

Annual Report of the Denominational Connections Committee
2010-2011

Members: Susan Chadwick, Mary Licking (Chair), John Sanders
Budget: Zero (0) dollars

The activities of the 2011 Denominational Connections Committee (DC) involved advising the congregation on an issue related to General Assembly (GA), advising the Social Justice Committee on a potential Outreach Collection recipient, publicizing the DC's activities to the congregation, and recruiting delegates for the Northern New England District (NNED) Annual Meeting and the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) GA.

In September 2010, UUNashua forwarded to me an e-mail saying: "The Unitarian Universalist Association Board of Trustees is looking for input on how GA 2012 in Phoenix, Arizona, will look. We want to know your questions, concerns, and opinions..." and indicated congregations must respond on short suspense. GA attendees in Arizona should devote their time to the immigration issue, appeared to be the idea some were promoting. My response indicated that the UUA has serious issues of its own that must be tended to at GA (the one time in the year the UUA meets as a whole). To get distracted from that task would not be helpful to the UUA.

In January 2011, during a UUNashua church service, the Outreach Collection subcommittee of the Social Justice Committee asked for recipient suggestions. The DC recommended the NNED Chalice Lighter Program which helps designated congregations with growth and development needs. An application for the Collection was completed by DC at the request of the Social Justice Committee. The scheduled month for the Collection was May. John Sanders gave the five minute descriptive speech before the congregation on May 1st. He mentioned that our congregation is one of 75 within the Northern New England District and many of those congregations need our help. Many are small, not as well endowed as ours is, do not own a building, and struggle to meet expenses. He spoke of the Chester, Vermont congregation, the first grant recipient of 2010 – 2011, that is upgrading the Chester meetinghouse to meet modern requirements. The second grant recipient of 2010 - 2011, announced February 15th, 2011, is the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stowe, Vermont, a young and growing congregation that just hired a consulting minister.

A DC coffee hour table was set up after the March 13th, 2011 service. Also, a DC article ran in the March 2011 UUNashua newsletter. The purpose of these efforts was to inform members of the Committee's operations and to recruit delegates for 2011 NNED and 2011 GA. In the May 2011 newsletter, DC's article publicized a May 1st meeting that would allow the congregation to communicate with the GA delegates on the agenda issues.

The DC approved and recommended to UUNashua the appointment of five (5) lay delegates for the 2011 NNED. All five registered and paid the fee for the event, and four

(4) – Ellen Fisher, Laurie Goodman, Mary Licking, and John Sanders - signed in as lay delegates and Reverend Steve Edington signed in as the ministerial delegate at the event site (Red Jacket Inn at North Conway, NH) to qualify for service at the NNED Annual Meeting on April 2nd, 2011.

At the NNED Annual Meeting, John Sanders was elected to a two year term on the NNED Nominating Committee. This term will follow the three year term he is just completing as the President and member of the NNED Board of Directors. He is a past President of the NH-VT District. John is serving a term as President of the District Presidents Association.

UUNashua is allowed seven (7) lay delegates for the UUA General Assembly, to be held June 22 – 26, 2011. For GA, this is the first year there is the option of offsite delegate service if a congregation cannot fulfill its slate. The Committee approved and recommended to UUNashua the appointment of five (5) onsite (at Charlotte, North Carolina) delegates and two (2) offsite delegates who applied by the May 1st deadline. The May 1st meeting involving the UUNashua delegates and the congregation was attended by two members who had applied for offsite delegate status and one congregational member. Registered delegates from UUNashua who could not attend provided their contact information to facilitate communication with members who attended. UUNashua submitted, for use in the GA virtual banner parade, a photo of the UUNashua banner flanked by the UUNashua off-site delegates. Frank Grossman was the photographer.

Another activity involving UUNashua and the NNED is worth mentioning. In the December 2010 edition of Northern Lights, the newsletter of the NNED, appeared an article entitled, A Multigenerational Trip to DC. Authored by Monica Staples, a member and Youth Advisor of UUNashua, the article discussed the bus trip originating from the UUNashua congregation to attend the Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear in Washington DC on Saturday, October 30th, 2010. The article's accompanying picture featured 29 participants.

Reverend Steve Edington has announced his retirement for 2012. As a member of the Committee for the past seven years and the past eight district meeting seasons, I can say Steve has been a great friend and conscientious facilitator of the Committee's business. He has entertained questions, given good advice, passed along concerns related to DC, and seen that delegate recommendations were acted upon in advance of deadlines. Best wishes to Steve for a great final year at UUNashua and happiness in retirement.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mary Licking, Chair