

ANNUAL REPORT



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF PORTSMOUTH 2008



AT SOUTH CHURCH WE NURTURE
SPIRITUAL GROWTH
THROUGH WORSHIP, LEARNING AND
COMMUNITY,
WE CELEBRATE THE WORTH AND DIGNITY
OF ALL PEOPLE
AND WE INSPIRE ONE ANOTHER TO ACT ON
OUR FAITH
IN THE LARGER COMMUNITY

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Minutes of Annual Meeting - 11.18.2007

1. Meeting called to order.
Quorum established by
moderator: Martha Fuller Clark.

2. 2006 Annual Meeting
Minutes reviewed and approved
unanimously.

3. Special Meeting Minutes from
January 2007 reviewed and
approved unanimously.

4. Board of Trustees Report
delivered by Board Chair, Julie
Draper.

5. Strategic Planning Committee
update delivered by co-chairs:
Amy Criswell and Eric Lipsitt. They
reported that a survey has been
sent out to the congregation and
has thus far been completed by
207 congregants. They described
it as a "living document" and plan
its completion by spring 2008.

6. DRE Sabbatical Committee
Report: Jo Maden introduced the
planning team for the sabbatical
of Sandra Greenfield. Susan
Treleven, chair, Susie Bright,
administrator, (she will offer
support to staff, teachers and
manage RE budget), Jo Maden,
overseer of Sunday morning
RE, Dan Beausoleil, youth, and
Catherine Greely, liaison to
congregation.

7. Presentation of the proposal
to move to one service: Randy
Lynch had chaired this project
and he presented a history of

the proposal. Request to go to
one service had come from the
congregation. Key stake holders
and the congregation were
consulted via forums. Process
yielded overwhelming support to
move to one service. Criteria for
moving back to 2 services were
outlined in his report.

Motion to move to one service
made by Kristi Mathieson,
seconded by Jack Reynolds,
approved unanimously by the
congregation.

8. Financial Report: Don Pollie,
treasurer and Stephen Blakney,
assistant treasurer. (Report and
budget attached) Budget was
given out to congregation.
Discussion ensued regarding
\$58,000 shortfall and pros and
cons of increasing pledges vs.
decreasing budget.

9. Nominating Committee:
presented new Board of Trustees
candidates. 3year candidates:
Cathy DiPentima, Sue Petersen,
Kate Kressly, 1year candidate:
Pete Okhuysen.

Motion to appoint the nominees
to the South Church Board of
Trustees made by James Kennedy,
seconded by Gillian Carter and
approved unanimously by the
congregation.

10. Motion to appoint Karen
Dutcher and Barbara Kumin
to the Nominating Committee
for the Board of Trustees made
by Andy Frank and seconded
by Patrick Stephens. Approved
unanimously by congregation.

11. Gifts presented to outgoing
Board of Trustees members:
Penny Reynolds, Tracey Clarkson,
Don Pollie, and Doreen MacGillis.

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting minutes submitted by
Board of Trustees secretary, 2007,
Paul Strand

Minutes of Special Congregational Meeting - 1.13.2008

Recording Secretary: Randy Lynch

Administration

Meeting opened at 10:55AM

Call to Order: Martha Fuller Clark,
Moderator

Opening Words: Julie Draper,
Chair, Board of Trustees

MOTION: Bob Vincent, made
motion to approve the budget as
presented by Stephen Blakney,
Treasurer, Board of Trustees.

SECOND: Jo Maden

DISCUSSION: Discussion entailed
with concern over lack of pay
raises for staff, lack of support for
outreach in the budget and lack
of health insurance for the office
assistant. Questions were also
raised concerning drop in utilities
and potential need for organ
repair.

All questions and concerns were
addressed by Stephen Blakney,
Julie Draper or from the floor.

Suggestion was made that we institute a once a month plate donation to an outside charity. Mary Burke will create a proposal from the Outreach Associates and present it to the Board of Trustees.

ACCEPTED: Unanimously
Closed at 11:30AM

Board of Trustees Report

Greetings from your Board of Trustees!

Here we are, reflecting back on yet another year together. This has been a challenging year as we have faced difficult financial realities both inside and outside of our sanctuary walls. Yet we have stuck together as a community and been steadfast in our commitment to live our faith and to care for one another. We have accomplished much!

- We began the new year by moving to one service. With the exception of a few minor bumps, we transitioned well! It is wonderful to worship together and to feel the fullness and energy of the sanctuary during Sunday service.
- Under the leadership of the Strategic Planning Committee, we adopted a comprehensive plan which is now being used to define our specific goals for the next several years.
- The Membership Task Force has created a fourth Associate's program, called the Fellowship Associates (FA's). Fellowship Associates will create

and oversee procedures for welcoming guests and inviting them into a membership discernment process. FA's will also work on sustaining membership and engaging the entire community in hospitality practices.

- The Green Sanctuary Team led our congregation through the Green Sanctuary Candidacy application process (to be approved by the UU Ministry for Earth.) This included an Action Plan with over 20 activities of which 75% are complete. We are well on our way to achieving certification!
- The Space Planning Committee led us through a finalized space plan for the interior use of both the main church building and Karnan House. This final plan gives South Church a strong, definitive and positive direction for reconfiguring the interior of both buildings.
- A Landscape Committee is currently being formed and, by spring, will finalize a comprehensive exterior landscape plan for both the main church building and Karnan House.
- Even in difficult economic times, we have completed important work on our sacred and historical home. We have funded professional architect and landscape plans, insulated the bathrooms, installed heat in the bathroom area, repaired the portico floor joints and finished important truss repairs in the attic. These are not outwardly visible projects yet they are extremely valuable as they protect the infrastructure of our building.

- Under the leadership of the Outreach Associates, we have initiated a quarterly collection for work in the greater community and have finalized a plan to host the Interfaith Hospitality Network families in our church from July 5-19 of 2009!

- The Partners for Sacred Places Committee has gone through a vigorous process of calculating our public value to the community, exploring the significance of our heritage and making an assessment of our building. They have outlined a 5 year time line that will lead us carefully and intentionally through a capital campaign.

Though these accomplishments are much to be proud of, the Board feels that it is also important to name our on-going challenges. We continue to struggle financially and are unable to meet the commitments internally and in the larger community that we aspire to. Transitioning our identity from a large church to a medium church is also a challenge for us. We struggle with defining our medium sized church in terms of what can we realistically and successfully accomplish, afford, and share.

The Board would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our staff. They face and feel the same frustrations and stress in their work as our staff as we do as members of this congregation. We also want to reach out to all of you and thank you for your presence in our community and for your commitment to our church, to our faith and to each other.

On a personal note, I want to thank you for all of you for your support and encouragement over the past two years as I have served as your Chair. You have taught me so much and I have grown in ways I could never have imagined. For your thoughtfulness and care, for this humbling experience, I will be forever grateful. Thank you.

In faith,
Julie Draper
On behalf of your Board of Trustees

2008 Board of Trustees

Chairperson Julie Draper
Vice-Chair Lee Williams
Treasurer Stephen Blakney
Secretary Randy Lynch

Chris Cole
Cathy DiPentima
Kate Gill Kressley
Mark McNabb
Sue Peterson
Peter Okhuysen
Katharin Smith
Paul Strand

Nominating Committee

The nominating committee has been busy this year. We met several times and processed ways to improve leadership recruitment; including a bulletin board downstairs and being part of a town meeting with Rev. Roberta and congregates in June. We also met with Rev. Roberta and the executive committee of the Board of Trustees to find out the specific needs of the board; i.e., representing our various demographics (men vs. women; older vs. younger; stewardship vs. RE vs social justice focused folk.) We had conversations with outgoing board members regarding their interest and availability to re-up for another term.

Our patient and wise convener, Cathy Okhuysen resigned from the committee in August due to work and multiple other church obligations. The remaining nominating committee was charged with the task of recruiting for 6 openings on the Board of Trustees and 2 openings on the nominating committee.

August 24th - Sept. 14th was our blast of advertising campaign; the bulletin, the NUUS flash, board meeting, hosting a coffee hour with our bulletin board and weekly announcements; leading us to a number of qualified members interested in seriously considering a board appointment from three sources;
1. Interested members coming forth
2. Suggestions from church members
3. Nominating



Civil Unions and Weddings

Becky Geer & Steve Linnell

June & Keryn Bernard-Kreigel

Memorials

On January 12, 2008, a memorial service was held for Patrick Stevens

Child Dedications

Gwendolyn Bowden
Elijah George
Nate Lynch
Aiden MacEachern

Maeve Anne MacEachern
Angelina Murdock
Ronnie Murdock
Miles Sager Moody

New Members

Chris Aeschliman
Bryan Campbell
Jennifer Golia
Ed Hitchcock

Carla McCabe
Kathy Moreau
Carol Reynolds
Denise Whittier

committee notes of members wishing a future appointment.

We then approached a short list of members. Some were interested and available. We invited these members to gather and provided a focused opportunity to ask questions and meet board members. We were asked very good questions! The process has been intended to be transparent, low pressure and provide a supportive transition for members considering the Board of Trustees. A slate will be submitted based on the needs of the Board and the specific skills, demographics of the interested member. All members are welcome to be considered in this process.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Erwin
Barbara Kumin
Karen Dutcher

Personnel Committee

The Committee concluded its primary charges in the prior fiscal year. We have not been called upon to act this year and therefore have not met.

Submitted by
Jim Verschueren, Chair

Minister's Report

Our mission statement identifies three core ministries for South Church: worship, learning, and community. I am pleased to report that all three are thriving; that in all three areas we have strengthened existing programs and experimented with some

innovations; that in all three areas we have volunteer energy and staff involvement.

Worship: During the past year, the Worship Associates have taken up a group study of the book Worship That Works. We have implemented some changes in worship that we believe will enhance the worship experience for everybody who is willing to enter the sanctuary with an open mind and heart. We moved the Greetings to the very beginning of the service so this high energy (and noisy) expression of our fellowship doesn't disturb the flow of worship. We made the silent candle lighting a regular monthly ritual. Intergenerational services now begin with a joyous processional. All of us sing "Enter, Rejoice, and Come In" while both children and adults join the procession around the sanctuary. The new website has a South Church liturgical calendar that explains some of the rituals that we practice on a regular basis each year.

I have talked with both the board and the Worship Associates about worship planning over the course of a year. I envision a year of sermons that draws from a number of different wells or sources. These include personal spiritual practices/growth/transformation, ethical/moral/social justice, UU identity (history, heritage, theology, principles), and covenantal issues (how we are together as a community). All of these are essential to the worship life of a liberal church. I strive to balance, over the course of the church year, the wells that I draw from. I recognize that

individual members of South Church may have an affinity for one source more than others. That is why it is so important to recognize that worship is what we do together. Almost every month the Worship Associates talk about how hard it is to please everybody in one hour. Then we remind ourselves that our goal is not to please everybody, but to invite everybody into the process of worship. At a recent workshop, I heard a young minister of a new and growing UU congregation say that they are very intentional about the purpose of worship in their congregation. "Our message," he said, is "go and do. Not come and see." Worship, like democracy, is not a spectator sport. It is a communal process of seeking the holy, in all the different ways that we understand holiness. I hope that all of you will find, in your worship experience at South Church, the inspiration to go and do whatever it is you are meant to do in this world.

Learning: One of the advantages of having one service on Sunday morning is that it has allowed me to return to something close to my heart: teaching. The Minister's Forum is now a regular weekly fixture on Sunday mornings at 11:30 AM. Did you know that the nursery is open for child care during the Forum? I have settled into a regular monthly schedule which is available on the South Church website.

Community: The Outreach Associates and the various task forces that work under their umbrellas continue to do wonderful work creating opportunities for us to minister

together to the larger community. From acts of charity to acts of justice we have so many ways that we live out our faith in the world. The Outreach Associates held a mini-retreat last January and came up with a new mission statement: Outreach Associates inspire South Church members to act on our faith in the larger community. We identify the social injustices, environmental degradations, and barriers to peace that would awaken the passions and actions of Church members, including our youth. We further identify the concerns of our members and help them act on these concerns through education, service, witness, and advocacy.

The Pastoral Associates continue to reach inward to members of the congregation in need. They offer comfort, assurance, and pastoral presence. They also offer meals, rides, and other practical help. Prayer shawls, hugs, and a calm word of assurance are all ways that we stand with our members in times of loss or dislocation.

Most exciting this year is the inception of a new program to enhance the quality of our outreach. The Board has approved a new Associates program that will focus on fellowship and membership. This new group will help all of us to practice the radical and inclusive hospitality we yearn for.

In a year marked by crisis and confusion in our nation, we have been steadfast. We have consolidated our programs and our finances, we have taken

care of each other, and we have helped to heal a hurting world. There is much to be proud of here.

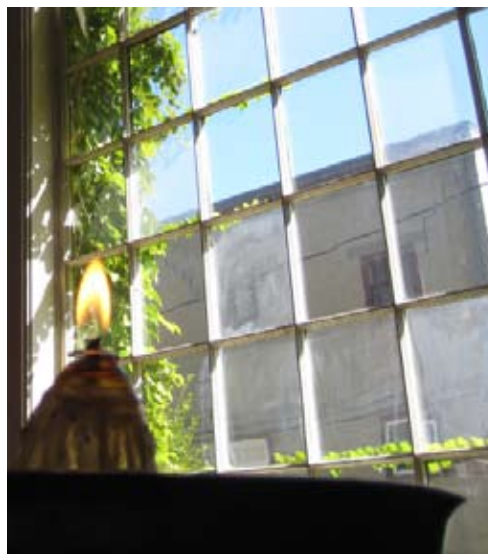
I want to particularly thank the South Church staff for their professionalism and their faithfulness to the work they do on your behalf. I also want to thank the board, the Committee on Ministry, the Associates, and the many others among you who have worked so hard to insure that South Church fulfills our stated mission.

In Faith,
Roberta

Music Director's Report

Notable events this past year include:

For Christmas Eve, December 24, a pick up family choir sang at the 5:00 p.m. service which also featured Matt Miello, piano and Nate Booth, cello. At the 8:00 p.m. service, Katie Robertson and Molly Brown sang a duet, Emma Clarkson played violin, and guest vocalist, Fran Schopick sang.



On Easter Sunday, Valerie Fagan provided liturgical dance for the intergenerational service.

The South Church Wonder Choir met at 9:00 a.m. on the second Sunday of the month through June 15, then resumed on September 14. Rehearsals commenced at 9:00 a.m. followed by singing at the 10:00 a.m. service. A group of "additional singers" commenced meeting informally at 9:00 a.m. on several Sundays which were not "choir Sundays." The choir builds in numbers and camaraderie: choir parties occurred on June 13th and October 4th at a choir member's home. Continuing thanks go to Terry Karnan for her leadership and organization with the choir. We have from fifteen to twenty voices singing with the choir, and we sing rounds and other a capella songs. Special thanks also to Interim Choral Conductor, Rahul Sivaprasad.

Community and Outreach: During the weekend of April 12, I served as pianist for the First District Meeting of the newly-merged Northern New England District, and was honored to play the accompaniment for the premier performance of Grace Lewis McLaren's hymn written for that special occasion.

The Rochester (England) Cathedral Boy's Choir presented a concert in the Spring as part of its New England concert tour. The South Church Music Committee provided a lunch and opened the doors so the boys could do a third concert in the United States, after another venue was unable to participate.



Our very own Duy Bui graduated from the Manhattan School of Music in May, and presented his annual South Church Concert on June 5, 2008.

Music Month

October 2008 was Music Month at South Church. Cantor, Donna Goldfarb, taught a song and dance from the Jewish tradition to children of all ages on October 12th. We welcomed Grace Lewis McLaren as guest preacher on October 26 where she spoke about her gifts as a notable Unitarian Universalist composer, and friend of South Church. During the Minister's Forum on October 28th, the South Church youth performed in recital. All South Church youth, whatever skill level, were invited to play or sing for the congregation during the Minister's Forum.

Along professional lines:
In June, I attended the

Westminster Choir College Choral Conducting Seminar in Princeton, NJ.

South Church Organ:

The South Church organ is not working like it should, according to curator Bob Faucher. Some of the valves are rusted, or the valve pads are compromised. Some leathers are turning to cardboard and are not properly sealing. The insides of the pipes are dirty and need cleaning.

The water damage has not been addressed, and some of the pipes are damaged mechanically and tonally. Several pipes have stopped speaking altogether. The debris and moisture causes a "glue" effect causing a pipe to stop speaking. This will make the sound not as originally intended, and will require more frequent tunings.

South Church Piano:

The bass strings were replaced

during July and August 2008 by Ray DeMarco, leaving a much richer sounding piano. Special thanks to spring cleaning and polishing of the piano by Joanne Holman.

Respectfully submitted,
Terrie Harman, Director of Music

Music Committee Report

Terrie Harman, Music Director;
Goeff Clark; Terry Karnan; Katie Baucke; Sally Hirshberg;
Bruce Deveau, Convener; Rahul Sivaprasad, Interim Choir Director

The music program at South Church has once again demonstrated its commitment to quality, thanks to our Music Director Terrie Harman's talent and enthusiasm. In addition, Terrie's ability to bring in guest musicians from the region's musical community has fulfilled our commitment to diversity.

This year we saw some members of the Music Committee move on to other projects, and the personnel reduction led us to scale back the concert series from past years. However, Duy Bui gave his annual June concert to a very large and enthusiastic audience. The Rochester Boy's Choir from England sang in May. And South Church also participated in the "Pipes of Portsmouth" organ concert series in October, with Terrie Harman adding South Church to the contributions of Saint John's and North Church.

In April, Music Committee members participated in singing at the District Meeting in April at UNH.

The Choir continues to sing thanks to the energy of subcommittee member Terry Karnan. Recently, Rahul Sivaprasad has agreed to direct the choir as well. At this writing, holiday music is being planned.

South Church's major musical instruments have received attention in 2008. The piano has been enhanced with the replacement of bass strings and re-tuned by Ray DeMarco. The organ remains in need of service due to the water damage sustained several years ago. Although it continues to serve, the organ is not up to standard due to warping and falling paint chips. The significant cost of repair is beyond the Music Committee's maintenance budget and has been taken up by the Building Committee.

In sum, music remains a vital component of worship at South Church. Thank you to the congregation and church leadership for lending its talented support in 2008.

Respectfully submitted for the Music Committee,
Bruce Deveau, Convener

Musicians for 2007/2008

Since the last Annual Report (2006/2007), we have enjoyed numerous musicians, some from the congregation, and some from the community. From November 4, 2007 through October 12, 2008, we welcomed the following:

Sarah Bauhan, flute
Matt Maiello, pianist
Christal and John Wilson
Amanda Allen, brass and piano
Mystic Magic
Portsmouth Men's Chorus,
Barry Finkelstein, accordion
Hymnsing with Cathy Okhuysen
Family Choir;
Nate Booth
Katie Robertson and Molly Brown;
Fran Schopick, vocalist;
Emma Clarkson, violin
Chants and reflective music with
Cathy Okhuysen
Duy Bui, pianist;
Executive Sweets – Barbershop
Quartet
John Decker, guest vocalist
Little River Trio
Jeannie Daniels, Evan Kesel, Tom
Kesel
Jack Myers, organist
Gale Gardiner, guitar
Joe McEachern, Traditional Irish
Donna Goldfarb, vocalist
Valerie Fagin, liturgical dancer
Funky Divas of Gospel
Martha Leathe, pianist
Becky May, conducting South
Church Choir and vocals
Jon Pritchard, Native American
flute
Mary Edes, guest vocalist
Barbara London, guest piano, flute
and vocals
Rick Kress, percussion
Senior Youth
Matt Meyer, guest percussionist
Jim MacDougall, piano and
vocalist
Russ Grazier, saxophone
The Pick Up Five – Agnes
Charlesworth (piano and
keyboards), Kent Allyn (guitar),
Doug Green (bass), Chloe Green
(vocals),
Kimberly Cloutier Green
June Bernard, guitar
Larry Garland, jazz piano and Ruth

Taylor, organ
Whatever Four, sax quartet
Charlene Flanders, drum
Sally Hirshburg, ocean drumming
Rahul Sivaprasad, violin and choir
conducting
Janet Polaski, bassoon
Kay Loudenslager, vocalist

South Church UU Buddhist Fellowship

The South Church UU Buddhist Fellowship (UUBF) was established in early 2000. Our mission is to experience and nurture joy and compassion in others and ourselves. Our intention is to carry this experience out into the world. Rather than appealing to scriptures and miraculous events for spiritual authority, Buddhism places an emphasis on individual experience and uses meditation to ground the "free and responsible search for truth and meaning," which is a guiding principle of the UU tradition. Thus grounded, meditation permits a direct and immediate experience of reality, providing a balance to intellectual inquiry. (see Rev. James Ishmael Ford, UUWorld March 1996).

Meditation is a large part of our regular weekly practice. Additionally we often use the study of Buddhist texts to inform our learning. We share our time each meeting talking about how these teachings can be integrated into our daily lives. We have been fortunate this past year to have Avi Magidoff as our meditation facilitator. Avi is a Yogi, Buddhist Zen practitioner and acupuncturist. Avi has

spent many years at Plum Village studying under Thich Nhat Hahn, Vietnamese Buddhist monk, poet, author and peacemaker. This past year, with Avi's guidance, we have studied the Buddha's teachings and discussed several of the Buddhist Sutras. Avi has offered several classes through the Adult Spiritual Enrichment program including a four week class on the Sutra on the "Full Awareness of Breathing"; an introduction to meditation class; a "Touching the Earth" meditation; "Buddhist Psychology"; and, "Liberation, The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali".

At the invitation of our minister Rev. Roberta Finkelstein, last February, members of the Sangha presented a Buddhist Sunday service in the South Church Sanctuary. We have also been invited to speak to the New UU Journey to Membership classes and give a brief overview of Buddhist practice. We were in attendance at the UU Northern New England District Meeting in Durham, NH in April 2008 and had an information table where we connected with several Sangha members from other churches in our district. This past year the Sangha continued the process of examining our structure and governance and this 2 year effort concluded in our adopting a Charter for the South Church UU Buddhist Fellowship on March 6, 2008.

At our weekly meetings 'dana' (donations or free will offerings given to support the Sangha or charitable causes) is given. From those offerings the Sangha has donated funds to South Church, the Children's Heart Project in

SriLanka, and in 2008 – 2009 we'll be adopting a child in need through the Jhamtse International "Gifts of Love" program.

By following the Buddha's teachings and meditating on Metta Bhavana or loving-kindness to everyone, we're attempting to look deeply into ourselves to create a healthier state of mind. Practicing loving-kindness to everyone helps restore harmony where there is conflict; and, creates a more welcoming environment where we can all learn, transform and grow. Our Sangha is an 'open' group and as such we welcome all who are interested in applying Buddhist teachings and practices into their daily lives. Usually eight to fourteen people gather on Thursday evenings from 7:00 to 8:00 PM in Karnan 1.

Communion Circle

This group has met throughout the year to celebrate Ehipany, Lent, Pentecost and World Communion Sunday in the sanctuary since 2003. Attendance varies between 5 and 15 people at each service. Sunday services are at 11:30 and, in addition, 2008 was the first year of Vespers services for both Maundy Thursday and during Advent.

As we gather around the table, we recall the roots of both Unitarianism and Universalism in liberal Christianity. We stand with Christians and others around the world who remember the life of Jesus as a model for how we might live into the two great commandments; to love God, and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

It is a communal celebration of the transformative power of forgiveness and love through music, prayer, and sharing fruits of the earth and vine. All are welcome at the table.

Convener
Cathy Okhuysen 2007-2008

Director of Lifespan Faith Development's Report

I begin my seventh year at South Church with deepest gratitude for all the hard work of many people while I was on a five-month sabbatical from January to June, 2008. Kudos and thanks to the Sabbatical Planning Team and to the RE Council, to the volunteer teachers, and to all of you. This program is all about the kids and teens and their adult leaders.

Members of the Sabbatical Planning Team were Susan Treleavan, Jo Maden, Susie Bright, Catherine Greeley and Dan Beausoleil.

Members of the Religious Education Council are Mike McGrail (Chairperson), Maureen Donnelly, Meghan Harris, Bryan Campbell, Jon Prichard and Bret Newbury. Thanks to Maggie Schneider, Anita McCarthy, Ellen Forbes and Susie Bright whose tenures expired either naturally or through outside influences! We do miss Anita and her family who moved to South Carolina.

Highlights of the year:

Worship/Rites of Passage
Seven Young Church Chapel Services
Eight All-Church Services
One Service led by the Senior Youth Group
One service for Child Dedications

Young Church

We continued with our year-long programs on Sunday morning:

Three-year-olds: Chalice Children
Pre-K/Kindergarten: A Discovering Year

1st/2nd Grades: Free To Believe
3rd/4th Grades: We Believe
5th/6th Grades: The Questing Year

The Summer RE Program began on June 1st. Our theme was poetry and we celebrated the silly, inspirational writings of Dr. Seuss.

Small Group Ministry: During the regular church year, we continued with this community-building program following each Chapel service. Chapel was attended by first through sixth graders.

Youth Groups
5th/6th Grade Youth Group (aka The Sparks): A monthly gathering of this group was held from October through May. Each evening had a special theme like 6-foot banana splits, weird foods night, homemade pie making. The program was immensely successful in building a sense of community and a connection to South Church. Oh yeah, and it was fun! Thanks to Susie Bright and Keryn Bernard-Kriegel.

Junior Youth includes 7th and 8th graders. The Group's leaders were Andy Frank, Sarah Bauhan, Shannon Fitch, Lauren Katz,

Dave Criswell and Sarah Lewis. The group's program was called You, The Creator. The Group had several overnights held here at the church.

The Senior Youth group was led by Barry Finkelstein, Dan Comly, Kari Prichard and Jim Prichard. Highlights included the Holiday-Sing-Along which included The Empty Bowls project, two overnights, and a group retreat at The Brown Center at UNH.

Nursery

Our babies and toddlers received tender, loving care this year by our new Nursery Supervisor, Stacey DeSimone. Dryden Robertson stepped down in December. Each morning Stacey was assisted each morning by parent volunteers and sometimes youth volunteers.

Young Church Teachers/Youth Group Adult Leaders:
Each class is led by a team of four who commit for half a year; with the exception of teen advisors who commit for a full year. Last year there were 37 volunteer teachers and ten full-time volunteer youth advisors on our teaching staff (see youth sections).

Young Church: Katy Baucke, Eric Baum, Leslie Brenner, Geoffrey Brown, Bryan Campbell, Kimberly Cartier, Joni Chagnon, Tracey Clarkson, Ingrid Dietrich, Suzanne Drysdale, Catherine Greeley, Barney Hoop, Elizabeth Keuffel, Martha Leathe, Pam Lehman, Joanne Lembo, Tracy Lipsitt, Alexandra Lockwood, Diana McNabb, Mary Malloy, Tanya Pierson-Sweeney, Joe Piscitello, Jon Prichard, Susan Remillard, Bridget Rhinehart, Meghan Rice,

Georgianna Ritter, Liz Robinson, Jennifer Rooney, Susan Sager, Ginny Scease, Dana Sinisgalli, Chris Smith, Roddi Smith, Leigh Steinman, Aaron Sturgis, Suzette Wilson

Roaming Supervisors

We instituted a volunteer-led program in January '08 when our budget cuts included the Sunday Morning Assistant. Thanks to Joanne Casale, Susie Bright, Deb Kolbjornsen, Maggie Schneider, Deanna Strand, Tracy Lipsitt, Sarah Lewis.

Adult Spiritual Enrichment
The program was led by Bret Newbury, Lance Hellman, James Funston and Jim Prichard. Offerings included: Cakes for the Queen of Heaven, Women's Spirituality Book Group, Hymn Sing, Yoga, Compassionate Communication, Emotional Freedom Technique, Building Your Own Theology, The Great Turning, Origami, Introduction to Buddhism, Meditation, Fishing/Dreams and Buddhism Psych. The Mind's Alive lyceum program began last January. There were 8 events starting with Dr. Elizabeth DeWolfe from the University of New England. Others in the series were: Father Romualdo F.W. Mayren Pelaez, "Just Married-the Musical", Francis Moore Lappe, Arab & Islamic Cultures panel, David Korten, Matt Meyer, and Bill McKibbon. The year's series will end with Rev. Dr. Nancy Crumbine. The series is budgeted to resume using South Church funds only.

RE Administration

Staff: Part-time staff included Dryden Robertson and Stacey DeSimone as our Nursery

Supervisors; Shannon Fitch and Sarah Tambling as our RE Assistant.

Sabbatical

During my sabbatical leave I took two graduate courses at Widener University in Chester, Pennsylvania and have subsequently been accepted into the Master's in Human Sexuality Education program. I attended an international RE conference in Great Hucklow, England, about an hour's ride from Manchester. I was on the executive team for this conference.

I attended several trainings/workshops including the first two Our Whole Lives modules (for K-1st grade/4th-6th grade) and a professional trainers' workshop through Planned Parenthood of Northern New England.

As part of the District's new program I provided consultation services to the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Eastern Slopes related mostly to their Religious Education program.

I also reveled in the time with my youngest daughter who graduated from Goffstown High School and is now attending Boston University.

In Faith and Love,
Sandra Greenfield Director of Lifespan Faith Development

Endowment Committee Report

Committee Members: Members of the Endowment Committee are

appointed by the Church Board of Trustees and serve three-year terms. Each may be reappointed for a second term. Current Endowment Committee members and their terms expire as follows:

Peter Bergh, Chair	2008
Russ Peterson	2008
Don Pollie	2009
Bob Vaccaro	2009
Jackie Ellis	2010
Alan Ammann	2010
Stephen Blakney, Treasurer	

Stephen Blakney has agreed to stay on as a regular committee member, beginning in 2009 with a term ending 2011. In addition, he has recruited Irene Bush for a three-year term. It is expected that Jennifer Rooney, as Church Treasurer, will also be on the committee. Thank you to all committee members for your continued commitment, particularly Russ Peterson. Also, thank you Stephen for filling next year's vacancies quickly and with excellent candidates.

Endowment: Head & Associates of Portland, Maine continued to manage the endowment fund portfolio for 2008. The Committee receives quarterly reports from Head & Associates. These reports show the current investment portfolio, any changes in the portfolio, any revenue received, and expenditures made. Both these reports and the monthly statements from Merrill Lynch are on file in the Church office.

The Committee also reviews the portfolio with Carl Gercke, Executive Vice President, Head & Associates after the start of the new year and in its fall meeting.

The portfolio is invested within the Church investment guidelines and as of September 30, had 59% in equities, 34% in fixed income, and 7% in cash and equivalents. For specific investments, please see the reports and statements on file in the Church office. The value of the endowment for the past three years is as the end of this report.

As has been the practice, 4.5% of the endowment was given to the Church for its operating budget in 2008. This amount is calculated using a 12-quarters rolling average.

In 2008, the Church received income from the endowment of \$27,337 in two installments of \$13,668. In 2007, this amount was \$26,248. The Badger Fund allocation also continues to be based on 4.5 percent distribution of \$26,500, or \$1,192.50. The Robert Karnan Advisory Committee was allocated 4.5 percent of \$10,000 or \$450 to purchase books. The Badger and Karnan allocations remain the same, but the 2009 Church allocation is \$28,149.

Investment Market Turbulence 2008 has become one of the worst financial markets in the past 75 years. The S&P 500, a common measure of overall market performance, was down as of 9/30 about -19%. The combined effects of the recent credit crunch, together with investors flight to quality has also resulted in low returns on fixed incomes. Year-to-date as of mid-October is even worse, with the S&P 500 down almost -40%. As Head & Associates' 10/13/08 newsletter

solemnly points out: "The impact of the financial crisis on the rest of the economy is becoming more clear, and it isn't pretty. Last week's slide in stock prices around the world can at the very least be described as unnerving not only to investors but to consumers at large. Unless soon corrected, the evaporation of asset values could have a broad negative impact on all manner of economic activity around the globe."

Fortunately, Head & Associates' portfolio selection techniques and risk considerations have allowed the endowment fund to fair better than the market, though still down considerably year-to-date. The net endowment fund return year-to-date as of September 30 was -10.34%—again compared to -19% for the S&P 500. Since much of the market turbulence occurred in the first two weeks of October (as of this writing), for Church members interest, it's worth noting the current balance, as well. The endowment fund, as of 10/15, was \$552,492—for a year-to-date decline of about -20%—again considerably better than the S&P's decline of -40%.

While the decline in the market has been painful for many, it is important to remember two key principles of the Church's endowment plan: 1. The fund is invested with a very long-term horizon (one hundred plus years and growing) in mind; and 2. Income generated for the Church is based on a three-year average endowment fund balance, not a "year end" balance. This serves to smooth out what could otherwise be significant income fluctuations.

To date, the Endowment Committee has been very pleased with Head & Associates overall investment performance, despite these difficult times.

Bequests: In November 2007, the Church received a \$3,000 bequest from the Estate of Elinor B. Vaughan. A thank you/ acknowledgement letter was sent to the Estate's executor, her son, Raymond C. Vaughan II.

Memorial Gifts: There Church received 25 memorial gifts honoring Patrick Stevens during the early part of 2008. Total gifts received equaled \$1,890. Thank

you letters were sent out.

Other Business: The Committee continues to explore with the Green Committee steps we might take to move the endowment fund closer to investing responsibly in the area of the environment. Head & Associates has screened much of the domestic investments in portfolio, using various publicly available services and determined preliminarily that none of our portfolio's investments would be considered "negative" from a sustainability/environmental perspective.

Submitted by:
Peter Bergh, Endowment
Committee Chair

Administrator's Report

UU Church administrators are often referred to as Cat Herders – we work to help coordinate calendars, oversee office management, as well as manage publications and oversee the facilities. Here is a rundown of this year's efforts:

Office

It is a pleasure to say that our office staff has remained the same for the past year. Sarah Tambling has excelled as our Administrative Assistant, and has helped to keep the weekly publications and rental activity under control while dealing with the loss of 5 hours per week. Kathi Maher is now overseeing our bookkeeping, and Sarah has picked up a few additional hours recording the income side of our books. Our

	Gross Value	Badger	Net Value
December 31, 2005	\$615,505	\$36,500*	\$579,005
March 31, 2006	\$637,725	\$36,500*	\$602,225
June 30, 2006	\$625,520	\$36,500*	\$589,020
September 30, 2006	\$639,187	\$36,500*	\$602,637
December 31, 2006	\$674,380	\$36,500*	\$637,880
March 31, 2007	\$674,554	\$36,500*	\$638,054
June 30, 2007	\$691,140	\$36,500*	\$654,640
September 30, 2007	\$712,427	\$36,500*	\$675,927
December 31, 2007	\$716,069	\$36,500*	\$679,569
March 31, 2008	\$672,422	\$36,500*	\$635,922
June 30, 2008	\$672,059	\$36,500*	\$635,559
September 30, 2008	\$612,599	\$36,500*	\$576,099

* This includes \$10,000 for the Karnan Fund, which is separately distributed.

biggest frustration, particularly this fall, is the lack of time to do anything but the bare minimum of tasks. Some days it feels like triage is all we can do, jumping from one thing to another as situations arise. That said, I can't imagine two better people than Sarah and Kathi to have helped us pull everything together.

Web Site and Publications

The reduction of our support staff in January led to more changes in the way we communicate with our congregation. We currently send out two editions of our NUUSflash electronically each month. They are posted to our new web site. Charlie Forcey has – long distance from Italy – developed a new web site for us using open source technology. Our hope was to have everyone contributing and editing their own information, but the learning curve has been steeper than expected. Special thanks to Joanne Holman for her aid in keeping things up to date.

Building

Our sexton position was a bit fluid for the first half of the year. Our handyman, Dick Casey, filled the role wonderfully from January until June when his other clients demanded more of his time. At that point we had two students step in to help – Patrick Maher and Greg Frank. This fall, Martin Koski has joined the staff as our sexton. He is doing an amazing job and is a joy to have around.

We have tackled a few big projects this year, the largest of which was sealing the boiler room and repairing the front steps. Other projects have been:

- Re-venting the furnace

through the east side of the building

- Repairing a weakened truss in the belfry
- Heating the upper bathroom area
- Replacing all the windows in the lower Parish Hall (in progress)

These projects have been managed by our general contractor, Bill Greenier.

It has been a pleasure to work with the Green Sanctuary team to help transform South Church into a Green Sanctuary. Our purchasing decisions are made with green protocols in mind – our paper products and supplies for the office, kitchen and restrooms are made from recycled materials whenever possible. We have installed programmable thermostats around the church and the offices to cut our fuel usage, and use green cleaning products. We consolidate orders from companies that deliver, so less fuel will be used in getting us our products. It has been a much easier transition than we would have thought.

Other

I sat on the Space Planning Committee and helped develop a plan for our future.

I am grateful for being able to attend the UUA's General Assembly in Fort Lauderdale this past June. GA is always a wonderful experience, a chance to see the world outside our congregation and to learn, grow and worship with others in our faith. In addition to workshops, lectures, and meetings, I was a delegate for South Church and

voted on everything from bylaws changes to what issues the UUA will tackle over the next 5 years (ethical eating).

In June, I began my second year as Secretary of the Board of the Association of Unitarian Universalist Administrators. I attended the Northern New England District Annual Meeting in April, and the New England Regional Conference in October.

The accomplishment I am most excited about is having officiated as a Justice of the Peace for 11 Civil Unions on January 1st.

One thing about being a Cat Herder – there is always more work to be done.

In Faith,
Julie Slayton Frank
Church Administrator

Membership Task Force Report

The work of the Membership Task Force took place over this past year (October '07 - October '08), and officially ended with our proposal (below) to the Board of Trustees on October 21st. The roots of this work, though, unofficially began with two widely attended meetings, hosted by Kimberly and Doug Green, in which the conversation centered around not just membership, but more specifically belonging.

The outcome of those gatherings, along with information, thoughts, and ideas of the meetings of the Task Force resulted in the following.

Proposal: The creation of a fourth Associates program, called the Fellowship Associates (FA's), members of which shall serve for a period of two years under the supervision of the Shared Ministry Associates and the professional Ministry. Fellowship Associates are recruited and selected according to the same calendar/procedures currently in place for the recruitment and selection of all South Church Associates programs. Fellowship Associates are W.I.S.E. ~ responsible for creating and overseeing procedures for **Welcoming** guests, **Inviting** them into a membership discernment process, **Sustaining** membership, and **Engaging** the entire community in hospitality practices.

Note: A reminder that the FA's are responsible for creating and overseeing what is, first and last, the work of everyone in our community. Welcoming and sustaining members is a community-wide and ongoing practice of religious or spiritual (including our own principles and sources) commitments to loving kindness, to "loving our neighbor"... a certain openness of heart that welcomes the stranger in and offers her/him safe harbor. At every level, in every circumstance, no matter how small or large the gathering, we approach and serve one another in a spirit of warmth, generosity, and gratitude. This is true for all of us; it is not the sole responsibility of the FA's.

Much, much more to come....
please stay tuned!!!

Respectfully submitted by Kimberly Green and Tracey Clarkson on behalf of the Membership Task Force, with special thanks to: Dee Dee and Jack Chambers, Joe Barrett, Susie Bright, Jon Prichard, Mary Burke, Jack Reynolds, Brad Greeley, Carol Reynolds, Kate Gill-Kressley, Diane Woods and Bob Vaccaro.

Auction Report

On Saturday, 29 March 2008 South Church celebrated our Third Annual Kitchen Food and Wine Auction. We added two new features to the auction. The first was that we took the auction to the Frank Jones Center in Portsmouth. What a joyous occasion we had. Terra Cotta Pasta provided a pasta meal with salad and bread. Ceres Street Bakery and Something Different Bakery of North Berwick donated chocolate desserts. The Green Sanctuary Committee provided and served fair trade coffee. Deb Thompson at the Frank Jones Center could not have been more helpful.

The committee consisted of Penny Reynolds, Stephen Pelletier, Steve Wiles, Deb McDermott, Lauren Katz, Kari Prichard, Janis Wolak, Denise Whittier, Brett Newbury, Cathy Dipentima, Kathi Maher and Neil Jorgensen. I don't know how to thank all the members of the committee for their many hours of time. I especially want to thank the committee and South Church for your care of me. I don't think I could have done my work without your support.

Special thanks go to the many volunteers from South Church who made the evening run so

smoothly. Thank you to Dan Comly for volunteering to be our auctioneer.

Even more thanks go to Tracey Clarkson, Julie Frank, Kathi Maher and Andy Frank. Had it not been for their self-less contribution of time and expertise at the last minute to implement Plan B the evening may not have happened at all.

The second new feature was the Kitchen Stool Art Project. This project was a collaboration with the arts, business and South Church community. Ten ordinary kitchen stools were transformed into works of art. The stools were displayed in the local businesses from January until the auction. We had a Find the Stools Contest to entice people to go visit the businesses to see the stools. The Brazo Restaurant donated a \$100 gift certificate as a prize for the winner of the drawing. The final week before the auction all ten stools were displayed at the Robert Lincoln Levy Gallery. The stools were auctioned the night of the auction. The following businesses and artists participated in this project.

Piscataqua Fine Arts - Mike Tronzo
Kennedy Studios - Cynthia Chatis
N. W. Barrett Gallery - Melissa Weeks

The Banks Gallery - Dennis Poirier
Just Us Chickens - Deb Ronnquist
and Jennifer Jennings
Village Gallery - Gloria Gustafson
Painted Treasures - Phyllis Giordano

River Run Bookstore - Roger Goldenberg
Robert Lincoln Levy Gallery - Bruce Deveau

Maine-ly New Hampshire - Susan Joy Sager

Respectfully submitted,
Penny Reynolds, Auction Chair

Pocket Gardens Tour Report

The 19th annual Pocket Garden Tour was very well attended with total earnings of approx. \$9000. Several new ideas for the tour helped to increase our earnings: in addition to partnering with 5 local nurseries to expand the plant sale, we had two Master Gardeners on hand to answer questions.

The Tour is on the cusp of its 20th anniversary. What began as an event to fund our own church gardens has become a summer ritual for hundreds of garden lovers. They have come to our city from all surrounding states to join locals in basking in the beauty of our local gardens and as a result, the tour has woven South Church into the cultural fabric of Portsmouth. As a fundraiser, it has also helped to fill our coffers in some small way. And while our financial needs far outweigh the money we bring in, every dollar counts in the care and maintenance of our life here at South Church.

But like all good things we come to depend on, change has come to the Tour. Specifically, most of the committee is retiring. We have created a manual to assist in the various aspects of running this fundraiser and most of us will all still be around to answer

questions or offer insights.

This committee has worked hard along with its volunteers, church staff and our larger community here in Portsmouth. It was our hope that this event meant enough to our congregation to have it continue. As of this date, there has been no response to our appeals even with a more direct approach with the directory in hand. It is with sincere regret that the committee is disbanded and the Tour has come to an end as a fundraiser for our church.

Special thanks to each of the committee members: Meghan Rice, Judy Miller, Pam Boley, Bobbi Atkinson, Rebecca Hennessy, Sheila Shea, Carol Caldwell and Marilyn Johnson. And last but not least, our sincere thanks to the myriad of volunteers who gave their time and efforts and the office staff for offering another year of perfect support.

Respectfully submitted,
Roddy Cole, chair

Update - Wes Tator and Jim Verschueren have stepped forward to chair the Pocket Gardens Tour for 2009.

Ministry for Earth Report

Using input from the Environmental Audit and ideas generated at a town meeting last October, the Green Sanctuary Team developed a Green Sanctuary Action Plan including about 20 activities in the areas of Worship and Celebration, Religious Education, Sustainable Living and Environmental Justice.

This was submitted along with a letter of application to the UU Ministry for Earth in March and was approved.

Over 75% of the activities in the Action Plan, and additional activities, have been completed. Highlights include: We started selling Equal Exchange Fair Trade coffee, tea and chocolate in January for a year long effort to raise funds for Sustainable Harvest International. An Arbor Day Service was held in April with a sermon by Flo Reed, the Director of Sustainable Harvest International. \$1100 was collected during the service to help with SHI's projects to teach farmers in Central America about sustainable agriculture methods. Book signings were held with France Moore Lappe, David Korten, Bill McKibben and Alan Weisman in collaboration with various organizations including Minds Alive!, RiverRun Bookstore, Seacoast Buy Local, Slow Food Seacoast, the Piscataqua Sustainability Initiative and the Dover Friends Meeting.

Intergenerational activities were held to show the film "The Arctic Tale", to have a field trip to Creek Farm in Portsmouth and to visit the Ferry Beach Ecology School. On June 1, members of South Church contributed plants and trees and joined residents of the affordable housing community, Pepperidge Woods in planting them at their community. This was a joint effort with the Outreach Associates and St. John's also contributed saplings for plantings.

As we move forward in the process to become a Green Sanctuary, we will be seeking input from members of the congregation on outcomes of the many activities we have held and how the Green Sanctuary program has transformed their lives and South Church. In order to reflect our connection to Earth in worship, we would like to see the 7th Principle, "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence" added to our Mission Covenant statement.

Submitted by
Judy Miller, Chair

A Year in the Life of South Church

January

Civil Union Celebration
Return to one 10AM service
Weekly Minister's Forums begin
Space Planning Process begins
Minds Alive! Lecture Series

February

Annual South Church Dance
Director of Lifespan Faith
Development Sandra Greenfield
begins sabbatical

March

Kitchen, Food and Wine Auction

April

South Church delegation goes to
the first Annual Meeting of the
Northern New England District

May

Memorial Day Peace Witness and
Bell Ringing

June

Heritage Sunday
South Church delegation goes to
General Assembly

July

Summer of Poetry begins

August

Granny D speaks at South Church

September

Searching for the
Future workshops

October

Stewardship Kick-
off
Get Out the Vote
initiative begins

November

Thanksgiving
Seder

