



First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Medfield

26 North Street, Medfield, MA
(508) 359-4594

www.firstparishmedfield.org



November Newsletter 2014

From the Minister

I hope you are enjoying these beautiful, warm days!

“Without vision, the people perish” said the ancient prophet. So let me share with you the substance of the conversation everyone was invited to participate in on October 26 about the draft vision statement.

Thank you to the folks who came to the first congregational meeting in our vision/mission process: it was a really rich conversation!

The draft vision statement was based on three core values that the board members had worked to discern over several meetings. They were

love, exploration, and spirituality

Based on these core values, we then developed this draft vision statement:

A loving community committed to the exploration of the human spirit and to the [nurture and] creation of a safe and welcoming world.

Remember, a vision is the “what” of the church’s purpose. It is the world we wish to see based on our most important shared values, and not just the church we wish to see. The mission describes the “how” of the church’s purpose, the ways - broadly speaking - we will go about helping make that world more of a reality.

To learn more about what was said at the open conversation, **please see the Notes article printed separately in this newsletter.** It gave us a great deal of food for thought, and we appreciated the conversation, questions, and feedback.

We will have another of these open conversations on November 9 at 11:30, and we urge you to attend if you could not make the first one. If you can’t attend this one either, perhaps you’d like to set up a meeting with myself or a lay board member to talk about the draft vision statement.

After these conversations, the Executive Board revise the working draft vision statement, and then

lead at least two discernment workshops with the congregation to develop the church's mission. These will be part of an iterative process, where workshops will be held, results summarized and widely distributed, feedback will be solicited, more conversations held and so on. After this, the board hopes it will have a succinct mission that congregants can remember and **care about** to guide our lives together as a community. And then the congregation will be asked to vote upon it at the annual meeting in June.

This work of reflecting anew on our purpose as a church is exciting. Clarity can be challenging - it requires prioritizing, and making choices. But clarity of purpose is also wonderful, it will help us all grow more, together and as individuals, and to have a greater impact on the world around us.

Many blessings, and see you in church!
Rev. Meg

We Have a New Movie Projector!



Thanks to Debra Carbarnes, Coming of Age parents and an anonymous donor

AND
THE FIRST PARISH YOUTH GROUP!



Church services, events that the public is invited to and the Youth Group will use it for Popcorn Theology.



Draft Vision Conversation Comments

On October 26, executive board members and congregants conversed about the proposed draft vision. Here are Rev. Meg's notes capturing comments from the meeting.

The three the Board discerned are:

love, exploration, and spirituality

The draft vision statement is:

A loving community committed to the exploration of the human spirit and to the [nurture and] creation of a safe and welcoming world.

General Comments

- Use verbs, not nouns made from verbs; shorter - ten words or less - is better
- My school scrapped its old mission and instituted just one word – respect, and that really was powerful, everything we did was guided by that.

Specifically on the Second phrase: “The Exploration of the Human Spirit”

- Need some mention of spirituality beyond just the human dimension.
- (EB member response) We have been talking about the dimension of spirituality beyond the purely human, we didn't take account of the sacred as we were drafting this. The big word we used for that value was spirituality. That's one possibility.
- (Rev. Meg response) We started talking about it, though. It's important to articulate a vision that creates space for all our theologies and doesn't only acknowledge the humanist perspective.
- Don't include the sacred or anything beyond our human community. Especially don't use that word God!
- I like “sacred space”.
- I'm an atheist myself, but I think what we are talking about is including what is

beyond our selves, Rev. Meg said it this morning, some of us see that as Nature, or the universe, or the sacred.

- “Beyond our selves” has three dimensions: space, time and consciousness. I like “spirit”, it comes from “breathe” which points to breathing in and out and interdependence.

Specifically on the third phrase: “To the Creation of a Safe and Welcoming World”

- Start from a positive, the phrase implies the world, this community aren't safe and welcoming; the world is partly safe and welcoming and partly not, so use “Cultivate”, build, or nurture rather than “create”, since we really aren't starting from scratch.
- I have a problem with the word “world”, it's way too big, it's “vision creep”. “Community” I could see.
- We can't make the world that way completely, but we can make it more that way than it is now, how about “working toward” rather than create?
- We can walk the walk of safety.
- We can't fix all the lack of safety in the world but we can do our best.
- What does “welcoming” mean, “safety”? They don't really mean anything.
- I like “welcoming”.
- There's a tension between the two words and that's good.
- It means a world where people can be who they are and accepted and feel like they belong.
- We need the word safe, this church hasn't always been safe, and we need to remember to how important that is.

From the Director of Religious Education

A Reflection on Giving



Did you hear the one about the family who sold their million-dollar house and moved to a less expensive one so they could give half their proceeds to fight hunger in Africa?

No joke, no punch line. They really did that. And the father and daughter, Kevin and Hannah Salwen, wrote a book about it called *The Power of Half*, (Houghton Mifflin 2010).

My first response to the story was "I could never do anything like that," and then I started asking myself, "If I could, would I?" And as I was reading about their years of work toward realizing their goal, I found myself asking all sorts of questions: What do I have to give away? If I don't have money to give, what do I have? The Salwens suggest thinking in terms of "time, talent and treasure" (treasure not necessarily being money, but other material things that can be spared, like clothes in a closet).

The Salwens' story and the questions they asked themselves helped me explore my own ways of giving, and my family's, in a very practical way. For example, I have this idea that I'm someone who donates to charities, but if I actually look at my checkbook, I don't do much of it. On the other hand, I don't think of myself as particularly generous with my time, until I look at my calendar and see how many of the things I do help other people.

One thing I love about being in a UU community is that having a chance to be generous in face-to-face interactions -- generous with attention. My favorite thing about facilitating RE is getting to

lavish kids with listening, with genuine curiosity and care.

On the other hand, there are times when I don't give money to homeless folks who are right in front of me. On a family trip to Washington DC, we were pretty overwhelmed by the number of people asking for money on the streets ("Washington DC isn't the shining utopia I thought it would be," my young son commented) and I had to explain my choice to say no.

Choosing which local organizations FPUU should collect pennies and nickels for at Medfield Day last year felt like a weighty choice. In the end, we put out jars for the Medfield Animal Shelter, Medfield Green (an environmental organization), and the Medfield Food Cupboard. This year we collected only for Forever Home Rescue New England, based in Medfield, because kids seem to be most enthusiastic about helping animals, and I wanted to encourage them in their giving.

There's no one right way to give, but it's always a good time to reflect on the idea of giving, what our own habits and priorities and assumptions are, what choices we make, and how it feels. It's also important to talk about these things -- in families, in communities -- to stay connected with giving as a practice and a value. We'll soon be entering a season of gifts and giving, and whether it drives you crazy or it's your favorite time of year, it's an opportunity for reflection and conversation.

From my perspective, we are all giving and receiving constantly, and as we do, we enter the flow of human generosity and hospitality as it's existed in every place and every time in history. May we all nourish that flow and be nourished by it.

--Alison Streit Baron

Owl Schedule for November



Jr. High Our Whole Lives (JOWL) for grades 7-9 meets in the U-house from 7:00 pm-9:00 pm on:

Sunday, November 2
Sunday, November 9
Sunday, November 23

High School Our Whole Lives (HOWL) for grades 10-12 meets in the Vestry from 7:00-9:00 pm on:

Sunday, November 16

Youth Group for grades 10-12 will meet on *November 9th* at 7:00 pm in the vestry.

November Coffee Hour Host Schedule



November 2: Leanne & Bill Harvey

November 9: Fritz Fleischmann & Katrin Fisher

November 16: Arnold & Faye Kalmbach

November 23: Rich Mastronardi & Susan Harlow

November 30: Kirsten & Glen D'Abate

Thank you Susan Harlow and Rich Mastronardi for being the Coffee Host Coordinators for November

Flowers Needed

Flowers for the Sanctuary are still needed for the months of November as well as January. Can you help?

Flowers donations may be given in honor or memory of a friend or loved one; in commemoration of a special event, or for any other reason you may decide to donate. Please contact Rebecca Stephenson.



Executive Board Notes

An Executive Board meeting was held on October 16, 2014

Financial Update:

FY 15 - at 29% through the fiscal year:

Pledges: \$34.1K (26.7%) out of \$127.7K (budget) collected

Fundraising: \$3K (31%) out of \$9.7K (budget) raised

Rentals: \$3.3K (30%) out of \$11K (budget) collected

Cash on hand (Rockland Trust Account): \$31K

Mondays at UU Medfield: Final plans for the first "Mondays at UU Medfield" on October 20 "Environmental Tax Reform" were discussed.

New Education Center Feasibility Task Force: In recognition that phase two of the New Education Center Committee has not been completed, the charter was finalized and voted on by the board: "The executive board, recognizing the need for the church to have religious education/administrative/rental space that is safe, accessible and energy efficient, hereby establishes a capital project task force. The task force shall investigate and report back to the executive board the range of capital project funds that the church can reasonably expect to raise. The executive board anticipates receiving the report in the winter of 2014-2015 so that the New Education Center Committee can work with the architect to complete phase two, taking the task force's report into account."

Vision Statement - We met Wednesday, October 1 for a 2 hour discussion of a vision for the church and continued this work at the meeting. We scheduled two congregational meetings - Sunday, October 26, and Sunday, November 9 after church, to have a conversation on a shared vision.

Semi-Annual Meeting: Scheduled for Sunday, December 7, 11:30am - 12:30pm - in the sanctuary.

Our next board meeting will be Thursday, November 20 at 7:30

Margaret Rolph
Executive Board Chair



Semi-Annual Meeting: Sunday, December 7, 11:30am - 12:30pm - in the sanctuary.

Medfield Interfaith Thanksgiving Worship Service

Tuesday, November 25th

at 7:00 pm

United Church of Christ

496 Main Street, Medfield, MA



Please join us!

Representatives from all the churches in Medfield, as well as Temple Beth David in Westwood, will take part in the service as well as a combined choir.

The Medfield Food Cupboard has requested the following from our church for the month of November:



Soup
Pasta sauce
Canned tuna
Canned chicken
Canned fruits
Canned vegetables Juice
Peanut butter
Applesauce

Please double check your food items to ensure that they are undented, unopened, and unexpired. Thanks for your efforts. Any donations are greatly appreciated and can be placed in the basket in the narthex.

Special thanks to Evan Springer who is the coordinator for our church this year.



Notes from the Music Director

COME TOGETHER, THE MYSTERY, PART ONE

Eva Kendrick

What do First Parish Medfield and a UU fellowship in Portland have in common? The tune is familiar to anyone who attends a service at First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Medfield. It is the first responsorial song we sing after the words of welcome, usually prompted by the words "Come, let us worship together."

Oh, come together in truth.
Oh, come together in peace.
Oh, come together in joy and sharing
Come together in knowing and caring
Come together, oh, come together,
Oh, come together in love.

This song had been left on the piano on my first day as Music Director, back in 2006, and I have played it in nearly every service since then. It is a tradition of our church, just like the closing responsorial song, "Until We Meet Again" which was written by Johann Georg Nageli and arranged by Medfield's own Lowell Mason. "Spirit of Truth" our third responsorial song which followed the silent meditation in years past was also written by Lowell Mason. The two Lowell Mason tunes were photocopied from an older hymnal, and the origins there are clear, However, I came to wonder what the origins were of our opening song, which was copied onto the other side of the music.

The sheet music for "Come Together" is handwritten, but the attributions are typed. The

lyrics were written by Dorothy Grover in 1971, and the music by a Douglas L. Butler. At the bottom are the words "Commissioned for the beginning of our Portland, Oregon Family Fellowship" and was first published and distributed by the Religious Arts Guild, UUA. The score at church is a photocopy. Did the UUA at one time distribute music to be used, copyright-free in various congregations?

I am keenly interested to discover how this piece of music came to be part of our First Parish Medfield tradition. When was it first given to us? Do other churches use this as an opening song of welcome? I have asked a few members of First Parish, some of whom who have attended for more than thirty years, and they have told me the song has been there as long as they have. Since the lyrics were written in 1971, it must have arrived sometime between 1971 and 1984, when the Music Director was several times my predecessor.

I have decided to discover the origins of this song and unlock the mystery of how it came to be a fixture at First Parish Medfield. If you have any clues or leads, please e-mail them to evakendrick@comcast.net. I will report back in a future newsletter with my findings.

In music & fellowship,
Eva Kendrick



Daylight Savings Time ends at 2:00 am on Sunday, November 2nd.
Don't forget to set your clocks back.



Veteran's Day, November 11th

Thank you to all our veterans for your service to our country!

Notes from the Church Office:



Information needed: Has your address, telephone number or cell phone number changed? Please email the office at admin@firstparishmedfield.org with updated contact information so that we can keep the church database up to date.

Please remember the following deadlines: *Church Newsletter:* Third Sunday of the month. *Order of Service:* Wednesdays by 5:00 pm.

Sandra Andreassi-Administrator

Office Hours: Mondays & Thursdays from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Supporting FPUU through Amazon.com and Equal Exchange



There are many ways to support First Parish - becoming a member is one, volunteering is another. But you can also help by buying things through Amazon.com or by getting your coffees, teas, and chocolates through Equal Exchange. Getting the things that you

would ordinarily order anyway, but using the links available on our website will let you do your part in supporting the work of this congregation, helping our social action agenda, and preserving our historic Meeting House.

Go to our website www.firstparishmedfield.org and click on the "Support First Parish-Amazon & Equal Exchange" link.



FPUU Calendar of Events

Sunday, November 2	Choir Rehearsal/9:00 am/Sanctuary RE Meeting/12:00/Vestry JOWL /7:00 pm/U-House
Monday, November 3	Historical Society Meeting/6:30pm/Vestry
Thursday, November 6	Committee on Ministry/7:00 pm/Minister's Office
Sunday, November 9	Vision Meeting/11:30 am/Sanctuary Chalice Circle/4:00 pm/U-house Youth Group/7:00 pm/Vestry JOWL /7:00 pm/U-House
Tuesday, November 11	Veteran's Day/Church Offices Closed
Thursday, November 13	Worship & Music Meeting/7:30 pm/Vestry
Sunday, November 16	Choir Rehearsal/9:00 am/Sanctuary HOWL/7:00 pm/Vestry
Thursday, November 20	Executive Board Meeting/7:30 pm/U-House
Sunday, November 23	Choir Rehearsal/9:00 am/Sanctuary JOWL /7:00 pm/U-House
Tuesday, November 25	Choir Rehearsal/TBD Medfield Interfaith Thanksgiving Service/UCC
Thursday, November 27	Thanksgiving/Office Closed
Monday, November 30	Choir Rehearsal/9:00 am/Sanctuary

