

Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, NH

Music Program 2011-2012

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 an average of 40 singers through the year, 2 of whom are new to the church this year, and 2 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 songs this year, including once with a youth pianist, and once with several members of the adult choir and a teen flutist. The adult choir sang for 28 services, Steve's party, and will be singing at the annual meeting. The choir was joined by members of the New Fellowship Baptist Church choir for one rousing Sunday, and we traveled to their church the following Sunday. Non-choir members of the congregation joined us for the early Christmas Eve service.

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 was unable to assist this year, due to her mother's passing and her continuing work dealing with her estate, so the committee managed to eke by without her help. Kathi Fogal has decided to leave the committee, and Kathleen Griffis has now joined the committee.

To help with our goal of engaging children and congregation musically, Jed led the Morning Song of Gladness to start off most Sunday morning services in the fall and winter.

We had great participation by over 70 guest musicians to provide special music other than the normal choirs, for a total of 20 services. John Burkitt has continued coordinating with the large number of special musicians.

A wonderful accomplishment was the third coming of "The Biggest Crazy UU Band That Ever Was (in Nashua at least)". This event 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"!

Another wonderful accomplishment was our collaboration with the New Fellowship Baptist Church choir. They came to our rehearsals for the month of February, and we sang together at our church, then at their church the following week. The choir members greatly enjoyed the camaraderie, and the congregation enjoyed the large amount of enthusiasm and talent they brought!

We were excited to have our new audio system in place this year, and have coordinated with the AV team to make sure our services are covered each week. We continue to use electronic methods of communication. We have added live-streaming of our Sunday service, and rebroadcast later the same day at 3 pm and 7 pm. 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 co-sponsored a service with the Worship Associates committee by percussionist Matt Meyer, which was very well-received.

Printed Music/Folders

We continue to have good participation in our choirs! We are ordering music and folders for 40 adult choir members. We reduced the number of pieces of music ordered for the youth choir, 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 included many congregation members:

Vocalists Suellen Davidson, Kathleen Griffis, Kathy Grossman, John Sanders, Hilary Keating, Sue Chadwick, Frona Avery, Linda Lewis, Jon Lasselle, Ellen Fisher, Kim Steele, Sandra LaBarge-Neumann, Noelle Bourquard; flutists Linda Lewis, Gillian Hinkle, and Mattsen Bradbury-Koster; clarinetists: Suellen Davidson, Rochelle Goren, Rick Lones, Burns Fisher; pianists Nicole Straussberg, Jed Holland; trombonists Jenny Grossman, Jon Lasselle, Kathy Grossman; trumpeters Jonathan Orr, Bruce Cleaveland, Bruce Dye; tuba Ben Bate, French hornist Lori Lerude; percussionists Ben Morton, Billy Parker; guitar and vocals Simón Rios and Jeremy Parker; saxophonist Jordan Murphy; vocals & keyboard & guitar Dan Murphy; ukelele Jon Brobst; handbell player Pam Sturdevant; band members John Burkitt, Tess George, Jed Holland, Geoff Goodell, Dan Murphy; guitar and vocalist Steve Hedges; Woody Guthrie singers Dan Murphy, Harry Purkhiser, and Kathy Grossman, with John Burkitt on bass, Billy Parker on drums, and Jed on piano; guitarist Charlie Beirutti; guitar and vocalist Zoe Goodell; vocalists Alyssa Lederhos and Billy Parker; 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.

Review of Music Budget 2011-2012

We continue to have a large expense of printed sheet music for the choir, due mostly to the large choir membership. We have paid for choir director substitutes for 4 rehearsals, and no outside guest musicians. We ordered no new 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. We have 2 teens providing childcare during Sunday morning rehearsals, and this is well-used by the choir members. This increased our expenses, but we feel it is worth it to choir parents.

Goals for 2012-2013

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 encourage teenagers who are interested in running the sound system.