

# Religious Education Committee

## Annual Report 2013-2014

The Religious Education committee meets monthly to plan activities for children, youth and adults, and to organize curriculum and teachers for classes held during the Sunday service.

Chris Parker retires this year as the Director of Religious Education after 29 years. This has been a very busy year that started with hosting a *Multigenerational Worship Workshop* run by the district and attended by five different churches. As a result, our most highly attended service this year was the "Dia de los Muertos" service, jointly organized by the Religious Education Committee and the Worship Associates. We rekindled our participation in the YMCA of Greater Nashua Church Basketball League. Coaches Mike Super, Andy Straussberg and Craig Thomas were all players in our Uni Uni Basketball team when they were in their teens and they came back to share their experience with today's youth. We ran both *Our Whole Lives (OWL)* and our *Rite of Passage Experience (ROPE)* classes this year; usually they happen on alternative years. We had eleven ROPE graduates this year who presented their Affirmation Statements and "bridged" to the Sr. High Youth Group. Attendance was low in the church school, not unlike other UU churches and public schools as well; folks on the outside call this a "birth dearth". Our hope is that once we get a settled minister and the general population increases, we will start to see those numbers rise again! We had several service projects this year that supported the soup kitchen, our community dinner and the Adult Learning Center, working toward our "Ending Hunger and Homelessness" initiative. Jamie Hinkle and Kim Steele volunteered to supervise outreach projects for the children in the church school one Sunday a month for the next church school year! We have plans to offer a *Young Adult Our Whole Lives* course next spring for which we will advertise in local universities to see if we can attract more young adults. We'll offer *Adult OWL* to our congregation in the fall. Our *Jr. High OWL* class had a bit of excitement this year at two of their overnights as the fire alarm went off three times due to a faulty valve in our aging sprinkler system! Repairs have been made and all is well. As I look forward to retirement, I have had fun looking back at our records of teachers, tallying the number of years our volunteers have contributed to the church and it is pretty impressive. I will not be the only one retiring this year, this is Chuck Rehberg's last year as Sr. High Youth Advisor after 27 years serving the youth in our church as well as many years serving the youth and young adults in our district. Thank you, Chuck!!! Now I bid my fond farewell, thank you for a wonderful 29 years.

### **Religious Education Director**

Chris Parker

### **DRE Professional Activities**

Chris attended monthly Southern New Hampshire DRE Cluster Meetings; the LREDA Fall Conference in St. Paul, MN, and LREDA Chapter meetings throughout the year. Organized a *Multigenerational Worship Workshop* led by Kim Paquette, Multigenerational Ministry Director of NNED, attended by five different UU churches. Attended a *Pastoral Care with Youth Workshop* in Manchester with all four Youth Advisors. Hosted a conference, *Designing UU Religious Education for the 21st Century* led by Barb Greve, here in Nashua. Completed the Church's Safety Policy Manual with Sherri Woolsey, Sandy Martinage, and Ellen Fisher.

### **Religious Education Committee Members**

Chairperson of Religious Education--Amy Savoie  
Amanda Eberle, Charles Savoie, Mary Ellen Wessels  
Nona Storer - Volunteer Coordinator

### **Senior High Youth Group, Youth Advisors**

Lynn Coakley, Roy Goodman, Chuck Rehberg, and Monica Staples

### **Young Adult Group Coordinator**

Monica Staples

## **New Committee Members**

We look forward to welcoming Mickey Shepherd to the committee next year. As we sadly bid farewell to Chris in her role as DRE, we are excited about working with our Interim Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Meredith Olson.

## **Budget**

RE Committee: \$5,200.00

## **Average Sunday Attendance**

Fall: 60 children, 21 adults

Spring: 51 children, 22 adults

Whole year: 56 children, 21 adults

There were 51 volunteers involved in implementing programs for children this year.

## **Graduating Seniors**

Hanna Bate, Mattsen Bradbury-Koster, Sutton Bradbury-Koster, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Devon George, Grant Lerude, Ben Pugh, Ethan Shepherd, Alexandra Ventresca, Chloe Warner, and Jonathan Zalman.

## **Rite of Passage Graduates:**

Alec Bonvouloir, Seth Bonvouloir, Laura Cannava, Joseph Earley, Sabra George, Ryan Glossop, Siobhan Rogers, Bryce Stack, Cloe Storer, Zachary Ventresca, and Devony Whiting.

## **Multigenerational Services**

**Water Service**--Members of the congregation were invited to bring a sample of water from their summer experiences and to briefly share that during service. Church school teachers were introduced and dedicated.

**Dia de los Muertos**--Members of the congregation were invited to bring in photos or other mementos of loved ones who have died to add to the shrine as part of this service.

**Thanksgiving Service**--The RE Committee shared the book The Greatest Table with the congregation and displayed art created by members of the congregation that reflected the theme of the story.

**Flower Service** -- Congregants bring a flower from home to represent the gifts they bring to our community and leave with a different flower to represent the gifts we receive from the community.

## **Special Events**

**Spend Sunday at Church**--RE provided a welcome breakfast prior to the first Sunday service in September.

**Winter and Spring Gatherings**--Children gather in the auditorium during the seasonal parties for crafts, active games, and snack. They also are given the opportunity to participate in a service project during each party. During the winter party, seasonal sugar cookies were decorated and delivered to and very warmly received by the Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter. During the spring party, several dozen eggs were decorated and made available to guests at our April community dinner which was held the same day.

**Pizza & Games Night**--This is a night of appreciation for RE volunteers and their families. Guests brought their favorite games to play after dining on pizza and dessert.

**Teacher Orientations**--Chris Parker meets with teachers in the fall and spring to discuss classroom regulations and provide curriculum materials. Committee members are encouraged to attend these meetings.

Teacher Meetings--are held to enable teachers to share their experiences and seek additional guidance as needed.

## **Service Projects**

The Senior High Youth Group hosted a Holiday Gift Shop which raised \$146.50 for Bridges: Domestic & Sexual Violence of Nashua and Milford.

The church school classes created 100 acorn kits for families at the Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter. They assembled sample acorns made of a cookie, chocolate kiss, mini chocolate chip and frosting. They also decorated bags to package the kit. The staff at the Soup Kitchen gratefully accepted the kits and said they would be happy to be the recipient of this project in the future.

The works of art created for the Thanksgiving multigenerational service by Kathy Grossman, Jessica Parker, Paula Super, Dick Widhu, and the kindergarten class were raffled off to raise \$164 for *Guest at Your Table*. (cont. p.3)

A total of \$3,364 was collected for *Guest at Your Table*. There were six \$100 donations which were eligible to be matched and a pledge of \$120 per month for a year.

Jamie Hinkle organized the church school students to decorate and plant repurposed buckets for summer food gardens for distribution at the Adult Learning Center and to place outside our kitchen for the Community Dinners.

### Music

The Youth Choir, directed by Jed Holland and assisted by. Frona Avery, Kathleen Griffiths and Greg Deneen, is open to all children starting in preschool

### Basketball

Mike Super, Andy Straussberg, and Craig Thomas organized a new team to add to the YMCA of Greater Nashua church league. Program's costs this year was \$819.07. The congregational support during practice and games was well appreciated by the players and coaches. This year's team members were Max Better, Seth Bonvouloir, Alec Bonvouloir, Jake Fitzpatrick, Casey Henry, Grant Lerude, Jake Murphy, Gabe Murphy, Luis Rivera and Ben Super.

## 2013-14 Church School Curriculum, Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua

Grade	Curriculum	Teachers
Baby/Toddler		Klaudia Yanushkevich Katie Woolsey
Preschool -	Celebrating Me And My World	Dawn Cutler, Bill Earley (1 <sup>st</sup> Semester)
		Dawn Cutler, Bill Earley, Maggie Woolsey (2 <sup>nd</sup> Sem.)
Kindergarten	Chalice Children	Amy Savoie, Max Better, (Charles Savoie)
First - Second Grade	World of Wonder (1 <sup>st</sup> Semester)	Hal Holway, Kathi Fogal
	Love Will Guide Us (2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester)	Hal Holway, Karen Murray, (Cindy Hudson)
Third - Fourth Grade	Love Connects Us (1 <sup>st</sup> Semester)	Kris Davidson, Gillian Hinkle, John McCannon
	Timeless Themes (2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester)	Gillian Hinkle, John McCannon
Fifth - Sixth Grade	Amazing Grace	Mary Ellen Wessels, Mandy Eberle
Seventh - Eighth Grade	O.W.L. Our Whole Lives	Ginger Hedges, Geoff Skelton, Andy Straussberg
Ninth Grade	R.O.P.E. Rite of Passage	Dan Earley, Krista Earley, Wayne Fletcher Ginger Hedges (Mentors)
Senior High	Senior High Youth Group	Monica Staples, Roy Goodman Chuck Rehberg, Lynn Coakley

### Those who taught 5 years or more between 1985-2014

<u>5 years</u> Victoria Agnew Jim Bonvouloir David Brodeur Lynn Harroff (Roff) Michelle Morrison Geoff Skelton Monica Staples Andy Straussberg Lois Taylor	<u>7 Years</u> Laurie Conrad Wayne Fletcher Ruth Hamblett Donna LaRue Jenn Morton Lance Pratt Kim Steele Sarah Widhu	<u>9 Years</u> Linda Mandra	<u>14 Years</u> Krista Earley Ginger Hedges
<u>6 Years</u> Kate Brodeur Kathi Fogal	<u>8 Years</u> Cecile Bonvouloir Lori Lerude Susan Nutting	<u>10 Years</u> Dawn Cutler Linda Donaldson-Guidi	<u>15 Years</u> Michele Edington
		<u>11 Years</u> Frank Grossman Loretta Hubley	<u>18 Years</u> Dan Earley
		<u>13 Years</u> Billy Parker Mickey Shepherd	<u>27 Years</u> Chuck Rehberg