



First Parish Unitarian Universalist Of Medfield

26 North Street, Medfield, MA

(508) 359-4594

www.firstparishmedfield.org



December Newsletter 2016

The Parson's Packet

Dear friends,

Where do we go next?

This is an urgent question, as we wonder what the future holds for us, for those we care for, and for our country and world. Many people are lying awake wondering and worrying – and looking for both consolation and clarity.

There are no simple answers. Maybe that is the beginning of the wisdom and fortitude we

must draw on to renew our quest for a better world. It has, after all, only been delayed. In all times, the best and the most troubled, the better world can be only delayed. It cannot be denied as long as men and women will speak and act and sacrifice to speed its arrival. We must comfort each other against despair, but we need to move on to the determination that overcomes all obstacles. That is the authentic consolation.

My first Biblical exegesis was of Habakkuk. For a minor Hebrew prophet, he had a major message, for in his brief text is this promise, "It will come at the time appointed for it." The good does not

tarry, as the old language had it. It arrives without fail, of its own volition. This is the first glimpse of the long arc of the universe bent toward justice.

Of clarity we have some important markers already. We know we must look to our own – and that our own includes our immediate community but also all humanity. Love, to prevail, must be written both small and large. It must be as immediate as the sun on our faces and as wide as the continents. It must be close as a single drop of rain and vast as the deep ocean itself. Like water, it must be both still and flowing, hidden and gushing forth like fire, it must avail us against dark

and cold – and it will.

Emerson’s famous response to the burden of history was to declare, “No better men ever lived than live now.” He meant that men and women of his day were surely equal to the challenges of their times. Surely we are as well.

Hold every heart in renewed hope.

Best wishes,
Rev. David

Sunday – Dec. 4

“The Pretty-Excellent Church”

Rev. David W. Chandler

Most UU churches have solid histories of being “pretty good,” with occasional bursts of inspiration. That’s been enough in the past – is it enough for the future? If we moved our game up a notch or two, where would we look to be something more? **Religious Ed.**

Sunday – Dec. 11

“The Thing with Feathers”

Rev. David W. Chandler

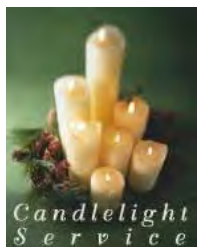
Transitional periods may exacerbate anxiety in congregational life. They may bring out latent tension. The answer is to live larger, not smaller. What we hold in our hearts and see in our dreams is strong enough to carry us in our competent hands. **Religious Ed.**

Sunday – Dec. 18

The Winter Solstice for All Ages

Samantha Decker Nemeth

Led by our RE Coordinator and RE Committee, our children invite us into the holidays with joyful celebration of ancient rituals for the shortest day and the changing seasons.



Saturday – Dec. 24 at 5:30 PM

Candlelight Christmas Eve for All Ages

Rev.

David W. Chandler

Bring your family and friends to join in the magic. We will have special music, including our Choir. We will have stories traditional and modern from our young adults. We will have singing from all and bright candles of joy and celebration and hope renewing itself.

Sunday – Dec. 25

Church closed for the holiday.

Notes from the Executive Board

Dear Friends:

One of the fallouts from the recent election is a renewed desire for safety in community – a feeling articulated by quite a few members of our congregation at several open meetings. At the Executive Board meeting on November 17, the theme of safety in community arose as well. And on the Sunday on which I am writing this note (November 20), the Joys and Concerns section of our service was notable for the shared joy of being in our community, expressed by one congregant after another, for the gratitude we all feel for being together.

Among the issues the Board had discussed at its September retreat, the theme of safety had come up in more localized sense: how can we feel safe in our congregation, and how can we learn to manage conflicts and strengthen trust in each other? We discussed this theme again at the November 17 meeting. Given that we need to install a new ministerial search committee by the end of this church year, we also looked at these questions through what Rev. David calls the “search lens”: what do we want to tell our next minister about us? What are our expectations of this new minister – and what are our expectations of ourselves?

In our discussion, we also addressed our “systems” – that is, our structures of self-governance and management within the congregation. We all agreed that we need to make the “systems” more visible and understood, to clarify which decisions are made by whom, and who is responsible for what. For instance, not everybody in the

congregation knows what our various committees do and who their members are. This is a special challenge for newer members, some of whom would like to join a committee but don’t really know where their own talents and interests could best be engaged.

The EB concluded that it would be a good idea to ask our committees to present themselves to the congregation, one committee at a time and one committee per month, during coffee hour – by setting up a table with some information where appropriate, and by being available for conversation. We’d like to begin this initiative during the current church year, but also make it a practice to have such information available in September after the first service of the year (sort of like the “club fairs” that colleges have for entering students). I have asked Green Sanctuary to start us off in January, and Membership to follow suit in February. Please stay tuned for details!

Looking forward, here are some other dates to keep in mind: the semi-annual meeting on December 4; the discussion of the interim process after the service on December 11; our festive Christmas service on the 24th -- and an intergenerational dance party on New Year’s Eve, sponsored by the Espresso Yourself Coffeehouse and featuring (you guessed it) The Larger Circle Band.



See you at the meetinghouse!

Fritz

Warrant

Semi-Annual Meeting First Parish Unitarian Universalist Medfield, MA

December 4, 2016 at 11:15 AM

The Executive Board hereby notifies all voting members of First Parish Unitarian Universalist Medfield of the Semi-Annual Parish Meeting, to be held in the Sanctuary of First Parish at 11:15 AM on Sunday, December 4, 2016. A quorum of 25 percent of Full Members eligible to vote at the time of posting of this notice must be present to conduct the business of the Congregation. This translates to 21 members.

In accordance with the Bylaws of First Parish Medfield (approved on June 3, 2012) in Article 4.2, the Semi-Annual Meeting is described as follows:

Article 4.2 Midyear Meeting

Article 4.2.1 Time and Place: A semi-annual Parish meeting is held in the Fall between the first day of November and the last day of December.

Article 4.2.2 Purpose: The semi-annual Parish meeting shall be held to update the Congregation on the status of the Church at the time of the meeting and conduct any other business as determined by the Executive Board.

The following topics will be addressed at the Semi-Annual Meeting:

- Financial update
- A vote to amend our by-laws to include the new Vision and Mission Statements.
- **Motion:** to replace the existing Article 2 (“Mission”) with the following:

Article 2 – VISION AND MISSION

Article 2.1 We are a loving community committed to spiritual exploration and to a safe and welcoming world.

Article 2.2 We strive to live with deep respect and love for life, to embrace the challenge of human differences, to foster spiritual growth and to work toward a just and sustainable world, beginning with our own and nearby communities.

- Report on the general state of the Church
- Any other business that may be put forward by those present.

We will convene right after an abbreviated coffee hour. The meeting should last about one and a half hours. Thank you on behalf of the Executive Board. Childcare will be provided.

Meet New Members Susan and Emily Sheppard!



Ten years ago this past August, Susan Sheppard got the call she had been waiting two years to receive. There was a little girl, 14 months old, in an orphanage in Dzerzhinsk, in the Nizhny Novgorod region of Russia, available for adoption. If Susan could come right away to meet her, and if she could prove that she had bonded with the child at that meeting, *and* if she could make the exhausting trip again if she was approved, she would be a Mom. One week later, Susan made the two day trip to Dzerzhinsk where she was ushered into a large playroom set up for such meetings and introduced to little Lyubov, a strawberry-blonde, blue-eyed bundle of energy, dressed in pink from head to toe for the occasion. Susan gave Lyubov the toys she had brought and watched her reel with excitement as she toddled around with a baby scooter and jumped on a large stuffed dog. After the initial meeting, Susan had to declare her intent, provide the baby's name for her new life and sign the requisite paperwork. Lyubov became Emily Ellen, and Emily would learn her new name

over the next couple of months before she could join her forever family in the United States.

It would be another three months before Susan received a date from the Russian authorities to appear before a judge in Russia to process the adoption. By mid-November, Susan was boarding a plane once again, loaded down with baby gear and clothing and supplies for the orphanage. After what seemed like an eternity, Susan flew into Nizhny Novgorod in the middle of the night in a blustery snowstorm. Between the arctic air and feelings of exhilaration and nervous anticipation, Susan slept little that night, but instead reviewed the questions the judge might ask in court the next day. A bright sunny morning finally arrived and Susan was shuffled off into a courtroom in an old dank brick building. After a nerve-racking inquisition by the judge, Susan was, at long last, declared Emily's mother and the celebration began. Susan and the adoption facilitator raced to the orphanage to get Emily, beginning their adventure together on November 16th, a day they

now celebrate as "Family Day". The new family began the journey home. This would entail an overnight train to Moscow where more paperwork, pictures, and passports were processed as well as a visit to a medical doctor for a final check before they could leave the country. As Susan tells it, "Little Emily was a trooper from the beginning. She whimpered just a little in her first car ride, but then excitement and curiosity won out. She wanted to see and touch everything she could, because so many things were new to her, like a car ride, a television and the big city. She opened every drawer, pulled everything out of suitcases and was on the run." Emily interjects, "I was full of action!" While Susan was love-struck from the moment she met Emily, real bonding began when, on the overnight train ride to Moscow, Emily was all tucked in on a sleeper bench and then decided to crawl up on Susan's chest for a cuddle. As Susan recalls, "She quickly fell asleep, and at that moment everything seemed right."

On the 18 hour trip from Moscow to Boston Emily never stopped moving; literally *flying* up and down the aisles of the plane! "She was a happy girl but I was in tears by the time we finally cleared customs. We were the last two people to walk through the gate after securing U.S. citizenship for Emily." And so it was that on the night before Thanksgiving, Susan and her patiently waiting parents brought Emily home to Medfield. Emily's grandparents were immediately smitten with their first and only grandchild, following her around the house as she pointed to objects. "Da!!" "Table." "Da!!" "Chair." They visited often and wanted to

babysit at every opportunity. "She gave them a new purpose, and it was wonderful to see how Emily infused new energy and life into our family. As we celebrate our 10 year anniversary together, I can't imagine life without Emily."

Today, Emily at 11 plays the flute, ice skates with the Starlights synchronized skating team, is an architect and construction engineer specializing in after school fort and fairy house building, sketches cartoons in her "Private" notebook, raises butterflies in her bedroom and can train a headstrong dog. Family and friends have been known to call Emily the Animal Whisperer. As for Susan, she does what so many Moms do – she works and she drives... But if homework is done and it's still early, Susan will make some popcorn and curl up with her Emily on the couch to watch a "really great" movie. *Godzilla vs. Megaguirus* was Emily's recent choice.

And, of course, Emily and Susan are now members of First Parish. Susan wanted to bring Emily up in a church community and decided to try the Unitarian church a year ago last spring. As Emily says, "It's not too God-related but I like the kid's section, and I like the crafts we do. I like coffee hour because I'm a black hole and love to eat! I like helping at the coffeehouse and I got to play my flute there." What keeps them active is the warm and welcoming community they have found here. "It gives us a sense of community and belonging, and it is comforting to be around like-minded people in these turbulent times."



Welcome

The Medfield Garden Club Holiday Greens Sale

The First Parish UU of Medfield



Saturday, December 3rd
10 a.m. until noon

Christmas wreaths, swags, kissing balls, basket arrangements, centerpieces, cemetery memorials, and the Garden Club's well-known miniature boxwood trees will all be available for sale. This is the Club's primary fundraiser and the proceeds support the Club's efforts to beautify the town, including the 19 roadside gardens.



Come early for the best selection!

Our Whole Lives (OWL) for 8th and 9th graders, is still inviting participants to join for a January start.



From the UUA website:

"Honest, accurate information about sexuality changes lives. It dismantles stereotypes and assumptions, builds self-acceptance and self-esteem, fosters healthy relationships, improves decision making, and has the potential to save lives.... Unlike many other sexuality curricula currently available, this program is comprehensive and progressive. In an inclusive and developmentally appropriate manner, it addresses sensitive topics that are typically excluded. Although the curriculum was developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ, this volume is completely secular and free of specific hreligious doctrine or reference. However, the underlying values of the program reflect the justice-oriented traditions of both denominations."

Our program, part of the Religious Education program at First Parish for over 10 years, is facilitated by Chris Conley and Cissy Hull-Allen and is open to First Parish members and friends, and also to the community (for a one time fee; scholarships available). Please contact Cissy (mecha1030@gmail.com) for more information.

Youth Group

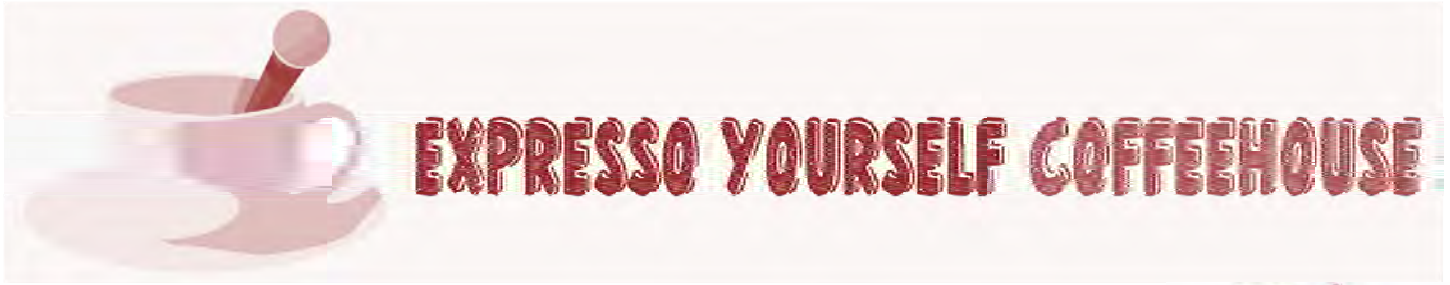
The Youth Group meets once a month, usually on the 4th Sunday evening. In December, there will be a party with past youth group members invited. Current discussions have spanned social justice, including the recent racist hate letters in Natick, and strategies for surviving certain classes at Medfield High. YG is open to FP students and friends in 10-12 grade.



If the Weather Outside is Frightful...



To keep you informed on any closings or delays on Sunday mornings, an email blast will go out to those that are on the mailing list no later than 7 AM.



Presents out first ever...

New Year's Eve Dance Party with First Parish's own Larger Circle Band!



**When: Saturday, December 31st (duh...)
7 p.m. to 10 p.m.**

Where: First Parish Vestry

**What: An evening of open mic stories, songs and poems
Plus...Dancing to the international tunes of the Larger Circle Band.
Plus... Complimentary hors d'oeuvres and desserts, cash bar
Plus... More fun than you could possibly have at home on the couch!**

Tickets: \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door
Contact: Linda Finkle @ Lindainwinthrop@gmail.com or 603-918-0848

Notes from the Church Office:



Please remember the following deadlines:

Church Newsletter: Third Sunday of the month.

Order of Service: Wednesdays by 5:00 pm.

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

Email: admin@firstparishmedfield.org

Sandra Andreassi-Administrator

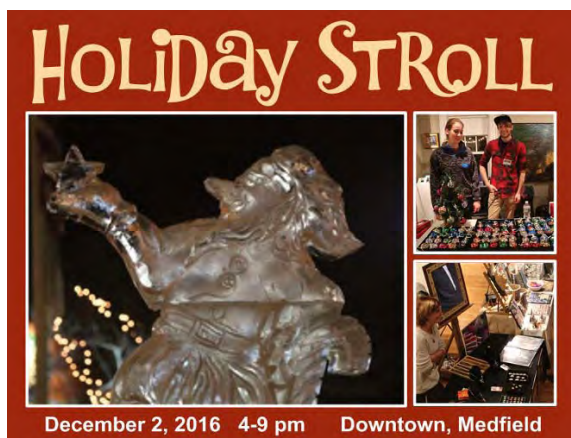
Supporting FPUU through Amazon.com and Equal Exchange

With the holidays quickly approaching, please remember that if you are using Amazon.com, you can help support First Parish!



To order on Amazon, please use this link: <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/redirect-home/firstparisuuch01> First Parish will receive about 5% of what you order and will not cost you anything!!! (One important note - if you had items in your Amazon 'shopping basket' before using this link, First Parish won't get the benefit of your shopping. Only items placed in the shopping basket AFTER clicking the above link help)

Equal Exchange only sells "Fair Trade" products - by dealing directly with small farmers and co-ops, they insure that the growers and producers get a fair market price for their products - and you get some of the best produce at a reasonable price. First Parish adds 15% to the Equal Exchange price, so your purchase also helps to support the work of the church. For information on ordering from Equal Exchange, click on this link: <http://www.firstparishmedfield.org/cms/component/content/article/45-amazon/76-ee>



The **Cultural Alliance of Medfield (CAM)** announces its second annual Holiday Stroll on **Dec. 2, 2016 from 4 – 9 pm**. This is a festive family event that takes place at eight venues along Main Street (Route 109) and the Dwight Derby House on Frairy Street. The Holiday Stroll includes food, an outdoor ice sculpture, roaming carolers, 40 juried artisans, live music, and M.E.M.O.'s outdoor tree lighting ceremony. All events are within walking distance, free parking nearby and free admission. For complete details and a list of artisans, visit www.MedfieldCulture.org.

The Medfield Food Cupboard has the following current needs:

PB
Jelly
Raisins
Fruit Cocktail

Canned Pasta
Chili
Beef Stew
Canned Corn

Tomato Products
Juice (large and boxes)
Kid Friendly Cereal
Sweet/Salty Snacks



Thanks to the community's generosity, we are currently fully stocked on soup, pasta and canned green beans.

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.

In our Larger Community....



P.O. Box 464, Sharon, MA 02067

*The Holiday Season is fast approaching & with that the **Gifts for Kids** Annual Program is getting ready to again serve needy youngsters so they can see their wish for presents come true*

*As a Coordinator for **Gifts for Kids**, I am asking for your help in promoting our organization & what we do....*

Our Primary Goal – *To help less fortunate families during the holiday season*

For the past 26 years our nonprofit organization helped ease the financial burden of less fortunate families for a happy holiday experience. We have been asked to provide for children identified by the Human Service providers in the Norfolk, Bristol & Plymouth counties.

We welcome your support in seeking Sponsors for these children by mentioning our organization to your parishioners. Find out more about us at giftsforkidsinfo.com and at www.facebook.com/GiftsForKids. Donations may be made on our website as well ~

Specific Sponsorship details will be available the week of November 15th.

Thanking you in advance,

Kathy Kubit – GFK Coordinator, GiftsForKidsInfo@gmail.com

*We are a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and all donations are tax deductible
Our tax identification number is 20-3361694*

Heifer Farm Holiday Open House



Heifer International, 216 Wachusett Street,
Rutland, MA

December 3, 4, 10 & 11, 2016 | 10:00 am to 4:00
pm each day

Creating memories, giving thoughtful gifts and enjoying good food are all part of our holiday seasons.

Heifer Farm invites you to a special event with a **Living Gift Market** so you can honor family and friends with a purchase of an animal gift that will share joy. Take home a special gift card and your photo with a goat!

Warm yourself with hot chestnuts at the bonfire; take a hayride; enjoy delicious homemade soup, baked goods and hot cocoa. Before you go, decorate a gingerbread cookie or stop into the Shop@Heifer for fairly-traded gift items, books, jewelry, and Heifer items.

Enjoy free admission with a canned good donation which will be given to the Worcester County Food Bank. We greatly appreciate your support! For more information, call 508-886-5000 or email heifer.farm@heifer.org.

First Parish Unitarian- Universalist Church of Canton to Host Clothing Events

As the temperature drops and thoughts turn to the upcoming holidays and season of giving, we at First Parish Unitarian Universalist - Canton are thinking of those who may be struggling and need a "hand up".

In cooperation with the Canton Area Food Pantry, we will host a free clothing event for families in need on Friday, December 2nd. Families will be welcomed to choose clothing, including coats and shoes, that will help them stay warm during this winter season. Children who come will also receive a special treat!

If you are in need of warm clothing please contact the Food Pantry for a voucher, or call the church for more information (781) 828-0296.

There will be a public clothing sale on Saturday, December 3rd from 9 am to 2 pm, with a bag sale after 12:30. Children's clothing will be \$1.00 per item, adult clothing will be \$2.00 per item, except for coats and selected new items which will range from \$3.00-\$5.00.

If you would like to donate clothing, please call the church office at (781) 828-0296 and leave a message if needed.

FPUU Calendar of Events

Friday, December 2	Choir Rehearsal/6:00 pm/Sanctuary
Saturday, December 3	Medfield Garden Club Greens Sale/10-12/Vestry
Sunday, December 4	Choir Rehearsal/9:00 am/Sanctuary Semi-Annual Meeting/11:15 am/Sanctuary
Monday, December 5	The Larger Circle Band Practice/7:00 pm/Vestry
Thursday, December 8	Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:15 pm/Vestry
Sunday, December 11	Choir Rehearsal/9:00 am/Sanctuary Thinking About the Interim/11:30 am/Vestry Chalice Circle/4:00 pm/U-House
Monday, December 12	The Larger Circle Band Practice/7:00 pm/Vestry
Thursday, December 15	Executive Board Meeting/7:30 pm/U-House
Friday, December 16	Choir Rehearsal/7:00 pm/Sanctuary
Saturday, December 17	NewLife Refurnishing Volunteer Day/Walpole
Sunday, December 18	Choir Rehearsal/9:00 am/Sanctuary Anti-Racism in the 'burbs/1:30 pm/Vestry Newsletter Deadline
Monday, December 19	The Larger Circle Band Practice/7:00 pm/Vestry
Saturday, December 24	Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary Christmas Eve Candlelight Service/5:30 pm/Sanctuary
Sunday, December 25	Christmas Day/Hanukkah begins
Monday, December 26	The Larger Circle Band Practice/7:00 pm/Vestry
Saturday, December 31	Expresso Yourself Coffeehouse/7:00 pm/Vestry

