

First Parish Unitarian Universalist Of Medfield

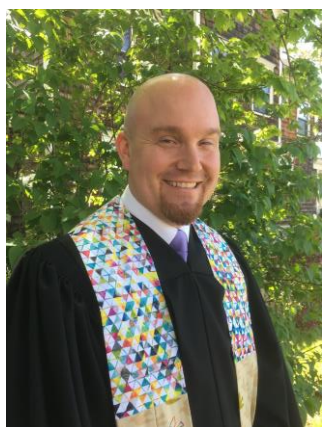
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www.firstparishmedfield.org



September 2022 Newsletter

Ministerial Musings Dave Egan, Minister



At the end of the church year in June, I was cleaning up and organizing the U House. I put some new books in the lending library in the parlor (please feel free to borrow any of the books). I found some old games and knick-knacks on the shelves and in the cabinets. I was excited when I came upon a beautiful wooden chess set... you know the kind with the nice weighted pieces used by chess pros. As a bit of a chess nerd myself, I was

delighted! Though hard as I tried, I could not find the accompanying chess board, and one of the rooks. Oh well, I still carefully displayed the beautiful pieces in the parlor.

A missing chess board and rook. Where could they be? Did someone borrow them? Lose them? Who knows. But it reminded me of what church life has been like for the past two-and-a-half years. Sure, we have stayed together as best we could through online platforms and inventive virtual gatherings. But our chess board was missing for much of this time...and some of the pieces were missing too. But somehow, the chess game continued, albeit with some difficulty.

This coming church year, I am hopeful that we will be securely back on the chess board, and that some of you estranged rooks might return as well. I know the past few years have been a struggle for our health, our hearts, and our minds. No one has gotten through this time unscathed. But in whatever ways feel nourishing and safe to you, I hope you can find a sense of community and support here at First Parish UU Medfield.

For there are many exciting things on the horizon. First of all, I am excited for you to all meet our new Coordinator of Religious Education, Jennifer Goodman. She has extensive teaching experience, a Masters in Education, and she even grew up as a Unitarian Universalist. The search committee was delighted to find someone of her caliber to coordinate our thriving RE program. We look forward to welcoming Jennifer into our community.

Also, this year we will be using Soul Matters, as a one-year pilot program. Soul Matters is a holistic thematic approach to church life. It provides curricula for religious education, lesson plans for the Pastoral Care Team to use for the monthly Chalice Circles, as well as resources that will be useful in crafting worship services. Each month there is a different theme, such as “belonging” or “courage”, and all of the Soul Matters components for that month are centered around that theme. As we try out Soul Matters this year, we welcome your feedback.

Finally, this coming Saturday the executive board, committee chairs, and staff members will be meeting for a Leadership Retreat. The purpose of this retreat is to develop a long term plan for our church community, one that is based on the vision and mission of the church. Following the worship service this Sunday, we will have an informal talk-back session with the congregation to report on

what was discussed, but more importantly to hear your thoughts.

As always, I look forward to embarking on a new church year with you all, and I am so very grateful to be serving as your minister.

See you at church!
Rev. Dave

Reopening Task Force Update

Covid Protocols for the new Church Year

The Reopening Task Force has reviewed current Covid conditions and recommendations. The protocols for the new church year are as follows:

1. Services will be indoors, with the air filtration system running.
2. All attendees, including children, are expected to be fully vaccinated and boosted. However, no signed attestation will be required.
3. Masks are recommended during congregational singing. Masks will be optional during other portions of the service.
4. Coffee and snacks can be served in the vestry after the conclusion of services. Masks will not be required.

The Task Force will continue to monitor conditions and will announce changes as they become necessary or appropriate. For questions or comments, please contact Bill Wians, Chair, Reopening Task Force: wwians@mac.com.

Upcoming Services

September 11

Our Cup Runneth Over

Rev. Dave Egan

Welcome back! After being apart this summer, we will reconvene and ask the question: why church? What is it about this community that connects us and adds meaning to our lives? With all that is happening in our lives, why do we return to this place again and again? During this, our annual water communion service, you are invited to co-mingle the water you've collected during your travels this summer, until our communal cup runneth over with gratitude.

September 18

Where Have All the Sand Dollars Gone?

Rev. Dave Egan

I recently walked along the shores of Ferry Beach in search of a sand dollar, something that has been almost impossible to find lately. I finally came to the conclusion that the ecology of this beach has changed, and perhaps I should accept this change. At the same time I was reading Octavia Butler's novel, *The Parable of the Talents* in which she focuses on the concept known as Process Theology. She says, "All that you touch you Change. All that you Change Changes you. The only lasting truth is Change. God Is Change." On this Sunday, we will explore how change is ever-present in our lives, and is perhaps even divine.

September 25

It's the Principle of the Thing

Rev. Dave Egan

What is it about Unitarian Universalism that speaks to us, that guides us, that helps us to become better people? Why do we hold fast to this faith that at times can seem ambiguous and wide open? How do we see our faith guiding us in our lives? Today we will take a look at our 8 UU Principles and what they mean to us in our ever-changing and challenging world.



Religious Exploration classes start on **Sept 18th**

Notes From the Music Director

Eva Conley Kendrick



I'm very much looking forward to the fresh start of another wonderful year of worship and community with you all! I wanted to invite you to participate in our music program in whatever way(s) suits you:

CHOIR-we are always looking for singers of all ages to join our choir, all ages welcome and no experience needed! We usually meet at 9 a.m. on Sundays before the services on weeks we are preparing music for special services such as Christmas Eve, the Community Thanksgiving Service, Music Sunday, Easter and more! If you would like to lend your voice in song, feel free to join us at any point in the year! Just send me an e-mail and I will send out our rehearsal schedule.

SOLOISTS-I would also like to invite instrumental or vocal soloists for various pieces of the worship service including offertory, prelude, postlude, interlude. I would love to freshen up the musical offerings this year, since you had two years of pandemic playing by mostly just me!! You are welcome to play a solo, or If you would like me to accompany you, I would be happy to set up a time to rehearse. I would love to plan to incorporate at least 1-2 FPUU members a month in an instrumental or vocal solo capacity. Please let me know if you are interested in lending your musical talents to our community in this way.

MUSIC APPRECIATORS-I always welcome feedback from all congregants and am happy to try to incorporate any special musical requests you may have. If there is a particular week or month you would like me to play a meaningful piece for you to honor a special occasion or memory, please let me know.

Please send any communication

to Evakendrick@comcast.net or music@firstparishmedfield.org <mailto:music@firstparishmedfield.org>.



From the Executive Board

FPUU Board Holds First Meeting of New Church Year.



The Executive Board of First Parish UU Medfield had its first meeting of the new church year on August 18. In an enjoyable departure from two years of Zoom meetings, it was held in person at the Walpole home of Bill and Karen Wians, preceded by a meal with contributions from board members.

The board was pleased to welcome Martha Castle as a new member. The board is also grateful to Jen Bartle and Kay Bennett, who last year stepped into roles as Vice Chair and Clerk respectively as mid-term replacements; both were elected to full 2 year term at the June Annual meeting. Board members then reaffirmed their covenant with one another.

The board's primary responsibility is to monitor FPUU's financial health and well-being, and to oversee the congregation's long-term goals and direction. Most of the meeting was devoted to these concerns. Various items discussed are reported elsewhere in this newsletter.

Minutes of each board meeting are reviewed and approved at the following meeting. They are then posted on the FPUU website. Minutes from Annual and Semi-Annual meetings can also be found there.

Board meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month. Meetings are open to all members of First Parish. The next meeting will be on Thursday, September 15 via Zoom. For a link to the meeting, please contact Kay Bennett, board clerk: kay8941@gmail.com.

The 2022-23 Executive Board

Bill Wians, Chair*

Jen Bartle, Vice-chair

Glen D'Abate, Treasurer*

Kay Bennett, Clerk

Martha Castle, At-large

Jeanette Ruyle, At-large*

Sarah Zitoli, At-large*

* indicates second year of a two-year term

First Parish Leadership Retreat on September 10



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Though it's probably a bit over-dramatic to say First Parish is at a crossroads or inflection point, it's certainly right that new growth and renewed energy over the past three years make the present moment a good time to look ahead. In that spirit, twenty First Parish members and staff have been invited to take part in a leadership retreat on Saturday, September 10. The retreat will take place on the grounds of First Parish from 2 to 5pm.

In this case, "leadership" includes members of the Executive Board, chairs of committees, and staff members. The retreat will be facilitated by UUA congregational services representative Erica Baron. Facilitation services are provided at no charge by the UUA for member congregations.

According to Baron, congregational leaders will "look forward by looking back." Special emphasis will be placed on what has given participants joy and inspiration at First Parish as a way to clarify goals for the future. While talk of next steps will certainly take place, they will be at a general level rather than setting concrete steps of a fixed plan. Any such plan requires the close involvement of the congregation as a whole.

Involvement of the larger congregation will begin on Sunday, September 11, in an information session following the first service of the new church year. Several retreat attendees will share results from the retreat and seek input from the congregation as next steps are contemplated. Based on the session, the Executive Board will work with various committees to coordinate the congregational survey voted on and approved at the June annual meeting, the results of which will further refine eventual goals and plans.

Everyone has dreams for the future. Turning them into a plan for action takes time, commitment, and cooperation. The Leadership Retreat marks the beginning of that effort.

Building & Grounds Committee



Rejoice! The U House Roof Leak is Fixed!

Just in time for the start of church services and Religious Exploration, the U House roof is once again snug and waterproof. A big thank you to Mighty Dog roofing, who were willing to repair just the area affected and to give us an excellent price. David Russell happily recommends them and can put you in touch with their local representative. (If you use them, please mention the church connection.)

Next step is removal of the water-damaged plaster and ceiling tiles in the RE closet and the U House kitchen. We will remove some or all of the kitchen cabinets as well. David Maxson lugged in some lovely donated replacements, allowing us to keep costs as low as possible.

Earlier this year, we consulted with a professional mold remediation service whose representative told us that the musty smell in the kitchen was not an indication of a dangerous situation. He also advised that the removal of affected materials was well within our amateur capabilities and gave us detailed instructions for how to proceed. The Buildings & Grounds committee plans to complete that work before too long, perhaps even in time for the first Sunday of the year.

Anyone interested in volunteering to help with either demolition or renovation, please contact David Russell.

Church Office Reminders



Church Newsletter: Third Sunday of the month. **This month it is September 18th**

Order of Service: Wednesdays by 5:00 pm.

Church Office Hours: Mondays & Thursdays from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Email: admin@firstparishmedfield.org

Sandra Andreassi-Administrator

Annual Fund Drive Committee

The AFD Committee will be gathering in the coming weeks to begin the planning process for the 2022/2023 Pledge Drive. We look forward to providing an update to the congregation later this year.

Membership Outreach Committee

Medfield Day at FPUU, Saturday, September 24th from 9-3



The Membership Outreach Committee (MOC) is in full swing, already planning for Medfield Day. We aim to keep a booth open for the entire 9am to 3 pm event on September 24th (rain or shine). Jess and I are looking for volunteers to set up, work a 2 hour shift, or clean up. Please reach out if interested.

Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour will return in full swing this year. MOC will be asking members to sign up for a Sunday and host this terribly missed social hour. Please look out for us at the next service to sign up.



All that is involved in hosting coffee hour is purchasing whatever snacks you would like to provide, brewing coffee, setting out hot water for tea, getting everything set up, and cleaned up afterwards. If you are interested in hosting a coffee hour, please sign up for a specific date using the following link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0a48a5a92da5fc1-coffee>



The Social Justice Incubator

Make a Difference...

Join a Committee!



Welcome to the new church year!

The Social Justice Incubator, or SJI, serves as an umbrella group to help nurture and support a **wide variety of social justice initiatives led by FPUU congregants.**

Here are the initiatives either currently going on at FPUU or on the horizon (in alphabetical order) – organizations/initiatives, a brief description of each, and the person(s) to contact if you'd like to get more involved. **Not seeing something on this list that appeals to you? Have another idea for a social justice initiative you'd like to start? We'd love to hear it!** Contact chair becca_kornet@yahoo.com and we will set up time to talk through everything with you and see how we can support your efforts.

SJI members: Kay Bennett, Nicole Hall, Thea Iberall, Becca Kornet, Margaret Rolph, and Jeanette Ruyle

Anti-Racism Team	<p>Focused on anti-racist work and offering many opportunities for the congregation to get involved, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-racist book group • Small group programs such as Knotty Conversations, Widening the Circle of Concern, and anti-racist role-playing workshops • Annual anti-racist vigils marking the anniversary of George Floyd’s death • Black UUs in History project, where congregants can research Black UUs in history and add it to a communal resource of this information 	Kay Bennett, Nicole Hall, Thea Iberall, Becca Kornet, Margaret Rolph, Jeanette Ruyle
Blood Drive	Hopefully happening in November, and may become an annual event	Sara Drumm
Chaplains on the Way	<p>Program helping unhoused people in Waltham. FPUU congregants can donate clothing, blankets, and other needed items.</p> <p>https://www.chaplainsontheway.us</p>	Louise Rachin
Dignity Matters	<p>Program providing feminine sanitary products, bras, and underwear to women and girls in need. Collection box outside the front door of the U House. https://www.dignity-matters.org</p>	Becca Kornet
Family Promise Metrowest	<p>Program providing housing and meals to families experiencing homeless. Primary opportunity for congregants is to prepare meals then serve to and eat with the families at the center in Natick (orientation required). Other opportunities, some not requiring orientation, are also available.</p> <p>https://www.familypromisemetrowest.org</p>	Becca Kornet
Green Sanctuary Committee	See description elsewhere in this newsletter	Jeanette Ruyle
LGBTQ Luncheon Program	FPUU, in collaboration with HESCCO and the LGBT Aging Project, has sponsored the Meeting House Cafe Lunch Club for LGBT Seniors, Friends & Allies in the vestry one Monday each month. Although the Lunch Club is currently on hiatus, plans are underway to start up again.	Louise Rachin
Medfield Food Cupboard	<p>Program providing food to local residents facing food insecurity.</p> <p>https://www.medfieldfoodcupboard.com</p>	Membership and Outreach Committee (Jess Razza and Martha Holt Castle)
New Life Furniture Bank of MA	<p>Program providing gently-used household furnishings to individuals and families transitioning out of homelessness. (Formal relationship under development)</p> <p>https://newlifefb.org</p>	Jeanette Ruyle
Walk for Hunger	<p>Annual event in May to raise money to help those facing food insecurity. Will hopefully start up again in 2023. Congregants can walk and/or make a financial donation to Team First Parish.</p> <p>https://www.projectbread.org/the-walk-for-hunger</p>	Louise Rachin
Wayside Pulpit Ministry	Wooden structure outside the North Street door of the church that holds statements we want to share with the public.	Jeanette Ruyle, Susan Stromgren, Martha Holt Castle

Green Sanctuary Committee News



Our next meeting is Friday Sept. 16 at 7pm. All are welcome! Email [Jeanette Ruyle](mailto:Jeanette.Ruyle) for more info.



GSC + B&G = good work in '22-'23

As the consequences of climate change affect us more and more near and far, and as our 241-year-old Meeting House endures continued wear, your Green Sanctuary Committee and Building & Grounds Committee are working together even more closely. Necessary building repairs and maintenance have energy usage and efficiency factors to consider. Our mutual goal is to lessen our impact on the environment and decrease how we contribute to climate change—commonly known as reducing one's carbon footprint.



1 The ancient one



We are focusing on two areas of concern: the **heating system** and the **windows** (roof solar panels will be looked at again at a later date). The **heating system** currently consists of two gas-powered boilers for hot water and steam heat. One boiler is ancient; the other is old. Naturally, we would like to not rely on fossil fuel anymore. Air source heat pumps are being investigated.

All **windows** in the Meeting House/Church are single pane and double-hung. Although they are quite old, none of them are original to the 1789 building! First Parish has implemented window replacement in the past, but this was way before anyone's current memory. Options are being explored



2 Vestry window before amateur-but-adequate repair and paint in 2021

for price, efficiency, and aesthetics. Window restoration, with interior window inserts to create a double layer are one possibility.

Window replacements with triple-pane thermal glass are another.

The GSC knows that FPUU is much, much more than our old historic building. Yet, here we are, living in and caring for this house of worship that creates a carbon footprint much larger than is morally responsible and financially prudent. Action is called for.

At the same time, we hope you all are taking your own personal steps to address climate change and care for our interdependent web of all existence. See: <https://community.massenergize.org/MedfieldMA/teams/181>



3 Close up of sanctuary window from outside; photo credit David Temple

Comforters for New Life Furniture Bank

A summer service project



If you read the email announcements from the past few weeks (they are probably still in your box if you missed them), you know that a small group of FPUU congregants made this happen.

Here you see the comforters at NLFB-- all full and queen sizes-- before they were distributed to clients, clients who are moving into new homes after being homeless.

This particular collection also meant that many pounds of textiles were *reused* rather than going into the waste or recycle stream.

Part of the total cost of buying inserts to put into gently used duvet covers has been donated. More is needed to cover the total which was fronted by Jeanette Ruyle. The average cost per covered comforter was \$23. ***Any amount is appreciated.***

Make out checks to FPUU with New Life on the memo line. Mail in or bring to church.

Monthly Mediation & Reflection

Shirley Riga, Spiritual Director

Member of the Pastoral Care Committee

Training with Kindness

<https://www.conqueringyourfears.com/post/training-with-kindness>

All I could do was laugh yesterday,
A day full of chaos
and yet it ticked away
like a normal day

I am one
in a universal movement
With growing awareness
in a sea of consciousness

my old self would feel lost
amid the rocky goings-on
with fingers pointing at me
if something went wrong.

Silence has given me
A gift of awareness
From which I observe
Me in space.

I am a child who spills the milk
Looking to the parent for a reaction
And there is no reaction but
Simple compassion

My silence is gentle, loving awareness
That holds the door open
to explore my walls of perception
gaining new understanding every day

[The Pith Instruction](#)

[By: Pema Chodron](#)

The pith instruction is, Stay...stay...just stay. Learning to stay with ourselves in meditation is like training a dog. If we train a dog by beating it, we'll end up with an obedient but very inflexible and rather terrified dog.

For I am more, always more
Beyond what my mind conjures
And as I experience my silence
I expand beyond my ideas and beliefs.

There are hiccups
And glitches that come and go
Like immovable blocks
That pop up and intrude.

Every moment I encounter
These moguls in life, choices
Rise before me to engage and resist
Or breathe and remember

I am more than chaos
I am more than hiccups
My silence holds something
Greater than any problem.

I practice patience with myself
For I would never demand a child
learn everything today.
We deserve the same gentleness.

I trust my practice of silence
I align my heart and mind into a doorway
I witness growth from gentleness and compassion
I stay in steadfastness and love

The dog may obey when we say "Stay!" "Come!" "Roll over!" and "Sit up!" but he will also be neurotic and confused.

By contrast, training with kindness results in someone who is flexible and confident, who doesn't become upset when situations are unpredictable and insecure.

So whenever we wander off, we gently encourage ourselves to "stay" and settle down.



Are we experiencing restlessness? Stay! Discursive mind? Stay! Are fear and loathing out of control? Stay! Aching knees and throbbing back? Stay! What's for lunch? Stay! What am I doing here? Stay! I can't stand this another minute! Stay!

That is how to cultivate steadfastness.

A Message From



We're Growing Our Amazing Team!!

And adding new members to the COTW Board of Directors!!

The Board's role is to support Chaplains on the Way's mission of social justice by building trusting relationships with those experiencing homelessness, living in deep poverty, and who may be dealing with mental health or substance abuse challenges.

The ideal board member is someone interested in addressing the impact of homelessness in our community. We welcome board members-at-large as well as those with experience in:

- Accounting or Finance
- Human Resources
- Social Media
- Fundraising
- Grant Writing
- Legal Expertise

For More Information Contact Louise Rachin at 617-429-7319 or lrachin@comcast.net

Help Support the Medfield Food Cupboard



As in the past, First Parish will be collecting food items for the Medfield Food Cupboard. Donations of non-perishable, unopened, unexpired food items may be dropped off in the narthex. The Food Cupboard exists to provide assistance to residents of Medfield who are in need of supplemental or emergency food. The Medfield Food Cupboard is generously supported by the residents of Medfield, the town's churches, and various community organizations.

To meet the needs of their clients, food distributions are held approximately every 2 weeks. If you need the services of the Food Cupboard, please call us at 508-359-4958 and leave a message.

Donations of canned tuna and chicken, canned pasta, canned fruits and vegetables, cereal, peanut butter, jelly, applesauce, juice, pasta sauces, paper products (paper towels, Kleenex, and toilet paper), cleaning products, and health and beauty aids such as shampoo, toothpaste, and shaving razors or refills, are always welcome. Financial donations may be mailed to the Medfield Food Cupboard at PO Box 172, Medfield, MA 02052. Financial donations are used to supplement food contributions by purchasing meats, cheese, frozen items, and any item in short supply.

Donate Food

Thank you for your donations - they will sustain us through the fall and winter months. We are profoundly grateful to the support we receive from our remarkable community.

*** Please ensure all donations are shelf stable, unopened, unexpired and not a jumbo size.**

Most Needed Items:

- Individually portioned snacks
- Vegetable oil
- Sugar
- Spices
- 100% juice
- Canned pasta
- Jelly/jam
- Ensure or Boost



Dignity Matters Dignity Matters is a non-profit organization that collects, purchases and supplies feminine hygiene products, bras and underwear to women and girls who are homeless or disadvantaged, in order to help them stay healthy, regain self-confidence, and live with basic dignity.

If you would like to donate items, they can be placed in the collection box on the front porch of the U-House. Contact Becca Kornet with any questions.