

Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua
Denominational Connections Committee
Annual Report
June 07, 2013 – June 12, 2014

Members: Mary Licking, Chair; John Sanders, Henry Zalman

Many activities mentioned in last year's report continued this year. The UUA / NNED involvement in the UU Nashua Ministerial Search process continued. Members of UU Nashua continue to attend NNED training, worship, and meeting events, and cooperate with the NNED's efforts that ultimately will benefit us all.

Publicity Efforts

Two mentions of UUA events in UU Nashua newsletter articles were placed or approved by the Committee and also a mention in the announcements. In the newsletter, DC mentioned the October 1st deadline for applying to make a presentation to the 2014 UUA General Assembly in Providence, RI. The DC approved the announcement by President Ellen Fisher that members could apply to DC to become delegates to GA. The 2014 NNED Conference, the 2014 UUA GA, the NNED Chalice Lighter program, and the Denominational Connections (DC) Committee were all publicized at a table during coffee hour after the worship service on March 2nd and March 16th, 2014.

Other Traditional Roles of the Committee

Committee members, Mary Licking and John Sanders, served as a delegates to the UUA GA 2013 in Louisville, Kentucky. John was a member of the Bass Section and Mary was a member of the Alto Section of the UUA GA Sunday morning choir and Closing ceremonies choir. Representing UU Nashua as absentee delegates to the UUA GA 2013 were Laurie Goodman, Kathy Grossman, Carol Houde, and Gary Lerude. Jim Keys of South Carolina was elected at UUA GA 2013 as UUA Moderator (governance leader) for a six year term. Five UU Nashua members represented the congregation as delegates at the NNED Spring Conference and Annual Meeting on April 12th, 2014: Mary Licking and John Sanders from the Committee, and also Ellen Barr, Harry Purkhiser, and Robert Sampson. Reverend Olivia Holmes, Interim Minister of UU Nashua, served as a ministerial delegate.

There is a regionalization movement within the UUA, with five regions being identified nationwide. Finances have been a driver in the decision to participate in regionalization for the districts that have chosen that route as a way of providing resources to congregations. The NNED voted February 1st to unify its staff with those of the three surrounding New England districts of the UUA, with a deadline in 2015.

For several years in a row, UU Nashua has been recognized in the NNED annual report for its support for the UUA Annual Program Fund (APF). For the current year, the requested APF contribution is \$58 per certified member. The requested APF contribution program is one way that congregations can support the UUA. There is also a requested APF contribution for the NNED that UU Nashua pays that is \$18 per member and is scheduled to increase to \$19 and \$20 for 2015 (which is still less than the \$23 per member average paid for all UUA districts). The 2014 NNED Annual Report acknowledged UU Nashua's contribution to the APF by putting it on the list of "Honor Congregations", meaning it was one of the congregations that made its full requested contribution to the APF. Also, UU Nashua was

listed as a “Leadership Congregation” in the annual report, the only congregation in the NNED to make that list. Leadership Congregations are the 50 highest contributors to the APF during the past fiscal year.

Robert Sampson of UU Nashua served as District Compensation Consultant for ten years and completed two terms as an NNED Endowment Trustee. At the NNED 2013 Annual Meeting, he and three other long time leaders from member congregations were given awards for their role in outstanding service to the UUA over a long period of years. The other three awardees were Angela Matthews of South Church in Portsmouth, NH, Roger Comstock of Lincoln VT who is outgoing NNED CFO, and Charles Boothby of UU Bangor, Maine, who is outgoing President of the NNED. Besides the delegates to the NNED meeting listed above, other UU Nashua members who supported Bob Sampson by witnessing the awards ceremony were David Hudson and Lance Pratt.

Under policy governance, it is the job of the Committee to recommend delegates to represent UU Nashua at the UUA GA and at the UUA NNED Annual Meeting. The Committee approved the delegates discussed above regarding those meetings. The Committee also approved David Hudson, Ellen Barr, Bill Kennedy, Harry Purkhiser, and Kathy Fletcher as delegates to represent UU Nashua at the June 2014 UUA GA in Providence, Rhode Island.

In the NNED Annual Report, Joe Sullivan, District Executive of the NNED, thanked UU Nashua, among other congregations when speaking of those that “hosted and often initiated our multi-congregational learning events and OWL trainings this past year.”

From the data section of the NNED Annual Report: From 2009 – 2014: 34% of the congregations within the NNED grew, 58% shrank, and 8% were unchanged in the number of members. When not considering congregations, but just the number of members, the NNED membership numbers can be considered as a decline of 1% a year or that membership numbers have stabilized after about four years (since 2008 of a nearly 2% annual decline).

The Fall 2013 NNED Chalice Lighter grant was awarded to the Sanford, ME congregation to help finance handicapped accessibility improvements and energy efficiency upgrades for their building. The second call of the NNED Chalice Lighter grant for 2013 – 2014 was the subject of UU Nashua outreach collections in May 2014. The two congregations that were designated as recipients of that call were the following: 1) Manchester, NH and 2) Waterville, Maine. The Manchester congregation will be making improvements central to their commitment to open their doors wider to the community. The Waterville congregation in Maine is seeking a small grant to improve their communication tools and outreach. The DC Committee applied to UU Nashua for the Chalice Lighter program to be an outreach collection recipient. The DC Committee made the presentation about the Chalice Lighter program on May 4th, 2014 to the UU Nashua congregation.

The sermon on March 23, 2014 at UU Nashua was given by Denny Davidoff. Denny is a Senior Consultant on The Interfaith Alliance Foundation staff and Director of Leadership Education Alliance for Democracy and Diversity. She was among the Founding Directors of the Interfaith Alliance in 1994 and served as UUA Moderator from 1993 to 2001. Denny is currently a Consultant to Meadville Lombard Theological School (Unitarian Universalist) in Chicago. The collection taken that Sunday went toward helping theology students.

John Sanders continues to serve as President of the Universalist Heritage Foundation and its Treasurer until recently was Jon Lasselle, a member of UU Nashua.

UUA / NNED Involvement in UU Nashua Ministerial Transition and Ministerial Search Process

The UUA and the NNED participated in multiple events that were part of the UU Nashua ministerial transition and search process. There are other teams and committees that were more involved and therefore, the privilege of reporting further on these events will be theirs.