

Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, NH

Music Program 2010-2011

Jared (Jed) Holland led two choirs this year. The adult choir has continued to thrive, and involves a large number of church friends and members, totaling 40 singers, 3 of whom are new to the church this year, and 5 others new to the choir. The youth choir, which involves very young children up through about 8th grade, fluctuates in the number of children attending. The youth choir sang 11 times this year, including twice with the adult choir. The adult choir sang for 28 services, and will be singing at the annual meeting. Non-choir members of the congregation joined us for the early Christmas Eve service, as well as 3 Greater Choir opportunities.

Our music committee has been assisting Jed with the music program. This committee (chair Kathy Grossman, members Geri Davidson, Kathi Fogal, John Burkitt, Jon Lasselle, Ruth Cannava, Steve Edington) has been doing a great job. Geri Davidson continues to perform a critical role in keeping the choir, music committee, music, and Jed organized.

Last year, to accommodate our large choir, we moved our rehearsal space to the chapel and began using the room next to the chapel as our music office. This is working very well, and the property committee has continued to assist us with any facility modifications we request.

In keeping with our continuing goal of providing more ways for congregation members and friends to contribute musically, we have continued the “Greater Choir” and asked more guest musicians to perform. The Greater Choir lets interested congregation members join the choir for one Sunday at a time without committing to Wednesday evening rehearsals. We haven’t had large turnouts, but there are usually a couple extra folks, a few of whom have since joined the adult choir.

To help with our goal of engaging children and congregation musically, Jed has been leading the Morning Song of Gladness to start off most Sunday morning services.

Jed led the congregation in singing songs for the Peace Pole dedication on September 19th.

We had great participation by over 60 guest musicians to provide special music other than the normal choirs, for a total of 18 services. John Burkitt has continued coordinating with the large number of special musicians.

A wonderful accomplishment was the second coming of “The Biggest Crazy UU Band That Ever Was (in Nashua at least)”. This song 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 “Down By The Riverside” and “Enter, Rejoice and Come In “! This band helped kick off the pledge drive for the Stewardship committee.

We continue to use electronic methods of communication. We are using Facebook, the UU network, the church website, and YouTube. We have continued to post audio recordings of our

services on the website, and have begun adding some video content, including a YouTube presence.

We created a music service in May. We learned that we overscheduled the service, so it was too long, but it seemed well-received regardless!

Printed Music/Folders

Happily, we continue to have good participation in our choirs! We continue to order music and folders for 40 adult choir members. We reduced the number of pieces of music ordered for the youth choir, even though there are more members, 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: Woody Guthrie singers Dan Murphy, Harry Purkhiser, and Kathy Grossman, with John Burkitt on bass and Jed on piano; Suellen Davidson on vocals, flute, clarinet; Gillian Hinkle on flute and piccolo; vocalists Cynthia Schroer, Jamie Reifsnnyder, Sarah Chadwick, Joan Storey and her daughter Alexandra Socha, Tina Marshman, Kathy Griffis, John Burkitt; Dan Murphy on guitar, vocals, organ; Kathy Grossman on trombone and vocals; band members John Burkitt, Dan Murphy, and Geoff Goodell; saxophonists Jordan Murphy and Stephen Herring; French horn players Peter Guidi; recorder players Thomas and Maggie Woolsey; drummer Ben Morton; brass sextet Bruce Cleaveland and Bruce Dye on trumpet, Peter Guidi and Lori Lerude on French horn, Ben Bate on baritone, and Kathy Grossman on trombone; Sutton Bradbury-Koster on djembe drum; dulcimer player Jim Woolsey; Jenny Grossman trombone player; Hannah Bate assisted the youth choir; Mattsen Bradbury-Koster conducted the youth choir; and talented members too numerous to mention here who participated in the Biggest Crazy UU Band That Ever Was (in Nashua at least) and in the music service.

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. We had some repairs done to the rectifier in the organ.

Review of Music Budget 2009-2010

We continue to have our biggest expense of printed sheet music for the choir, due mostly to the large choir membership. Jed has paid for 4 substitutes, and no outside guest musicians. We ordered only two pieces of youth choir music, and we repeated many of our favorite songs throughout the year, so we have kept our expenses down in these ways.

Requests

We would like to have our budget increased by \$600 to help buy sheet music for the continuing large number of adult choir members. We have been compensating for the larger numbers of members by ordering fewer pieces of new music, and sometimes writing our own music, but we would like to be able to order one new piece of music per month for our music library. Each new piece costs approximately \$100, and our current budget allows us to purchase about 4 or 5, so the requested increase would allow us to purchase 10, averaging 1 per month.

Goals for 2010-2011

To continue to keep our expenses down by repeating some of our favorite songs throughout the year.

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 improve the sanctuary sound system.