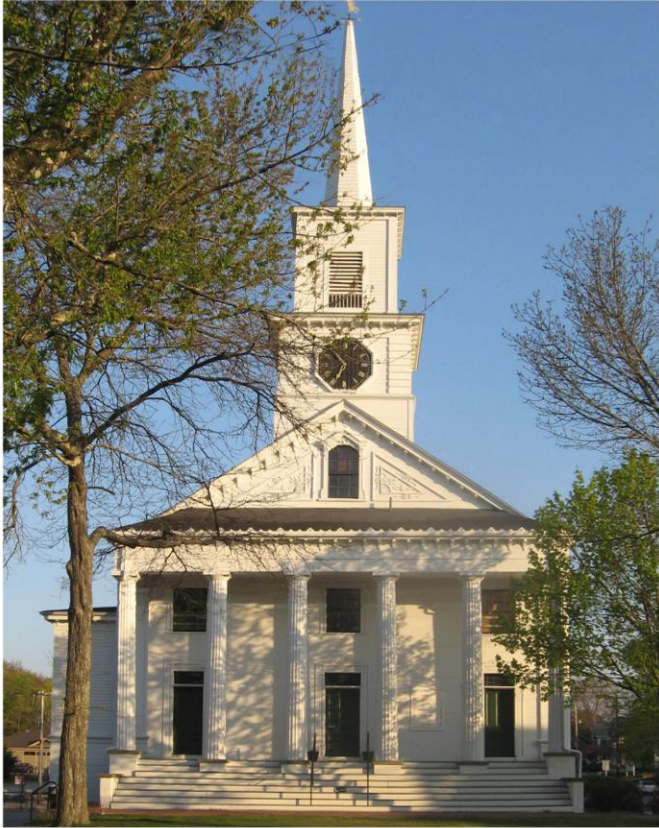


*First Parish Unitarian
Universalist of
Medfield*

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

www.firstparishmedfield.org



January Newsletter 2023

Ministerial Musings

“Happy Healing New Year”

We don't enter the New Year smiling like the baby pictures in illustrations of New Year's Eve. The world doesn't work that way. We enter the new year carrying our past.

It's a shock to parents when their children for the first time are cut open by accident or injury, the first of many shocks. We collect in a lifetime many scars and no amount of New Year celebrating or cosmetic surgery will conceal them.

We get marked from falls out of cribs, at play, in barns and fields and kitchens, from collisions and escapades, illnesses and war. We collect scars on thumbs, fingers, around the eyes..., and vaccination scars, acne scars, appendectomy scars, a lifetime of lesions on back, belly, knees, and necks....

But if our hides testify to our vulnerability and fragility, they also tell of our durability—the transfiguring into the toughest of tissues their baklava of

our skin. Scars witness to the persistent, countermanding mysteries of healing, re-knitting, recovering, miraculous as birth....

We don't enter the New Year smooth as babes, but we do enter as survivors, often enriched—tougher, wiser, readier—for the time to come. Our scars signal not only injury but renewal, not only the old year's accumulation of woe, but the new year's reality of healing, strength, and hope....

The Reverend Clarke Dewey Wells

This is true. All of us enter the new year with scars from old injuries, some deeper and more life threatening than others. And so it is with the people of the Ukraine. And so it is with our own groaning nation as well. There has been way too much wounding in recent months in our nation and in our world. Too many who are carrying scars they've never carried before. Do you suppose they would entertain the possibility that they've become tougher because of these scars? Wiser? More prepared for what will unfold in the year to come?

Perhaps this is true for some, for those who've managed to survive. For scars really do attest to the ability to heal, that it is possible for that which has been torn asunder to come back together again. It is this knowledge that brings hope as the new year begins. And for this I am grateful.

May a multitude of blessings fill each of our lives in the coming year.

In faith,
Rev. Dave

Notes from the Church Office



Please remember the following deadlines:

Church Newsletter: Third Sunday of the month. **January 22nd**

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 Sandra Andreassi-Administrator

Upcoming Worship Services

January 8

Trying to be Perfect

Rev. Dave Egan

Come join us for this service where we will ponder the question asked by Mary Oliver: "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" It seems appropriate that we ponder this question when a whole new year stretches out before us. When we wonder not only how this coming year might be different to us, but how we ourselves might be different.

January 15

History and Fate Meet

Rev. Dave Egan

Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act 58 years ago, following the murder of the Rev. James Reeb, a UU Minister, in Selma Alabama. This sermon brings to light a part of history that all UUs should know.

January 22

The Wisdom of Lao-Tse

Rev. Dave Egan

It is good to be reminded that what we proclaim to know for sure only reveals how much we don't know. As the Tao Te Ching puts it: "Those who know, do not speak. Those who speak, do not know." Perhaps the wisdom found within Taoism will help sustain us as voices in the public arena grow louder & more persistent.

January 29

The Better Angels of Our Nature

Rev. Dave Egan

On the brink of the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln, in his first inaugural address, said this: "...We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection...." Lincoln knew that once the war was over, the north and the south would need to draw on "the better angels of their natures" if their democracy was to survive. With so much division in our country right now, perhaps we too, need to turn to those better angels.



Weather ALERTS

If a Sunday service is delayed or canceled, an ALERT will be posted on our website, firstparishmedfield.org. We will also send an email to everyone through MailChimp.

The decision will be made no later than 7:00 a.m. on Sunday.

– Executive Board

Religious Exploration

Jennifer Goodman

Coordinator of Religious Education

Thank you to the teens, the children, and the parents who did an awesome job at our Solstice Service! We watched an enactment of a solstice



story about the sun growing tired and being held in the arms of night, and the children praised the sun, sang to it, and lit candles, coaxing it to come out again. We heard about foods from different traditions and about Boxing Day. And we were treated to a sampling of the families' favorite foods after the service.

In November, the children offered the congregation a Native American Thanksgiving Prayer, with paintings and representations of gratitude. And then in A Time for All Ages, after Thanksgiving through until Solstice, we focused on

how to help others, with stories from St. Nicholas and King Wenceslas.

Our RE theme in January will be Finding Our Center. We will first experience what our "center" is, what the light shining within us is, and then we will work with bringing it out into the world. Finding one's center is really a point-periphery exercise, where we alter between the center and the world around us and back to the center, integrating the whole. We'll discuss making choices that align with our light, what pulls us off center, and what balance means for us. We warmly welcome children into this exploration!

Neighboring Faiths

On Sunday, January 22, the Neighboring Faiths class will travel to the Islamic Center of Boston in Wayland at 12:30 pm. We will meet at the FPUU parking lot at 11:30 am.



From the Annual Fund Drive Committee

The Annual Fund Drive Committee is planning the following events.

SAVE THESE DATES!		
	2023 TIME/DATE	ANNUAL FUND DRIVE EVENT
1	6:00 PM SATURDAY JANUARY 21	PIZZA/GAME NIGHT - VESTRY
2	7:00 PM SATURDAY FEBRUARY 4	SMALL SUPPERS - TBA
3	7:00 PM SATURDAY FEBRUARY 11	SMALL SUPPERS - TBA
4	6:00 PM SATURDAY MARCH 4	ANNUAL FUND DRIVE KICKOFF EVENT - VESTRY
5	10:00 AM SUNDAY MARCH 5	ANNUAL FUND DRIVE SUNDAY SERVICE IN PERSON & VIA ZOOM
6	10:00 AM SUNDAY APRIL 2	COMMITMENT SUNDAY SERVICE IN PERSON & VIA ZOOM

We'll be in touch with you shortly with details for each event.

We are respectfully,

The Annual Fund Drive Committee: Co-Chairs Mary Corthell and Marshall Sugarman, Fritz Fleischman, Duncan Glover, George Lester & Don Rolph

Reimbursements Towards Pledge commitment

The FPUU Treasurer and Administrator request that all expenses due for reimbursement be submitted as soon as possible after they are incurred to ensure that they are accounted for in a timely manner and are logged into the correct accounting and fiscal year in which the expense belongs.

For anyone wishing to convert an expense into a pledge donation, the best way to do so is to submit the expense for reimbursement, then when it is paid, write a separate check to FPUU for the same amount and indicate it is toward your pledge. This keeps the accounting much cleaner. Thanks for everyone's continued generosity!



Green Sanctuary Committee News



Our next meeting is tentatively Jan. 6, 2023 at 7pm via Zoom. All are welcome! Email [Jeanette Ruyle](mailto:Jeanette.Ruyle) for link and more info.



On Being Environmentally and Fiscally Responsible

All the GSC newsletter pieces so far this church year have mentioned our church meetinghouse windows and/or heating systems. Windows and heat are currently the two primary areas of concern for FPUU being more energy efficient **and** fiscally responsible. It is more than an intersection: it is an intertwined relationship in terms of our situation at FPUU. This topic came up at the recent mid-year congregational meeting on December 18th.

Herein lies the task and challenge—to compare the pros and cons and costs. It must be done for everything that needs updating and upgrading. Taking the vestry windows *as just one example*, decisions would be based on something like this:

VESTRY WINDOWS

	Approx. U-value rating	Ease of maintenance	Historic and aesthetic factors	Cost per window (4-6 large)
Restoration	With complete repair to original + commercial interior inserts: 0.53* NOTE: single pane glass U-value=1	Int. and ext. of original needs yearly upkeep. Inserts need to be removed and stored as needed. No screens.	Historic District Commission criteria—Yes. Congregants’ love for the old—unknown. Window appearance unchanged.	Repair and maintenance – volunteer labor. Factory custom-made interior inserts with DIY assembly—about \$900*
Replacement	0.30**	No maintenance. Comes with screens.	Historic District Comm. criteria—probably yes. Congregants’ love for the old—unknown. Window grille would change to 8/8	Factory custom-made and professionally installed—about \$6300**

*Indowindows.com estimate **Marvin Infinity estimate

Want join a time-limited windows and/or heating system task force? Contact Martha Holt Castle or [Jeanette Ruyle](mailto:Jeanette.Ruyle)



A Message from Chaplains on the Way Executive Director Jill Gauling

December 2022

Dear Ones,

Thank you for your Friendsgiving donation in the amount of \$406.00.

Since December 2018, when you sponsored your first Chaplains on the Way Winter Clothing Drive, all through a pandemic that felt endless, and now, First Parish Medfield has continued to give the unhoused community of Waltham unwavering support.

Words cannot express my gratitude.

I can start, though, with thank you, thank you, thank you!

Sincerely yours,

Jill

Jill Gauling

Chaplain and Executive Director

Jill@chaplainsontheway.org

651-757-5268

Collection for Chaplains on the Way

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
- *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.

Monthly Mediation & Reflection

Winter Solstice–December 21, 2022

A spiritual sharing by Shirley Riga

Member of the Pastoral Care Committee

“At a time when the world seems the most divided, there is a unity expanding in each heart to heal the wounds of a spiritually-disconnected society.” - Matt Kahn

We are living in unusual times. The world is amidst transcendent change, and like a fish, we can't yet see beyond the water we reside. We're still surviving the storm. Long buried roots of complacency are shaking loose. People are surviving. People are dying. Hearts are breaking open in a global movement awakening the masses.

It's exciting and terrifying. It's easy to get caught up in feeling helpless, AND the key to survival is bringing your attention back to the present moment. I forget to remember and have to remind myself. So, I make a sign to remind me:

I TAKE LIFE ONE MOMENT AT A TIME

There's so much going on. Life is a stunning experience that is often immobilizing. Thankfully, our ability to breathe happens automatically without a reminder. We were born to be part of this experience. Our true inner power lies in our choice to feel and acknowledge long-buried memories and process them. Instead of blocking and distracting ourselves away from them, process them. It takes courage, and as we process out the long-held wounds, we create more inner light. We are lightworkers.

In my experience, I see people ignoring their inner emotions and the ignoring becomes a daily habit, often resulting in a volcanic eruption. Processing inner emotions doesn't have to involve a total meltdown. If you're willing, ask for help to gently

guide you to find the perfect way for you to move them forward. By making the decision, you will find a supportive way to release them.

I have had decades of talking therapy that helped me identify what emotions I was feeling. By expressing ourselves to a good listener, it literally helps release the hold the inner emotion had on you.

There are other tools to help, like journaling, and artistic expression that help let out our inner emotions. Creativity of any form unleashes pent up feelings and is freeing. There are so many ways to process old wounds safely, all you need to do is be willing to let them go.

“Feel it heal it. Hear it clear it.” Matt Kahn

Pent up emotions take up space in our physical bodies, as well as our energy bodies. They cause dis-ease and dis-comfort. It's time to mend the heartache instead of carrying it inside and using it as a wall to hide behind. All you have to do is be willing, ask for support from someone you trust and allow yourself to release the dis-comfort. Once a decision is made, supportive ways to release will come to you. All it takes is your willingness. Let yourself go beyond your old story of pain.

A Winter Solstice Prayer - Edward Hays from Prayers for a Planetary Pilgrim.



Photo credit: Aaron Burden

The dark shadow of space leans over us. . . .

We are mindful that the darkness of greed, exploitation, and hatred also lengthens its shadow over our small planet Earth.

As our ancestors feared death and evil and all the dark powers of winter, we fear that the darkness of war, discrimination, and selfishness may doom us and our planet to an eternal winter.

May we find hope in the lights we have kindled on this sacred night, hope in one another and in all who form the web-work of peace and justice that spans the world.

In the heart of every person on this Earth burns the spark of luminous goodness; in no heart is there total darkness.

May we who have celebrated this winter solstice, by our lives and service, by our prayers and love, call forth from one another the light and the love that is hidden in every heart.

Amen.

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 in the Vestry.

FPUU Calendar of Events

Sunday, January 1	New Year's Day
Thursday, January 5	Pastoral Care Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Friday, January 6	Green Sanctuary Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Sunday, January 8	UU Bible Study/U-House/11:30 am
Wednesday, January 11	Committee on Ministry Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Thursday, January 12	Staff Meeting/11:00 am/Zoom Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Sunday, January 15	Men's Group/U-House/11:30 am
Monday, January 16	Martin Luther King Day Observed
Wednesday, January 18	Membership Outreach Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Thursday, January 19	Executive Board Meeting/7:30 pm/Zoom
Saturday, January 21	AFD Pizza & Game Night/6:00 pm/Vestry
Sunday, January 22	Chalice Circle/11:30 am/U-house Neighboring Faiths/Islamic Center of Boston/FPUU lot at 11:30 am
Thursday, January 26	Building & Grounds Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Tuesday, January 31	RE Committee Meeting/7:30 pm/Zoom

