

Denominational Connections (DC) Committee
Annual Report
June 13th, 2008 - June 11, 2009

Members: Mary Licking, Chair; Susan Chadwick, John Sanders
Budget: 0 dollars

John Sanders attended the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) General Assembly (GA) on June 25th –29th, 2008 at Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He and Steve Edington, UUNashua minister, carried the UUNashua banner in the opening ceremonies banner parade. Dr. Elizabeth M. Strong and John Sanders gave a workshop, “Are You a Closet Universalist and Don’t Know It?” They showed the Universalist Heritage Foundation video that UUNashua’s outreach collection helped finance. John distributed the video at the UU History booth. He also sang in the GA choir.

On July 1st, 2008, UUNashua became part of the new Northern New England (NNED) UUA district, made up of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. Of the UUA districts in the United States, the NNED is home to the greatest number of congregations.

On September 27th, 2008, DC participated in a Strategic Vision 2018 meeting to help set priorities for UUNashua’s next 10 years. On January 31st, 2009, DC participated in a follow-on session led by UUNashua President, Laurie Goodman, regarding the church’s vision for the future, the ties between its groups, and goal-setting.

On October 18th, 2008, UUNashua was well represented by a large contingent at the UU New England Fall Conference in Worcester, Massachusetts. They included Laurie and Roy Goodman, Lori and Gary Lerude, and many others. John Sanders, president of the NNED, represented the district. Rev. Dr. Laurel Hallman and the Rev. Peter Morales, candidates for UUA president, responded to audience questions.

“Rev. William G. Sinkford, President of the UUA, preached at the UU Church of Nashua, NH, for their Living Wage Service on January 25, 2009” is how the UUA described the historic visit (from the UUA website social justice section accessed on

April 19, 2009). The header on the article read, “2009 January's Action of the Month: Living Wage Days are Here! Join Let Justice Roll National Campaign for \$10 in 2010 Federal Minimum Wage”. Another article on the same website mentioned the sermon title as, "Living Faithfully—Working for Living Wages". From the latter article: “The sanctuary of [UUNashua] was packed and you could feel the excitement in the air.” Representing DC at the service were Sue Chadwick, who sang in the choir, and John Sanders. Interesting features of the event were 1) the UUA’s indicating beforehand UUNashua was chosen as the site for this sermon due to its proximity to UUA headquarters and UUNashua’s record as having a commitment to social justice issues, and 2) the visit’s invitation was initiated by the UUA.

On March 1st, 2009, DC hosted a coffee hour table to educate the congregation on its activities. Discussion topics included publicizing the new NNED website, the district spring conference and annual meeting, and the new district chalice lighter program. Another effort to communicate with the congregation involved articles in the UUNashua newsletters of June-July, August and October 2008, and February, March, April, and May 2009.

During May 1 – 3, 2009, DC participated in the first NNED conference and annual meeting at the Red Jacket Inn, North Conway, NH. John Sanders, as president of NNED, chaired the meeting and presented a Table Talk during the Saturday luncheon entitled, “Our Ultimate District Goals / UUA.” UUNashua sent several delegates to the meeting including Hilary and Bob Keating, Gary Lerude, and DC member, Mary Licking. In the Annual Reports publication there was mention of two of the delegates DC helped recruit for last year’s Annual Meeting. Cynthia Schroer’s posing a question on district funding for youth appeared in the minutes. Robert Sampson’s selection as one of the four NNED Trustees appeared in the Trustees Report and he also filed a report for his Compensation Consultant role. You may remember having contributed during Sunday collections to the UUA advertising campaign. In response to questioning, it was learned the UUA website received a huge increase in the number of visitors after each advertisement appeared in Time magazine.

John Sanders, as NNED President, chaired three Board of Directors meetings, a September one in Moultonborough, New Hampshire, a January one in Augusta, Maine, and a June one in Mt. Holly, Vermont. The October 2008 NNED newsletter, Northern Lights, explains those district meetings start on Friday nights and run through the Sunday morning church service of a nearby congregation. John also authored a column, "Living the Faith," in the October 2008, and March and June 2009 issues of Northern Lights.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mary Licking