

Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua  
Denominational Connections Committee  
Annual Report  
June 13, 2014 – June 04, 2015

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

Ex-officio members: Interim minister, Reverend Olivia Holmes (from June 13 – July 31, 2014); Interim minister, Reverend Doctor Janet Newman (from August 1, 2014 – June 4, 2015); President of the Board of Trustees, UUCN: Harry Purkhiser

Budget: 0 dollars

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*

At least two mentions of UUA events were placed by the Committee in the announcements or newsletter. A Denominational Connections (DC) Committee information table was provided during coffee hour after the worship service on March 29<sup>n</sup>. The delegation to GA 2014 provided a summer service to the congregation. Members of the delegation are listed below.

*Other Traditional Roles of the Committee*

Committee members, Mary, Ellen, and Harry served as delegates representing UUCN at the UUA GA 2014 in Providence, Rhode Island. David Hudson and Kathy Fletcher also were delegates and Reverend Olivia represented UUCN as a ministerial delegate at GA. Mary was a member of the Alto Section and Reverend Olivia was a member of the tenor section of the UUA GA Sunday morning choir and Closing ceremonies choir. Five UUCN members represented the congregation as delegates at the NNED Spring Conference and Annual Meeting on April 11th, 2015 in Concord, NH: Ellen, Mary, and Harry from the Committee, also, David Hudson and Lance Pratt. Reverend Doctor Janet served as a ministerial delegate from UUCN. Mary was a member of the Alto Section and Reverend Doctor Janet was a member of the soprano section of the NNED choir. At the 2015 GA, those attending from UUCN served as the cheering section for Reverend Olivia as her name was called and she approached the stage for the retirement ceremony at the Service of the Living Tradition.

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 has been preparing for the July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015 unification of its staff with those of the three surrounding New England districts of the UUA. The pattern of exactly how each region considers itself fully regionalized is nonexistent. The UUA is now made up of 16 districts and one region. Each district, now part of a region, has different parts of its operations regionalized and not necessarily in the same way as other regions. The NNED continues to control its own endowment and has no plans to spend it on any of the southern New England districts in its New England Region, but as mentioned above, it will start sharing staff with them on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

What, then, will be the charge of the NNED starting July 1<sup>st</sup>? The NNED Board of Directors will continue to manage the NNED endowment, support the launch of the regional staff plan, help get the New England Advisory Council for Congregational Life off the ground, continue the work of the Chalice Lighter program, and explore new ways of building our faith in northern New England. What is the Advisory Council mentioned above? One is being created for each UUA region. From the NNED Annual Report: These councils will actively connect with congregations to find out what is and is not happening in the pews across the region.

For several years in a row, UUCN 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 \$60 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 \$20 for 2015 (which is still less than the \$23 per member average paid for all UUA districts). The 2015 NNED Annual Report acknowledged UUCN '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.

The NNED's outstanding service award for 2015 was given to Willard "Bud" Martin for his work in badly needed research and clarification regarding the property deed histories of a number of properties owned by the UUA in New Hampshire.

Under policy governance, it is the job of the Committee to recommend delegates to represent UUCN at the UUA GA and at the UUA NNED Annual Meeting. The Committee approved the delegates discussed above regarding those meetings. The Committee is also in the process of providing to UUCN approvals for the 2015 UUCN GA delegation.

At an NNED event held in September 2014 to educate congregations being served by interim ministries, Joe Sullivan, District Executive of the NNED, pointed out to those present UUCN's history of taking advantage of information sessions and training provided by the NNED and how that pattern of behavior provides answers to the questions congregations frequently ask. At that event, Harry of the Committee, and David Hudson served as panelists.

From the data section of the NNED Annual Report: From 2012 – 2015: There was a 69% increase in the number of non-members being served by NNED congregations. Membership in NNED congregations went from 6664 in 2014 to 6581 in 2015. In considering membership numbers, the NNED reminded the reader that data are limited by inconsistency in reporting and in how congregations define members, and then went on to say: Nonetheless, the longer-term trend of overall declining membership among NNED congregations mirrors similar trends in the other UUA New England districts and in other mainline denominations in our region and country as a whole.

In December 2014, the DC Committee made application to the Social Justice Committee Outreach Collection subcommittee for a collection to be devoted to the NNED Chalice Lighter grant program. The answer received is that such a collection will be assigned for a time in Fall 2015.

Reverend Olivia served as an At-Large member of the NNED Board of Directors, and in April 2014 was elected its Secretary. Committee member, John, continued this year to serve as President and Treasurer of the Universalist Heritage Foundation.

*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.

//original signed//

Mary Licking

Revision 1