

Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, NH  
Music Program 2013-2014

Jared (Jed) Holland led two choirs this year.

The Children's Choir involves very young children up through about 8<sup>th</sup> grade. This year the singers ranged in age from 4 to 13, with most of them being about 7 or 8 years old. There were between 5 and 14 children attending on any given Sunday, with a total of 25 children participating at some point throughout the year. The Children's Choir sang 8 songs this year, including a chalice lighting song on Music Sunday and also sang twice with the Adult Choir. Our thanks go to volunteer Frona Avery who helped direct the Children's Choir, and to Greg Deneen who accompanied them on guitar. Music committee member Kathleen Griffis assisted with directing and the logistics for the Children's Choir this year.

The Adult Choir has continued to thrive, and involves a large number of church friends and members, totaling 44 choir members. Nine new members joined the choir this year. Out of these nine, 5 are new to our church this year. Sometimes Olivia, our interim minister, sang with us on special occasions. The Adult Choir tried something new this year: the choir was scheduled to sing on almost every Sunday. In past years our church attendance dropped noticeably on "Choir Days Off" because the choir is a significant percentage of the congregation. This year, rather than taking one Sunday off each month, the only Sundays the choir was not scheduled to sing were those Sundays for which the leader(s) of the service had special non-choir music planned. (There was also one snowstorm cancellation.) The choir sang a total of 56 anthems, and sang at 36 out of 41 Sunday services. (Last year the Choir sang at 27 Sunday services.) The choir will also sing at the annual meeting. Some members of the congregation joined us to sing in the Christmas Eve Choir at the earlier Christmas Eve service, and some joined us to sing as part of a Greater Choir on Easter Sunday.

Our music committee has been assisting Jed with the music program. This committee (members Geri Davidson, Kathy Grossman, John Burkitt, Ruth Cannava, Kathleen Griffis) has been doing a great job. Kathy stepped down as chair in order to be on the ministerial search committee this year, so her work was spread amongst the other committee members, with Geri running the meetings.

To help with our goal of engaging children musically, we have included youth vocalists, drummers, brass players, and other instrumentalists. We also have one youth who has joined the Adult Choir.

We had great participation by over 50 guest musicians to provide special music other than our regular choir music, for a total of 17 services. John Burkitt has continued coordinating with the large number of special musicians.

A wonderful event was the 5th coming of "The Biggest Crazy UU Band That Ever Was (in Nashua at least)". This group brought together the talents of many church members of all ages, and they all pulled together to do a fabulous job playing and singing a rousing version of "When the Saints Go Marching In"

and “Your Love Keeps Lifting Me” for our last service of the church year.

Another wonderful accomplishment was having a “Music Sunday” service led by Jed Holland. He brought together many different elements of our music program for this beautiful service that included the Children’s Choir, the Adult Choir, and a guest cellist, as well as participatory songs and musical experiments for the congregation.

Jed also put forth great effort this year to allow us to have projected words during the services. He spearheaded this effort and did all the work for several months. He has now transitioned it to a church member, who is beginning to involve some other congregation members in the effort.

Jed also spearheaded having a sing-along band before 4 of our services this past fall. Participants included Jed, John Burkitt, John Brobst, Steve Hedges, Kathy Grossman, Billy Parker, Ben Morton, Grace Morton, Dan Murphy, Adrian George, Greg Deneen, Geoff Goodell, and Tess George.

We have also participated in working toward the church goal of providing community dinners. Jed Holland and John Burkitt have been providing live music at some of the community dinners.

We continue to utilize electronic methods of communication. We have live-streaming of our Sunday services, and rebroadcasting later the same day at 3 pm and 7 pm. We are using Facebook, the UU network, the church website, the choir google group, and YouTube. We continue to post audio recordings of our services and some video content on the website.

Printed Music/Folders We continue to have good participation in our choirs! We are ordering music and folders for 45 Adult Choir members. We reduced the number of pieces of music ordered for the Children’s Choir 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 and friends:

Vocalists Mary Ellen Wessels, Emily Stauff, Steve Hedges, Kathleen Griffis, Kathy Grossman, Dan Murphy, Marty Storer, Ben Morton, Martha Holland, Katie Woolsey, Stuart Schneiderman, Sue Chadwick, Wes Chadwick, Ellen McCormick, Harry Purkhiser, John Brobst, and the entire Chadwick family: Sean, Sue, Wes, and Sarah. We also heard Jed Holland sing a vocal solo for the first time! Instrumentalists this year include percussionists Billy Parker and Ben Morton; upright bass players John Burkitt and John Brobst; ukulele player John Brobst; flute player Linda Lewis; cellist Gary Hodges; French horn players Lori Lerude, Erica Agnew, and Bridget Foner; saxophonist Jordan Murphy; pianist and organist Dan Murphy; clarinetist Suellen Davidson; trumpet players Jonathan Orr and Bruce Cleaveland; trombonist Kathy Grossman; guitarists Steve Hedges, Kathy Grossman, Adrian George, Grace Morton, Geoff Goodell, John Brobst, Greg Deneen, and Dan Murphy; and many talented members who participated in the Biggest Crazy UU Band That Ever Was (in Nashua at least), the multi-generational Christmas Eve Choir, and the Easter Brass Band.

### Instrument Repairs/Maintenance

The organ had 2 tunings/repairs, the sanctuary piano had 2 tunings, the choir room electronic piano has been working well, and the sanctuary humidifier system is being maintained.

### Review of Music Budget 2012-2013

We continue to have the large expense of purchasing printed sheet music for the Adult Choir, due mostly to the large choir membership. We have paid for choir director substitutes for 3 rehearsals, and one outside guest musician. We ordered very few new pieces of Children's Choir music, and we repeated many of our favorite songs throughout the year, so we have kept our expenses down in these ways. We also kept expenses down by Jed arranging two songs for the adult choir. We have 2 teens providing childcare during Sunday morning rehearsals, and this is well-used by the choir members. This increased our expenses, but we feel it is worth it to choir parents.

### Goals for 2014-2015

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. To encourage teenagers who are interested in running the sound system or joining the choir.

To raise funds to buy the teal Singing the Journey hymnals for the sanctuary.

To continue to keep our expenses down.

To interface with the new interim DLRE to continue to find ways to engage children and youth.

To interface with the new interim minister to continue to contribute to high-quality worship services.