sundays, we offered writing points, postcards and

addresses of state legislators to members of the congregation. The Task Force then delivered/ mailed 150 cards to our state legislators in support of the Trust Act. We attended a rally at the State House in Boston to launch the Trust Act Campaign on March 20 and attended Immigrants' Day at the State House on April 8.

We will continue to try to influence legislation at both the State and Federal level to change our broken immigration system.

## **Welcoming Committee**

This was a busy year for our Welcoming activity at North Parish. We targeted the celebration of our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Welcoming status with a yearlong agenda of activity. Rev. Lee Bluemel, Kendra Bauer, and Tad Bickford, along with others set the course for North Parish events as well as our community presence through Welcoming Faiths and the McVagly youth group. In the fall we screened the movie "Love Free or Die" a documentary of the journey of the openly gay Episcopal Rev. Gene Robinson as well as the webinar "Learning about Transgender Identity". Members of the Welcoming Committee attended the UU Andover service led by Mr. Barb Greve preaching "Courage from Necessity". In November, the McVagly youth group gifted North Parish two new colorful banners proclaiming our "We are a Welcoming Congregation" which were displayed in the North Andover Holiday parade and then installed outside the church.

In January, Tad Bickford attended the UUA workshop "How to Welcome and Minister to LGBTQ Youth". In this workshop core identities were outlined as biological, gender expression, gender identity, and sexual orientation and how we need to understand our own beliefs before we can be of service to the LGBTQ population. In February, North Parish hosted the Welcoming Faiths coalition (10 area representatives) for the Courageous Love awards ceremony. In March, Tad Bickford traveled to Ludlow, MA representing North Parish to speak at the U.C.C statewide conference on Welcoming Communities of Faith and how to improve you welcoming message and build community support. The Welcoming Faiths coalition then produced a community wide event in early April at Northern Essex Community College on "Coming Out and Keeping the Faith". The event was a panel discussion with youth impacted by religion and being gay or transgendered and insight from Religious leaders. The visibility on this topic and the impact on the multigenerational audience were phenomenal.

The yearlong welcoming activity culminated with an April weekend of celebration including a Barn Dance and special Welcoming Service, including a beautiful video that was produced by Barry Low that provided a historical look at how we came to be Welcoming Congregation, as well as the progress that we have made and the celebrations we have had over the past 19 years. Great thanks to Barry and to Keith Connors for the wonderful work they did to make out 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary such a celebratory event.

## **Green Sanctuary Committee**

Members and volunteers: Stephanie Harrington, Lynn Langton, Terrie Reid, Cindy Jones, Tina Klein, Dale Burton, Kim Adami, Lorryn Kinkaid, Liz Anderson, Susan Haltmaier, Kimberly Lennarson, Jen Humm, Heather McNeil, Pat Grimm, Mary Kilpatrick, Carolyn Cronin

The committee remained active this year with a variety of education activities and new members. Winter Film series focused on several topics:

- Tapped –This documentary is an unflinching examination of the big business of bottled water and the effects on the environment
- Bag It: Is Your Life Too Plastic? Documentary film exposing the effects of plastic bags and other plastic consumer merchandise, and its effects on land ecosystems, the marine environment and the human body
- Genetic Roulette: The Gamble of our Lives- The documentary provides compelling evidence of the health risks that we are taking by consuming GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms) and offers a recipe for protecting ourselves and our future.

Children’s Education: Working with Sara Schwindt and the RE classes, the committee provided several educational experiences including:

- The Story of Stuff video entitled the Story of Bottled Water and discussion about how we can reduce, recycle and stop drinking bottled water.
- Kids viewed an abbreviated version of Bag It as part of the Earth Day Celebration education activities during the month of April. The RE classes learned about reducing our use of all plastics and taking a pledge to eliminate single –use plastics as part of the Parish’s Single-Use free challenge.

Earth Day Congregation-wide Celebration – The Green Sanctuary Committee organized the Earth Day Pot Luck luncheon after services and a hike at Weir Hill Reservation and Lake Cochichewick in North Andover.

The committee will plan activities for next year that will include a local food event as well as more educational activities for the entire parish.

### **Social Action Council Summary**

It has been a very busy and rewarding year, with the involvement of many people. Thank you to all who help to keep Social Justice alive and vibrant at North Parish.

Future Projects/Goals: Will be determined in the fall.

Chairperson: Kevin Reid

Members: Heather McNeil, Donna Cloney, Tad Bickford, Brian Parker, Karen Parker

## **Stewardship Committee 2012-2013**

*“Where your treasure is, so your heart will be also”*

When you think about it .... there is real truth to these words, which were offered to his flock of followers by that wise teacher, Jesus. What we do with our money is a true indicator of what we value in our lives and our hearts. We, your Stewardship Committee, were reminded of this by a book entitled “*Ask, Thank, Tell*” which a representative of our historical cousin, South Church Andover, recommended to us when we met as part of our outreach effort to learn how some other churches with solid track records for financially supporting their operations achieve their goals.

Seeking to find ways to expand the financial foundation that supports our mission each year, we asked the congregation to consider two questions as you all considered what to give:

*What effect has North Parish had on your life, your family, your community and others you care for? What effect could it have in the future?*

*Does your level of giving reflect the place that North Parish holds in your heart, in proportion to your resources?*

Our hope was that these questions would help our congregation, as a whole, break free of the patterns of giving that have characterized our annual campaigns for the last few years, which haven’t generated enough in pledged support to enable us to fully pay our own way in living the mission we define for ourselves. Each year, we draw from the resources that were left to North Parish by those who came before, to fill the gaps we won’t support ourselves. This year .... as our congregation also gives serious consideration to a permanent solution to our facilities needs, which will be our legacy to those who come after us ... we hoped to encourage a level of giving that would put our annual operations on a solid, pay-as-we-go financial footing.

“*Ask, Thank, Tell*”. Our *Ask* was to change the North Parish Giving paradigm. We *Thank*, from the bottom of our hearts, all who listened to our message, who perhaps came to one of our stewardship gatherings to learn and to share, and who ultimately affirmed that their hearts do indeed lie with North Parish by pledging to share a generous measure of their treasure.

Now, let us *Tell* you how we did. As of May 3<sup>rd</sup>, the date of this report, we have received pledges or other indications of support for \$348,500, which is just slightly more than last year. Nearly 40% of the congregation increased their pledge over what they offered last year, and another 7% or so of our pledges are from new members and friends. But, about 35% of us pledged exactly what they had before, while another 17% decreased their pledges. Finally, about 9% of those who pledged previously have or will be leaving us, or for some other reason declined to offer a pledge. These percentages all generally mirror what we have experienced in recent years. The very slight increase in the amount pledged is insufficient to cover even the Board’s proposed mission-driven increases in our operating costs, let alone enabling progress on the goal of eliminating a draw from reserves. So ... while there is much generosity to celebrate, as a committee we remain chagrined that we were unable to meet the challenge of convincing the congregation of North Parish that we need to step up and fully support the operations that enable our mission.

Religious giving is influenced by many factors – degree of commitment, resources, competing financial demands – and we know many would give more if they could. All gifts to North Parish

and all pledges of support – wherever they fall on the scale – are important to our mission and, on behalf of the North Parish congregation, we thank each and every one of you who participated in this year’s campaign. If you are interested in helping us try again next year to find the key that unlocks the full range of abundance we are confident lies within our congregation .... we would be delighted to have you join our committee!

Respectfully submitted,  
The North Parish Stewardship Committee  
Peter Calkins, Carol Lewis, Bill Putnam, Harry Voorhees.

## **Worship Committee**

The Worship Committee’s primary task is to help Rev. Lee in the seamless flow of Sunday worship. We meet monthly to discuss how we might improve the worship experience and the overall sense of welcome. Our monthly discussions may include thoughts around sermon topics, readings, music, rituals, or traditions.

We recruit, train, and schedule ushers and worship assistants for every service, and most of us also fill those roles when needed. We are starting to use the ivolunteer software application to allow online signup for ushering and worship assistants, making the respective coordinators’ jobs easier.

The Worship Committee also helps identify and secure guests preachers for those Sundays Rev. Lee has off.

This year the guest preachers and lay speakers included:

Meg Soens (UU);  
Jesse Jaeger (UU), Immigration Justice Sunday;  
Solstice Ensemble (Earth-Based), Winter Solstice;  
Martin Espada (nondenominational), Hispanic poet and writer;  
Helen Cymbala (Earth-Based), Imbolg / Candlemas;  
Kirk Byron Jones (Baptist), Living at a Sacred Pace;  
Aidin Olsen, James McDaniel (UU Senior Youth), Perspectives in a Changing World;  
Margaret Weis (UU), The Invisible Wife

We also continued our Parish traditions of Water Communion, Bread Communion, Chocolate Communion, Easter Egg Tree of Life assembled by Kim Adami, Flower Communion, and services led by the Coming of Age group, the Senior Youth Group and High School Senior Bridging service.

Additional seasonal observances included Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Hannukah, and Passover from the Jewish tradition; Autumn Equinox and Summer Solstice from the Earth-Based traditions; Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Palm Sunday and Easter from the Christian tradition.

We celebrated Heritage Sunday this year by sharing our individual families’ heritage stories and their geographical origins. We celebrated Veteran’s Day, Thanksgiving, Martin Luther King Day, Earth Day, Mother’s Day, and Memorial Day.

In 2011 we had greatly increased attendance at our summer services, to a high of 45 attendees and an average of 32; high attendance and interest continued in the summer of 2012. We were excited to add UU Kids activities and nursery care for the summer services, allowing more parents and families to attend. The 2012 Summer Services boasted a high attendance of 70, and an average of 45. Summer topics included: Faith in Rock'n'Roll; Animal Healers; the Shaker Communities; Summer Fun; the Bread and Roses Strike; Homosexuality and the Bible; a Music Service; and the works of e. e. Cummings.

We have already scheduled two-thirds of the leaders for 2013 summer services. Summer service coordinators are Kim Adami and Helen Cymbala.

2012 – 2013 Worship Assistants: Kim Adami, Jeri Bayer, Barbara Call, Elise Carbonell, Carolyn Cronin, Donna Cloney, Nancy Cottrill, David Cymbala, Helen Cymbala, Grace Durfee, Cara Forcino, Alison Green, Sue Goley, Nancy Lennhoff, Lanie Lincoln, Carol Lewis, Ann Low, Barry Low, Brenda Marcoux, Kevin Reid, Terrie Reid, Ruth Race, Harry Voorhees, Joannie Warnshuis, Bob Watts, Keith Wentzel, Lynn Wentzel.

WA Coordinator 2012 – 2013: Keith Connors

WA Training 2012 – 2013: Cara Forcino

Usher Coordinator 2011 – 2012: Kim Adami

Usher Coordinator 2012 – 2013: Lisa Scott

Supplies Coordinator 2012 – 2013: Kim Adami

Respectfully submitted,  
Helen Cymbala, Worship Chair

Worship Committee Members: Kim Adami, Suzanne Adams, Chas Bicking, Keith Connors, Cara Forcino, Barry Low, Lisa Scott.

## **Affiliated Organizations Reports**

### **Great Pond Sangha**

**Accomplishments of Past Year** (7/1/12-6/30/13):

- Offered meditation instruction, guided meditation sessions and discussion four times a month throughout the year
- Offered meditation during Sunday services at N. Parish.
- Offered several Newcomers' Nights for those new to meditation and/or the group
- Through our relationship with Lama Willa and the Natural Dharma Fellowship we developed a strong and ongoing connection with the new Wonderwell Mountain Refuge in Springfield, NH.
- Two GPS retreats at Wonderwell Mountain Refuge, Springfield, NH held in June 2012 and January 2013

- Maintained an email list of approximately 100 people
- Provided financial support to Sangha members as needed for purchasing study-group books and attending special programs and retreats
- Maintained a lending library of Buddhism-related books and CDs
- Provided support/guidance for Sangha members in developing abilities to assume leadership/mentoring roles
- Provided pastoral support as needed for Sangha members
- Held organizational meetings as needed.
- Maintained membership in the U.U. Buddhist Fellowship
- Donated \$500 to North Parish
- Maintained a practice-leader rotation
- Cooked for Bread and Roses.
- On January 28, 2012, hosted Tibetan Buddhist Lama Willa Miller for a half day retreat at Old Center Hall
- On November 3, 2012 hosted Lama Samten and Lama Karma for day long retreat in Old Center Hall
- Maintained a presence on the internet via a Facebook page and Google sites.
- Increased the number of practice leaders for Wednesday night meditation sessions

#### **Future Projects/Goals:**

- Continue current offerings
- Increase visibility in Merrimack Valley
- Create a Great Pond Sangha website
- Create a connection with Bread and Roses to offer Sangha members an opportunity to serve food on site at the Bread and Roses facility.
- Coordinate “movie nights” with Buddhist themed movies, offering the Sangha and North Parish community to connect socially.
- Have another retreat and Wonderwell.
- Start another Everyday Dharma study/practice group for those interested in beginning or refreshing their individual spiritual practice.
- Offer two practice days during the next year.
- Invite some guest practice leaders to our Wednesday night sittings.
- Offer a half day or full day Tai Chi workshop.

Director, Meditation Teacher: Laura Howell

Coordinators: Phil and Susan Malloy

Organizing Committee: Susan Malloy, Phil Malloy, Laura Howell, Brad Howell, Donna Lewandowski, Leo Shapiro, Mark Lemire, Dieuwke Fiedler, Nancy Adrian

## **Jericho Road Lawrence, Inc.**

#### **Accomplishments of Past Year:**

- 52 volunteer project matches made since 5/19/2012
- Continued our ED support groups with guest facilitators on such topics as employee law, fundraising, and security

- Provided workshops on such topics as compliance training for 501c3 nonprofits and managing nonprofits in the electronic age
- Launched our Cultural Inclusion Pilot with the YWCA with the goal of increasing the representation of Latino professionals on nonprofit Boards
- Continued our second round of our Board Tune Up program using a facilitated process that helps Boards self-assess their performance over the past year, identify goals to work on for the next 12 months and put together a work plan to achieve those goals.

**Future Projects/Goals:**

- Continue our flagship skills-based volunteer project matches
- Continue and grow our Cultural Inclusion program
- Continue our Board Tune Up program with 5 nonprofit Boards
- Continue our ED support groups
- Continue our workshops with Lawyers Clearinghouse

Chairperson: Ron Hilbink

Term of Office: 1 yr

Vice Chairperson: Harry Voorheese

Board Committee Members: Frank Mele, John VanDrie, Dawna Perez, Kevin Reid, Matt Wilson

Outgoing Committee Members: Karen Nemeth, John Weaver

## **Merrimack Valley Alliance of GLBTQ Youth (McVagly)**

**Accomplishments of Past Year:**

McVagly is approaching its fourth anniversary since its inception in June 2009. During the past year we've increased our weekly attendance, developed a solid team of adult advisors, improved our visibility, and build collaborative relationships with the local high school Gay/Straight/Allies (GSA's). This year we also received our largest private donation and delivered more effective programming events.

McVagly meets weekly year-round on Monday evenings and has regular attendance of 10 – 15 youth and 2 – 4 adults. We conduct a flexible meeting structure which includes social gathering time, introductions, and a check-in process where the youth share their weekly story, followed by time for meeting programs. This format facilitates the ability of the youth to get to know each other and socialize. In addition, it allows for the adults to hear of the struggles and achievements of each of the participants early in the meeting to allow for individual attention and encouragement before the end of the session.

Programming activity this year has included youth led discussion topics on: bullying, gay student rights, sexual health, and suicide prevention. In December, 4 youth achieved HEARTT certificates in Health, Education, and Risk Reduction Training in a weekend long session in Sturbridge, MA. We hosted our annual GLBTQ Valentine's Dance which was attended by over 40 youth from 13 surrounding communities. In addition, we attended the Boston Youth Pride rally and parade in May, and crafted our own personalized T-shirts to show our spirit.

McVagly adult volunteers are very dedicated and provide individual skills and benefits to the group. We completed CORI forms for all adults in the fall. Amy Johnson, Di Kinsman, Kevin Mitchell, Chris Amoroso, and Tad Bickford make up the team. Financial health is excellent and the state funding stipend through Department of Public Health is expected to continue through 2014.

### **Future Projects/Goals:**

We intend to continue to foster youth leadership skills. This will build a network of youth leaders within the group to allow for turnover and diversity of talent. In the fall we will be providing opportunity for training in the areas of Public Speaking, Group Leadership, as well as additional Health and Risk reduction education.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Tad Bickford

## **People's Pantry**

### **Accomplishments Of Past Year:**

We served 13, 016 individuals in 2012!! We are proud to be able to serve those in need with a great variety of fresh, frozen and canned food items. A new Menu is created for each pantry which includes nutritious items, many of which come from the Merrimack Valley Food Bank as part of the state MEFAP (Massachusetts Emergency Feeding Assistance Program). Other foods come from food drives which schools, churches, and other organizations produce. All Girl Scout troops collect much-needed Baby Foods for us October thru April. Breads are donated by Fantini Bakery, Haverhill and Stop and Shop and Tripoli, North Andover. I order fresh produce for each pantry from Donabedian, Salem, a wholesaler. We are very proud to be able to offer fresh fruits and veggies, which are paid from our Peoples Pantry fund. On holidays(Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter) we provide a Market Basket Gift Card so that each family may purchase their own ham, turkey or vegetarian option (Note: this also saves us from having to figure out where we would store large meat items!) The rest of the holiday menus show extra caring and thought for our guests. Clothing is brought over by Phila and Dick Slade(formerly handled by Loretta and Bob Middleton) from The North Andover Thrift Shop for our guests - these are always well received. After a brief sign in, each guest usually heads for the kitchen where we have made coffee, hot chocolate, tea and offer donuts and fruit juice to our hungry guests. The kid's table is at the moment "on hold" waiting for a new leader since Dotti Anderson left the pantry for family reasons. Many thanks to Dotti for the special way she interacted with the myriad kids of our pantry guests. Each alternate Tuesday pantry is preceded by a large effort on the part of our Monday Night Pantry group headed by Fran Rohr. This group, using the Menu as its work sheet, sets up all (but the cold or frozen items) on many long tables set up in the Chapel for the next day's pantry.

We began in October 1992! Our program speaks to our UU principles and we are grateful to the church for supporting The People's Pantry for all these years.

**Future Goals:** We hope to be able to maintain our current level of service - If we were ever to be given a bit more space, we might be able to increase our numbers served a bit more by having the ability to stock more foods.

Chairperson: Cari Marchese

Committee Members: Chas Bicking, Molly Bicking, Betsy Black, Tony Daigle, Beth Daigle, Jane Ford, Meg Gannon, Lucy Gatchell, Adele Gaulocher, Carole Harris, Maude Jayne, Pam Koscielniak, Martin Lowrie, Dave Lewis, Mel Marchese, Carol Marshall, Paul McCarthy, Andrew McDevitt, James McDaniel, Loretta Middleton, Bob Middleton, Tom Papineau, Dena Paris, Sophie Paris, Terrie Reid, Fran Rohr, Sally Russo, Jerusha Ryan, Annie Starrett.

Outgoing members: Dotti Anderson, Kate Gilligan, Jim Greer, Cheryl, Bill and Allie Herland, Jean DeLuca, Loretta and Bob Middleton, Dot and Bob Towler, Joan Warnshuis.