

## Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, NH

### **Music Program 2009-2010**

Jared (Jed) Holland led two choirs this year. The adult choir has continued to grow, and involves a large number of church friends and members, totaling 41 singers. The youth choir, which involves very young children up through about 8<sup>th</sup> grade, has 22 members this year. The youth choir sang 10 times. The adult choir sang for 29 services, the Harmony at Home concert, and will be singing at the annual meeting. Non-choir members of the congregation joined us for the early Christmas Eve service, as well as 5 Greater Choir opportunities.

Due to the larger size of the adult choir, we moved the choir into a new rehearsal space. The choirs now rehearse in the chapel, and the room next to the chapel is now our music office.

Our music committee has been assisting Jed with the music program. This committee (chair Kathy Grossman, members Geri Davidson, Kathi Fogal, John Burkitt, Jon Lasselle, Ruth Cannava, Steve Edington) has been doing a great job. Geri Davidson continues to perform a critical role in keeping the choir, music committee, music, and Jed organized.

In keeping with last year's goal of providing more ways for congregation members and friends to contribute musically, we have continued the "Greater Choir" and asked more guest musicians to perform. The Greater Choir lets interested congregation members join the choir for one Sunday at a time without committing to Wednesday evening rehearsals. We haven't had huge turnouts, but there are usually a couple extra folks, a few of whom have since joined the adult choir.

We had great participation by 32 guest musicians to provide special music other than the normal choirs, for a total of 14 services. John Burkitt has continued coordinating with the large number of special musicians.

A wonderful accomplishment was "The Biggest Crazy UU Band That Ever Was (in Nashua at least)". This song brought together the talents of over 35 church members of all ages, and they all pulled together to do a fabulous job playing and singing a rousing version of "Down By The Riverside"!

We have done some work this year connecting with people from other area UU churches. We held a potluck and hymn sing get-together last month that had 22 attendees, including 5 from the Milford UU Church. We have shared some music with the Concord UU Church. Jed and Kathy travelled to Portland, Oregon, to attend the UU Musicians' Network conference last summer, and met many other musicians and gained many ideas to work on here.

For new music this year, Jed and Kathy each entered a hymn into a UU hymn contest, and the Grossmans wrote a new verse for Winter Wonderland to honor newly legal gay marriages in New Hampshire.

We worked with the Stewardship committee to lead sing-a-longs for the pledge drive month, including All Together Now, He Never Returned, All God's Critters Got a Place in the Choir,

Stand By Me, and the “I Love the Whole World” video we produced, which brought together many elements of our fine church family.

We are trying to utilize more electronic methods of communication. We are using Facebook, the UU network, the church website, and YouTube. We have continued to post recordings of our services on the website, and have begun adding some video content. We have a YouTube presence that includes videos of The Biggest Crazy UU Band That Ever Was (in Nashua at least); Kathy, Dan, & Harry’s Woody Guthrie songs; and Picnic of the World. We have also displayed videos in a few services, including “I Love the Whole World” and “We Are All Connected”, with limited success (we need better sound to make it effective).

We sponsored and sang in the benefit concert ”Harmony at Home” in honor of Allison Myrick, which benefited the local anti-violence group Bridges. There were 12 singing groups participating in this concert, organized by choir member Gil Dubray.

We and the Worship committee co-sponsored the Drum service and workshop led by Matt Meyer.

### **Printed Music/Folders**

Happily, we continue to have good participation in our choirs! We continue to order music and folders for 40 adult choir members. We reduced the number of pieces of music ordered for the youth choir, even though there are more members, because many of the children are not yet music readers, so they are sharing and learning by ear.

### **Guest Musicians**

This year’s guest musicians include many congregation members: brass choir members Bruce Cleaveland, Bruce Dye, Jonathon Orr, Ben Pugh, Ben Bate, Lori Lerude, Jenny Grossman, and Kathy Grossman; band members John Burkitt, Geoff Goodell, Billy Parker, Tess George, Adrian George, Zoe Goodell, Bruce Fitzpatrick, and occasional others; Woody Guthrie singers Dan Murphy, Kathy Grossman, and Harry Purkhiser; flautists Gillian Hinkle, Andrew Holland; oboe player Ruth Cannava, guitarist and vocalist Jonathan Orr; klezmer clarinetists Suellen Davidson and Burns Fisher; singer Dan Murphy and saxophonist Jordan Murphy, drummer Billy Parker; vocalists Tina Marshman and Suellen Davidson; Dr Bogg’s All Purpose Band with Tess George, John Burkitt, and Geoff Goodell; and talented members too numerous to mention here who participated in the Biggest Crazy UU Band That Ever Was (in Nashua at least) playing Down By The Riverside. We also had guest cellist Carolyn Regula play for us.

### **Instrument Repairs/Maintenance**

The organ had 3 tunings/repairs, the sanctuary piano had 1 tuning, the choir room electronic piano has been working well, and the sanctuary humidifier system is being maintained.

### **Review of Music Budget 2009-2010**

We continue to have our biggest expense of printed sheet music for the choir, due mostly to the large choir membership. Jed has not paid for many substitutes or outside guest musicians, we ordered fewer pieces of youth choir music, and we repeated some of our favorite songs throughout the year, so we have kept our expenses down in these ways.

**Requests**

We would like to have our budget increased by \$400 (for a total of \$1500 for octavos) to help buy sheet music for the continuing large number of adult choir members.

We are hoping to have risers for the choir next year, and are working on the details.

We are beginning to look into having a sound/light booth and built-in projection capabilities.

**Goals for 2010-2011**

To do a church musical in the spring of 2011, called Quilters, with 7 adult women actresses.

To continue to keep our expenses down by repeating some of our favorite songs throughout the year.

To keep personally connected to the individuals in the music program so they feel this church is their family, especially during troubled times.

To find even more ways for church members and friends to contribute musically to the life of the church.

To find more ways to make services musically engaging for the children, especially as they will be in services every week next year.