



*First Parish Unitarian
Universalist of
Medfield*

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

www.firstparishmedfield.org



April Newsletter 2024

Ministerial Musings

On Sunday mornings, I mutter under my breath as I drive past the athletic fields on my way to First Parish. The parking lots are usually filled to overflowing as families flock to the field to watch their children play sports. My muttering usually revolves around “the way things used to be” when adults didn’t shop, and children didn’t play sports on Sunday mornings because that was the time to go to church. It was the Sabbath. But alas, those days are long gone.

It seems like everyone is so busy these days, especially young families who try to squeeze a plethora of children’s activities into an already heavily booked schedule. Where’s the breathing room, I wonder. Where’s the time for letting the mind wander? For playing without rules and expectations? For sitting down for meals together and actually checking in with each other?

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 21st

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



The biggest news from the Religious Exploration Committee this month is that our Executive Board has approved the hiring of a new CRE! Even though the budget is tight, our community has once again prioritized our youth by advocating for the value of hiring a consistent, dedicated coordinator for our children's programming. Tiane and Kirsten, RE co-chairs, are starting to form a search committee, and will plan to convene soon to get the process underway this Spring.

But, the RE Committee needs your help! Our experience has been that word-of-mouth has been the most effective way to find candidates for this quarter time position. Our last two CRE's have come to us through personal connections with either an employee or member of First Parish. So, if you know someone who may be a good fit for this 10 hour per week salaried position, please contact Tiane Jennings or Kirsten D'Abate for the job description and salary range.

OWL update: Fritz and Arnold will be attending O.W.L. training with the UUA in the coming months. We are very appreciative of their time commitment and willingness to co-lead in this important volunteer capacity.



In other news, the K-6 children have been exploring themes of inclusion; When is it okay to invite just one or two friends at recess to play a game? When do you think everyone in a group should be invited? What is tricky about making a guest list for your party? We are blessed to have Sarah Zitoli continuing to share her time and energy by serving as our curriculum manager and lead teacher for our classroom.

Last, check out the R. E. bulletin board above the sofas in the vestry. The board is updated every few months, and it displays a bit of what our children are busy exploring in R.E. classes.

From the Executive Board

Stewardship for Us Final Report Now Posted on FPUU Website



The final report by consultant Barry Finkelstein of Stewardship for Us has been posted in the members area of the First Parish website. Also posted are Barry's more personal reflections about First Parish based on his visit.

The report covers present challenges and future opportunities, both financial and otherwise, and makes a variety of concrete recommendations. It also contains a detailed summary of the survey congregation members completed in advance of Barry's visit.

As anyone who participated that in January weekend will recall, Barry's consultation produced a palpable sense of excitement and showed us our strengths and potential. Since that weekend, the Executive Board met with Barry by Zoom to discuss his report and has begun work on recommended next steps. Actions already taken range from the small and symbolic (for instance, sharing the Sunday offering with local charitable organizations) to much larger efforts like compiling historic pledge data and creating multiyear budget projects and costs for capital improvements.

To view the report and Barry's reflections, log into the Members Area and click on the Stewardship for Us link in the left column. Here is the link: <https://www.firstparishmedfield.org/members/stewardship-for-us/>

Black Lives Matter Banner Task Force

The Black Lives Matter Banner Task Force was established at the request of the board: "The task force is charged to review the sign as it now appears with its distinctive iconography and, if it judges a change to be appropriate, to recommend an alternative or alternatives to be voted on by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting on June 2, 2024."



The Task Force has been meeting weekly and has:

- provided a survey on this issue to the congregation: we have received 21 responses so far
- performed research on Black Lives Matter and its associated iconography with the material available at: <https://bit.ly/49ZdWlv>

And the Task Force has scheduled listening sessions after church on Sunday Mar 24 and Apr 7. We will also hold a Zoom listening session tentatively scheduled for Wed Apr. 10: we will send out a formal announcement once this session is established.

Based on the research done by the Task Force and the input from the community, the Task Force is on track to make a recommendation at the annual meeting on Jun 2. If you would like to discuss this with the task force, please contact Martha Castle, chair of the Task Force at marthaholt@gmail.com.

You are Invited to the Annual FPUU Potluck Passover Seder!

Wednesday, April 24th 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 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 into 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



Green Sanctuary Committee

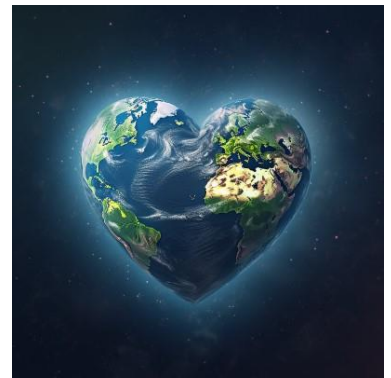
Our next meeting is April 23, 2024 at 7pm via Zoom. All are welcome! Email [Jeanette Ruyle](mailto:Jeanette.Ruyle) for link and more info.



Our mission is to raise consciousness about the environment, motivate for individual and systemic change, generate commitment to community action, and promote environmental justice, recognizing that all injustices are connected.

1. **Earth Day Worship Service is April 21**, the day before the official world-wide Earth Day. Our tradition is for this to be for all ages—something for everyone! Please do come if you are not away on school vacation.

2. **FPUU is taking part in Medfield Climate Week 2024** on two separate days.



Sunday April 28, FPUU Goats of Dover are visiting 1-3pm. Come and meet

G.O.D. Also, during that time there will be home-raised chickens in the front yard, plus robotic lawnmowers in the side yard from AOS New England, and an earth-friendly craft for children.

Attend Events
2024 Climate Week MEA
 Medfield • Environment • Action
 Saturday, April 27 – Sunday, May 5
 Check back soon for the 2024 Climate Week Schedule
 Go to MEAMedfield.org for a Schedule of Events
 Proud to Network with Sustainable Medfield.org
 QR code

Saturday May 4, Espresso Coffee House returns at 7pm for a special environmental justice-themed evening of open mic spoken word, and international folk dancing with award winning caller Jacob Bloom and the Larger Circle Band.

Watch for news about how you can help out with either or both of these FPUU events!

A MEDFIELD CLIMATE WEEK ACTIVITY

SUNDAY 1:00-3:00

APRIL 28

First Parish Unitarian
Universalist Church
60 North Street
Medfield

Goats, Robot Mowers, Chickens & more!

'Goats of Dover' – Bring the whole family to see the friendly goats! Having the 'Goats of Dover' visit your property is an effective, environmentally friendly way to eradicate poison ivy and unwanted brush- and it's super fun! Goats of Dover is committed to cleaning up and greening up our planet. Their services include goatscaping, goat yoga, baby goat visits, and cocktails with goats.



- Come say hello to some friendly local chickens and learn if backyard chicken keeping is for you.
- Create and bring home a kid's craft project using all recycled materials.
- Have a hands on visit with working landscaping goats.
- Try your hand at using electric yard tools.

Robotic lawn mowers and other sustainable tools for yards and fields. Automated Outdoor Solutions of New England will be featuring robotic lawn mowers, a robotic snowblower, a leaf-blower, a variety of battery-powered handheld tools and more! All tools are practical alternatives to noisy gas and oil-powered lawn maintenance tool!



Choco de Mayo—The 2024 Occasionally Annual First Parish *Chocolate Auction*



Save the date! First Parish will host its popular Chocolate Auction on Sunday May 5 following the morning service.

Two divisions will be featured: one for items offered by our children and young adults, the other an adult division.

Our most recent Chocolate Auction was conducted online during Covid. It was great fun nevertheless, and a successful fun(d)raiser. We look forward to an in-person event this year. Some items will be available for purchase that Sunday. Others will be delivered at an agreed upon later date.

Bakers and other sweet-toothed members: contact Sarah Zitoli (sezitoli@gmail.com) or Bill Wians (wwians@mac.com) with items you might like to prepare.



UUA General Assembly

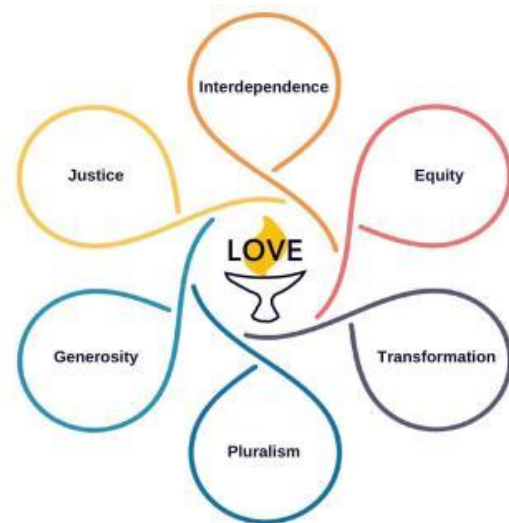


The 63rd General Assembly will take place virtually **Thursday, June 20 through Sunday, June 23, 2024**. Adult registration is \$280 and includes access to General Assembly 2024 in the Whova event app, as well as on-demand programming, featured speakers, and major worship. Register through February 29 with a down payment of \$50 by selecting the Early Bird Payment Plan at checkout. Voting delegates who wish to participate only in General Sessions may also register with the business-only option; this option is no-cost, but a donation is suggested. Registration rates increase March 1, 2024.

Update on the Proposed Revision of Article II

To be voted on at General Assembly 2024

At last year's General Assembly (GA), a preliminary proposed revision of Article II was passed after discussion and voting on a first set of amendments to the proposal. In October 2023, the Article II Study Commission incorporated the approved amendments and completed a [final draft](#) of its proposed revision. After that, further amendments, per UUA by-laws, could be submitted by congregational petition to the Study Commission. There are specific rules for this procedure and the deadline was February 1, 2024. The process is described in [this letter](#) from the UUA Board to congregations, as well as in various articles on [uua.org](#)



Currently, the latest amendments are publicly posted on the [Discussion Forum](#). There are [four amendments](#) that met all the submission criteria and will be moved to the final GA agenda for voting. *[An editorial comment by this writer*: For anyone who has questioned some of the wording of the proposed revised Article II, these latest amendments might be of particular interest.]*

There are [many resources](#) for further information about the proposed Article II revision.

*Jeanette Ruyle

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 winter 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/l/2AoBMFSCYN4W/refnav_wishlist_lists_1?) for shipment directly to the Dignity Matters warehouse. https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/l/2AoBMFSCYN4W/refnav_wishlist_lists_1?

Medfield Food Cupboard



Please contribute non-perishable items to the Medfield Food Cupboard basket located in the narthex. Thanks in advance for your generosity!

Most needed items: Boost/Ensure (chocolate or vanilla), Rice mixes (e.g., Rice-a-Roni), Spaghetti, Peanut butter, Jelly.

Collection for Chaplains on the Way



**Chaplains
on the way**

hope is found in hearts connected

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. 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.



FERRY BEACH RETREAT

MAY 17-19



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 Monday, March 4th, on a first come first serve basis.



Monthly Meditation & Reflection

Shirley Riga, Spiritual Director

Member of the Pastoral Care Committee

(photo by David Clode)



Space for Wonder

In that envelope of time when I just wake up, eyes still closed on the edge of sleep, I am in my special time when I ask questions, see images, and tiptoe around, carefully maneuvering around my sleeping ego. I do not want to wake her just yet as she is all about schedules and customs, timelines, and to-do lists.

I have a small chair in this space where I can sit in silence, take my time, breathe in clarity and be with those that support me beyond the veil. This is truly my place where I am always welcomed, sated with images, wisdom, and comfort beyond the body.

I found this special place not by exploring, but by falling into despair. Day after day, year after year I woke to deep inner sorrow. As awareness dawned every morning, the veil of darkness descended. Before rising out of bed I was laden with heavy sadness weighing down my energy.

I coped for years lugging around my unresolved problems and despair. I side-stepped my anger and ignored the small whispering thoughts. I sought therapy and listened to their words. I circled around the advice, always landing on my despair. Until the day I decided enough.

Every day is a new beginning. Every morning holds that moment when my unconscious meets my conscious mind and thinking starts. With curiosity, I began nudging open that space between the unconscious and thinking mind and discovered the envelope.

I learned this in between space is much like when I sit in silence. My ego is less in control and my imagination is free to explore, to fly and create beyond expectations.

The transitional state between awake to sleep is termed the hypnagogic state [1]. I contend this transition exists the other way as well, between sleep and waking.

THE HYPNAGOGIC STATE: A BRIEF UPDATE

The hypnagogic state refers to a transitional stage between wakefulness and sleep, in which sensory perceptions ...

I jumped on the chance to explore this space hoping it would make a difference for me. I began by using

music setting it up to turn on about the time I stirred. I estimated around five o'clock or so. The music was upbeat. I think I used an oldies CD.

What initially happened was I woke to the words and music playing in my head. I created a distraction. I kept up this practice until I became bored with it. Next step I changed the music and kept going with that until I became bored.

I believe I nudged my mind away from the habit of sadness and distracted it with music. It helped.

I am my own advocate. I take action to help my discomfort.

I have learned this space of time is an easy time to ask for help. I experienced access to my Higher Power in this transitional state and using music helped ease my mind.

I believe the veil is thin during this period. I can have conversations with my spirit team, my Higher Self. I ask for clarity and support and guidance.

This morning, my agenda was the same. On cue as I stirred, I saw a beautiful colorful parrot and the word "wonder" accompanying it.

I thought I would write about wonder this morning, along with awe and beauty for the incredible colors and creations in nature.

As I sit with this inspiration with Google looking at images of parrots, I realize the true wonder is in finding this envelope of time, and creating this special space where I am in awe of the support, guidance and comfort having discovered a room of my own.

Coffee Hosts Needed

Coffee hour hospitality after the worship service is a very important time to welcome new members and guests and enjoy some fellowship with one another.

If you are interested in hosting a coffee hour, please sign up for a specific date using the following link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10Co44BAEAF2AA7F94-coffee#/>



Sanctuary Flowers Request



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 or Margaret Rolph at margaretrolph@gmail.com

FPUU Calendar of Events

Monday, April 1	Staff Meeting/1030 am/Zoom Medfield Historical Society Meeting/7:30 pm/Vestry
Thursday, April 4	Pastoral Care Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Vestry
Sunday, April 7	Building & Grounds Work Day/11:30 am Black Lives Matter Banner Task Force Listening Session/11:30 am/Vestry OWL/7:00 pm/Vestry
Wednesday, April 10	Membership Outreach Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Thursday, April 11	Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Sunday, April 14	Men's Group Lunch/11:30 am/U-House OWL/7:00 pm/Vestry
Monday, April 15	Patriot's Day
Wednesday, April 17	Right Relations Team Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom Annual Fund Drive Committee Meeting/7:15 pm/Zoom
Thursday, April 18	Executive Board Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Friday, April 19	Larger Circle Band Practice/7:00 pm/Vestry
Sunday, April 21	Newsletter Deadline Women's Group/11:30 am/U-House OWL/7:00 pm/Vestry
Monday, April 22	Passover begins at Sundown Earth Day
Tuesday, April 23	Green Sanctuary Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Wednesday, April 24	Passover Seder/5:00 pm/Vestry
Thursday, April 25	RE Committee Meeting/7:30 pm/Zoom
Saturday, April 27	Medfield History Steeple Tours/9:30 am
Sunday, April 28	Chalice Circle/11:30 am/U-house Goats of Dover/1:00 pm/Grounds OWL/7:00 pm/Grounds