

*First Parish Unitarian
Universalist of
Medfield*

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

www.firstparishmedfield.org



January 2026 Newsletter

Ministerial Musings

Dave Egan, Minister



Ministerial Musings

Welcome to January! As always, with the new year comes a sense of promise and hope for the future. We wonder what will come in our lives. We make resolutions and flimsy promises. We enthusiastically tell ourselves, "This is the year that I will get in shape and be my best self!" ...well, at least until Groundhog Day.

Yet as optimistic as we might be for the future, we cannot shake the memories of the year that was 2025. A year when hope often seemed in short supply. We remember war and genocide, mass shootings, abuses of power, environmental disasters, reckless rhetoric, attacks on immigrants and refugees, rising food prices, and a growing sense of despair. This past year increased our collective anxiety, leaving us a nation harshly divided and angry at one another. It truly was a year many of us would like to forget.

But yet, as Unitarian Universalists, we simply are not able to turn a blind eye. We know that there is much work to be done to make our neighborhoods, our country, and our world a kinder and fairer place. For we are a faith that declares that every person is inherently worthy and has the right to flourish with dignity - *everyone* - not just with those whom we agree. We are a faith that seeks out justice and equity, in a very unequal and unjust world. We are a faith that understands that we are part of an interdependent web, and what affects one, affects us all. As UU's we are called to love one another in the best way we know how, *even* with those whom we may not even like.

These Unitarian Universalist values are easy to say, but what would it look like if we actually *lived* these values? Well, that is another matter altogether; something I am sure we all struggle with every day. Our principles call us to rise to be our best selves, even when we are angry and bitter. We try to live our values, but often we fail miserably. I am reminded of the words of the playwright Samuel Beckett, "Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try Again. Fail Again. Fail Better."

So, as we enter into 2026, may we strive to open our hearts to the beloved stranger. May we move out of our comfort zones and challenge our preconceptions of *the other*. May we strive to respect our differences, and learn from those who see the world in a very different way. Some days we will make mistakes and forget our best selves, but I pray that we will have the wisdom to get back up and try again tomorrow. For if we are to heal our individual and collective wounds, this is what the times require of us.

My friends, compassion is hard to practice. But try again. Fail again. Fail better.

Many Blessings,
Rev. Dave

From the Social Justice Incubator



We hope you will join us on January 25th, when members of the SJI will be leading Justice Sunday, with service elements provided by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). More details are below in the list of January services.

And speaking of the UUSC, don't forget to return your Guest at Your Table boxes with any contributions you have made (please convert them into checks made out to the UUSC). Alternatively, there are envelopes available to mail contribution checks directly to the UUSC.



Upcoming Services

January 4

Wash, Rinse, Repeat

Rev. Dave Egan

As we say goodbye to 2025, and welcome the new year, we ask ourselves: What's holding us back? What's getting in the way of living as fully as we'd like? What from the past year might we like to wash away and release? During this intergenerational service, you will be invited to write down those things that you wish to leave behind from 2025 and things that you hope for in the coming new year.

January 11

When the Roof Caves In...

Rev. Dave Egan

What do you do if a tree crashes through your roof? Do you hire someone to fix it? If you can't afford it, what are your other options? Climb up on the roof yourself with some duct tape and tarp and pray for the best? Ignore the hole in the roof and pretend it will be fine? Sell the house and find a rental? During this service, we will explore how we as individuals take care of our bodies and souls, and how we as a congregation take care of our buildings and grounds... hopefully *before* disaster strikes.

January 18

Safety, Sanctuary, and Service

Rev. Dave Egan

"We come into this world alone, and alone we leave it; and between the entrance and the exit we spend our time searching for companionship." -D.M. Dooling. So many who come to church express a desire for real community, not only a space for socializing, but a place that authentically serves the wider world. How do we, both personally and collectively, help foster a space of safety and sanctuary, so that we may be of better service to others?

January 25

Justice Sunday

Social Justice Incubator

Our service will be based on the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's (UUSC) Justice Sunday. Justice Sunday is a day of learning, commitment, and support for human rights. This service highlights UUSC's legacy of defiance in the face of authoritarian threats to human rights and the ways in which our global partners advance justice and possibility in the midst of similar threats today.

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



Notes From the Music Director

Eva Kendrick Conley



Tips for using the virtual hymnal

Hi all, thank you for your willingness to try out the virtual hymnal! I hope you have enjoyed some of the new songs we've programmed this fall. I've had some feedback from congregation members, and wanted to offer some tips on how to get the most out of the virtual hymnal, both in and out of the service.

1 - You can find upcoming (and past) Sing Out Love hymns at www.firstparishmedfield.org/hymns. We don't have it more prominently featured on our website as we have a subscription for our congregation members only.

2 - If using a small device like a phone during the service, make sure your phone can rotate to landscape mode (horizontal) for a larger font size.

3 - Come early to church to snag a paper copy! I do print out a small number each time I incorporate a new hymn. They will be at the back of the church by the programs.

4-log into the website to listen to the pieces, explore hymns we haven't yet sung, and learn about their history of the pieces and biographies of the composers. E-mail me for the password!

Jeanette shared this with article about the new hymnal, written by FPUU friend Matt Meyer who has been a guest service leader here on a few occasions. I think you will enjoy reading it!

"Sing Out Love: The Old Roots of the New Hymnal"

<https://www.uuworld.org/articles/virtual-hymnal-column-tradition-history-innovation>

And lastly, please considering joining us for the next Open Hymn Sing and give us your feedback on new hymns we are considering incorporating! This will be scheduled for the winter 2026, date TBD¹

I hope you have a wonderful, joyous and peaceful holiday season!



Coming of Age

The Coming of Age group of three young people and coordinators Cissy Hull-Allen and Bill Wians continues to meet regularly on Sunday evenings.

At each meeting, topics for discussion range from UU principles and how our denomination can be compared to other religious groups, to BIG questions about God, heaven and hell, who and what we are, and the need to seek self-knowledge.

In January, the group will turn to finding mentors for each of the three students to help them in formulating their statements of belief prior to sharing their statements with the congregation in May.

Upcoming sessions are on January 4th, 11th, and 25th.

HUUG Service Project



Downstairs in the vestry there will be HUUG boxes which will be sent to Jackson and William, our recent graduates, at their college. We ask that if anyone from the community has anything they want to add to the boxes to send or wants to donate money for shipping, that would be greatly appreciated. These will be out for 3 weeks, from January 18th to February 1st"

From the Executive Board – Semi-Annual Meeting



Please mark your calendars for the Semi-Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 11, 2026 at 11:30 AM in the sanctuary and on Zoom. Business will include a budget update and other important church business. 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.

WARRANT

**Semi-Annual Meeting First Parish Unitarian Universalist
Medfield, MA
January 11, 2026 at 11:30 AM**

The Executive Board hereby notifies all voting members of First Parish Unitarian Universalist Medfield of the Semi-Annual Parish Meeting, to be held **in person in the sanctuary and on the Zoom conference**

platform beginning at 11:30 AM on Sunday, January 11, 2026. A quorum of 25 percent of Full Members eligible to vote at the time of posting of this notice must be present to conduct the business of the Congregation. This translates to 19 members.

Please use the following Zoom link (the same as for Sunday worship) for remote participation
<https://uso6web.zoom.us/j/89905019277?pwd=iiEUSqYQlPOCTX4EJpgFdgaAoiciXa.1>

In accordance with the Bylaws of First Parish Medfield (approved on June 3, 2012 and amended on December 22, 2024) in Article 4.2, the Semi-Annual Meeting is described as follows:

Article 4.2 Midyear Meeting

Article 4.2.1 Time and Place: A semi-annual Parish meeting is held in the fall between the first day of November and the last day of January.

Article 4.2.2 Purpose: The semi-annual Parish meeting shall be held to update the Congregation on the status of the Church at the time of the meeting and conduct any other business as determined by the Executive Board.

The following topics will be addressed at the Semi-Annual Meeting:

- 1) Acceptance of minutes from June 8, 2025 annual meeting**
- 2) Report on the general state of the church by the board chair, Martha Castle**
- 3) Minister's report - Rev Dave Egan**
- 4) Financial update from the treasurer, Michael Taylor**
- 5) Capital Campaign Exploratory Committee findings presented by Glen D'Abate**

Over the past several years, First Parish Executive Boards have been increasingly concerned about the extensive physical needs of our historic Meeting House. It has become clear that First Parish cannot pay for necessary capital expenses from our budget or assets. In June 2025, the Board established a FPUU Capital Campaign Evaluation Committee. This committee met 7 times between June 16th and December 10th, 2025, with a mission to evaluate whether this is the right time to initiate a capital campaign at FPUU and, if so, what the scope and goals of this campaign would be. The Capital Campaign Evaluation Committee's full report will be sent with the meeting materials and will be presented at the meeting followed by a congregational vote whether to proceed with the capital campaign.

- 6) Authorization to enter into contract(s) for roofing and solar panel vendor(s)**

The Board is seeking authorization from the congregation to enter into contract(s) for a roofing vendor and a solar panel vendor (they may be the same vendor) to replace the 33-year-old Meeting House roof and install solar panels. This contract shall not exceed \$103,000. This meeting's approval is important given the time-constraints of solar panel direct incentive payments currently available.

7) Authorization to take a loan for up to \$100,000

The Board is seeking authorization from the congregation to take a loan for up to \$100,000 from either: (1) FPUU member(s); (2) Needham Bank; or (3) a solar panel vendor to allow First Parish to move forward with the Meeting House new roof/solar panel project ahead of the Capital Campaign funds being available.

8) Medfield Historical Society request to place King Philip's War historical sign on possible First Parish property presented by David Temple

The Medfield Historical Society (MHS) is seeking approval of placement of a sign commemorating the 350th anniversary of King Philip's War where the current Meeting House Pond sign resides. It is unclear whether First Parish owns this piece of land but to be certain, the MHS is seeking First Parish approval. The Board is in favor of allowing placement of the sign, and according to the FPUU Policy Governing Public Statements, is asking for the congregation's input and approval.

The sign will state the following:

Top of Marker: Medfield Town Seal

Heading 1: Medfield in King Philip's War

Heading 2: February 21, 1676

The raid on Medfield during King Philip's War was one of many by Native Americans to regain ancestral land and save their way of life. Before dawn on this date, several hundred Native warriors led by Nashaway Sachem Monoco moved silently into Medfield. Many residents had already sought refuge in five garrisons. About 75 armed inhabitants and 125 soldiers defended the town. After a morning of fierce fighting, a cannon fired near this spot to warn Dedham of the raid prompted the Native forces to withdraw across the Charles River. Thirty-two houses and two mills had been burned. Seventeen colonists and an unknown number of Natives were killed on this, the most significant day in Medfield history.

Acknowledgement: Medfield Historical Society

9) Anti-Racism Team proposal for congregation to support MA Indigenous Legislative Agenda presented by Jeanette Ruyle

The form, with more details can be found here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfzbPmDv6MKHr6RR2_RljuMisq-F2AnS7wK42Qixta7WuigLA/viewform

The meeting will end by 1 PM. Thank you on behalf of the Executive Board.



<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10Co84DA5A928A3FE3-56905841->



A vibrant bouquet of blue forget-me-not flowers with yellow centers, overflowing from a gold-colored teapot. The teapot has a handle and a spout, and the flowers spill out from the top, with a few petals scattered on the surface below.

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



Annual Fund Drive Committee

The annual fund drive process is beginning. The AFD committee has been planning since the beginning of the church year and the process will begin as January commences.

The theme for this year's drive is:

"Sustaining Hope"

Please put the various annual fund drive activities on your calendar:

- Sat Jan 31 @ 530 PM: Game night, all are invited!!!
- AFD kickoff dinner Sat Feb 28 @ 6:30 PM, children are invited
- Kickoff Sunday Mar 1 service
- March: canvass process
- Commitment Sunday Mar 29 service



The annual fund drive is the primary financial support for First Parish. We look forward to your participating in the activities and in helping us make the 2026/2027 fund drive successful!

Game Night – Saturday, January 31st at 6:30 PM

The Annual Fund Drive Committee would like to invite the community to
night of games and social festivities!

Sat Jan 31 at 6:30 PM
FPUU Vestry

Pizza and soft drinks will be provided!



Please RSVP by Jan 24, 2026 to: Don Rolph don.rolph@gmail.com.

We look forward to you joining us!!!

Hosts Needed for 2026 Small Suppers!



The Membership Outreach Committee is coordinating this year's small suppers. (potluck gatherings where 6-8 FPUU members and friends share an evening of good food and conversation). We are looking for several people who are able to host these popular get-togethers in February or March.

Please contact Michele Gravelle MGravelle@comcast.net and indicate what dates in February or March are best for you. Once we have hosts, we will start the sign-up for guests. Thanks for participating in this First Parish favorite!

Notes from the Church Office:



Please remember the following deadlines:

Church Newsletter: Third Sunday of the month. **January 18.**

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

Medfield Food Cupboard

Please contribute non-perishable items to the Medfield Food Cupboard basket located in the narthex. Requested items are: Ensure/**Boost** (chocolate or vanilla), **Rice mixes** (e.g., Rice-a-Roni), **Spaghetti**, Peanut **butter** (preferably Jif or Skippy, creamy), **Jelly** (preferably grape).



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. Donations can be left in the box outside the U-House. Alternatively, they have an Amazon Wish List where you can order items to be shipped directly to DM. Most needed items include sanitary pads (packages of 20, 24, 40, and 48), adult sports bras (all sizes but particularly XL), and new adult underwear in all sizes and styles. If you have questions or would like to have the link to the Amazon Wish List emailed to you, please contact Becca Kornet.

Green Sanctuary Committee



-Our next meeting is on Jan. 14, 2026 by 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.

FPUU's GSC, Sustainable Medfield, and Medfield

Among the environmental and sustainability groups in Medfield, First Parish is known for its activism in caring about our environment and climate change. In large part, this is due to the Green Sanctuary Committee representing FPUU as part of the network of [Sustainable Medfield](https://sustainablemedfield.org). Note the SM logo that appears above, monthly on the GSC piece for this newsletter.

Sustainable Medfield organizes four Actions of the Quarter per year. Participating groups and organizations in the network take turns leading the Actions. The most recent AOTQ was initiated by Fritz Fleischmann on behalf of the GSC and FPUU. Read [Pete Peterson's blog](#) and learn about the plan as well as the history of this effort. Fritz and several Sustainable Medfield collaborators have been working with the Medfield School Department and School Committee.



Thank you, Fritz, for your work in protecting clear air, our health, and our environment. Thank you for helping FPUU be known around town as a "green sanctuary" in action!



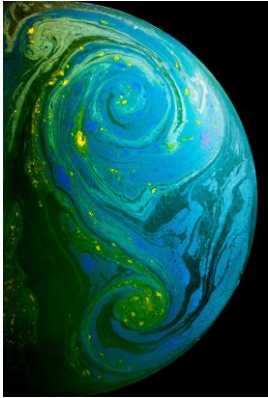
Mediation & Reflection

Shirley Riga, Spiritual Director

Member of the Pastoral Care Committee

UNUSUAL TIMES

(Photo by Solen-Feysissa)



We live in unusual times. The world is amidst transcendent change, and like a fish, we can't yet see beyond the water we reside in because we're still surviving the storm. Roots buried in complacency are shaken loose. People are dying. People are surviving. Hearts break open as a global movement of awakenings of massive proportions takes place.

It's exciting and terrifying. We feel helpless and find power in presence. We react in stunned silence and thankfully our breath continues automatically without a reminder. We were born to be part of this experience. As we burn away the long-held wounds we create more light within. We are lightworkers.

Like the ocean, we ebb and flow in both sides of life – love and fear. We hold the wisdom to stand steady and allow the flow of love and fear move through us.

Every person walking on Earth holds some awareness of all the changes happening in the cosmos. We are all being birthed in new energy and it is messy. I listen to sages like Pam Gregory, a master astrologer, as she interprets her years of understanding into complex sentences explaining the immense change we are undergoing. Planets aligned in ways never documented for over 6,000 years.

It is so important to listen with our heart, not analyze in our head. I catch myself when I start analyzing instead of feeling. We are at the tipping point of a new consciousness, one which has been emerging for decades. A consciousness that will continue to purge out the pain.

Fierce self-care. Gentleness. Remember to love yourself with your inside words and your outside actions. You are the center of your Universe.

No Longer Room for Stones

by Liliana Kohann

I cannot really change how tall I am,
but I can change how tall I stand.
I cannot really change how old I am,
but I can change how young I feel.
I cannot really change how well I see
but I can change how well I learn.
I cannot really change the color of my skin

or the sound of my voice,
 but I can change the colors of my expressions.
 I cannot really change my bone structure,
 but I can change the structure of my thoughts.
 I cannot really change the coldness I received,
 but I can change the warmth with which I give.
 I cannot really change my sensitive nature,
 and God knows I've tried,
 but I can change the nature of my environment:
 No longer room for stones,
 but soil fertile and soft,
 Where flowers like me can grow.
 Where we can cherish it all.
 Where all our gifts can glow.
 Where we all can become the heroes
 that we were meant to be.
"I cannot do all the good the world needs. But the world needs all the good that I can do."

~Jana Stanfield

A Message from Chaplains on the Way

The following items would be gratefully received by the unhoused community of Waltham:



- 3 lb. cans of caffeinated coffee
- 12 oz. hot cups w/lids
- 40-pack case of Bramble or HotHands hand warmers, available on Amazon.com
- Yoga mats - 1/2" thick
- Men's and Women's new or gently used winter coats and jackets, sizes medium – extra large (preferably made from synthetic fabrics)
- Men's sweatpants & hooded sweatshirts, sizes large & extra large
- Women's sweatpants & hooded sweatshirts, sizes medium & large
- Women's and men's winter gloves, sizes medium – extra large
- Winter socks, long underwear, sizes medium – extra large
- Warm blankets & sleeping bags, (preferably made from synthetic fabrics)
- Travel-size sewing kits
- First aid supplies (adult size band aids, antiseptic wipes, sterile gauze pads, medium & large, first aid tape)

Kindly place your donations in the box located in the vestry. Contact Louise Rachin at 617-429-7319 or at president@chaplainsontheway.org with any questions.





Calling All Chocolatiers!!

It's time to choose your recipes for the 2026 First Parish Chocolate Auction! Donations of chocolate-themed items are now being sought.

Sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050B4CAA728A4F58-61355877-2026>



When: Sunday, February 8, 2026 immediately following the morning service.
Just in time for your Valentine.

Who: You! Members, family, friends.

Where: FPUU Vestry

What: All the chocolate.

- We are seeking chocolate creations of all kinds from adults, teens and children. Items can be homemade and available at the auction or a promise for an item to be delivered to the winner.
- You can provide tasty treats professionally made by local bakeries / sweet shops or donate a gift card. Donated gift cards from local establishments will be sold by raffle, with winners announced at the end of the auction.
- Some items will be available to take home on Auction Sunday. Others will be delivered at an agreed upon later date.
- Payment by cash, check or Venmo is requested at the time of purchase by the successful bidder.

Faye Kalmbach
Membership Outreach Committee



FPUU Calendar of Events

Monday, January 1	New Year's Day-Office Closed
Sunday, January 4	CoA/7:00 pm/U-House
Monday, January 5	Staff Meeting/11:00 am/Zoom
Wednesday, January 7	AFD Committee Meeting/7:15 pm/Zoom
Thursday, January 8	Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:30 pm/Zoom
Sunday, January 11	Semi-Annual Meeting/11:00 am/Sanctuary CoA/7:00 pm/Vestry
Wednesday, January 14	Membership Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Sunday, January 18	Newsletter Deadline Women's Group/11:30 am/U-House
Monday, January 19	Martin Luther King Jr. Day/Office Closed
Thursday, January 22	Executive Board Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom R.E. Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Sunday, January 25	OWL/5:30 pm/U-House CoA/7:00 pm/Vestry
Saturday, January 31	AFD Game Night/6:00 pm/Vestry

