

# First Parish Unitarian Universalist Of Medfield

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



[www.firstparishmedfield.org](http://www.firstparishmedfield.org)

## October 2022 Newsletter

### Ministerial Musings

With the ongoing war in Ukraine, so many lives have been lost. Those who have survived have been uprooted and forced to flee their homes. So many survivors talk about the roots they have in their neighborhoods, some of which have been growing for generations. There's a culture in which they've been so firmly embedded that to uproot & go elsewhere is unfathomable. How do you survive without the smells & sounds & tastes of home?

What they describe is so different from the experience that most of us in this congregation have had. Very few of us live in the neighborhoods where we grew up. Most of us do not have

extended family and life-long friends living close by. Almost all of us have even left behind the churches and synagogues of childhood—if we had one to begin with. And yet most of us long for connections. We may even long for some place where we can put down roots, some place that we can call home.

I know that this congregation has become home for many of you, that this is where, over time, you've developed your closest relationships. Maybe this has happened because we try to be real with each other here and talk about important things. Maybe it's because we share the fullness of life with each other, those times when we rejoice

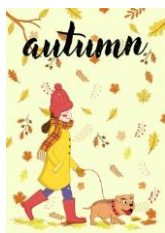
as well as those times when we worry. Maybe it's because we trust each other enough to laugh and sing and even weep with one another. Maybe it's because we usually manage to forgive each other when we step on each other's toes. Maybe it's because the welcome mat is always out, even when someone's been away for awhile.

My hope always is that each person walking through our doors will eventually feel at home among us. This takes time, of course. Roots don't grow overnight. And so what my hope is that each of us who've been here for awhile will seek out

those who look a little lost, and if the person who looks lost turns out to be the head of a committee or on the board, that's fine. Even I look lost sometimes! The important thing is that we be welcoming to each other. That we help each other find our ways around and into this beloved religious community of ours. A place to call home is important.

In faith,  
Rev. Dave

## Notes from the Church Office



Please remember the following deadlines:

Church Newsletter: Typically the third Sunday of the month.

Order of Service: Wednesdays by 5:00 pm.

Church Office Hours: Mondays & Thursdays from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Email: [admin@firstparishmedfield.org](mailto:admin@firstparishmedfield.org)

The deadline for the November Newsletter will be October 23rd

## Coffee Hour Volunteers Needed



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>

## Upcoming Services

**October 2**

**Re-membering**

**Rev. Dave Egan**

This is a Service in honor of the Jewish High Holy Days. The authors of *Amish Grace* say that “forgiveness is less a matter of forgive and forget than of forgive and *remember*—remembering in ways that bring healing. When we remember we take the broken pieces of our lives—lives that have been *dismembered* by tragedy and injustice—and *re-member* them into something whole.”

**October 9**

**Old Age Ain’t No Place For Sissies**

**Worship and Music Committee**

Ageism is one of the most common forms of bias in our society, but is less discussed and often more accepted than other forms of discrimination. Louise Rachin explores the concept and shares her own experiences both working in elder care and now as 'a woman of a certain age' being a care recipient.

**October 16**

**The Many Faces of God**

**Rev. Dave Egan**

Ralph Waldo Emerson was one of our Unitarian sages influenced by Hinduism, including the Hindu understanding that Divinity permeates everything including us. What else do we have to learn from this ancient religion?

**October 23**

**Solitude and Community**

**Rev. Dave Egan**

D.M. Dooling writes: “We come into this world alone, and alone we leave it; and between the entrance and the exit we spend our time searching for companionship.” So many coming to church express a desire for real community—not the superficial or virtual communities so prevalent today—but the kind where deep connections can grow.

**October 30**

**Circle of Memory**

**Rev. Dave Egan**

This is the time of the year when pagans celebrate Samhain and Christians observe All Souls Day. It’s a time when some believe that the veil separating us from our loved ones who have died becomes thin. This will be an intergenerational Sunday for remembering, so you are invited to bring a photo of your departed loved ones to place on the altar.





# Medfield Day

September 25, 2022







Selection of anti-racist books at the Social Justice Incubator's table at First Parish!



Thanks to all the helpers!



## Fall photos from Medfield Day



(photos provided by John Kornet)

## Field Trip to Royall House and Slave Quarters in Medford



The Anti-Racism Team recently organized a trip to the Royall House and Slave Quarters,

around the corner from Tufts in Medford. In the 18th century, the Royall House and Slave Quarters was home to the largest slaveholding family in

Massachusetts and the enslaved Africans who made their lavish way of life possible. Now serving as a museum, the Royall House and Slave Quarters believes that "museums are not neutral," and strives to tell the story from the perspective of the enslaved people there rather than glorifying the lives of the family they served.

We hope to organize another trip there, possibly this fall. Stay tuned!

## Lowell Mason Talk and Performance at FPUU - October 3rd

Lowell Mason (1792-1872), Medfield's most famous and accomplished native son, was music director at FPUU in his youth. He went on to write some 2,000 hymns and establish the curriculum for public school music education in the United States. Today, one of the highest honors for a music teacher is to be selected as a Lowell Mason Fellow by the 130,000-member National Association for Music Education.

If her schedule permits, Eva Kendrick will participate in what should be a fun program by the Medfield Historical Society, "Legacies of Lowell Mason, Medfield's Master Musician" on Monday, October 3, at 7:30 pm in the FPUU vestry. The program will include a talk and music, including audience sing-alongs.



The featured speaker will be Stephen Marini, who has taught at Wellesley College since 1976. Prof. Marini, who is also a pianist and choral conductor, made a very significant donation of Lowell Mason papers, music, and memorabilia to the historical society last spring.

About the October 3 program, he says "I plan to present a number of Mason's legacies--spiritual (his Savannah materials), educational (public music education), performance (Handel and Haydn, etc.), compositional (the hymns), and commercial (publishing and more)--to interpret him as a quintessential 19th-century Bostonian."

The program will be presented Monday, October 3 at 7:30 pm at the old meetinghouse, aka Unitarian church, 26 North Street. Free and open to the public, of course.



## Plant daffodils in memory of Dan Bibel

Everyone is invited to plant a daffodil bulb or two on Sunday October 23 after coffee hour.

Hopefully, most holes will be dug ahead of time and all folks will need to do is place a bulb in the hole and cover it up. The daffodil bed will be in the space between the FPUU driveway and the pond. Bring your own gardening gloves, if you like, and dress for the weather. If it is pouring rain, this activity will be rescheduled, date TBD.

Daffodils were Dan's favorite flower. Dan, a long-time congregant, died on February 11, 2020 of pancreatic cancer. Sometime in April 2023, when the daffodils are blooming, there will be a memorial celebration of his life. Questions, contact Jeanette Ruyle, Dan's loving spouse.



## Opportunity to Volunteer with Family Promise Metrowest



Family Promise Metrowest is a wonderful organization based in Natick. Their mission is to transform the lives of families with children who are facing homelessness by mobilizing a diverse community to provide shelter, education and comprehensive support.

They are a little different from other programs, in that they focus on just a few families at a time, providing such a deep level of support that these families ultimately graduate from the program and find housing and jobs. The program works with area houses of worship (churches, synagogues, mosques) to get volunteers.

For years, FPUU Medfield was a "partner church" to the UU church in Sherborn. 4 times a year, the Sherborn church would be assigned a week to house the families - members of their church and ours would prepare meals, serve the guests, and eat with the families at the Sherborn church. During COVID, the families were housed in hotels and there was no volunteering from area houses of worship. But things just got a lot more exciting.

Family Promise recently opened its new center in Natick. Now families can stay in the same place, without having to move around every week. Rather than being in rooms at a church, the families are in an apartment that just feels a whole lot homier. This is an amazing program. The families are treated with immense dignity and respect, and it is an incredible experience to provide meals and share them with the families.

If you would like to get involved, please contact [becca\\_kornet@yahoo.com](mailto:becca_kornet@yahoo.com). Anyone who volunteers needs to go through an orientation session, which we can organize to take place via Zoom. Then we will have a pool of FPUU folks ready for the next time an opportunity comes up. <https://www.familypromisemetrowest.org>



# Green Sanctuary Committee



Our next meeting is Friday, October 28 at 7pm.  
All are welcome! Email [Jeanette Ruyle](mailto:Jeanette.Ruyle) for more info.



## Medfield Day 2022 and GSC

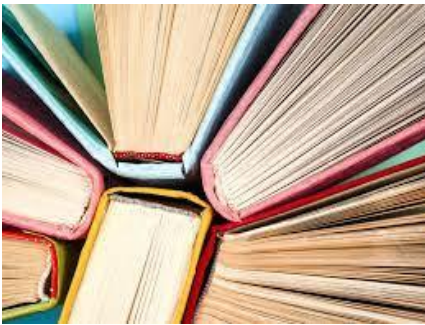
Learning and education are part of our mission. Medfield Day presents a wonderful opportunity for that, as well as having some fun. This year, GSC is offering donated and newly-rooted houseplants for sale. Children can plant a cutting in potting soil and take it home. We know that when children learn about and experience nature and care for living things, they are more likely to be a good steward of the Earth and environment in general. [Note: by the time you read this, Medfield Day will have happened; hope you had a good time!]



*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.*

←Take another look at “the ancient one.” It needs to go!

# Anti-Racist Book Group



The Anti-Racism Team has been offering a book discussion group via Zoom for over a year now. Our conversations are always thought-provoking and meaningful.

Our next meeting will be **Tuesday, November 1** from 7:30-9:00. We will be discussing "Stamped from the Beginning" by Ibram X. Kendi. All are welcome. If you'd like to be added to the mailing list to stay updated on our book choices and meeting dates, contact [becca\\_kornet@yahoo.com](mailto:becca_kornet@yahoo.com).

Here's a list of the books we have read so far, and a sample of those we will be reading in future discussions:

## Read and discussed so far:

*So You Want to Talk About Race*  
Ijeoma Olua  
*How to be an Antiracist*  
Ibram X Kendi  
*The New Jim Crow*  
Michelle Alexander  
*Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*  
Isabel Wilkerson  
*Between the World and Me*  
Ta-Nehisi Coates  
*"Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting*

*Together in the Cafeteria?"*  
Beverly Daniel Tatum  
*Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*  
Bryan Stevenson  
*The Vanishing Half*  
Brit Bennett  
*I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness*  
Austin Channing Brown  
*The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How we can Prosper Together*

Heather McGhee  
*American Prison: A Reporter's Undercover Journey into the Business of Punishment*  
Shane Bauer  
*The Souls of Black Folk*  
W.E.B. Du Bois  
*The Water Dancer*  
Ta-Nehisi Coates  
*"Mediocre" The Dangerous Legacy of White Male America*  
Ijeoma Olua

## Sampling of some of the books to be read and discussed:

*Stamped from the Beginning*  
Ibram X Kendi  
*From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America*  
Elizabeth Hinton  
*Blackballed: The Black Vote and U.S. Democracy*  
Darryl Pinckney  
*Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Have Reinvented Racism and Wrecked the Middle*

*Class*  
Ian Haney Lopez  
*White Fragility*  
Robin DiAngelo  
*Waking up White*  
Debby Irving  
*The Invisible Man*  
Ralph Ellison  
*Beloved*  
Toni Morrison  
*The Warmth of Other Suns*  
Isabel Wilkerson

*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*  
Maya Angelou  
*The Hate U Give*  
Angie Thomas  
*Dreams from my Father*  
Barack Obama  
*Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom*  
David W. Blight  
*Americanah*  
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie



# Would you like to participate in Knotty Conversations?



Last church year, the Anti-Racism Team facilitated a 7-part program called “**Knotty Conversations for Dismantling White Supremacy.**” Program topics included:

- Cultural Appropriation
- Calling Out, Calling In, and Staying Together
- Dealing with Shame, Fragility, and Denial
- Following the Leadership of People of Color
- Allies, Accomplices, Collective Liberation

The program was seen as a highly positive experience, as you can see in the testimonials below.

This program gives participants an opportunity to consider and discuss these issues from different angles and perspectives, to try on some new ideas, to ask some hard questions of themselves and/or each other, and to share some of the concerns these issues raise for them as they work for transformation in their congregations.

We had several congregants who were interested in participating but could not make the schedule work, so we are considering offering this program again this church year. The 7 parts of the program can take place according to group preferences – once a week, once every two weeks, once a month, etc. We are hoping to be able to find a schedule that works better so that more people can participate.

**If you are interested in participating, please email [becca\\_kornet@yahoo.com](mailto:becca_kornet@yahoo.com). If we get enough interest, we will reach out to the group and find the timing that works best for everyone.**

- The Anti-Racism Team

Testimonials from participants in last year’s program:

*"Participating in 'Knotty Conversations' was a great personal growth experience. It was an opportunity to explore inherent biases in society, and in myself, in a judgment-free, constructive format. I came away with more tools for entering into difficult conversations in future social or professional situations."*

*"Knotty Conversations provided a safe structure for examining white supremacy with fellow First Parish members and friends. I trusted others in the class to listen openly as I struggled with difficult and important questions in each session."*

*"I learned a lot from the Knotty Conversations course. I'd heard about white fragility and white centrality, but facing and understanding how easy it is to cause harm to another person by my cluelessness was eye-opening. The course gave me deeper insights into how to really practice the 1<sup>st</sup> UU Principle and to respect the inherent worth and dignity of every person."*

# Monthly Mediation & Reflection

Shirley Riga, Spiritual Director

Member of the Pastoral Care Committee



As I live in my heart,  
I find myself crying often,  
eyes overflowing as I allow my tears  
with compassion and acceptance.

I was punished for crying  
Closed into a room until I ceased,  
Banished for being scared  
by adults who didn't want to feel

I am the adult now and  
My walls of control are built by me  
Made of childhood memories now  
Welcomed with open arms

Every day I sit in silence hoping my  
Inner guard is relaxed and  
In an allowing mood to let go of  
Control born of years of living

Every day I sit in silence  
I'm building trust as I walk up  
To my inner guard, offer peace  
And hold the heart door open

Some days it works and others not.  
I am the patient parent holding  
The crying child. I am tolerance  
and compassion.

Some days there are tears from  
Painful memories and missteps  
Not yet aired or forgiven.  
Other days tears of joy and relief.

I started a conversation yesterday  
With forgotten friends,  
Long ago acquaintances  
I lost touch with

They all came in together  
The young shirley in her 20's,  
the middle-age shirley in her 40's  
the older shirley in her 60's.

As we sat together, the reunion  
Started with a surge of regrets,  
tears of guilt for the forgotten  
connections and a commitment to go on.

I didn't expect they had so much to say  
I got scared and confused  
And lived with a headache  
for the rest of the day

Until I realized they all  
Want to be heard and honored  
For every choice that was made  
For every action that we shared.

My journal is the meeting room.  
The rules are simple.  
Honest reflection  
Citing lessons learned.  
Crying is allowed.

My heart is the guide.



## **I am You by Gracemarie Cirino**

Having empathy  
Expressing compassion  
To know what  
You feel  
To walk in  
Your shoes

To carry your  
Burden  
Loving who  
You love  
Dreaming your  
Dreams

Understanding  
Your heart  
Now I comprehend  
Your essence  
**I am you**

## **A valuable resource to share by Shirley Riga**

It's been eight years since my 32-year-old daughter transitioned into the unseen world. Every year, I am humming along with life until around July 31st when an unwelcome intruder called grief finds its way into my body and emotions. This year was better though.

This year I approached each day with awareness prepared to welcome this intruder with a plan. Optimism in hand, I congratulated myself for the work I've done processing more emotions, being honest and gentle with myself. It wasn't until I was struggling with a mundane task feeling frustrated when I asked myself, "Is this really about that task?"

I honestly had to answer that it was grief again. Somehow it snuck in behind my walls and slapped me upside the head. Oh, yes, cellular memory – I forgot that part. My body holds painful memories. My body stores these painful memories within, and when I am reminded by dates, times, even smells, holidays, you name it, memories float to the surface and hurt. They hurt no matter how prepared I am to deal with grief. My old solution was to isolate, overeat, overdo. My new solution is to create space to feel the grief (pain) and listen.

I am a psychic medium. I have knowledge of the unseen world, work with it every day and still I struggle. What's different this year is I found an organization named Helping Parents Heal, that dedicates its purpose to heal from the loss of their child(ren). Helping Parents Heal is a nonprofit, and its mission is "to help individuals become "Shining Light Parents"—meaning a shift from a state of emotional heaviness to one of hopefulness and greater peace of mind. HPH goes a step beyond other groups by allowing the open discussion of spiritual experiences and afterlife evidence—in a non-dogmatic way."

They have free resources, understanding listeners, support parents, tributes, books, and more, all in the name of helping a parent like me feel better.

I've been using HPH's resources and they have helped me. For the first time in eight years, I'm more open about my loss, sharing it with trusted friends. I even contributed a tribute to her on the HPH website, joining so many others who know this journey.

I would be glad to talk to anyone about this in more depth. Feel free to share this.

## Blood Drive, November 15



Very happy to share the news that First Parish Medfield will be holding a blood drive on Tuesday, November 15th in honor of our very own Fritz Fleischmann!

The drive will be in our vestry on November 15<sup>th</sup> from 1-6 pm, link below to sign up.

Hoping this will be the first of what will become an annual event for our church and our community!

For more information, please contact Sara Drumm.

To schedule an appointment, please visit [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) and enter sponsor code: **UUMedfield** or copy and paste the link below:  
<https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=uumedfield>



## 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.



## FPUU Calendar of Events

Monday, October 3	Medfield Historical Society Meeting/7:30 pm/Vestry
Tuesday, October 4	Yom Kippur Begins
Monday, October 10	Indigenous Peoples' Day/Office Closed
Wednesday, October 12	Committee on Ministry Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Thursday, October 13	Worship & Music Committee/7:00 pm/Zoom
Thursday, October 20	Executive Board Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Sunday, October 23	Daffodil Planting/11:30 pm/Grounds
Sunday, October 23	Newsletter Deadline
Friday, October 27	Green Sanctuary Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom

