



First Parish Unitarian Universalist Of Medfield

26 North Street, Medfield, MA

(508) 359-4594

www.firstparishmedfield.org



December Newsletter 2023

Ministerial Musings

Each year as the holidays approach, what I tell my family is that what I really want for a present is a gift of time. This time of year I always feel a bit crazed as I tick off the days remaining until Christmas and wonder how I will ever get it all done. For I am determined to carry on the traditions I learned from my mom. So there are days spent baking & decorating cookies, assembling the homemade gingerbread house, and of course making the traditional cinnamon rolls. Hours spent stringing lights on the porch outside and transforming our house into a magical Christmas wonderland. By the time December 24th arrives and it is time to get to the Christmas Eve service, I feel enormous relief. Time is up. Can't do one more thing. I sit there wrapped in candlelight, singing familiar carols, listening to the story, and my whole body relaxes into a great ahhhh.

It is so tempting to get caught up in the craziness of the holiday season. Standing in lines, waiting to get a big bargain, trudging through malls, short-tempered & exhausted, worrying about all those people on the list. Wondering if you've gotten the right thing and if it's enough. And how you're ever going to finish in time. And how you'll manage to pay for everything when the bills start rolling in a month from now.

We know all too well that there is another kind of giving that comes from a much deeper place than that labeled "Holiday Obligations & Expectations." But the trick is to remember this as we get caught up in the busyness of the next few weeks. And so I would encourage you to stop for a few moments, take some long, slow, deep breaths and bring into your mind's eye the people in your life that you really, really care about, and perhaps as you hold them there, you will discover that what you really want to give them can't be wrapped up neatly and tied with a bow.

This act of giving, especially when it flows out of a generosity of spirit, out of a love-centered spirit, is something that returns to us ten-fold. It's not something that depletes us, drains our resources, but it fills us until it overflows once more into another act of giving. That's the way it works. An endlessly renewing cycle.

Many blessings to you all this holiday season,
Rev. Dave

From the Executive Board



First Parish members are asked to please plan to attend the Semi-annual Meeting on Sunday, December 17 at 11:30 am in the vestry and on Zoom.

Business will include a budget update and voting on important board motions. A quorum of 25% of membership is necessary.

The warrant with more specific information will be sent by email at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Thank you.



Upcoming Services

December 3

The Importance of Covenant

Bill Wians & Rev. Dave Egan

Within our world, our country, and even our congregation, there are a variety of perspectives on many deeply held beliefs. With so much divisiveness in our world right now, we must ask ourselves: what is more important, being right or being kind? This Sunday, our executive board chair Bill Wians, our minister Rev. Dave Egan, and members from our Right Relations Team will speak about the importance of covenant, especially in times of conflict.

December 10

The Evergreen Tree

Rev. Dave Egan

Long before evergreens were brought inside to decorate for Christmas, ancient people considered these trees sacred. They were bridges between heaven and earth, where gods could speak to the humans and humans could speak to the gods.

December 17

Solstice Service

FPUU Children

This intergenerational worship service will be created and led by the children from our Religious Exploration program. The service will feature stories and music that relates to the winter holidays and to Solstice, the shortest day of the year.

December 24

Christmas Eve Service

Rev. Dave Egan

A traditional celebration of the season, our intergenerational Christmas Eve service will feature lots of holiday stories, the lighting of candles, and traditional Christmas carols. This service will begin at 5:30 PM. To keep everyone safe and healthy during this indoor service, masks will be required. There will be no morning service.

December 31

No service

Notes from the Church Office:



Please remember the following deadlines:

Church Newsletter: 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

Sandra Andreassi-Administrator

Religious Exploration Committee

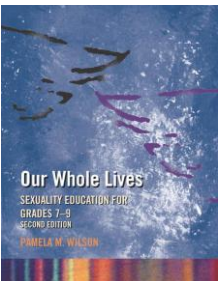


The Religious Exploration class is busy preparing for the children's Winter Solstice Service on December 17th, and there are just a couple of Sundays remaining to plan and rehearse!

For over a decade, the Winter Solstice Service has been 'produced' by the RE kids (with some help from their leaders and guides) and it has become a cherished tradition at FPUU. The evolution of the Solstice Service 'play' into a complete worship service, led and designed by the RE children, was a natural outgrowth of our values. Our church community cherishes and celebrates intergenerational perspectives, and encourages all persons at FPUU to contribute to our shared worship experiences.

We are grateful for the extra effort that Sarah and the kids are devoting to Solstice planning. We are also grateful to all of the parents for getting their kids to church on Dec 3rd and 10th, during this busy season, so that the kids can help to plan and rehearse. Note that there will be a 'part' or role for every interested child on December 17th, regardless of prior involvement leading up to the service.

After the Winter Solstice service, RE will resume in January with our short videos and activities from the 'CartUUns' and 'Bluey' curricula. We have many volunteer openings starting in January and for both RE and Little Lights Guides. Check the links on the members page of the FPUU website to sign up. (When signing up for Little Lights, select the 'Guide' role, because Jackson or Avery will generally serve as the 'Lead sitter')



OWL program planning for 7-9th graders gets underway in January, and we are hoping to recruit from outside of our membership, as we need to expand the group beyond our few FPUU kids.

A group of 8-10 is ideal, and we have room for 6-8 more kids right now. Speak to John Kornet if you know a neighbor or friend outside the church who may be a candidate for participation in OWL.



Blood Drive November 14th a Huge Success!

A huge thank you to all in our First Parish community who signed up to donate, check donors in, and help with set up and clean up, that would be great!

A few pics and email from Red Cross re. our drive copied here to include - great to see what an impact we had! Thanks, Sara



Hi Sara,

It was so nice seeing you at the blood drive on Tuesday. Thank you for your hard work in promoting and recruiting, volunteering and donating!! All very much appreciated.

Congratulations on a great, successful day.

We had 42 presenting donors, collecting 42 units of lifesaving blood. These will help to save up to 126 lives!! We also had 3 first time donors!

Medfield Garden Club Holiday Greens Sale

The First Parish UU of Medfield



**Saturday, December 2nd
10 A.M. until noon**

Christmas wreaths, swags, kissing balls, basket arrangements, centerpieces, cemetery memorials, and the Garden Club's well-known miniature boxwood trees will all be available for sale. This is the Club's primary fundraiser and the proceeds support the Club's efforts to beautify the town, including the 19 roadside gardens.



Come early for the best selection!

Medfield Holiday Stroll – December 2nd



HOLIDAY STROLL

*Church at Meetinghouse Pond
26 North St.*

MAKE
letters to Santa

WATCH
classic movies

EAT
yummy treats

OUTSIDE & FREE

Next Classes held on December 3 and December 17



Are you interested in learning more about Unitarian Universalism?
Do you have questions about the big mysteries of life?
Are you looking for more meaningful relationships in your life?
Do you yearn for deeper connection and community?

Then we hope you will join us to learn more about who we are,
where we come from, and how to become more involved.

We will be holding three sessions in the coming weeks.
We will share a meal together and have an open and informal dialog
with our minister and members from our Membership Outreach Committee.

Each session will cover the same content, so pick whichever date works best for you.

Sun. Nov. 19
breakfast @ the U House
8:30-9:30AM

Sun. Dec. 3
lunch @ the U House
11:30-12:30PM

Sun. Dec. 17
breakfast @ the U House
8:30-9:30AM

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First Parish UU Medfield's MEN'S GROUP



If you identify as male, we hope you will join us.

Often men don't have a space in our lives
to meet with other men and reflect on things
we have in common: fatherhood, marriage, finances,
societal expectations, our mid-life crisis, retirement, etc.
We will meet in the U House for lunch, conversation & connection.

2nd & 4th Sunday of the Month
Lunch @ the U House
11:30 - 12:30 PM

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Sanctuary Flowers for December Request



Your help is requested to ensure that we have Sunday Worship Service Flowers.

Flowers are a wonderful way to celebrate or memorialize an occasion, event or a loved one.

If you would like to provide worship service flowers, please contact Louise Rachin at lrachin@comcast.net

From the Social Justice Incubator – Dignity Matters



FPUU supports Dignity Matters, a local non-profit that provides menstrual supplies and undergarments to 15,000 women and girls in Massachusetts living in poverty and/or experiencing homelessness.



They are having a fall drive and are collecting donations of tampons, pads (including Depends type pads/underwear), new underwear, and new/gently used bras. Donations can be left in the bin located on the porch of the U House.

If you prefer, shop their [Amazon Wish List](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2AoBMFSCYN4W/refnav_wishlist_lists_1?) for shipment directly to the Dignity Matters warehouse. https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2AoBMFSCYN4W/refnav_wishlist_lists_1?

If you have any questions, email becca_kornet@yahoo.com. Thank you!

Medfield Food Cupboard

Please place non-perishables in the container in the narthex. Most needed items:



- Boost/Ensure (chocolate or vanilla)
- Tuna (solid white, in water)
- Creamy peanut butter
- Jelly/jam (12 or 18 oz)
- Individually portioned snacks

Any questions, email becca_kornet@yahoo.com

Please join us for the First Parish Annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



Sunday, December 24th at 5:30 pm

Bring your family and friends to join in the magic. We will have special music, including our Choir. We will have stories traditional and modern from our young adults. We will have singing from all and bright candles of joy and celebration and hope renewing itself.

To keep everyone safe and healthy during this indoor service, masks will be required.





Green Sanctuary Committee

Our next meeting is January 26, 2024 at 7pm via Zoom. All are welcome! Email [Jeanette Ruyle](mailto:Jeanette.Ruyle) for link and more info.



Our Unitarian Universalist faith enfolds wisdom from sacred understandings throughout time. The beginning weeks of December can be a period of contemplation and awareness. Many UU's have grown a shared personal expanded view of this season called Advent.

UU minister [Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner](#) writes:

"Advent challenges us not just to wait, but to wait *actively*: to do the work of preparing hearts and till the soil that awaits seeds of hope and love. Advent encourages us to be present in each moment of waiting."

The Green Sanctuary Committee invites you use an environment-loving, earth-care lens in experiencing the next four weeks. Here are some meditations for each Sunday (or whichever day works for you). A chalice or candle may be lit.

1st LIGHT OF HOPE

"There is a hope that's been expressed in you: the hope of seven generations, maybe more. And this is the faith that they invest in you: It's that you'll do one better than was done before.

Inside you know, inside you understand; inside you know what's yours to finally set right..."

—lyrics from the song "May I Suggest" by Susan Werner



2nd LIGHT OF PEACE

"As we are confronted by chaos,
May we have the wisdom to believe in peace.
Surrounded by voices of disagreement,
May we have the audacity to speak for peace.
Lured by the seduction of despair,
May we have the courage to maintain
a vision of possibility and peace."

Rev. Maureen Killoran

3rd LIGHT OF JOY

"I choose joy over despair, not because I stick my head in the sand, but because the Earth gives me joy every day, and I must return the gift."

Robin Wall-Kimmerer, from Braiding Sweetgrass



4th LIGHT OF LOVE

"As frozen earth holds the determined seed, this sacred space holds our weariness, our worry, our laughter and our celebration. Let us bring seed and soul into the light of thought, the warmth of community, and the hope of love.

Let us see together, hear together, love together. Let us worship."

Laura Wallace

Wishing you hope, peace, joy, and love this holiday season and beyond,
Eve, Fritz, Kirsten, Jeanette, Margaret, Susan, and Thea of the Green Sanctuary Committee

A Message from the Social Justice Incubator

Most Needed Items Request



Chaplains
on the way

hope is found in hearts connected

& gloves, sizes medium – extra large, Warm socks, Long underwear, sizes large & extra large, Warm blankets, Sleeping bags, Masks

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**



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. Feel free to contact Louise Rachin at 617-429-7319 or lrachin@comcast.net with any questions.

Mediation & Reflection

Shirley Riga, Spiritual Director

Member of the Pastoral Care Committee

BELONGING

"A deep sense of love and belonging is an irreducible need of all people. We are biologically, cognitively, physically, and spiritually wired to love, to be loved, and to belong. When those needs are not met, we don't function as we were meant to. We break. We fall apart. We numb. We ache. We hurt others. We get sick." Brené Brown

Our FPUU community is strong and mighty. We may not be large in numbers but we are large in spirit. I am a month out of my traumatic accident in the Netherlands where I broke my leg in four places, surgery, rehab and the long road back.

I had the choice to pursue my surgery in the Netherlands, and I considered the surgery so far from home for about twelve hours. Until I reflected on what's back home: my family, my community and of course, the Boston medical system.

There is no fundamental requirement to belong to our UU community except to have an open heart, a willingness to share and a human need to belong. We are all from different walks of life, different wants and needs, even different family systems, but we all have a desire to embrace the values that our UU holds – one of them being the inherent worth and dignity of every living being.

This is short and to the point, unlike other articles I have published in the past, but the time is at hand, and my ability in short supply. I want to say, thank you First Parish community for the collective heart put to use through the actions that we each do to express our deep desire to help, contribute, and reinforce better living, better believing, better belonging and better overall energy in our day to day lives.

Thea and I deeply express our gratefulness for our community, as we lean into the difficult challenges at hand. Challenges come to all of us in all shapes and sizes, and we know the value of a community to lean into.

The power of belonging is strong along with the values we live our lives in. Each of us has control over the present moment only, and sure we can plan for the future, but the future has a way of resulting in surprises we don't plan for. My order of business is to love myself through the grieving process of losing our vacation while we embark on the long, arduous path of recovery that involves both of us. Am I grumpy and unhappy? At times, yes, I am. It is important to feel my emotions and then let them drift off as the moment passes to another present moment. It is the only way to survive in this changing and tumultuous world.

So this moment I am breathing. I am alive. I face my challenges physically, emotionally, and spiritually looking for the light in each moment. There is something I am learning with each experience. With no doubt in my mind, the world is full of wonderful, loving and caring people who want to do good. Thea and I experienced this first hand in the first part of our European trip and in the aftermath of my fall. I hold on to that fact, live in my moment and love what is in front of me, including my FPUU community. Thank you thank you.

Shirley Riga

PROPOSED REVISION TO ARTICLE II

1. Article II Purposes and Covenant

2. Section C-2.1. Purposes.

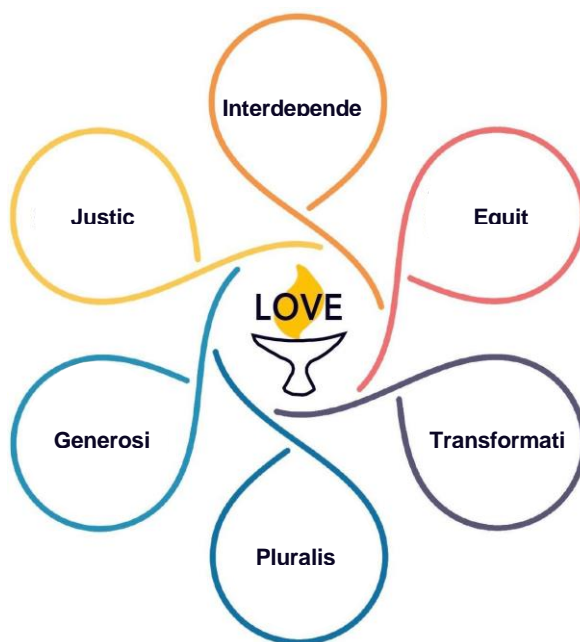
3. The Unitarian Universalist Association will devote its resources to and use its organizational
4. powers for religious, educational, and humanitarian purposes. Its primary purposes are:
- 5. • to assist congregations in their vital ministries,
 - 6. • to support and train leaders both lay and professional,
 - 7. • to foster lifelong faith formation and spiritual development,
 - 8. • to heal historic injustices,
 - 9. • to support and encourage the creation of new Unitarian Universalist communities, and
 - 10. • to advance our Unitarian Universalist values in the world.
11. The Unitarian Universalist Association will actively engage its members in the transformation of
12. the world through liberating Love.

13. Section C-2.2. Values and Covenant.

14. As Unitarian Universalists, we covenant, congregation-to-congregation and through our
15. Association, to support and assist one another in our ministries. We draw from our heritages of
16. freedom, reason, hope, and courage, building on the foundation of love.

17. Love is the power that holds us together and is at the center of our shared values. We are
18. accountable to one another for doing the work of living our shared values through the spiritual
19. discipline of Love.

20. Inseparable from one another, these shared values are:



21. Shared Unitarian Universalist Values

PROPOSED REVISION TO

Image Description: This image is of a chalice with an overlay of the word Love over the flame, with six outstretched arms that create a circle around each of the core values and form a six-petal flower shape. Each arm is a different color, and clockwise they are: Interdependence (Orange), Equity (Red), Transformation (Purple), Pluralism (Blue), Generosity (Green), and Justice (Yellow).

[Suggested shift to Rule and recommended edits] The UUA may create visual representations of the values, which put love at the center and interconnect each value, and may periodically update that image. A version of this image shall be included, with image description, after “Shared Unitarian Universalist Values” in the published version of these bylaws.

22. **Interdependence.** We honor the interdependent web of all existence. With reverence for the
23. great web of life and with humility, we acknowledge our place in it.
24. We covenant to protect Earth and all beings from exploitation. We will create and nurture
25. sustainable relationships of care and respect, mutuality and justice. We will work to repair harm
26. and damaged relationships.
27. **Pluralism.** We celebrate that we are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and
28. theology.
29. We covenant to learn from one another in our free and responsible search for truth and
30. meaning. We embrace our differences and commonalities with Love, curiosity, and respect.
31. **Justice.** We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all thrive.
32. We covenant to dismantle racism and all forms of systemic oppression. We support the use of
33. inclusive democratic processes to make decisions within our congregations, our Association,
34. and society at large.
35. **Transformation.** We adapt to the changing world.
36. We covenant to collectively transform and grow spiritually and ethically. Openness to change is
37. fundamental to our Unitarian and Universalist heritages, never complete and never perfect.
38. **Generosity.** We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope.
39. We covenant to freely and compassionately share our faith, presence, and resources. Our
40. generosity connects us to one another in relationships of interdependence and mutuality.
41. **Equity.** We declare that every person has the right to flourish with inherent dignity and
42. worthiness.
43. We covenant to use our time, wisdom, attention, and money to build and sustain fully accessible
44. and inclusive communities.

PROPOSED REVISION TO ARTICLE II

45. **Section C-2.3. Inspirations.**

46. Direct experiences of transcending mystery and wonder are primary sources of Unitarian
47. Universalist inspiration. These experiences open our hearts, renew our spirits, and transform
48. our lives. We draw upon, and are inspired by, sacred, secular, and scientific understandings
49. that help us make meaning and live into our values. These sources ground us and sustain us
50. in ordinary, difficult, and joyous times. We respect the histories, contexts, and cultures in which
51. these sources were created and are currently practiced. Grateful for the experiences that move
52. us, aware of the religious ancestries we inherit, and enlivened by the diversity which enriches
53. our faith, we are called to ever deepen and expand our wisdom.

54. **Section C-2.4. Inclusion.**

55. Systems of power, privilege, and oppression have traditionally created barriers for persons
56. and groups with particular identities, ages, abilities, and histories. We pledge to replace
57. such barriers with ever-widening circles of solidarity and mutual respect. We strive to be
58. an Association of congregations that truly welcome all persons who share our values. We
59. commit to being an Association of congregations that empowers and enhances everyone's
60. participation, especially those with historically marginalized identities.

61. **Section C-2.5. Freedom of belief.**

62. Congregational freedom and the individual's right of conscience are central to our Unitarian
63. Universalist heritage.

64. Congregations may establish statements of purpose, covenants, and bonds of union so long
65. as they do not require that members adhere to a particular creed.

FPUU Calendar of Events

Friday, December 1	Medfield Holiday Stroll
Saturday, December 2	Medfield Garden Club Greens Sale/10-12 am/Vestry
Sunday, December 3	Choir Practice/9:00 am/Sanctuary What is UU'ism/11:30 am/U-House
Monday, December 4	Staff Meeting/10:30 am/Zoom
Thursday, December 7	The Larger Circle Band Practice/7:00 pm/Vestry
Sunday, December 10	Choir Practice/9:00 am/Sanctuary Men's Group/11:30 am/U-House
Wednesday, December 13	Membership Outreach Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Thursday, December 14	The Larger Circle Band Practice/7:00 pm/Vestry Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom Executive Board Meeting/8:00 pm/Zoom
Sunday, December 17	Choir Practice/9:00 am/Sanctuary What is UU'ism/11:30 am/U-House Semi-Annual Meeting/11:30 am/Sanctuary & Zoom
Wednesday, December 20	Right Relations Team Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom Annual Fund Drive Committee Meeting/7:15 pm/Zoom
Sunday, December 24	Christmas Eve Service/7:00 pm/Sanctuary
Monday, December 25	Christmas Day/No service today
Thursday, December 28	The Larger Circle Band Practice/7:00 pm/Vestry

