



*First Parish Unitarian
Universalist of
Medfield*

**26 North Street, Medfield,
MA**

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www.firstparishmedfield.org



LOVE CONNECTS US

March Newsletter 2023

Ministerial Musings

This time of year always has a profound sense of vulnerability. All of those bulbs waiting patiently underground begin to ponder when it might be safe to poke their tender shoots out of the soil. Birds and bugs and sleeping critters wonder when it might be safe to wake up and start foraging for food. We too, cautiously wait and hope for those first signs of spring to appear. Is it time yet? Let's check. Nope. Better go back inside where it is safe and warm. Maybe we will try again next week.

This month at First Parish will be exploring the theme of vulnerability during our worship services, religious exploration, and our small group ministries after church on Sundays. The faith we share here at First Parish helps us to cope with our feelings of vulnerability, for we know that we are in a community of folks who have similar struggles, who will be there to support us when we need it most.

This month we will hold our annual service, Why I Love First Parish, where members will share why

this place is so important to them. Why do you return to this community over and over again? Is it the spiritual nourishment that you feel when you worship with us on Sunday mornings? Is it the friendships that you develop during our small supper potlucks? Is it engaging in small group ministries like Men's Group, UU Bible Study, or Chalice Circle? Is it the peace of mind in knowing that our children are engaged in meaningful religious exploration each week? Or is it something else? Whatever it is that you love most about First Parish, we are so glad that you are part of this congregation where we can all be vulnerable together.

As you probably know, our annual pledge drive also begins this month. Our Annual Fund Drive Committee will be leading the way and asking us to consider what a generous pledge might look like for each of us. Whatever amount we each determine we will pledge, the grounding for our generosity has to do with the ways in which we appreciate - even love - our congregation. And there is much to love about this community and

many ways to become more involved, such as coming to family social events, engaging in social justice and environmental activism, joining our small group ministries, exploring religious education, singing in our FPUU Choir, and connecting with our deeper selves during worship.

But whatever ways this community is most meaningful to you, we know that these things can only happen through the contributions of all of us. Therefore we will be asking all of you to make a pledge at some level and to consider increasing your pledge. For this is a vulnerable time for each of us, for First Parish, and for our world. But together we have shown time and time again great resilience through our commitment to this congregation that we love.

With gratitude,
Rev. Dave

Pathways to Membership Class



Are you or someone you know looking for a spiritual home? Are you interested in learning more about Unitarian Universalism and the history of First Parish? Are you looking for deeper connection and more meaningful relationships in your life? Then we hope you will join us to learn more about who we are, where we come from, and how to become more involved.

The Membership Outreach Committee and I will be holding two Pathways to Membership classes on **Sun. Mar. 26 and Apr. 23**, from 11:15-noon, next door in the U House. Both sessions will cover the same content, so pick whichever date works best for you. Hope to see you there!

Upcoming Services

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| March 5 | Renewing our Covenant | Rev. Dave Egan |
| As our annual pledge drive formally kicks off, we will hear about why supporting First Parish is important. Every year we renew our covenant with one another to take care of this community; to give our time, our talents, and our resources, so that we can continue to have a church to call home. On this Sunday we will gather in deep gratitude for this marvelous congregation. | | |
| March 12 | The Mish-Mash Heart | Rev. Dave Egan |
| Being emotionally vulnerable means acknowledging feelings, taking a risk, and tolerating some uncertainty. Bring the whole family to this intergenerational worship service that will explore the inherent vulnerability of loving and being loved. | | |
| March 19 | Why I Love FPUU | Worship & Music Committee |
| During this lay-led service, members of the congregation will give personal testimonials about all that this congregation means to them. If you ever thought about bringing a friend to church, this would be a great time to start! | | |
| March 26 | Being Vulnerable Together | Rev. Dave Egan |
| Holding our Unitarian Universalist faith authentically means opening ourselves to vulnerability and uncertainty. We don't claim to have easy answers; instead we journey together toward deeper understanding and meaning. As Brené Brown reminds us, "Faith minus vulnerability and mystery equals extremism. If you've got all the answers, then don't call what you do 'faith.'" | | |

Don't forget to set your clocks forward on Sunday, March 12th!

Notes from the Church Office



Please remember the following deadlines:

Church Newsletter: Typically the third Sunday of the month. – This month it will be [March 19th](#)

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

Religious Exploration

Jennifer Goodman

Coordinator of Religious Education



For January's theme, we did lots of things to find our center. We focused on the flame within us, decorated candles with beeswax with a symbol of our true selves, and looked

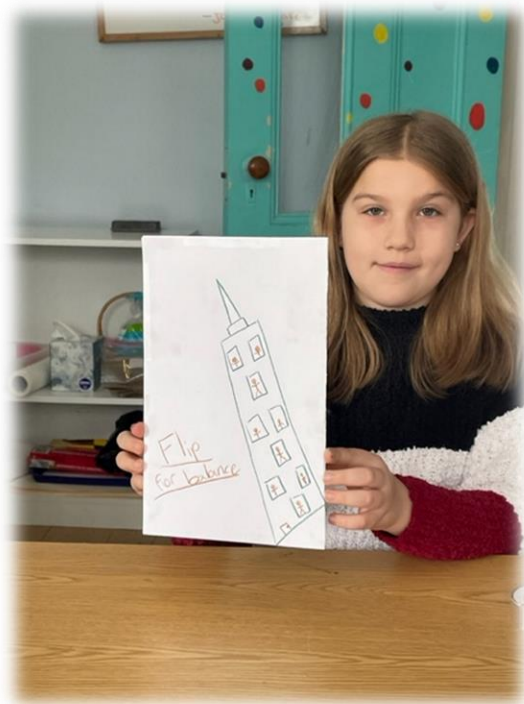
at the star within every apple. Then we explored balance: in our bodies, in spinning tops, and in our emotions. We talked about what takes our feelings us off balance and what balances us, like resting, hugs, body tapping, doing something that makes us happy, talking to a friend or our parents, and being with pets. We drew pictures and heard a story.

February's theme is "Love," and our sessions are covering self-love, friendship, and community love, which will be focused on what we love about First Parish Medfield. We have already written and mailed Valentines to ourselves and created a self-love pledge. In March, our theme will be "Vulnerability." We will also be looking for signs of spring and celebrating the Equinox!

We need adult volunteers to help with assisting in the classroom and A Time for All Ages, if you have anything you would like to contribute! Email Jen at cre@firstparishmedfield.org with any interest.

Warmly,

Jennifer Goodman



Coming of Age Program



Coming of Age is once again happening at First Parish. We have 4 participants and their mentors (usually referred to as the M&M's) in the group being facilitated by David Maxson and Cissy Hull-Allen. David took the mentees on a nighttime hike up Noon Hill in January where wonder-full topics were discussed, and in February the M&M's met for discussions including the divine and the meaning of life.

Still to come are more discussions with members in our congregation, the (open to all) MFA tour with our favorite docent Bill Wians, and lots more talking!

Our young people give us much hope for our future!

Neighboring Faiths



On Sunday February 13, our Neighboring Faiths class visited the Islamic Center of Boston in Wayland. It was wonderful to finally be able to return to this amazing mosque in-person after COVID.

We learned about Islam, talked about what the young people there do for their religious education, heard amazing details about hajj, toured the Center, and attended prayers. (We also saw the incredible work the membership was doing to help earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria - there was a large room filled from floor to ceiling with all sorts of supplies being readied for shipment

overseas.)

As always, the young people in our class were respectful, polite, and curious. They were engaged and asked great questions. And they put up with me re-briefing them on the drive there and de-briefing them on the ride back. Thanks to Jess Razza for joining us for the outing.

Our next visit will be to Temple Beth David in Westwood, where we will attend Friday Shabbat services on March 24.

Becca Kornet



Photos from Small Suppers

Small Suppers were held on Saturday February 4 at the home of Louise Rachin & Duncan Glover; and February 11 at the home of Jess & Nate Razza.



Annual Fund Drive

RESILIENCE THROUGH COMMITMENT

Dear Friends:

This year, in a warm winter with little snow, the first spring bulbs came up in December. The war in Ukraine rages on. A conservative majority on the Supreme Court overruled *Roe v. Wade*. Democratic governance across our country and across the world remains under attack. And Covid keeps flaring up with new variants. What is there to feel hopeful about?

In fact, our very community is a reason to feel hopeful! Last year, our Annual Fund Drive motto was "Building Our Dream Together," with this description: "It is the dream of a just and peaceful world, in which our children grow up in a loving community, confident in their future, committed to rational inquiry and respect for all life." We called it "a necessary dream, which sustains us when the world appears to be darkening around us, and which also enables us to experience joy and to celebrate all good things, large and small."

Of course, such a vision must be grounded in a strong and resilient community. Where we are vulnerable as individual persons or families, we can be resilient as a community – by coming together to assert our life-affirming and democratic values in a nation whose internal divisions stand in the way of addressing the problems we all face.

As a congregation, we have been resilient during the last three years, when attendance declined in houses of worship across all denominations, and when other local UU churches are in talks to merge with other congregations or close their doors permanently. We have adjusted flexibly to the threat of Covid by installing air purification systems, by wearing masks when asked, and by making services accessible online. We have continued our activities in support of social and environmental justice. We have taken steps to reach a larger public, by setting up a new Membership Outreach Committee. And now we have brought back our Coffee Hour!

With all that, our resilience is being tested as we address our fiscal needs: our projected budget deficit continues to grow, and we do not want to cut back on our small staff, all of whom are already doing more than what they are paid for. But what our Executive Board wrote to you over a year ago is still true: "First Parish is more important to our lives than ever... Never in recent decades has there been a time of greater need for our congregation to exist."

During this challenging time, we have shown tremendous resiliency through our commitment to our members and friends who make up this sanctuary we call First Parish. A sanctuary that has held us gently, with love and care.

So we ask you, once again, as stewards to open your hearts and purses to sustain, improve, and grow our congregation. Let us continue that work together in generosity and hope.

Thank you for your care.

Your Annual Fund Drive Committee: Mary Corthell (co-chair), Fritz Fleischmann, Duncan Glover, George Lester, Don Rolph, Marshall Sugarman (co-chair)

Annual Fund Drive Kickoff – So who's in for Game Night???



When: Saturday, March 4 from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm.

Where: FPUU Vestry

Playing cards and small supper will be provided.
BYOB (Bring Your Own Board Games, Beer & Brood)

Suggested Donation: \$5/person \$10/family.
RSVP to duncanglover@comcast.net or 857-939-0769.

"Resilience Through Commitment" Annual Fund Drive 2022-2023

*The Annual Fund Drive Committee respectfully requests that attendees take a COVID test with negative results on the event day.

Green Sanctuary Committee



Our next meeting is March 10, 2023 at 7pm via Zoom. All are welcome! Email [Jeanette Ruyle](mailto:Jeanette.Ruyle) for link and more info.



Medfield CLIMATE WEEK – we will be part of this!

Medfield Environment Action (MEA) is organizing Medfield's first ever 'Climate Week' from **Saturday, April 29 through Sunday, May 7**. There will be multiple independent events throughout the week, all showcasing climate awareness and sustainability, with local actions and initiatives. As part of Medfield Climate Week, on **May 6** the Green Sanctuary Committee, along with the Membership Outreach Committee, are planning to organize some environmental and nature children's games and activities outside in our church yard. There will be a DIY dollhouse-size model of our meetinghouse showing all that we hope to accomplish with "greening" the building. We are also looking into having goats visit! On the same day, Medfield Environment Action (MEA) will be holding a Children's Clothing Swap in the vestry.

MEA is actively seeking 'Event Captains' to lead the following: bike to school day and heat pump info sharing. Possible 'Event' ideas for you/your group could be: eco lawn equipment demonstration, composting demonstration, native and/or low water use garden tour, meatless meal specials at restaurants, climate book readings, climate themed art (painting, recycled materials sculptures, cartoons) nature walks/scavenger hunts, outdoor clean-up events, show off your chickens, compost pile or beehives or anything else you might like to offer. If interested, please fill out this [form](#) by March 12th with your proposed event idea and contact information. No need to have all final details available. We would love to get your ideas as soon as possible and we can work with you to build it out. We look forward to hearing from you and reach out to us at meamedfield@gmail.com if you have any questions.

Earthday Worship Service for all ages – April 23

Join us for this annual First Parish tradition honoring our home and finding hope and strength of action in community.



Earth

First Parish EV Charger



First Parish car charger facts:

First Parish has recently installed EV car charging capability at the church. We have a 220 V outlet by the entry to the vestry, and the car charger itself is in the black nylon bag in the broom closet.

David Maxson has installed a monitor to measure our electricity usage. For every kilowatt-hour of electricity used in electric vehicles, we reduce overall emissions by over 1 lb of CO₂.

Based on this, in the first full week of usage, we saved over 30 lbs of CO₂ from being released into the atmosphere.. At this rate we could keep 3/4 tons of CO₂ from being released into the atmosphere for each year of usage, and usage is likely to increase. This is a small but measurable green impact from First Parish Medfield!

Thank you to all who are using the charging facility!

Don Rolph

From the Worship & Music Committee



The Worship and Music Committee sends a big thank you to the Sunday morning Tech Team!

Every week, one of the following First Parish folks (with backup by Tech Manager, Kyle Lampe) runs our Zoom coverage from the sanctuary balcony: Patty Castle, Thea Iberall, John Kornet, Bernard Posner, and Wes Sutton.

We are very grateful that First Parish can continue to offer remote worship for those at home. Thank you, Tech Team, for your commitment and skills!

Reminder: hymn lyrics are accessed by clicking on the links for the online hymnals (Singing the Living Tradition and Singing the Journey) found in the Thursday service announcement right under the order of service link. You can download the hymnals to your desktop for easy access.

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.

Recent Work Completed in the U-House

Due to a leaking roof, there was water damage in the RE closet, wall of the meeting room below and damage in a kitchen cabinet.



The area where the room leaked in the RE classroom was sheet rocked and a shelf installed. The supply closet and classroom are looking great!



Due to the water damage, a double cabinet was taken down. Sheet rock was installed, painted and shelves were hung where the cabinet had been.

On to the meeting room...

The cork wall was removed and two walls were painted.

Before...



And after!



Looking so cozy!

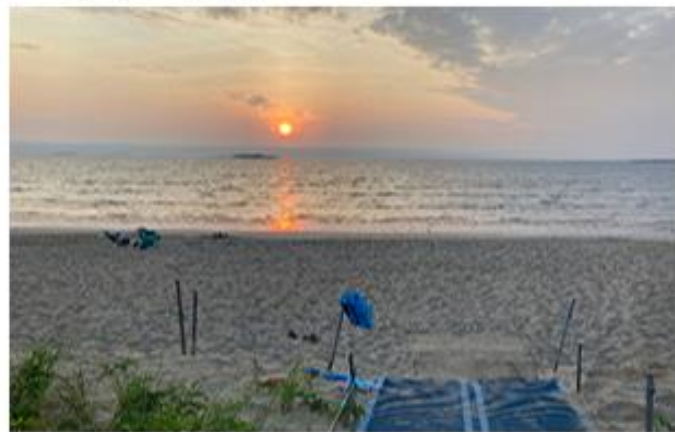


If you havent been in the u-house in a while, stop by. It looks great!



FERRY BEACH RETREAT

MAY 19-21



Join us in Saco Maine for a fun, restorative, all-ages retreat at Ferry Beach!

Relax while collecting shells along the beautiful, seven-mile-long, sandy beach, play on the playgrounds, sing by the campfire in the wooded grove, or read a good book on the porch.

We will hold our Sunday worship service in the outdoor chapel among the tall pines.

Like last year, this will be a shared retreat with the First Universalist Society of Franklin.

There are a variety of types of lodging to choose from: dorms, cottages, cabins, or campsites.

We will arrive Friday afternoon or evening (no dinner served Friday night).

Our Ferry Beach Retreat includes breakfast, lunch, dinner on Saturday, and breakfast on Sunday.

Ferry Beach Retreat & Conference Center will follow current Maine COVID guidelines.

Registration begins on Wednesday, March 1st, on a first come first serve basis.

To register, follow this link: <http://fbch.me/franklinmedfield>



Monthly Mediation & Reflection

Shirley Riga, Spiritual Director

Member of the Pastoral Care Committee

We are Spiritual Beings in Human Bodies



Over the past several years I have been growing spiritually as a Healing Medium. It is not a journey for the weak hearted as I clear traumas, painful memories and illogical core beliefs that don't serve me any more. Sometimes it feels like I grasp for understanding in the dark, not knowing where I'm going. Other times, understanding knocks me upside the head because sometimes I just don't want to see what's in front of me.

Last Monday while sitting in meditation in my weekly trance class, I was feeling frustrated and stuck. Something my mentor said spurred me to ask my guides for help. I was finally able to put words to my frustration and formed a question. I have felt so stuck, living in a human body, getting caught up in "stuff", grieving, wanting changes and disappointed in the world, in my wants and in my frustrations. So many times I feel done living in my body and want to go where I know my daughter is, want to surround myself with truth, love, creativity and realness. I'm committed to staying in my body as long as I am able so I'm not going anywhere yet, and I want to be happier.

The question that formed was "How to live as a human in a spiritual world?" I wrote the sentence down mid meditation so I wouldn't lose it.

After I put that question in Google, a practice I like to do to see what comes up, what came up was a website by [Vance Gowmon](#), medium, healer, activist. He wrote about the stages a human goes through and this is paraphrased:

- Stage 1. Identify with being human and unaware of the spiritual
- Stage 2. Identify with the spiritual while denying the human experience
- Stage 3. Identify as a spiritual being in a human body, using things like our intellect, logic, life experience, along with computers, cars and money to foster life affirming purposes to join in with others to build bridges for us humans to walk across from stage to stage, honoring the importance of the stages, in service of spirit.

This was revelatory to me. I feel I have a place in my humanness to put my grief, my losses, all my egoic wants and needs because it all helps me to be a spiritual being in a human body committed to the service of spirit.

I'm taking a breath! I forgive myself for forgetting who I really am. and I live in the flow. Those two mantras are on index cards around the house to remind me I am not my loss. I am not my grief. I am not the abuse I've received because of my gender. I am a spiritual being in my human body. I forget.

I often get triggered by things out in the world that remind me of past traumas. I have trauma surrounding my daughter's life-long illness and ultimate transition. It was a simple sign that said "Code One" on a business

that brought the image of "Code Blue" to the forefront. Then the cascading emotions, physical sensations and ultimate decompensation sets in until I get grounded and in perspective again. Before I educated myself on the journey of a trigger, I used to label myself "crazy" or "losing it" with terrible self-judgment. Triggers are triggers and it's so important to institute self-care the minute they are recognized. If I don't practice self-care, I abandon myself in a time of need. I am my best advocate.

I have been triggered several times since this revelation by things that happen while I am out and about and I've taken the time to feel them, not push them away. I want to stay steady with myself, not abandon or deny myself tenderness because of self-judgment saying I should be over this by now. I listen to my inner chatter instead of ignoring what I say, which is what I have done for years. As soon as I hear concerning words from my inner voice, I pause and offer me a chance to express in writing, orally, creatively, whatever it takes to listen.

This reminds me of a practice I instituted when my kids were elementary school age. I made it a point to be home when the bus dropped them off. I helped them unload their school stuff and sat on the couch and we talked about their day. As they grew, they didn't want to share anything. I made it a point to make the time and the space anyway. That's what I am giving to my inner voice, time and space.

I'm okay. I'm a spiritual being in a human body, and my whole life experience has contributed to my wisdom. We all gather wisdom from our life experiences, and some of our classrooms have been atrocious, horrible situations. Others are bumps in the road. Remembering to glean some learning from every situation helps keep a perspective on our spiritual growth in a human body. Sometimes the learning comes years later. With the loss of my daughter, I vowed I would never recover, and yet, I continue to learn, aspire to her example and remember I grow spiritually in every situation. Namaste

Chaplains on the Way Most Needed Items Request



The following items would be gratefully received by the unhoused community of Waltham: \$5.00 Dunkin Donuts Gift Certificates, Cans of caffeinated coffee for the winter breakfast program, Men's sweatpants & hooded sweatshirts, sizes large & extra large, Winter hats & gloves, sizes medium – extra large, Warm socks, Long underwear, sizes large & extra large, Warm blankets, Sleeping bags, Masks and Hand warmers.

If you would like to donate items, they can be placed in the donation box in the Vestry. Your generous, ongoing support for Chaplains on the Way is greatly appreciated. Contact Louise Rachin at 617-429-7319 or lrachin@comcast.net with any questions.





UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY PITTSBURGH • JUNE 21 - 25, 2023

This year the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly will take place in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I will be driving there with some ministerial colleagues as a voting delegate. I am wondering if anyone else from First Parish UU Medfield is also interested in becoming a voting delegate at GA? Our congregation is allowed to send two delegates (in addition to the minister).

For those who have never been to General Assembly as a delegate, you will be surrounded by thousands of other UU's from across the globe. You can march in the opening banner parade where we will proudly carry FPUU's banner, attend wonderful worship services, participate in thought-provoking workshops, hear the key-note speaker at the Ware Lecture, and make your voice heard as a voting delegate during the plenary sessions. This year there will be much discussion surrounding the change to the UUA's Article 2 bylaw, regarding the newly proposed UU Values and Covenant.

This year GA is being held online and/or in-person Wed. June 21- Sun June 25, 2023 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Most GA events will take place at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, 1000 Fort Duquesne Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a voting delegate at GA, follow this link: <https://www.uua.org/ga> Here are the registration rates: <https://www.uua.org/ga/registration>

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions you might have.

In faith,
Rev. Dave



FPUU Calendar of Events

Thursday, March 2	Pastoral Care Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom RE Committee Meeting/7:30 pm/Zoom
Saturday, March 4	AFD Kickoff Event/6:00 pm/Vestry
Sunday, March 5	UU Bible Study/11:30 am/U-House Coming of Age/7:30 pm/Vestry
Monday, March 6	Medfield Historical Society Meeting/7:30 pm/Vestry
Wednesday, March 8	Committee on Ministry Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Thursday, March 9	Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Sunday, March 12	Daylight Savings Begins Men's Group/11:30 am/U-House Coming of Age/7:30 pm/Vestry
Wednesday, March 15	Membership Outreach Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Thursday, March 16	Executive Board Meeting/7:30 pm/Zoom
Sunday, March 19	Newsletter Deadline Chalice Circle/11:30 am/U-House
Friday, March 24	Neighboring Faith trip to Temple Beth David/Meet 6:00 pm/FPUU
Sunday, March 26	Pathways to Membership/11:15 am/U-House Coming of Age/7:30 pm/Vestry

