

*First Parish Unitarian
Universalist of
Medfield*

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

www.firstparishmedfield.org



January Newsletter

From the Minister

Here's a beautiful short prayer by Gerald Heard you might want to incorporate into your new year's meditations:

TIDES OF JOY

*Fathomless Ocean of Love, ever creating the universe anew:
Give us grace to go about all our doings cheerfully,
Rhythmically, with hearts lifted high,
knowing that no matter how troubled the surface waters of life seem to be,
we are constantly upheld by your deep tides of joy.*



Dear Friends,

When you read this letter it will be close to the New Year. It will be quiet, and a good time to reflect on the months just past, on our new shared ministry.

I hope that you will take some time to reach out to me or someone else in leadership soon and let us know how the church is feeling to you now, after half a year with this new minister. What are you glad about? What do you wish there was more of as you think about the future at FPUU?

I want to let you know what I will be focusing on in the New Year, in addition to the worship services and continuing to getting to know you.

- We will resume our congregational covenant conversations and gradually work our way toward a vote to possibly adopt one at the annual meeting.
- I will be beginning one or more small groups (“covenant groups” or “chalice circles”) in February. These are groups of six to ten people that meet once or maybe twice a month in gatherings that invite intimacy, allow for serious engagement with religious and spiritual topics, and lead toward expression of our principles and values in action. The intention is to obtain a balance of the personal and the thought-provoking. The core of the content is the group’s shared life stories in response to thought provoking UU oriented themes, and the insights we draw from them. The groups are open, supportive, nurturing environments that promote and facilitate

spiritual growth and mutual, interactive care for one another. Sounds good, right?

- Our new monthly outreach series, “Mondays in Medfield”, will begin at the end of the month with Mark Samels, executive producer of PBS’ American Experience, presenting and speaking about his latest documentary “The Amish: Shunned.” Come, and invite your friends!
- I will lead a three-part afternoon workshop series on forgiveness beginning Sunday January 26 at 3:00 pm. In the first session we will view and reflect on an excellent documentary about a family in which the mother’s cancer has recurred, and how that effects different family members as they struggle to use their “Gift of Time” well, to forgive each other for deep pain from their shared past. (Full disclosure, my brother is a film-maker, and the family is my family.) The second workshop will involve an experiential process, called the Tree of Life, through which we explore our life, gifts and resilience. The final workshop will focus on the process of forgiveness, and what we can do to help ourselves forgive when that is what we want to do.

Finally, I am out of the office until January 8. If you have a pastoral emergency before I return, please call the pastoral care emergency line 781-850-3307 and a pastoral care team member will speak with you, and pass you on to the back-up minister.

Happy New Year, and until we meet in person again, many blessings,

Rev. Meg

**Office hours: Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30 – 2:30 and by appointment
Work cell: 781-767-7663 Pastoral emergencies: 781-850-3307**

From the Director of Religious Education

“What Are We Waiting For?”



I don't know about your kids, but mine keep asking "How many days till Christmas?"

Meanwhile, every time I go into a store, the friendly clerk at the register asks me, "Have you finished your Christmas shopping?"

And all the moms at school pick up ask each other, "What are you doing over the holidays?"

This time of year, Advent, is about waiting, right? But does it need to be this frenetic Let's-get-there-as-fast-as-we-can kind of waiting? And what exactly are we waiting for?

It reminds me of taking trips with kids in the car, when someone demands "Are we there yet?" every few minutes. By the time we're "there," we're all cranky!

Where is it that we need to get to in such a hurry? What's so bad about NOW? I tell my kids to enjoy the view out the car window while we're driving... they don't buy it. And you--are you skimming this so you can get to the next item in the newsletter and be done with it? Are you wondering what the point is? Or is your mind already on the next thing you need to do today, or wishing something would just be over and done with?

Maybe you're one of those people who really and truly enjoy the holiday season and all it offers. But if you're like many of us, you're just wondering, "Are we there yet?"

Of course, we're NEVER "there." We're always "here." So we might practice paying attention to here, and now, and helping kids practice that too. In some ways, they are masters of being in the present moment. Other times ("Are we there yet?" "Are we there yet?" "Are we there yet?") Not so much.

Family meals are a perfect opportunity for presence. I admit to finding family meals pretty stressful, and I often just want them to be over with. But I'm trying to make dinner a time when we can slow down, light some candles, and sit, and eat, and be together, in whatever states we're in.

We do the same thing in worship: We pause whatever else we're doing in our lives. We come to the sanctuary. We come together. We remind each other of something. And it's not "Are we there yet?" It's "Here we are!"

A poem adapted from Lao Tzu:

*Always we hope someone else has the answer,
Some other place will be better,
Some other time, it will all turn out.
This is it.
No one else has the answer,
No other place will be better,
It has already turned out.
At the center of your being you have the answers,
There is no need to run outside for better seeing.
Nor to peer from a window.
Abide* at the center of your being
The more you leave it, the less you learn.*

*in other words, "wait, hold still!"

My wish for each one of you is at least one moment today when you say, "There's nowhere I'd rather be." And maybe even "There's no one I'd rather be."

Yes, we are there.
We are here.
Welcome.

--Alison Streit Baron

Are we there yet?

Executive Board Notes

An Executive Board meeting was held on December 19, 2013

Semi-Annual Parish Meeting: In response to the favorable sense of the congregation to the presentation by the architect, David Sharff, on planning for the new U-House, we approved the second phase of the architect's work (already funded), and discussed setting up a formal capital campaign in the new year.

Installation for Reverend Meg: We approved an expense of \$1500 for the installation, to be held in March.

Financial Update for FY 14

Pledges: \$63.8K (57%) out of \$111,063 (budget) collected

Fundraising: \$6K (60.6%) out of \$9.9K (budget) raised

Rentals: \$5.1K (34%) out of \$15K (budget) collected

Cash on hand (Rockland Trust Account): \$50.7K

New Life Home Refurnishing: Home Refurnishing will be moving to bigger accommodations in Walpole in January; a date will be set soon for First Parish to volunteer.

January Potluck sponsored by Membership Committee: It will be held on Friday, January 10.

Margaret Rolph
Executive Board Co-Chair



Family Promise MetroWest — Volunteers Needed Orientations on January 5th and January 7th



Have you thought you might want to volunteer to help homeless families?

If so, there are many opportunities available at Family Promise MetroWest. In order to get started you first have to complete the orientation to their program. What better way to become acquainted with the program than attend a training right here in Medfield or nearby Sherborn!

One will be held Sunday, January 5th at the Pilgrim Church in Sherborn from 11:30 am to 1pm. Contact Jennifer Searle, 508-650-1790, if you're able to attend.

The second will be held Tuesday, January 7th, from 7-8:30 pm at the Medfield UCC Church on Main St. Please contact Kathy Belmont at 359-6913 or <kbelmont3@verizon.net>, if you'd like to attend. If you have other questions, please give Barbara Bunger a call, 359-4058.

Winter Adult Enrichment Opportunity "The Gift of Time" Workshops Led by Reverend Meg



"The Gift of Time", a three-part afternoon workshop series on forgiveness, begins Sunday, January 26 at 3:00 pm.

In the first session we will view and reflect on an excellent documentary about a family in which the mother's cancer has recurred, and how that effects different family members as they struggle to use their "Gift of Time" well, to forgive each other for pain from their shared past. (Full disclosure, Rev. Meg's brother is a filmmaker, and the family is her family.)

The second workshop, on **Sunday February 2nd** at 3 pm, will involve an experiential process called the Tree of Life to explore the gifts and resilience in our lives. The final workshop, on **Sunday February 9** at 3 pm, will focus on the process of forgiveness, and what we can do to help ourselves forgive when that is what we want to do.

In order to participate in workshops two and three, you will need to have participated in the first one.

2nd

First Parish Family Potluck



Friday, January 10th

5:30pm- 8:30pm

***Babysitters provided
RSVP Kirsten D'Abate for childcare 359-9914***

***We'll be spinning your favorite tunes during the
meal and after!***

Sponsored by Membership Committee

Join us for a good time!!

Save the Date:

MARK SAMELS PRESENTS

THE AMISH: SHUNNED
JANUARY 27TH AT 7:00 PM
IN THE VESTRY



More details to follow...

**Come one, Come all, to the
6th ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST**

On Super Bowl Sunday

FEBRUARY 2, 2014

At 8:30 am in the Vestry

Bring a friend to the breakfast and to church



50% of donations from this event will be given to
The New Life Home Refurnishing program

Save the Date -- March 30 at 4:00 pm

The installation of Reverend Meg Soens as First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church in Medfield's minister

An installation is like a wedding -- it's when church and minister formally establish their relationship, and make promises to each other about how we will be in relationship together. It includes outside witnesses to the event, including clergy from neighboring churches town and UU churches in the region. It will be a ceremony of relative pomp and circumstance, followed by a great spread. Mark the date!



Flowers Needed for the Sanctuary

Would you like to have a loved one remembered at our Sunday service? Your donation of flowers would be greatly appreciated. Sundays in January, February and May are available. Please contact Rebecca Stephenson 508 740-0663 or rgspt1@gmail.com

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 8:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Email: admin@firstparishmedfield.org

Sandra Andreassi-Administrator

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.

**Just go to Firstparishemedfield.org
and click on the link at the bottom of any page!**

Food Cupboard Donations Needed

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

**DONATE
FOOD
HERE**



- Juice - bottled or boxes
- Raisins
- Toilet paper – 4 packs
- Cereal
- Applesauce cups
- Raisins
- Cookies
- Crackers

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

Special thanks to Evan Springer who is the coordinator for our church this year.

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

*This month our theme will be forgiveness.
Three of the sermons will explore different aspects or stories around forgiveness.*

January 5, 2013

Sarah Zitoli and Friends

January 12, 2013

Forgiveness I: Lesson in Hope for Our Human Community

Rev. Meg Soens

Nelson Mandela, like Martin Luther King Jr., was a prophet, a leader, and a practitioner of non-violent resistance to the oppressive system under which he and his fellow South Africans lived. We'll explore what we can learn from how he led South Africa through its transformation from apartheid to democracy.

January 19, 2013

Forgiveness II: Almost-forgiveness

Rev. Meg Soens

Sometimes we try to forgive someone who has hurt us, but we just can't do it. Where do we get stuck, and what then?

January 26, 2013

Forgiveness III: Not for our own sake

Rev. Meg Soens

Most of us know how much better we feel after we forgive someone, and that in itself is a powerful stimulus. But is that all? Is it just about ourselves?



In Case of Severe Weather...

To keep you informed on any closings or delays for Sunday morning worship services, there will also be an announcement made by 9:00 am on the church website at www.firstparishmedfield.org. An email blast will also go out to those that are on the mailing list.

FPUU Calendar of Events

Tuesday, January 14	Lunch Bunch/12:00 pm/Church Offices Membership Meeting/7:15 pm/Bunger's House
Thursday, January 9	Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:30 pm/Vestry
Friday, January 10	Family Potluck/6:00 pm /Vestry
Sunday, January 12	Coming of Age/7-9pm/Vestry
Tuesday, January 14	Lunch Bunch/12:00 pm/Church Offices Membership Meeting/7:15 pm/Bunger's House
Thursday, January 16	Executive Board Meeting/7:30 pm/U-House
Sunday, January 19	Newsletter Deadline
Sunday, January 26	The Gift of Time Series/3:00 pm/Vestry Coming of Age/Field Trip to MFA
Monday, January 27	Mark Samels presents The Amish:Shunned/7:00 pm/Vestry

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