North Universalist Chapel Society
2021 Annual Report

Annual Meeting

January 30, 2022
11:30 am

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Affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association
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The North Universalist Chapel, Woodstock, VT
Annual Meeting, 30 January 2022

1. Moderator, Kevin Geiger, opens the meeting
2. Welcome – For the Board of Trustees, Richard and Leon
3. Election of 2022 Moderator – Nominating Committee nominates Kevin Geiger
4. Election of 2022 Clerk – Nominating Committee nominates Judy Williamson
5. Election of Treasurer – Nominating Committee nominates Ann Wynia
6. Election of Board Members – Nominating Committee nominates Michael Zoldos for a two-year term.
7. Election of Nominating Committee Nominees – The Board, represented by Clara Gimenez, nominates Polly Forcier and Sherry Belisle
8. Presentation of Annual Report – Board and Committee representatives followed by questions, comments and motion to accept the report
9. Presentation and Action on 2022 Budget
   a. 2022 Stewardship Drive report – Denise Lyons and Michael Stoner
   b. Discussion of North Chapel’s Current and Future Finances: Opportunities and Challenges in our Changing Environment – Richard and members of the Board
   c. Finance and Trustees of Funds Committee Report – Jim Swift, Committee Chair
   d. Discussion of the 2022 budget and vote to approve the 2022 budget – Richard and members of the Board
10. Brave Light Project Update—Leon Dunkley
11. Facilities for the Future Update – Gina Auriema - Description of work that was completed in 2021 and update on plans in 2022
12. Unsung Hero – presented by Richard Schramm and Richard Waddell on behalf of the Board of Trustees
13. In Memorial – Sherry Belisle
14. Closing – Leon

Adjournment
Yet again, this has been a year that few of us will forget. We began the year with the church closed and all services were on-line. During the summer we held services outside in the back yard overlooking the river—it was wonderful being able to mingle with other people (masked, of course) and then in the fall we held services inside with every other row of pews closed for social distancing and everyone masked. Then came Omicron! Because it was so highly communicable, the Task Force suggested, and the Board approved that we would again close the church and return to on-line services. It has been a challenging time that included two members becoming infected with COVID-19, resulting in several church members needing to get tested, especially those who were seated closed to the individuals who tested positive. Luckily none of these members were infected.

At the end of December, we said goodbye to David Parker who decided to leave the board and this month we are very happy to welcome Michael Zsoldos as the new member. We are constantly reminded of how blessed the North Chapel is to have so many talented, caring, and energized people in our congregation, who devote untold hours to making this our spiritual home. We begin this report by saying a heartfelt THANK YOU to everyone for all you have done and will continue to do in 2022. Let’s hope that at some point during this year we will once again be able to join face to face in our beautiful sanctuary. It will be so good to see you there.

This summary provides a review of some of the major activities that have taken our attention throughout the year.

- **Work on the Building and Grounds.** Under the leadership of Gina Auriema and many others, we continued to enhance our historic building. With generous support from Chris and Barbara Bartlett we now have three air purifiers for use in the sanctuary. Two are set up at the front of the sanctuary—one near the pulpit and the other near the piano. The other one is just inside the entrance door to the sanctuary. Gina also oversaw the reseeding of the front lawn that is now very green and healthy. Most of the grass had died due to the snowplows throwing salt layered snow onto the lawn that effectively killed the grass. Gina asked the Town Manager to see that the plows did not continue this process.

- **Board/Minister Retreat.** On July 17, the Board held a four-hour retreat held in the Social Hall (all members socially distanced and wearing masks). The main discussion topics focused on planning for the 2021 Stewardship Drive that was coordinated by Denise Lyons and Michael Stoner, and the 2021 budget and other fundraising activities. Aside from the board members, Chris Bartlett, Deb Rice and members of the RDC, and Anne Dean participated in this discussion.

- **Ministerial Programs.** Leon, working with Denise Lyons, Richard Schramm and Richard Waddell, developed a new program called Brave Light that involves outreach to youth from the Upper Valley and at the Taunton, MA UU church. The individuals selected will participate in three long weekend retreats—one at the North Chapel, another at the Taunton church, and the third at Star Island. With a new grant from the Byrne and Canady Foundations, the UUA and others, this project has been fully funded and will be completed by the end of the calendar year. Leon has been working on other community initiatives and continues his ministerial duties to support the North Chapel and the wider community.

- **Significant Fundraising Activities.** The Endowment Fund continues to grow and we have raised $205,292 and for the first time we were able to move some money from it and applied it to the operating budget. The Stewardship Drive in the fall raised $135,000; the 2021 pledges exceeded the amount that was proposed so the Board decided to move the excess amount to the 2022 budget. The Annual Spring Auction planning is underway and will go “live” in March.

To all of you who stepped up to provide these and many other initiatives that ensure the church could continue to deliver on its mission, we offer our deepest gratitude.
North Chapel Board: Mary Blanton, Laird Bradley, Anne Dean, Clara Gimenez, Richard Schramm, Richard Waddell, Judy Williamson, Michael Zsoldos and Ann Wynia, Treasurer
1. 2020 Moderator, Kevin Geiger, opened the meeting at 1:05 p.m.
2. Welcome from the Board of Trustees: Richard Waddell, Chair, and Leon Dunkley. Richard welcomed everyone and Leon called us back to a moment two years ago at his installation during the laying on of hands, remembering the quiet power of community.
3. Election of 2021 Moderator – Nominating Committee nominated Kevin Geiger and it was seconded. The vote in favor was unanimous.
4. Election of 2021 Clerk – Nominating Committee nominated Anne Macksound but she was unable to do this and Judy Williamson was nominated in her place. The vote in favor was unanimous.
5. Election of 2021 Treasurer – Hope Yeager from Nominating Committee nominated Ann Wynia. The vote in favor was unanimous.
6. Election of Board Members for a three-year term– Nominating Committee nominated Kathy Astemorski, David Parker and Richard Schramm to join the NUCS Board of Trustees (note: Richard Schramm joined the Board in November 2020 when Marcia Peterson stepped down). The vote in favor was unanimous. Chris Bartlett and Anne Dean are rotating off of the Board. Richard thanked them for their service.
7. Election of Nominating Committee members – The Board represented by Clara Gimenez, nominated Polly Forcier and Sherry Belisle. The vote in favor was unanimous.
8. Presentation of Annual Report – Peggy Kannenstine motioned to accept the report and Anne Dean seconded the motion. The vote in favor to accept the Annual Report was unanimous.
9. Presentation and Action on 2021 Budget and Other Financial Issues
   a. 2020 Stewardship Drive report – Ann Wynia reported that pledges to date have totaled $143,000 and many people increased their pledge by 10% or more as suggested.
   b. Discussion of North Chapel’s current and future finances: Opportunities and Challenges in our changing environment – Richard and Ann spoke about the financial issues for 2021. The Social Justice allocation will be fully used by June; the Building and Grounds budget will increase due to the need to replace the front lawn and the repairs to the kitchen, specifically the grease trap and floor tile replacement (due to grease trap overflow); the Office Administrator is budgeted for 10 hours/week; UUA
dues will be increasing and we must now pay our full amount; and QuickBook expenses will increase and responsibility for handling this will be taken on by Margaret Hawkins starting in February at a fee of $30/hour. Richard and Chris addressed the demographic of our membership and the impact that has on the budget and what structural items need to be addressed in the longer term to compensate for decreasing income. This includes (1) the importance of growing the church community and identifying alternative sources of revenue, (2) the group working on rentals hopes to increase rental revenue especially when we are able to reopen the church, and (3) the Endowment Fund will be formally launched in May and that will provide some additional income. Richard commented that the RDC is focusing on other fundraising initiatives beyond what is already planned. He welcomed anyone with ideas on raising money to contact the RDC. There were no significant discussions.

c. Finance and Trustees of Funds Committee report from Jim Swift. He reviewed last year’s budget and said that in 2022 we will have a bigger challenge and will need to find ways to fill the gap. He added that the Endowment Fund hopes to raise $500,000 but this may take some time to fully accomplish this. He said the Committee is aware and appreciative of all the work that Ann has done over all the years and he thanked Chris for his efforts on planning for the future of the North Chapel.

d. Ralph Lancaster made a motion to approve the 2021 budget and it was seconded by Lynn Peterson. The vote to accept the budget was unanimous.

10. Strengthening Families, Building Community Update
a. Key accomplishments – Geraldine Fowler reported that she was proud and happy to provide many of the programs at little or no cost to the North Chapel. These included helping over 300 families with clothing during the year. She worked as a case manager for WARF that began in April 2020 and they raised $734,000 and awarded $586,000 in grants to 658 applicants. She read a letter of thanks written by one of the recipients. Geraldine described the work as gut wrenching and beautiful in the way the community responded to the needs of families.

11. Facilities for the Future Update – Ginny Gelfan described the work completed in 2020 and an update on plans for 2021. There was a “deep cleaning” done in 2020 and success with dealing with the long-standing problem of humidity in the church building, especially downstairs. A dehumidifier has been installed and that is working well. Every wall in the church building has been insulated except the sanctuary; the only way to do that effectively would be to blow it in and that can’t be done because of historic preservation.
12. Unsung Hero – presented by Anne Dean and Richard Waddell on behalf of the Board. This year two awards were given. Anne presented an award to Diane Mellinger for coordinating the Sunday services so beautifully for the lovely music and videos. Richard presented an award to Ann Wynia for all the work she does to help us understand our finances and to help the North Chapel. Fran Lancaster also noted that Ann was one of the longest serving treasurers—a job she has held for over 30 years. In addition to these Unsung Heroes, Richard recognized three additional people who have worked many hours for the church—Chris Bartlett, Anne Dean and Joanne Boyle. And Ann Wynia thanked Marcia Peterson for her time on the Board and for coordinating our Zoom meetings.

13. Closing – Leon thanked Richard and Kevin for their work on today’s meeting and made a tribute to Alan Perkins who passed away in 2020. In closing he read a poem that he had written titled “Ways Kindness May Name.”

14. Anne Dean made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Jenny Gelfan. The meeting adjourned at 2:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Hope Yeager
North Chapel opened its metaphysical doors on March 15\textsuperscript{th} of 2020 and in through its physical doors came the Johnson family. We were crazy that morning, two years ago—making title cards out of construction paper, crayons and masking tape. We had no idea what we were doing. We just went for it—Geraldine, Diane, Pierre and I. We weren’t open to the public but we invited the Johnsons to stay. They didn’t know that we had chosen to go online. So, they stayed and they were patient with us...gracious. It was strange. I didn’t recognize them. I had not seen them before and I could not properly welcome them amidst all of the confusion.

We got through that first online service. We all felt so relieved. The Johnsons departed quickly. We waved at one another and off they went. Eleven months went by and then, they got back in touch with us. North Chapel received a lovely card from them it read as follows:

\texttt{2/19/21}

\textit{Rev. Dunkley,}

\textit{It has been almost a year since my brother, cousin and I attended your church. It was memorable as we were the only three in the}
congregation as we did not know the church service had been cancelled ... COVID. We were in search of God.

My brother was not in the states when our mother died. She had been at the Woodstock Terrace’s Memory Unit for five years. Our cousin, Susan, visited her often, and was a light to our Mother for most of Susan’s life. Susan suggested this service. My brother traveled to the U.S. and we were able to attend together.

I apologize for any discomfort our attendance may have caused. We were a pod against COVID but we were not able to speak with you at the service’s end, to explain ourselves.

Thank you for the service, sermon and music. It was a helpful refuge from serious loss.

Blessings,
Sandra Johnson

Enclosed was a check for $100.

I share all of this because church matters. It is so important. Its gifts are a lifetime in the making and they go on. They outlive us. I share this because deeply appreciate what we do together.

We have taken a great journey this year—pressing into the challenges of our time more knowingly, mourning the losses and celebrating the gifts of 2021. Our spiritual themes have been lovely, poignant, prescient and wise. In the first quarter of the year (in the January-March period), we explored The Common Good, Thresholds and Possibility. Our services were as follows:

January 3  Insight is 2021
January 10 Leadership and the Common Good
January 17 Carrying Freedom
January 24 All for One and One for All or ME? Or WE? (Veronica Delay)
January 31 Which Common Good by Rowley Hazard
February 7 Excuse Me, Mr. Dragon
February 14 Musings on Love (Laura Foley and Clara Gimenez)
February 21  Is the Threshold of American Serenity Made of Kryptonite?
February 28  The Last Waltz (or The Threshold of Possibility—Part One)
March 7   The First Waltz (or The Threshold of Possibility—Part Two)
March 14  Kindness Is Also Possible
March 21  Embracing Present Possibilities
March 28  Preaching to the Choir

In the second quarter (in the April-June period), there was a “healing trilogy”—healing ourselves, healing our Earth and healing our world. Our services were as follows:

April 4   The Virtual Easter Egg Hunt and the Gentle Return of Life
April 11  Breath and Breathlessness—Reflections from the Long Road of My Healing
April 18   Only Grief (Simon Dennis)
April 25  The Rendezvous of Victory—A Spiritual Reflection on the Loss of George Floyd
May 2   The Lightness of the Soul
May 9    Daffodils and Motherhood—A Springtime Reflection on Charity, Mercy and Patience
May 16  Healing Our Democracy: The Vision of Braver Angels (Ron Miller)
May 23   Starfall—The Nearness of Loss (remembering David Doolittle)
May 30  The Stage of Our Learning
June 6      Saving the World When Spring Hangs Up on You
June 13    Staying in Conversation (Gwen Groff)
June 20  Beautifuler Things
June 27   The Spiritual Tools of Awakening

In the third quarter (in the July-September period), we explored the
themes of courage and resilience. We explored a theme we called Minding the Heart in Times of Crisis. Our services were as follows:

July 4  I'm Having to Change My Mind About A Lot of Things These Days
July 11 Choosing the Better Club
July 18 The Hidden Meaning of the Rain
July 25 Courage During the Pandemic
August 1 Sneaking Into the Promised Land—Attempt #2 (at least)
August 8 Resilience from the Far Side of the Fall
August 15 Music as a Spiritual Practice and Its Place in Life
August 22 As Resilient as New Clay
August 28 In This Together: A Service of Resilience, Acceptance and Release (Sawyer/Hutzler/Dunkley)
September 5 The Holy Spirit Flood—UU Style
September 12 New Safety Belts—Understanding Risk on the Highway of Information
September 19 Wandering in the Desert
September 26 Little Emergencies (Kevin Geiger)

And in the fourth quarter (in the October-December months), we closed out the calendar year. We did so by exploring more narrative themes—Navigating Uncertainty: Opportunities and Risks in October, What Sustains Us? In November and The Gift of Presence in December for the holiday season. Our services were:

October 10 Know Thy Self—The Inner Wisdom of the Outer game of Life
October 17 What If We Were Faithbook Friends Instead?—A Reimagining of Social Media
October 24 Flying the Blue Peter...what are boats made for? (Rob Schultz)
October 31 Masks and Ghosts and Gourds and Candy (What else do you need?)
November 7 The Rising Sun Sustains Us
November 14  "Staves that keep this boat afloat..." (Chris Cassell)
November 21  The Tender Side of Gratitude
November 28  A Nickel's Worth of Free Advice—Stay Foolish
December 5  Uncornered and Unconquered—The Gift of Integrity in Challenging Times
December 12  Love as a Core Value (Deanna Jones)
December 19  An Art That One Can Live In
December 24  The Art of Christmas (with Adrian Tans and Joan Columbus)
December 26  Christmas Presence

As the same time, so much more was happening. North Chapel hosted a four-week class online called Learning and Thinking Critically in Challenging Times. The class was led by Ron Miller and myself. We worked together. We created the class description:

Learning and Thinking Critically in Challenging Times
(A Four-part Online Class with Ron Miller and Leon Dunkley)

WELCOME EVERYONE!!

We are so excited for this endeavor. Speaking to the needs of our world right now is so important. In order to do so most effectively and most enduringly, it is necessary to learn about and to agree upon the common ground. The common ground is required of the common good...and vice versa. Acting effectively and enduring means thinking through our problems with enough integrity that we can transcend them. It is possible in times like these to mature our sensibility, to move from settling for lowest common denominators to striving for highest human values.

We will be meeting for four, consecutive Thursdays, from 7:00 until 8:30. In our first session, we will be building
community. We ask you to be ready to introduce yourself. It's nothing extensive. Everyone will be asked to take two minute to share a little bit about who you are and what brings you to this journey that we will be taking together.

This is going to be wonderful. We can't wait to see you all!!

Ron Miller, Coordinator of the Woodstock Learning Lab
Leon Dunkley, Minister, North Universalist Chapel Society

The class was wonderful and very well attended.

Out of the Children and Youth Task Force that the North Chapel Board created three years ago has come The Brave Light Youth Exchange Project. Brave Light is the name of the Canaday Foundation grant that was submitted on Super Bowl Sunday in 2021, one day before the deadline. Many thanks to all who participated in the development of the concept paper, particularly Denise Lyons and Richard Schramm who now serve on its advisory committee. Thanks as well to Susan Innui who was also helpful early on. “WHAT IS BRAVE LIGHT?” you might ask.

Brave Light is like a varsity traveling team for joy and justice. It is a grant-funded project at North Chapel that is open to all high school students. The Brave Light Project will cost approximately $130,000. The Project is grant-funded through the Canaday Foundation, the Byrne Foundation, the UUA Funding Panel and private donors. So, apart from the registration fee, the Brave Light Project is FREE for all participants.

Brave Light brings together two groups of students, one group comes from central Vermont and the other group comes
from Boston. Each group will have up to 25 students. We will
gather three times between May and August to have a lot of
fun, to work together on interesting projects and to develop the
leadership skills that we need to meet the
challenges of our time.

The life experiences of rural Vermont
and urban Boston offer a backdrop to
genre with challenging issues—climate
change and sustainability, race and justice.
We ask, “Who are we today?” and “Who can
we become tomorrow?” We explore the
answers together.

We have been working with a team in the Boston
area. Our Taunton cohort (Rev. Christana
McKnight and April Rosario) are increasingly
excited about the project. Christana is the Taunton lead and will co-
direct the project conferences with me. April will be providing primary
administrative support. On our end here in Woodstock, Chloe Powell
is now on board. She is highly talented. You may know her as the
organizer of the Feast and Field concert series in Barnard. I invite
you to check out her work by visiting https://feastandfield.com/.
You may also know her because she has been supporting North
Chapel by directing the Spiritual Exploration program. More on this
later.

The Brave Light Project is now delayed because of the Omicron
surge. I look forward to updating you on our progress. The Brave
Light webpage had been designed by Kristen McEntyre. It is being
maintained by Joanne Boyle. The page is already up and running on
the North Chapel website. Check it out! It was a very busy January.

In February, a group of justice avengers made a whole lot of soup!! The effort was led by Ken Woodhead, Michael Zsoldos and Karen Gainey. They moved it forward. They arranged for the use of our kitchen on behalf of Change the World Kids. For their hard work, many in our community are deeply nourished. Every week, gallons and gallons of warm and nutritious soup was distributed to those in need. Thank you, Ken. Thank you, Michael. Thank you, Karen. Thank you, CTWK!! What a wonderful gesture they are making!

Also, at that time of joy, sorrow was near at hand. We said good-bye to a wonderful soul. We mourned the death and celebrated the life of Wendy Smith. So loving and so gentle, her heart was larger than life. Her heart remains here with us, even though she is gone from us. Our beloved Wendy Smith died peacefully on a Monday morning. She had entered home hospice the week before. Although her body was weakening, she grew more beautiful with the passing of each day. The last time that I saw her in her home on Loveland Hill, she was absolutely radiant. She was filled with light.

Both of her brothers, Jeffrey and Steven, with her in her final days. Her faithful dog, Aurora, was always by her side.

Our dear Wendy was memorialized by her loving family at Prospect Hill Cemetery in Flemington, NJ. What a joy, to know such a powerful and such a beautiful woman. We hold her and her family in our hearts.
How we take care of ourselves and one another is very important as we move forward. In March, a pastoral care team composed an outreach letter in an effort to create a phone tree so that we could stay in touch during the first phase of the COVID crisis. The letter was called “Speaking With Bravest Fire.” It drew from the hymn.

Though I may speak with bravest fire
And have the gift to all inspire,
And have not love, my words are vain
As sounding brass and hopeless gain

—Though I May Speak With Bravest Fire (Hopson, STLT #34)

Dear Friends,

Greetings from North Chapel. We hope this message find you and your loved ones well amidst this time of challenge. In just a few short weeks, our lives have undergone considerable changes. Patterns that we have known for years have been disrupted. Times have changed. For many of us, we need a sense of community now more than ever.

Will you help us to stay connected? This past Tuesday afternoon, four of us put our heads together, trying to create a way to stay connected. We are trying to create a phone tree or a buddy system, some means of staying connected by phone during the crisis of Covid-19. Are you willing to be a part of this? If you choose to participate, this is what that choice means:

1. Agree to be an Outreach Caller by responding affirmatively this email
2. Send in your short-list of people with whom you are regularly in touch so that we are not redundant in our efforts
3. Await a second email message from us containing a list of people to call to check in on
4. Make the calls periodically (once a week, once every two weeks) and report back if there are concerns or needs to which we can respond.

No one needs to feel more alone than we have to be right now. With your help, we can make that real in our community. Thank you for your consideration.

Every blessing,
Anne Marinello
Fran Lancaster
Richard Schramm
Rev. Dr. Leon Dunkley

The phone tree effort was discontinued but it is starting up again. We may have underestimated the persistence of this disease.

Truly, how we take care of ourselves and one another is very important and we the work continues again in the hands of people like Anne Marinello, Polly Forcier, Fran Lancaster, Sherry Belisle and others. We will continue to look for ways to stay connected. We can do better.

There is a growing energy around building a post-Omicron response team. As we are able to gather (and even before this time), it will be good to have a team that can be present to pastoral needs as we deal with what continues to come our way. We must be careful, though. It is important to pace ourselves. We are in this for the long haul. We must act accordingly.
I shared a letter with the Board and I will share it again in this Annual Report. A close colleague of mine in Washington shared it some time ago.

Part of A Guide to Pastoral Care and Connection in a Time of Physical Distancing
By Cecilia Kingman
March 17, 2020

My dear colleagues in ministry, lay and ordained,

I want to ask you all to work less right now. I mean it. We have a long and difficult road ahead.

Some learnings from Seattle, where our situation gets more intense each day:

• Just when you figure out how to do worship live from your sanctuary, with a skeleton crew, it will be time to shift to doing worship from your home.
• Just when you figure out how to do so many things to replicate "church" as we know it online, you will realize that what your people need most of all is straight up pastoral care, and time to connect with one another. Not programming. And definitely not perfection.
• Just as you figure out how to minister during a pandemic, the ground shifts and you have to find a new center.

I believe we need to slow way down, because if we are already exhausted we will have no reserves [as we move forward].

Please take good care of yourselves right now. We will need all our reserves in the weeks and months ahead.

Seattle was among the cities that were hardest hit in the first wave of the pandemic. Vermont had a very different experience. But we still need to be careful.
By May, we grieved the loss of another beloved soul. So many in this community were close with David Doolittle. We knew his smile, his laughter...his generosity of spirit. He was a friend to so many, a friend to everyone he knew. He laughed with us. He sang with us. He lived with us so fully and so open-heartedly. It was so hard to see him go. North Chapel responded on May 23rd in a reflection called Starfall. The description was as follows:

Starfall—The Nearness of Loss
Constellations are sets of stars to which we have given names and stories. These sets of stars and stories are impossibly far away. Leo and Andromeda, Cassiopeia and Orion...never are they near enough to touch. Sometimes, though, stars fall from the sky—crashing through roofs and windows, busting through doorways and breaking our hearts. When our beloved David Doolittle died recently, it was like a star had fallen from the sky. How do we handle loss when it strikes so very close in life?

What a truly lovely man.

May was warmer. We began to gather safely outside. We began to rediscovering our togetherness. This was healing. It was easier to cope with everything when we are together again.

David's parents were Star Island friends of mine. I met them in my teens. I got to know Edith and Al Doolittle personally when I was in my early twenties. Edith ran the gift shop and Al could not stop talking about his make-shift telescope. I loved to look at the stars. He showed off his telescope to all who had interest. Through him, we reached out to find the beauty.

Speaking of reaching for beauty, Pentangle reached out to us. Alita Wilson worked with Joanne Boyle to organize a poetry reading in the backyard. It connected schools in the area and it drew and interesting crowd. Burlington's Rajnii Eddins performed at North
Chapel on a beautiful day to an enthusiastic, socially-distanced audience on Thursday evening, May 13th. Eddins is “the founder of the Poetry Experience at Fletcher Free Library and the artistic director for the Young Writers Project. He co-coached the internationally acclaimed Muslim Girls Making Change, the first team to represent Burlington in the Brave New Voices International Youth Poetry Slam Festival. Eddins says he sees art and youth engagement as a dynamic, transformative tool for social change.” He is a great person with whom to stay in relationship.

Also at this time, Rev. Pratima Dharm became associated with North Chapel as a Community Minister. We entered into relationship with a Community Minister in California. Community Ministers need to have an affiliate relationship with a congregation for accreditation with the UUA. Rev. Pratima Dharm has reached out to us. Now, North Chapel (through Kathy Astemborski and myself) is providing a small amount of advisory support for the Spirit of Love Café, a project that Pratima is in the process of creating. An excerpt from her letter to me reads as follows

I started a café in March 2020. It quickly became known for its refined Mexican and Indian American themed dishes—coffees and teas, cookies, etc. During COVID and other challenges, business suffered. For the 9 months that the café remained open, free meals and coffee/tea was provided to all homeless
people daily as well as a meal was prepared and served for about 100-150 homeless people at a local shelter each month. We began to offer Vespers gathering with masks and appropriate social distancing where they also prepared and cooked the meal for the homeless. (all participants had to acquire mandatory Food Handler’s license and orientation before volunteering!)

I simultaneously started a non-profit organization called: ‘Spirit of Love’ Fellowship & Outreach with the same group of people I met at the café in the early part of 2020. Though we all hold varied and unique theologies, we share a common understanding and vision of what being open and aware of our differences and individualities means in practice! The point to note here is that the majority of people within the ‘Spirit of Love’ Fellowship & Outreach are of Hispanic descent and culture. They speak Spanish as well as English. They are also very open and aware of my own unique theology, philosophy, Indian culture, language/s, food, clothing and heritage! In fact surrounded by such a supportive and yet culturally distinct group of people has allowed me to authentically own and integrate my own uniqueness!

You’ve all had an opportunity to meet Pratima. She preached to us a few weeks ago, on the 9th of January. She’s a powerful colleague!
As I am learning through Simon Dennis at the Center for Transformational Practice and through Rob Schultz at Vital Communities and the Leadership Upper Valley course, issues for the unhoused community are on the rise in the state of Vermont. Efforts are underway in Burlington and White River Junction to address this challenge. The ‘Spirit of Love’ project is coming at an opportune time. The closing of the May Board Report was as follows:

In closing, I cannot express enough appreciation for Michael Zsoldos, Ken Woodhead, Karen Gainey and the Change the World Kids for the soup project that was fantastically successful. I am also so grateful to Buildings and Grounds for their concern and efforts to restore the front lawn. I am grateful as well to Donna Durgin, Diane Doubleday and others for the flower arrangements prepared for each Sunday’s reflection.

In these days, when conflict between liberal thinkers and conservative thinkers are tearing us apart, it is so important that North Chapel remains a place where we can be more healthy and more loving about the difficulties that we face. As Hosea Ballou, himself, reminds us. If we agree in love, there is no disagreement that can do us any injury; but if we do not, no other agreement can do us any good. Let us endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace.

Amen.

The summer was rich with weddings, riverside lunches and outdoors services on Sunday. During that time, we received a phone message from a former member of this community recently. Brian. He left an old phone number but no last name. His words were these:

Hey, what’s up, man. I just wanted to encourage you. I don’t go to your church but, you know, I used to and I just wanted to let you know that you guys are helping a lot of people. There’s a lot of oppression in this world, man, and just want to let you that...I just want you guys to keep fighting “to set the captives free,” man. But, yeah... My name is Brian. You can
call me if you want. 802-299-0430. I pretty much always go to the Catholic Church now but yeah...I love you guys. Alright. Talk to you later. Bye.

You never know who you’re going to touch.

We entertained the idea of being in the sanctuary. And when we returned there for the first time since mid March of 2020, Dan Fraser did the preaching. He came to North Chapel to share his reflection entitled Courage During the Pandemic. Dan is well-known in the Upper Valley because of his business—Dan and Whit's in Norwich. Dan and Whit’s in deeply involved in community-building efforts in Norwich and during that pandemic, led a series of efforts to draw attention to the needs of Norwich and the larger world.

Coming together as we did that Sunday was a beautiful experience. Entering in through the front door, greeting one another...being with one another. It reminded us. It fed us to be back inside the building.

The next week, some old friends dropped by, friends from Maryland and New Jersey. Surprisingly (for me), they didn’t come to see me! They came to be with all of you! Sarah Prout and her partner came visiting. Sarah and I were in LRY (youth group) together at the church that I grew up in, in Lincroft, New Jersey. LRY stood for many things. It stood for Liberal Religious Youth, which was the name of our youth group before it was changed to Young Religious Unitarian Universalists in the late 80s or early 90s. LRY also stood for Love Reaches You, for Little Red Yo-yos and for Left-over Raspberry Yogurt. You could take your pick. Everyone knew the code. The joke still animates our smile. In youth group, everyone knew that they were welcome...that they belonged. This is what we’re trying to do with Brave Light.
I was thrilled to see Sarah again…and her new partner, Scott. And another surprise, sign language interpreter Angela Conan was visiting from Maryland. She is a former member and leader from the Unitarian Universalist Church of Silver Spring, where I served before coming to Vermont. It was wonderful to see everyone again! You never know who you’re going to touch.

We are all experiencing trauma together. We are all responding in different ways. We are all deeply affected by what has been happening. Many of us are tired—physically, emotionally, spiritually. So, it was fitting that, in August, we explored the theme of resilience.

We were wise to do so. Huzzah!! to the Worship Team…for as we began to gather again, there were many new faces among us. Some of these newer folks have actually been with us online for a while now. Some are older. Some are younger…with kiddos. All are happy to be a part of this community.

David Parker coordinated a large gathering of people who were new to the Woodstock area. Together with the leader of this project, a woman named Kirstin Lynde, a lovely gathering of 30 to 40 people took place on North Chapel’s the back lawn. Kirstin, herself, is new to the area, arriving in 2019. On August 5th, she and David put together an incredible potluck.

Communities grow because, within them, there is a genuine desire to meet new people. Communities grow because an openness
of heart is present. They grow because there is a generosity of spirit. Thank you, David. Thank you, Kirstin. It was beautiful event. One of many more to come, I pray. I think there is a real need in this community—for friendship and for fellowship...and for fun!

There was a bright, young woman at the gathering named Katherine. She is in her first year at Vermont Law School. Before moving to Vermont, she studied in Durango, CO. Cheryl Nixon (now, Dr. Cheryl Nixon) is a dear friend of mine from college. We’ve stayed in touch over the years. She is now the Provost at Fort Lewis College in Durango. Katherine worked with her while she was a student there!

Katherine also went to church when she lived out west. For this, she also knows Rev. Katie Kandarian-Morris. Katie is my colleague, my teacher in seminary and my friend. She is the one who is wearing the rainbow stole. I last worked directly with Katie back in 2018. I was a featured speaker for her regional, UU retreat. We sang together. We led others in song. I think that she’s famous because she went to high school with Madonna. (It probably annoys her when I tell that story). We sang:

We shall be known by the company we keep
By the ones who circle round to tend these fires
It is time now
And what a time to be alive
In this great turning, we shall learn to lead in love

Katie’s wonderful. You might remember this song. We have sung it in the Sanctuary.

Needless to say, both Katherine and I were thrilled make all of these discoveries. I truly hope that she becomes a part of this community. She enjoys North Chapel and she told me that she wants to be a part of things. I hope that remains the case as we move forward.

North Chapel’s Lasagna Dinner for new families was a great success. Once again, David Parker did a wonderful job...as did young Aiden, his talented and able assistant. We didn’t get the numbers that we had hoped for but there were major deterrents that day. The skies overhead were threatening rain and Woodstock was bustling with tourists. Next time we try that, we might consider doing a lunch right after church. It would have an added boost because the smell of baking lasagna might wander up to the sanctuary. That might serve as an effective invitation.

The afternoon was very beautiful and Lora Coble joined us for the event and that was perfect. It may be that the “New Families Dinner” should be the public title of what we all know is really a church-wide event. That way, we can get to know one another.
Anyway, I thought it was lovely and the lasagna turned out well (I was pretty much freaking out about that! I was worried, Just ask David.).

In the fall, Mary Blanton and Anne Marinello led an absolutely brilliant Worship Committee Retreat. We met on Saturday, October 16th, from 9-12. We had a fabulous conversation and a critical one. We considered North Chapel’s posture, going into the second season of being online.

1. How will we respond to the spiritual challenges that are before us?
2. What does community mean in the second year of this unfolding crisis?

The Social Justice Film Series was launched. Thank you, Annie Macksoud, Joelle Seavey and others. The first film that was discussed celebrated the work of Joanna Macy. The insights from that film and the online discussion informed parts of the reflections that followed the showing in a way that was organic and deeply generative. Likewise, the quality of the conversation in the Worship Retreat was organic and generative as well. We are pulling together wisely and naturally in a way that still feels like church.

Midday on Wednesday, October 20, I departed for Lansing, Michigan. Years ago, I was asked to deliver the sermon for the Installation of my dear colleague, Rev. Neal Anderson. Then, COVID
hit and the plans were delayed indefinitely. It finally took place. I was able to honor him just as he had honored me when I was installed here in Woodstock. It is wonderful that North Chapel is now spiritually linked with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lansing.

In late October, I asked Joanne to send me a list of the people who had recently asked to be added to the church directory.

Booie Williamson and Tatiana Lamia and their children
   Bodhi Williamson
   Felix Williamson
Cliff and Kate Johnson and their children
   Isla
   Elliot
Caroline Connolly and her kids
   Aiden
   Shannon
Pam & Jaime Ellertson
Cindy and David Cook
Elaine and Bob Ambrose
Deb Green
Miles LeDoux
Dan Courcey
Joelle Seavey

That’s 21 new people and this list is not complete!!! That’s utterly fantastic—to have grown in the context of challenges. I look forward to meeting everyone who is new. I look forward to learning your stories…especially the young ones.

What I know so far is that Elliot is three. He knows that autumn is supposed to be cold. So, when he walked into Silver Lake with me
and several others for the North Chapel September plunge, he was shivering. It was warm enough outside and the water was lovely but he was shaking.

His sister, Isla, is five. FYI, five is SO much older than three (poor Eliot is likely to be reminded of all of his days...Isla will see to it). Isla likes heart-shaped cookies with pink frosting. She must've made some sort of back-door deal with Ann Wynia because on the afternoon of the New Families Dinner, Ann came through with the goods—heart-shaped cookies with pink frosting. They were so good, I almost didn’t want to tell Isla about them!

I think a lot about the kiddos. It was easier when Geraldine was leading them. After she resigned early in the pandemic, we were without a Spiritual Exploration Lead. When she resigned, it was not advisable to hire someone into that role at that time. As we began to experiment with meeting in person, our needs quickly changed. We needed someone to fill that role and we needed someone immediately. Chloe Powell agreed to lead the children and she has continued in that role. This was an emergency hire in a time of crisis and I am so pleased. Chloe has a great deal of experience. She is a former teacher. She run a nursery school and her own children’s summer camp. She speak a lot of different languages. She has liberal, religious values. She has ministry in her background and she is absolutely great with kids. On her second Sunday, little Felix was already sitting in her lap. That said, the Board and I are working together to make our professional relationship more formal. I am so touched by their passion and commitment to excellence. It’s beautiful.

Leadership in times of tension and difficulty requires a quiet, steady course of action. North Chapel is providing that. If I thought
that pride was a consistently healthy thing, I would say that we should be proud of that. What I can say is that others are noticing—people in the Woodstock environs and beyond. In autumn, Rev. Patience Stoddard came to worship with us. Patience is the former minister from Norwich. She is a wonderful person. A few weeks later, David Sa’ada joined us on a Sunday morning and he brought his family. David Sa’ada is the son of Mounir Sa’ada (b. 1909, d. 2008). Mounir Sa’ada taught history in the Woodstock Country School and served as minister here, at North Chapel, from 1946 until 1964.

David (son), Gretchen (daughter-in-law) and Marjorie (granddaughter) were with us last Sunday. Marjorie Sa’ada told me twice candidly last Sunday that North Chapel got her through the pandemic. We never know who we’re going to touch.

Finally, we were recently approached by a woman named Hope Haviland. She wanted to send us pictures of something that she discovered on the back of an old barn in Strafford. It was an old, external display case that used to be part of the exterior here at North Chapel. The details of how the display case got to Strafford is not yet clear to me, but because of the work that they are doing on the barn, they reached out to us. They didn’t want the display case to get damaged or destroyed.
Time had taken down its finishes, rusted its hinges and broken its glass, but it has a haunting spirit that still endures, a spirit that is made better by the wind and weather, just like us.

Randy Leavitt (Esa Leavitt’s father) and I retrieved the case some time ago. I have reached out to Gina Auriema to talk about what we might do with it after it is restored to working condition. She’s on board with the project. Who knows how it will turn out! We’ll be meeting to discuss this further in the coming months. This case carried the old word of the church and that is valuable. It carries a history that resisted being torn down and discarded for many years.

It rougher looking these days but it survived the past and so have we. I wonder what we will do in the days to come.
2021 FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Members: Chris Bartlett, Chris Lloyd, Margaret Kannenstein, Jack Nelson, Wayne Speyer, James Swift and Ann Wynia (treasurer)

1. **2021 BUDGET.** The 2021 final budget numbers reflect a surplus of approximately $35,000. The surplus was due to a number of non-reoccurring factors. Pledges exceeded the proposed budget by over $10,000, but rental income was light by over $10,000. The Brave Light allocation to Leon’s salary was $8,000. Overall, income was approximately $14,000 less than projected. Fortunately, there were large savings in expenses from the original projection of approximately $35,000. Geraldine’s earlier than anticipated departure accounts for almost $30,000 of the savings in expenses. The committee agreed that the $35,000 surplus should be transferred to the Reserve Fund with the Vermont Community Foundation.

2. **2022 BUDGET.** The proposed 2022 budget reflects an anticipated small surplus at the end of the year. Pledges failed to reach our goal of $145,000 and appear to be headed towards $135,000 (currently $129,000 with some expected additions). Revenue in 2022 is significantly increased by the Brave Light allocation to Leon’s salary is $18,856 is the major factor in being able to propose a balanced budget. The Brave Light contribution is one-time yearly income item that is not recurring in future years. Increased expenses include: (a) Leon’s salary was increased by 3% and dental insurance is being added to his benefits package; (b) The office administrator’s salary is increased to $18/hr.; (c) UUA dues are returning to normal at $12,000 per year, up from a reduced rate of $6,300; (d) There is a proposed increase in SE staffing from $1,500 to $6,600. Overall, it appears that the budget should come close to balancing in 2022.

3. **2023 BUDGET.** The committee has a real concern regarding a significant shortfall in 2023 when the Bright Light allocation is not available, resulting in a reduction of income of over $18,000. Plans need to be explored to cover this gap with increased income or reduction in expenses.

4. **ENDOWMENT FUND.** More efforts will be made starting in late May to obtain additional contributions to the Endowment Fund (current balance just over $200,000). The church is allowed to draw up to 5% of the principal balance to defer expenses on a yearly basis. It is important to continue to grow this fund to offset increasing expenses.

5. Current investments as of end of 2021:
   - Jantos fund – $4,896
   - Endowment Fund with the Vermont Community Foundation (VCF) - $201,952
   - Reserve Fund with VCF – $182,432 (should be increase by $35,000 from the budget surplus)
   - Reserve Fund with Wells Fargo - $89,350
6. Jim Swift has maxed out his time on the committee and will need a replacement. The following are the terms of the members:
   - Peggy and Jack – second term commenced 2021
   - Chris Lloyd and Wayne – first term commenced in 2020
   - Chris Bartlett – first term commenced in 2019
## North Universalist Chapel Society

### Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2021

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## North Universalist Chapel Society

### Statement of Financial Position

**As of December 31, 2021**

### Liabilities and Equity

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<td><strong>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</strong></td>
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# 2021 Financial report and 2022 proposed budget

Ann Wynia, Treasurer

## Income

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## Expenses

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Buildings & Grounds
2021 Yearly Report

We normally start off the year by taking down Christmas decorations in early January. During December of 2020 we weren’t meeting in person, so no decorations were put up. We were spared that chore.

There was plenty to do in the kitchen though. The Grease trap rusted out and spilled that incredibly stinky “sludge” over 1/3 of the floor. Floor tiles were so badly damaged that several had to be torn up and replaced and a new grease trap installed. Sextons spent a lot of time moving stuff around and putting the kitchen back together and doing a super clean and de-grease of interior space in time for the CTWkids to begin their winter soup kitchen project.

The kitchen got new drain lines with flow restrictors and is now up to date with plumbing code.

Throughout the winter months we continued to oversee the snow removal, and kitchen use and rejoiced that we got through the winter without any heating issues or frozen pipes.

Spring clean up involves a lot of raking and removing debris from the winter plowing. We got the gardens looking fresh and clean and raked and pruned along the driveway where the trees were overgrown.

In July, Gina contracted with Dead River for oil prices for winter season 21/22 and the yearly service on oil burners was done. Also in July, we made a special effort to get the grounds in good shape for our first outdoor Sunday Service.

We replaced the AED battery and Electrode Cartridge for the PHILLIPS HEARTSTART HSI that is in the social hall.

The big summer project this year was putting down a new lawn in front of the Sanctuary. Again, we relied on a valuable committee member who has expertise in this area. George Wohlgemuth successfully dug out the invasive crab grass and fertilized and reseeded the lawn. The sextons kept it watered and Gina and Mark mowed and raked when it was needed. Over the summer months, the “good” grass overwhelmed the “bad” crabgrass and once again good prevailed. By summer’s end we had a beautiful new lawn.

There is always plenty to do around the lawn and gardens and Radek, even with some health issues, continued to mow the lawns and kept the grounds in good shape.

The other huge summer/fall project was the one Radek completed on the parsonage garage where he did extensive work to mitigate water damage and repaired large areas of rotting infrastructure including the foundation, interior support beams, flooring and more.

In August, Gina attended the Vt/Quebec conference again by ZOOM. Attendance insures that we receive our allotment of about $1,000 in the form of a dividend check from investments.

We’re lucky to have an electrician on our committee. When the sanctuary’s hearing assistance technology was acting up, we had Ritchie take a look and determine what had to be done. He replaced parts and got it working in good order.
Fall clean up was done - cutting back the plants and putting the gardens to bed. Radek finished mowing and leaf cleanup.

The last of the interior clean up and organizing of “stuff” that was stored in the SE room during renovation was completed so that the SE rooms were clear for use. File boxes with church history and old board reports are now housed on shelves in the closets of the parlor. Sextons prepared the building for winter - storm windows were put back and screens were stored, new batteries in all thermostats, heat adjusted, etc.

This year, we had to hire a new person for snow removal, as the Murphy’s who had done it for years, had to drop our account. We hired the one person who responded to our ad. We also had to hire a second person to clear just the town sidewalk in front of the Sanctuary where the town plow dumps heavy, wet snow. This requires a person with a heavy duty snow blower and Cody Campbell has a ride in machine that does the job.

In December we cut a beautiful tree from John Atwood’s property to put up in the Sanctuary. It was decorated and enjoyed for a couple Sundays before we stopped meeting in person AGAIN and sadly had to cancel in-person Christmas Eve services. We’ll remember these pandemic days (years) for a long time.
The Music and Worship Committee continues to focus on the core principle of its mission statement: “to ensure that the preparation and delivery of the Sunday morning services are of the highest available quality, that they connect both the head and the heart, that they contribute to the spiritual well-being of all the people present, and that they reflect our church’s values as outlined in the seven principles”.

Committee activities:

Last year’s report began with “What a year this has been for the MAWC!” The same can be said for 2021. As the number of COVID cases soared in early 2021, we continued our online services on YouTube. Diane was a pro at assembling our video services. We added a video of Laura Foley reading a poem and often a prayer scrolling over a beautiful video. The service usually consisted of a welcome, an opening hymn, the lighting of the chalice, Laura's poem, a prayer, Spirit of Life, the reflection and an instrumental or choral piece. Diane continued to hold zoom choir rehearsals and was incredibly adept at assembling the recorded voices into a beautiful choral piece.

Despite all the challenges we feel good about not only having met our mission, but the quality of the services. Our weekly services have between 150 and 250 views. We have been able to connect with church members who have moved away, and even involve them in our services. As a member of the choir or a welcomer. Perhaps this is the silver lining. Both Leon and Diane have been the glue that held the services and the committee together.

In April a reopening task force began to look at the data and to consider a date to return to in person services. By June the COVID numbers had greatly decreased and many of us were double vaccinated. We started holding services in the backyard of the church the second Sunday in July and continued holding them outside until late September. We only had to cancel the service once due to rain. We depended on volunteers to bring out the podium, speakers, the Joys and Concerns table and to erect two 12-foot square tents. We all wore masks and sat socially distanced from one another.

As fall and cool weather approached, we warily moved inside continuing with social distancing and masks and we purchased 3 air filters for the sanctuary. Most people felt safe enough to attend, and even continued coming when in early November we had our first case of COVID. Thanks to the precautions we were taking, no one else caught the virus. We had another case after Thanksgiving and again, no spread. Then the Delta variant was joined by the more contagious Omicron variant and the number of cases in Vermont began to climb. The Health and Safety Task Force met the week before Christmas and made the decision to go back online, starting with the Christmas Eve service. Thanks to our early experience with video services, the transition was seamless. The Christmas Eve service was fabulous and was viewed by over 250 people.

We have continued to have monthly themes for our services, and four members of the committee met monthly to craft them. Leon and many guest reflectors have used the monthly theme as the inspiration for their reflections.

We have had a wonderful group of reflectors this year, both in person and on video. Six members of our congregation gave reflections: Veronica Delay, Rowley Hazard, Laura Foley and Clara Gimenez, Kevin Geiger, Sabrina Brown and Fred Hass and Chris Cassell. Gareth Henderson, Simon Dennis, Gwen Groff, Ron Miller, Dan Fraser, Rob Schultz and Deanna Jones also gave reflections. The Board has asked us to invite speakers who are involved in Social Justice issues.
For 2021, they included: Ron Miller, Braver Angels, Simon Dennis, The Center for Transformational Practice, Kevin Geiger, a regional planner at TROCR, Dan Frazer, community building in Norwich, Rob Schultz, Vital Communities and Deanna Jones, Thompson Senior Center. The committee will continue to invite speakers who are involved in Social Justice issues in 2022.

Members of the committee as of February 2022 will be, Co-chairs – Jenny Gelfan and Clara Gimenez, Kristen McEntyre, Lora Coble, Anne Macksoud, Leon Dunkley and Diane Mellinger.

Respectfully submitted by - Mary Blanton and Anne Marinello, resigning Co-Chairs
Music at the North Chapel 2021

Much like the previous year, North Chapel music in 2021 was not without its challenges and blessings. The choir continued to meet weekly on Zoom, visiting and singing, and recorded individual audios for mixing into pieces that were included in Sunday e-services. This allowed safe participation for singers, and included “bonus” singers from afar who would otherwise not have been able to participate. This continued through July 4th, when we uploaded what we hoped was our last e-service. Meeting outside through the end of September allowed for recorded music of all sorts, since there were no restrictions due to copyright issues. Services began in the sanctuary in October, with no singing, but allowed for live music, though no vocalists or wind instruments. Choir began to meet again in November in a hybrid fashion, rehearsing both in the sanctuary (masked and distanced) and simultaneously on Zoom. It was not perfect for anyone involved, but adequate for everyone. Our plan to record individual audios to create songs for playing at the in-person Christmas Eve services was still useful when those services were moved exclusively online.

My continued gratitude for the intrepid choir singers, and in particular to the following: Don Ransom, Pierre Fournier, Rowley Hazard, Sandi Anderson, Alicia Breer, Anne Dean, Laurie Marshall, Sherry Belisle, and David Ross.

Respectfully submitted by
Diane Mellinger 1/8/2022
Annual Report of North Chapel
Resource Development Committee for 2021
For Annual Meeting January 29, 2022

The RDC committee has four members: Deborah Rice- Chair, Wayne Thompson, Susan Rubel, and our Board liaison, Richard Waddell. We also have the support of Denise Lyons for grant writing. Ideally this committee was designed to oversee the five different streams of revenue for North Chapel, besides weekly donations, but for now, as a practical matter, it is mainly concerned with Fundraising and the Stewardship Drive.

I. Fundraising- Projects are summarized on a table each month in the committee reports section of the North Chapel website. In 2021 there were four successful fundraisers, in spite of the Covid pandemic:
   A. The Spring Fling Auction, which brought in $15,832. A huge thank you to Anne Dean for organizing it.
   B. Fall Bulb Sale chaired by Susan Rubel, netting $2,348.
   C. Wreath & Amaryllis Sale, chaired by Deborah Rice with support from Polly Forcier, Jack Nelson, Fran and Ralph Lancaster, Laurie Marshall, Barbara Abraham and Katrin Helgason, which netted $2,843.
   D. The Hash Dash repackaged the Red Flannel Hash Supper organized by Ann Wynia, as a takeout instead of seated meal and netted $1,875.

Stewardship Drive- The 2022 pledge drive has raised approximately $130,000 toward the stated goal of $145,000, with pledges still coming in. To date, 79 individuals or families have pledged. Thank you to Denise Lyons, Michael Stoner, Joanne Boyle, and Ann Wynia for their work on the drive, and to board members who contributed weekly video messages about the importance of pledging.

II. Rentals of Building Space- Not possible due to Covid. There was one very small wedding with all appropriate safety precautions.

III. Grants- Richard Waddell reports that North Chapel received $17,000 from the Byrne Foundation. The Canaday Foundation awarded $90,000 for the Brave Light Project that Leon is working on.

IV. Planned Giving- Through the Finance Committee, on hold until further notice.

The RDC committee welcomes volunteers to let the Board know if they have expertise to contribute in any of these areas.

Submitted by Deborah Rice
Report from SE Director, Chloe Powell

Thank you for welcoming me into your community. I’m grateful for the opportunity to work with the North Chapel SE program. I grew up in Barnard, attending Barnard Central School, and the WUMS/HS. As a teen-ager, I spent two years in Rome, Italy, attending an international high school and making friends from all over the world. Traveling and experiencing other cultures is something that is important to me. I look forward to sharing my love for other cultures with the children.

Like Rev. Leon, I graduated from Tufts University, where I studied Child Development and Italian. For two years after college, I was a preschool teacher for 4-year-olds. I loved the challenge of simplifying complex ideas making them understandable to young children. I have continued to work with children over the years running my summer camp, Camp Red Clover through 2019. I have also worked as an advocate for food education, and now for music and arts education. Currently, I work with BarnArts, programming the Music on the Farm Thursday Music Series. My job has expanded to include building residencies for international artists and making connections with our local schools. We will be bringing the Haitian group, Lakou Mizik, to public schools and community groups this April and May. I hope to bring them to North Chapel as well.

I have enjoyed getting to know the children in the SE Program and am delighted to return to my roots of working with young children. We’ve been reading stories and talking about the story’s message. We have also had fun creating art together. I have many ideas for the future, and I especially like to daydream about a season when we can be outside gardening and cooking together with the fruits of our labor. In the fall, the children helped me plant some colorful tulip bulbs. I am hopeful that we will be together soon and see them flower!
Social Justice Film, Discussions, and other events Group ("SPARKS") Report

A small North Chapel group is currently engaged in planning a series of films, discussions, and other events related to social justice issues for the North Chapel and wider community. Our goal is to support one another as we raise our awareness and deepen our understanding of the complex and compelling issues of our times, in the hope that both together and separately, we can take effective and meaningful action. We are hoping to develop outcomes from our discussions. For the most part they are open to our wider community. For now the films are watched online with discussions on Zoom. We hope as the pandemic wanes we can offer the films in the parlor with discussions to follow. We are currently discussing plans for spring films. Your suggestions are welcomed!

To get involved or join us, contact any one of the group: Joanne Boyle, Peggy Brightman, Joan Columbus, Annie Macksoud, Anne Marinello and Joelle Seavey.

September 2021
Starting in September the committee met, planned and discussed how best to present (remotely, due to the pandemic) social justice themed films and followed by discussions. It was decided that the links to the films would be sent out to the congregation, and sometimes the wider community, to watch on their own time, followed by a link to a zoom meeting where all interested would participate in a moderated discussion about the film.

October 2021:
Joanna Macy: Climate Change as Spiritual Path,
a film by Anne Macksoud & Jon Ankele /Old Dog Documentaries.

November 2021:
“The Last Irene”-(VINS film)

January 2022:
“Beyond the Politics of Life and Choice
A film by Anne Macksoud and Jon Ankele/Old Dog Documentaries

Respectfully submitted by Peg Brightman, Chair
Report from the Yoga Class

I continue to offer my yoga class via zoom on Wednesdays from 8:30-9:30. Please contact me at amykwheeler@icloud.com if you’d like to join us. It’s by donation to the North Chapel and open to all.
My intention for this class is to offer an opportunity for relaxation and stress relief through gentle movement and breath/body awareness.
Thank you, Amy Wheeler