



## *First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Medfield*

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

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



## April Newsletter 2023

### Ministerial Musings

I know many of us have gotten out of the habit of coming to church on Sundays. I can understand that. With the crazy schedules that so many of us keep week after week, sometimes I'm amazed that anybody shows up at the meetinghouse on Sunday mornings when we could be sleeping in or sitting on a patio soaking up the rays instead. After all, no one takes attendance or makes a black mark next to your name if you don't show up. You're not going to burn in hell for skipping worship. And god, if there be a god, can be worshipped most

anywhere. So why bother to roll out of bed and come to church at the ungodly hour of 10 A.M.?

The dictionary tells us that worship means reverence for and allegiance to a deity, idol, or sacred object. But the root of that word, "worship," means to consider things of worth. It is in this spirit that we gather on Sunday mornings, for our intention always is to call us back to something deeper, something more expansive than just ourselves, something more meaningful than what we too often encounter as we race

through the rest of the week. The hope always is that folks will find something that they can either relate to or be challenged by in the sermons. But even if that doesn't happen, perhaps it will be the music that quiets or stirs your soul, or a prayer that touches a tender spot in your own life, or a personal sharing during the lighting of candles that reminds you of our common humanity.

I happen to love it when we gather to worship. I can always feel my spirit lifting when we sing together, especially when it's something familiar that can be sung with gusto. I love the buzz before worship begins and the cacophony when it's over.

I love it when we laugh. And when we share conversation during coffee hour. I actually love it all, at least most of the time. And I hope this is so for you as well. It's beloved community that we create and celebrate when we come together to worship on Sunday mornings. Don't miss out. Come!

In faith,

Rev. Dave

## Executive Board to Seek Congregational Input on Difficult Budget Choices

As the Executive Board of First Parish works to develop a budget for the upcoming fiscal year (FY24), it has been faced with several hard financial realities. Expenses are rising, in some cases significantly. At the same time, the number of people who pledge to First Parish has declined, with demographic trends suggesting no straightforward route for growth. This year's budget is already running a significant deficit. The deficit for FY24 is likely to be larger, and possibly much larger. Small cuts like trimming costs for photocopying or postage will not come close to closing the gap. Difficult decisions will need to be made if First Parish is to become financially healthy.

Toward that end and in the interest of full transparency, the Executive Board will conduct congregational town halls before submitting a budget to the annual meeting on June 4. The Board will share details of income and expenses to make clear the challenges First Parish faces, and will seek guidance from the congregation, with the goal to develop a budget for FY24 that is fiscally responsible while being responsive to the needs and wishes of the congregation.

We hope to involve as many members as possible in this process. Further details about options for participation in these important conversations will be forthcoming in early April.



## Upcoming Services

**April 2**

**Commitment Sunday**

**Rev. Dave Egan**

On this Sunday we will celebrate the culmination of our annual fund drive. By pledging to our congregation each year, we re-affirm our commitment to one another and to the work of First Parish. Come join us for a joyous worship service of praise and gratitude for this community that we all help to build everyday.

**April 9**

**To Live Again**

**Rev. Dave Egan**

According to a favorite hymn for Easter: "When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain, Love's touch can call us back to life again...." This is the miracle celebrated during the Easter season: "Love lives again, that with the dead has been...."

**April 16**

**Turning to Thomas**

**Rev. Dave Egan**

An American-born Zen priest jokes: "Had I known the Gospel of Thomas, I wouldn't have had to become a Buddhist!" This Gospel describes the teachings of Jesus in a way that is very different from what we read in the Gospel of John, a gospel written during the same time period. The teachings in Thomas are consistent with Unitarian Universalism. Surprised? Then be sure to come and hear more.

**April 23**

**Resilience, Community, Connection, and Hope**

**GSC**

Our 2023 Earth Day All Ages Worship Service, presented by the Green Sanctuary Committee, will explore being resilient while facing dire climate change news and predictions. Individual commitment is called for, yet community and connection with each other give us the hope to make the commitment and have resilience. Everyone will have a part in this worship service!

**April 30**

**Awakening to Injustice**

**Rev. Dave Egan**

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Today we will be hearing testimonials from two survivors of sexual assault. The collection from today's service will go to support New Hope, a local domestic violence shelter.

## Notes from the Church Office



Please remember the following deadlines:

Church Newsletter: Typically the third Sunday of the month. – This month it will be April 23rd

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](mailto:admin@firstparishmedfield.org)

# Religious Exploration



Newsletter March/April 2023

In RE for the month of March, we are exploring the theme of Vulnerability - when we feel like we want to be vulnerable and when it's a good idea to protect ourselves. We will be looking at our concerns, and we'll make little worry dolls to share our troubles. In our exploration, we'll wonder what it feels like to hug with a shield, and what it feels like to have a broken limb without a splint.

We also focused on the bigger congregation's theme by asking the question, "What do I love about First Parish?" and, "What excites me about coming to church on Sunday?" We made pictures of our answers...



Let your creativity be your contribution!

**We are looking for volunteers to lead A Time for All Ages.** We can work with you on ideas, or you're free to develop something on your own. This part of the service is really a quick dip into something - 5 minutes or less. If you haven't tried it before, we encourage you to experiment, and for those of you who have done it before, we welcome your experience! Please reach out at [cre@firstparishmedfield.org](mailto:cre@firstparishmedfield.org). Thank you!

Warmly,  
Jennifer Goodman  
Coordinator of Religious Education



## Neighboring Faiths



On Friday Mar 24, the Neighboring Faiths class attended Friday Shabbat services at Temple Beth David in Westwood. We enjoyed a lovely service filled with amazing music. Everyone was so welcoming and truly glad we were there, and we were even given special time to see the Torah up close with the Rabbi. Thanks to Martha Castle for coming along!

Our two remaining faith traditions will be Quakerism and Jainism. While we were unable to arrange a visit to a Quaker Meetinghouse, we will be watching several videos to give the kids a sense of what a Quaker Meeting would be like. For Jainism, we will be visiting the Jain Center in Norwood in May.

## Coming of Age

One of our favorite activities is a Values Continuum. This exercise is first introduced in Our Whole Lives (OWL) and is a great tool in CoA. It allows space to reevaluate the value (belief, opinion) as we discuss a given statement. With one of the poles in our vestry designated "Absolutely yes, I agree" and another pole assigned "No, no way, I disagree," a value statement is read and participants pick a spot on the continuum and then have the opportunity to explain their choice and defend their position. We also have the freedom to physically move along that continuum as different views are presented that may change how we feel. And our group has big feels and big opinions !

## 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!

## Buildings & Grounds



Hi all,

I'm reaching out on behalf of the Building and Grounds committee to invite anyone interested to join us in our work caring for our beautiful meetinghouse!

The time commitment can be whatever you can offer - helping out with projects as they arise and when you're available, taking on the responsibility for some of our scheduled tasks/maintenance (I'm slowly learning just how many of these there are!), and/or offering any expertise you may have.

For those of you willing to follow the B&G conversation, we can add you to the discussion list. You are not obligated to reply to everything. For those who want to just do occasional volunteer work, let us know what activities and specialties are of interest and we will let you know when there are opportunities to pitch in. (next on the list, tackling the downstairs bathroom in the U house, so stay tuned for that email when we get a date on the books)! We also hope is to bring back our monthly workdays after church (previously after church on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month).

Please feel free to reach out with any questions,

Thanks for considering,

Sara and your FPUU Buildings and Grounds Committee.

## From the Executive Board



**SAVE THE DATE!** Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 4 at 11:30 in the Sanctuary

The meeting will be held in person with the option of remote participation. Warrant to follow. Main items will include election of new board members, approval of the FY'24 budget, and any items of business brought forward by the congregation. The Board looks forward to your participation! A quorum will be necessary to conduct business.

## You are Invited to the Annual FPUU Potluck Passover Seder!

Friday, April 14<sup>th</sup> in the Vestry, starting at 6:00 PM  
All are invited to this family gathering



Passover is the celebration of the liberation of the Israelites from their slavery in the time of the Pharaohs, but for us it is much more than that. We celebrate it also as a celebration of the search for liberation for all people at all times. Our Seder is a telling of that story – you know, the one from the Bible, the one from movies – but with a UU flavor. We will all take turns reading parts, and then we will eat.

If you would like to come, please email Becca Kornet at [becca\\_kornet@yahoo.com](mailto:becca_kornet@yahoo.com) and tell us what you will bring (so we don't get five salads and no main courses). One note – there are some traditional foods which fit in to a Passover meal. Leavened products including certain grain-based foods like bread and pasta do not. If in doubt, ask us or do a search online.

We hope you can join us!

Thea Iberall  
Faye Kalmbach  
Becca Kornet  
Louise Rachin

# Medfield Community Spring Blood Drive

Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>

11 am- 4pm

First Parish UU of Medfield

Hello First Parish Friends,

I'm excited to announce our upcoming blood drive on Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> at First Parish Medfield - help welcome spring by signing up to save a life!

It was wonderful to start this new tradition in honor of our fabulous Fritz last fall, and we look forward to continuing to hold this drive twice a year (spring and fall) to support the Red Cross and share our fabulous building and First Parish family with our community.

Please see the links below to donate and to help - looking for volunteers to help set up and break down, as well as two greeters each hour. As those who volunteered last fall will tell you, this is definitely a feel-good event and you will for sure enjoy helping out!

Thanks in advance, and please feel free to reach out with questions: [bongo\\_8@msn.com](mailto:bongo_8@msn.com)



**Help save a life.**

Schedule your  
blood donation  
appointment today.

To schedule an appointment, please visit [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) at <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive?> Enter sponsor code: UUMedfield.



## [Help with First Parish UU Medfeld Spring Blood Drive](#)

Please review the available slots below and click on the button to sign up.  
Thank you!

[www.signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com)





*Grab your sneakers, strollers, and leashes and join us for Family Promise Metrowest's first in-person walk since 2019!*

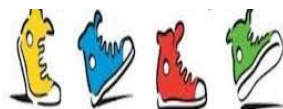
Family Promise is so excited to host this heart-warming event once again, which includes fun activities for all ages. Come join us for lunch. New this year we have Anzio's Brick Oven Pizza Truck joining us for the afternoon serving their delicious pizza.

This is their largest fundraiser, fueling its mission to transform the lives of families with children facing homelessness across the Metrowest region.

Join us **Sunday, April 30 at Natick High School**. Pre-registration is encouraged. Same day registration opens at 12:15 pm and the Walk starts at 1 pm. It's a 3-mile loop on sidewalks through Natick Center and back to the High School.

Please register to walk with us.

Register to walk: [www.tinyurl.com/2023FPMWalk](http://www.tinyurl.com/2023FPMWalk)



## Green Sanctuary Committee



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



### Earthday Worship Service for all ages – April 23

Join us for this annual First Parish tradition honoring our Earth home and the beloved community of the interdependent web of all existence. Everyone will be part of this interactive worship service.

### Medfield CLIMATE WEEK and FPUU

Medfield Environment Action (MEA) is organizing Medfield's first ever 'Climate Week' from **Saturday, April 29 through Sunday, May 7**. FPUU is hosting a Climate Week event on **Saturday May 6**. See elsewhere in this newsletter for more information.

### Petition Gov. Healey to stop gas pipeline expansions

Eversource has been wanting to build an additional pipeline through Springfield to Longmeadow. Residents of these communities have been fighting it, as reported in [this article](#).

The [UU Mass Action](#) Climate & Environmental Justice Team is joining in with [Mass Power Forward](#) to send Gov. Maura Healey a message to keep her promise about climate goals and "Put Gas in the Past."

If you agree, email [this petition](#) by Earth Day April 22.

If you are interested in more information about the Climate & Environmental Justice Team of UU Mass Action, [check it out](#). They meet monthly for one hour get stuff done!



## For Medfield Climate Week on Saturday May 6 First Parish is hosting an event 10am-1pm

### Be a part of **2023 Climate Week MEA** Medfield • Environment • Action

Saturday, April 29 – Sunday, May 7



**A variety of community-wide** and community-led events being held to promote Climate Awareness and Action throughout the week

**Create an event** Individuals and groups are invited to be Event Captains and create an event — big or small. Please fill out the form at <https://tinyurl.com/ClimateWeekEvents> or use the QR code with your idea for an event

**Questions** Email [meamedfield@gmail.com](mailto:meamedfield@gmail.com)



In our “backyard” there will be Goats of Dover, children’s games, and a community weaving project. In the vestry will be a book sale of environmental books, a model of our church meetinghouse with climate-friendly features, and (hopefully) a surprise sweet treat.

The Membership Outreach Committee and the Green Sanctuary Committee are working on this. If you would like to help, contact Kirsten D’Abate or Jeanette Ruyle.

If you act quickly, there is still time for you to host *your own* event during Medfield Climate Week by sending in this [form](#) by March 30.

More information will be provided about when and where all the other events are happening.  
Stay tuned...





## FPUU Kitchen (Almost) Ready for Rental Use



The First Parish Executive Board extends a big thanks to Don Rolph for pursuing the certification necessary to allow the vestry kitchen to be usable by outside groups. At a time when finding ways to expand revenue sources is a major concern for the Board, Don's successful completion of the rigorous course of study and testing to obtain certification is deeply appreciated.

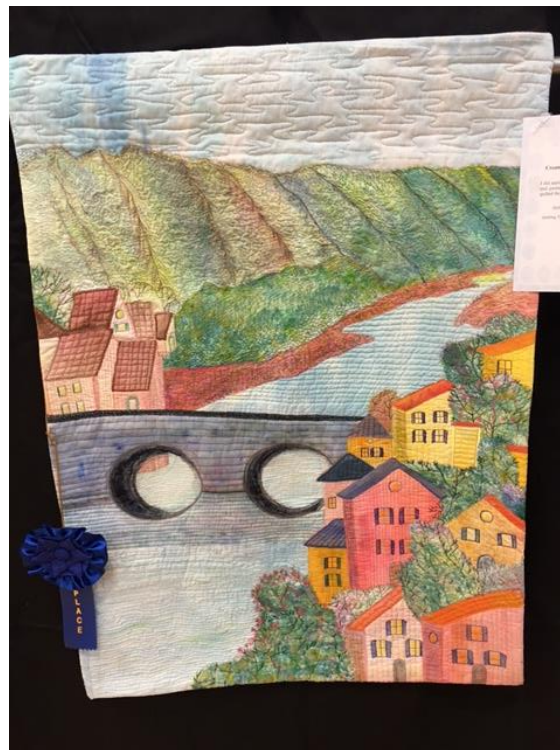
To complete the certification process, Don is making a list of all required equipment, will create new signage, and will schedule a required town inspection. He envisions organizing a team to perform ongoing required maintenance. The certification will be good for five years. In a few weeks, we will be able to rent the kitchen and the vestry once again. Thank you, Don!

## Among Ourselves

For your visual pleasure: A quilt and a detail from another quilt, both entered in the recent Rhododendron Needlers Quilt Guild ([RNOG](#)) Show, and done by our own talented Margaret Rolph!



\*Note the blue ribbon.



## 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.

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## Chaplains on the Way Donations



### Spring/Summer 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, men's & women's short sleeve cotton t-shirts, sweatpants, hooded sweatshirts in sizes medium, large and extra-large, cotton socks, blankets and sleeping bags.

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](mailto:lrachin@comcast.net) with any questions.

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## Medfield Food Cupboard

### Most Needed Items:



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

### Food collection bins are located at:

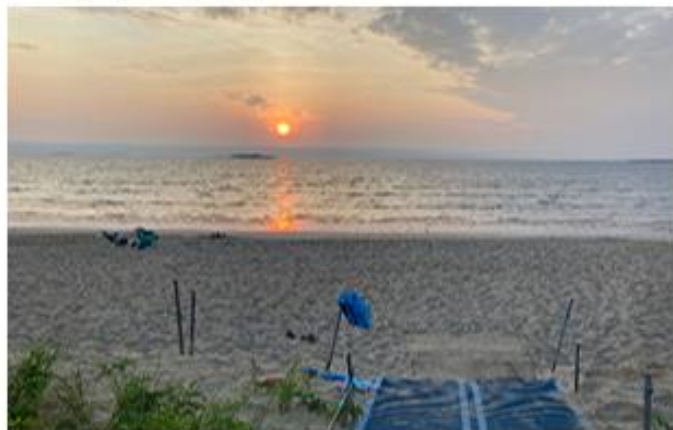
The Council on Aging  
Shaw's  
Pfaff Center/Park & Recreation  
St. Edward's Church  
Starbucks





# 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

## COURAGE



All he wanted to do was come through the door like the six of us did, walk freely. I'm a member of a

hospice choir and we just finished singing to a memory care facility. A delightful, seemingly normal looking older gentleman followed us out. We stopped him at the door and kindly stated we can go through, he cannot.

A simple interaction that held enormous triggers. The situation brought me back to a difficult time in the past when my grown daughter, living with a lifelong liver disease, became so despondent that she wanted to harm herself. One incident led to another that led to her being hospitalized in a locked psyche ward.

I was at the door saying goodbye and unable to allow her to leave. As I stepped through the door, I could hear her pleading and it knifed through my heart. This task was one of the hardest tasks I ever did, walk away from my daughter pleading with me to take her home.

She was an inpatient for a week. Though the first few days were tumultuous at best, the whole week was essential to her gaining a better perspective on her situation. She was in her mid-twenties and facing a fatal liver disease, and coming to grips with the idea that this is her life plan. I was her main support, and I didn't want it either.

Sometimes in life we need to face really difficult situations that take courage, a courage we pull up from our toes, even though we believe with all our heart we can't do it. We do it because we must.

Relying on strong supports in my life, I forged through this task and survived. I was left with me, remembering self-care, following daily routines and putting one foot in front of the other. I had other choices, like run away and turn my back on my daughters. Not a choice I wanted to make. I could sedate myself with drugs or alcohol or food. My food choices satisfied my emotions. Food was my substance of abuse.

Now entering my 70's, life is easier with a different kind of difficult. I am retired and have time to myself to engage in tasks I prefer to do. Often, I tell people I am in preferment. My body has morphed through many changes. I was suffering from Stage three kidney disease, pre-diabetes and a terrible digestive disorder called Small Intestine Bacteria Overgrowth (SIBO) that caused unrelenting pain throughout my body both during the day and night. I also suffer from Fibromyalgia, another unrelenting pain syndrome.

I believe my abuse of food led to my health conditions. My years of emotional suffering with my chronically-ill daughter, my battered emotions from a dysfunctional alcoholic home, and a failed marriage was eased by an eating disorder I still struggle with to this day.

Through all the years I parented my children, I had an insatiable desire to explore spirit, the unseen

world, to understand what it has to offer in a difficult and challenging life.

My paternal grandmother often talked of the occult and I found myself curious and weirded out at the same time. My relatives made fun of her, often degrading her beliefs in front of the whole family. My mother as well had a strong desire to explore spirit and shared her excitement with all of us as we all suffered through the alcoholic abuse afforded by my father. I believe every female member of my biological family was born with gifts of extra sensitivity.

After my second daughter was born with her liver disease, my life broke open, revealing not only my terror on the odds of my second daughter surviving past the age of five, but through therapy discovering the emotional and sexual abuse we all suffered within our biological family. Behind closed doors of the esteemed vice president of a prominent bank in Western Massachusetts, my father tyrannized his children because of his fear and addiction to alcohol.

Like a well-worn path of exploring, I set about to help myself using spirit, research and medical professionals to help my survival. After my divorce, I had to provide for my two girls, start a new career while learning more and more about the unseen world.

Now 40 years later, I hold the weathered skin of a sailor navigating the rocky waters of a life at sea. My daughter survived until the age of 32 when her body no longer was able to sustain life. I fought for her the whole way. She learned to fight for herself

along the way, and her willingness to fight allowed us to be closer up to the end.

I battled my food issues. Pain is a great motivator. Using advice from learned functional nutritionists and other medical professionals willing to look at the whole picture, I completely changed my gut biome while eliminating bad foods, replacing them with good foods. Now over three years of successful food choices, I am disease free. Occasionally, I still struggle with Fibromyalgia pain, but much more manageable.

Most of all, I am living my life with spirit, enjoying the feeling that I am not alone. The world of spirit joins me every day as I go about my tasks. I ask for advice, discuss my choices and feel the support. This world is meant to be lived in a dualistic way, accompanied by loved ones on the other side, assisting us as we navigate through daily living as a human. Our humanness is not all there is. Spirit accompanies us as we learn our lessons. We are spiritual beings in a human body.

My daughter is part of my spirit team. Other loved ones, ancestors along with guides, angels and other light beings make up my spirit team, and I'm still discovering.

One thing I have learned through my life is no one is alone. No one dies alone. If one feels life is hopeless and they are left alone to suffer, it is their mind that has erected the wall of separation. By changing one's perspective, releasing the limiting core beliefs and messages we have adopted from our childhood, we can open up to a world of incredible support. All that's needed is intention and a willingness to do so.



## FPUU Calendar of Events

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Saturday, April 1   | RE Committee Meeting/7:30 pm/Zoom  |
| Sunday, April 2     | UU Bible Study/11:30 am/U-House<br>Coming of Age/7:30 pm/Vestry                      |
| Wednesday, April 5  | Passover Begins  |
| Thursday, April 6   | Executive Board Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom<br>Pastoral Care Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom |
| Sunday, April 9     | Easter Sunday<br>Coming of Age/7:30 pm/Vestry  |
| Wednesday, April 12 | Committee on Ministry Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom   |
| Thursday, April 13  | Staff Meeting/11:30 am/Zoom<br>Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom        |
| Friday, April 14    | Passover Seder/5:00 pm/Vestry  |
| Saturday, April 15  | Dan Bibel Memorial/2:00 pm/Sanctuary   |
| Sunday, April 16    | Chalice Circle/11:30 am/U-House  |
| Wednesday, April 19 | Membership Outreach Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom                                   |
| Thursday, April 20  | Executive Board Committee Meeting/7:30 pm/Zoom                                       |
| Saturday, April 22  | Earth Day  |
| Sunday, April 23    | Pathways to Membership Class/11:15 am/U-House<br>Newsletter Deadline                 |
| Sunday, April 30    | Buildings & Grounds Cleanup Day/11:30 am<br>Coming of Age/7:30 pm/Vestry             |

