



*First Parish Unitarian
Universalist of Medfield*
26 North Street, Medfield, MA
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www.firstparishmedfield.org



January Newsletter 2013

Ministerial MUUsings...

One of the many things I like about First Parish is the way the congregation discusses issues, large and small, global and parochial. It is good to see people gathering around the table in the vestry talking about the church community taking action on climate change and being a UUA- certified Green Sanctuary. It was also very satisfying to facilitate the wonderful, illuminating conversation we had in November about the First Parish Welcoming Statement. Then there was the respectful and passionate discussion a couple of weeks ago about a new First Parish sign.

Let me focus on this last congregational conversation. The installation of a new sign identifying First Parish and the future of the

Wayside Pulpit evoked strong feelings. For my part I want it "all." I think a new sign will tell people First Parish is alive and well. (Yes, First Parish is well.) How a congregation keeps its buildings and property tells the wider community how the church community's members feel about themselves. That is why I am hopeful that a new U House will be erected in the near future.

The current Wayside Pulpit is in disrepair and a good bump or a strong gust of wind is all that is needed for it to topple. I like the idea of the Wayside Pulpit. Non-UUs may not understand that it is something unique to us but the pithy quotes often evoke thought and reflection, and isn't that what Unitarian Universalism seeks to do? Even if it

is a remnant of a day gone by, when most people walked to church or walked by it, nevertheless it is still possible for a passerby in a car or on a stroll to read the message. The solution of what to do with the Wayside Pulpit is easy. First, a new one has to be erected; next, a visible placement is necessary (and any applicable town zoning ordinances should be followed, though I really don't see that being a hindrance. Finally, someone or a church group needs to take responsibility for changing the quotes frequently. Finding new quotes is as easy as finding the nearest Bartlett's. Getting them printed is easy too.

Of course, the real test is how the congregation can come to a consensus. We pride ourselves in

following the democratic process which requires every one who wants to voice an opinion to be heard. But, as we see on the national political scene, the process of democracy is a messy, slow and oftentimes fractious affair. What we at First Parish need to remind ourselves is that even with differing opinions, all have the best interests of the church in mind. With that thought firmly in front of us, surely we can come to an agreement that is satisfactory to all.

Peace,

Rich Stower

News and Views from the RE Desk

Patricia Hatch, Interim Director of Religious Education

Dear First Parish Members and Friends,

Mr. Rogers' mother told him something that can help all of us: "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." To this day, especially in times of 'disaster,' I remember my mother's words and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers – so many caring people in this world."

When horrible things happen in our world, it is easy to focus on all the negatives. And of course, it is important to consider what can be done to help prevent future tragedies. But in my personal reflection, I find it hopeful and life-affirming to focus on the helpers, the heroes, and on the multitudes of people who care. Of course, I grieve and offer prayerful thoughts to those suffering. But then I remind myself of all those who cared and still care, and those thoughts encourage me just like they encouraged Mr. Rogers.

Parents and grandparents may want to take Mr. Rogers' mother's advice. It is important to give children and youth opportunities to talk, ask questions, and express their feelings. In these conversations, maybe we can also bring more awareness of all the many helpers.

The UUA has some beneficial trauma response resources for families and congregations. The titles include such topics as "Helping children and adolescents cope with violence and disasters" and "Managing Your Distress in an Aftermath of a Shooting." These resources and others can be found at

<http://www.uua.org/safe/response/117164.shtml>.

Wishing you peace and shalom during this holiday season and in the coming year,

Patricia

Executive Board Notes

The semi-annual Parish Meeting was held December 16.

- ❖ **Treasurer's report:** Glen D'Abate reported \$59,233 expenses against \$52,060 income, about normal for this time of year. Cash on hand, \$62,000, total assets \$144,000
- ❖ **Ministerial Search:** John Kornet reported on the Ministerial Search. (see article)
- ❖ **Educational Facility:** Duncan Glover reported that \$6950 has been donated to fund an architectural study for a new educational facility.
- ❖ **Wireless:** David Maxson gave a brief report on the status of MetroPCS interest in installing wireless antenna in the FPUU spire.
- ❖ **New Sign:** Duncan Glover spoke for the Membership Committee on the proposal to install a new sign and relocate the Wayside Pulpit. A motion to form a dedicated Sign Committee to complete the project was made and approved.
- ❖ **Welcoming Statement:** Bill Wians, Don Bowden-TeXera, Mark Samel and Fran Kingsbury proposed the new welcoming statement be: "As a Welcoming Congregation, First Parish Medfield invites everyone into our faith community." They made further recommendations that the Order of Service be revised to include a rainbow banner and equals symbol on the front, and to add the affirmation statement from the FPUU By-Laws to the back. Their recommendations were unanimously approved.
- ❖ **State of the Art Educational Facility:** Duncan Glover reported that the \$1,800 phase one contract with David Scharff has been signed and an advance payment of \$900 has been made to conduct a preliminary survey for a new facility. A design committee will be overseeing the study. It will include representatives from the EB (Duncan), RE, B&G, Worship & Music, Membership; minister ex officio, and two ad-hoc members are possible. David Scharff will begin in January.
- ❖ **Wireless Antenna Update:** The Town ZBA approved the MetroPCS application to install an antenna in the First Parish steeple under the new wireless by-law. The next step is for Metro PCS to submit a design and apply for a building permit. The detail engineering of the reinforcement to the steeple structure must be completed by FPUU so that MetroPCS can proceed. David Maxson has requested MetroPCS to advance funds to FPUU to pay for completion of that engineering. The fastest track possible shows a potential completion could be late Summer/early Fall 2013.
- ❖ **Green Sanctuary:** Fritz has been meeting with a number of FPUU members who are interested in taking action on climate change. They are recommending that FPUU undertake the process of becoming a Green Sanctuary within the UUA guidelines. A standing committee will be formed and Fritz has volunteered to lead the process.

- ❖ **Fundraising:** Winter fundraising events are planned:
 - Pancake Breakfast scheduled for February 3 will raise funds for the Family Promise.Charity.

- Saturday March 2 was set aside as a date for a fun and fundraising event.
- The Indoor Yard Sale is planned for Saturday March 23. Volunteers are needed to run the event.

Ministerial Search Committee News

Report for the Semi-Annual Meeting
First Parish Unitarian Universalist Medfield
December 16, 2012

Committee Members:

Dan Bibel
David Temple
Frances Kingsbury
Louise Rachin
Kirsten D'Abate
John Kornet
Jenifer Bartle, Chair

First Parish Medfield is currently in year two of a two-year interim ministry after the departure of Rev. Bob McKetchnie. In April of 2012, near the end of year one, a seven-member committee was selected by means of congregational vote and input from the Executive Board. This Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) has been tasked with following UUA guidelines and procedures with the goal of selecting a ministerial candidate to present to the congregation for their vote. This report explains the work of the MSC to this point and describes the tasks still ahead.

Retreat: The work of the MSC kicked off with a retreat at nearby Bullard Farm in Holliston, MA in late June 2012. The retreat was facilitated by our Ministerial Search Representative from the UUA, Rev. Georganne Green. The goal of the retreat was to begin to build a solid team and to learn about the tasks that lay ahead. It was an extremely successful event.

Gathering information: The first major task of the MSC was to conduct a survey of the congregation. The MSC worked throughout the summer months to prepare the survey, and released it in mid-August. The survey was conducted online and in paper for those who requested it. We had an excellent response rate of over 85%. The MSC also held cottage meetings for members to express their opinions in person.

Preparing the Congregational Record: The next major task undertaken by the MSC was to complete the Congregational Record (CR) form on the UUA website. This form requests extensive data about the congregation, including narrative descriptions and numerical data (e.g., membership and budget information going back to the 1970s). The same form is used by all congregations in search; it is effectively the online "job

description" that ministerial candidates see. Candidates who have read our CR and are interested in pursuing our position "click" on us; we can then see their equivalent Ministerial Record (MR) -- a UUA form similar to the CR.

Creating the "Packet": The month of November had the MSC busy preparing the congregational "packet" -- what was once a binder with printed pages now takes the form of a website -- to be used to exchange detailed information with prospective ministerial candidates. The packet assembled by the MSC is a very attractive website with rich information, beautiful pictures, and easy navigation. Please note that all First Parish members are invited to view the packet; please contact one of the committee members if you would like the address and password.

Currently: In late November we learned that a number of ministers had clicked on us; we were then able to decide with whom we would like to exchange packets. On December 2, 2012, the MSC had its third and final consultation with Georganne Green from the UUA. The purpose of this consultation was to check in, to field questions, and to review the tasks that remain.

We have received ministerial packets from a number of ministers; the MSC is currently in the process of choosing which ministers to interview by telephone.

The Coming Months: Once all phone interviews are conducted, the MSC will likely select three pre-candidates (the standard number) to interview in person. These interviews will take place during weekends in February. They will involve Friday dinner, Saturday interviews, Saturday dinner, and Sunday morning preaching in pre-arranged "neutral pulpits" in similar-sized regional UU churches. Note: the identities of the pre-candidates must be kept confidential at all times throughout this process.

The MSC will evaluate all pre-candidates and intends to select one of them to become the final candidate. If that person agrees to be our candidate, and meets additional screening criteria, the MSC will announce that person as the candidate. Additionally, the details of the position will be negotiated by a three-member Negotiating Team: David Temple (representing the MSC), Glen D'Abate (representing the Executive Board), and Julie DeSorgher (representing the congregation at large). In late March or April, the candidate will participate in a week-long series of events in the congregation. He or she will preach one Sunday morning, then spend the entire week meeting with the various constituencies of our church. On the following Sunday morning, he or she will preach again. Immediately following the service, and according to church bylaws, the congregation will vote on whether to call that person to be our minister.

COMING SOON

**5th ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2013**

**Bring a friend to the breakfast and to
church.**



Donations to Support an Urban Ministry Child's Campership

Other Announcements

Supporting FPUU through Amazon.com and Equal Exchange



There are many ways to support First Parish - becoming a member is one, volunteering is another. But you can also help by buying things through Amazon.com or by getting your coffees, teas, and chocolates through Equal Exchange.

Getting the things that you would ordinarily order anyway, but using the links available on our website will let you do your part in supporting the work of this congregation, helping our social action agenda, and preserving our historic Meeting House.

Go to our website www.firstparishmedfield.org and click on the "Support First Parish-Amazon & Equal Exchange" link on the left. It's easy!

The Medfield Food Cupboard has requested the following from our church for the month of January:

- Cookies
- Crackers
- Canned chicken
- Juice
- Plastic wrap/tin foil/zip lock bags



Please double check your food item to ensure that it is undented, unopened, and unexpired. Thanks for your efforts. Any donations are greatly appreciated and can be placed in the basket in the narthex.

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. If you miss this deadline but have an announcement to be made at the church service, please submit a typed announcement to the service manager for that given Sunday and send a copy to the office.

Church Office Hours: Mondays & Thursdays from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Email: admin@firstparishmedfield.org

Sandra Andreassi-Administrator



Upcoming Services (All Services Begin at 10:00 AM)

January 6, 2013

"The New Year"

Rev. Richard M. Stower

The rhythms of life are all around us. All cultures throughout human history have recognized the need to assess what is going on with these rhythms of our existence. To celebrate the New Year is to be present at our rebirth in which we have learned from our past and look towards the new opportunities for the future.

January 13, 2013

"Caring"

Rev. Richard M. Stower

Ministry in a free and liberal religious congregation is not just somewhat that a minister "does to" or with a congregation. It is also the life the interaction, the caring and the sharing that goes on within and amongst the congregation as well.

January 20, 2013

"Reclaiming the Prophetic Voice"

Rev. Richard M. Stower

In a book written forty years ago, Rabbi Abraham Heschel, one of the great theologians of the twentieth century, offers a description of the nature of the biblical prophets and a modern interpretation of their words. Rabbi Heschel was one who was not only inspired intellectually by the prophets but was inspired by them to *act*. He was a tireless participant in the civil rights and anti-Vietnam war movements. He walked alongside Dr. King in Selma. Heschel opens his book with a question: "What manner of [a person] is the prophet?"

January 27, 2013

TBA

The Worship and Music Committee

FPUU Calendar of Events

Tuesday, Jan 1	New Year's Day
Sunday, Jan 6	OWL Meeting/7-9 pm/Vestry
Thursday, Jan 10	Worship & Music Committee/7:30 pm/Vestry
Sunday, Jan 13	OWL Meeting/6-8 pm/Vestry
Tuesday, Jan 15	Membership Meeting/7:15 pm/Bunger's Thursday, Jan 17
Thursday, Jan 17	Executive Board Committee/7:30 pm/U-House
Monday, Jan 21	Martin Luther King Day – Office Closed
Sunday, Jan 27	OWL Meeting/7-9 pm/Vestry
Sunday, Feb 3	5 th Annual Pancake Breakfast/8:30 am/Vestry OWL Meeting/7-9 pm/Vestry
Sunday, Feb 10	OWL Meeting/7-9 pm/Vestry
Thursday, Feb 14	Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:30 pm/Vestry
Sunday, Feb 17	OWL Meeting/7-9 pm/Vestry
Monday, Feb 18	President's Day/Office Closed
Tuesday, Feb 19	Membership Committee Meeting/7:15 pm/Bunger's
Thursday, Feb 21	Executive Board Meeting/7:30 pm/U-House
Sunday, February 24	OWL Meeting/7-9 pm/Vestry

For a complete listing of events, please visit our website at www.firstparishmedfield.org. If you would like to book the Sanctuary, Vestry or U-House for an event or meeting, please check availability and then contact the church office at admin@firstparishmedfield.org