



First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Medfield

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

www.firstparishmedfield.org



February Newsletter

From the Minister

What Is An Installation Anyway?

Dear FPUU friends,

On March 30th at 4:00 pm I will be formally installed as your settled minister. So what does this mean?

Our relationship began when you, the congregation, voted to call to me to serve as settled minister in May of 2013 and I said yes. A Unitarian Universalist congregation doesn't hire, but *calls* their minister because the relationship is one of mutual promises, rather than a purely

contractual one of a job description fulfilled or not. The relationship, in other words, is mutual, normative, and committed; a moral rather than a contractual relationship.

We will formally enter into this covenantal relationship of minister-congregation at the March 30th service. The installation is basically a service much like a marriage, at which you and I covenant with each other as minister and congregation. Such a formal occasion of promise-making typically occurs in the spring of a minister's first year, after there has been some time in which to get to know each other, and to plan for the service.

I am very happy we are now preparing for this day. I am so blessed to be here with you. I am relishing the process of getting to know you and get involved in outreach, fellowship, worship and pastoral care.

The installation itself will be a worship service, with the familiar elements of readings, hymns, prayer and a sermon. There will, however, be three elements unique to an installation. These three elements are: 1. the act of installation by you the congregation, 2. the charge to the minister and 3. the charge to the congregation.

The act of installation will be performed by your executive board chair and vice-chair, with participation by you the congregation and myself.

The charge to the congregation will be given by someone from our larger Unitarian Universalist faith community. That person will charge you to be attentive to your covenant with your minister, and call you into service in the larger Unitarian Universalist movement and community.

The charge to the minister is usually given by another minister, and usually includes reminders of

the privileges and responsibilities of ministry and some good advice.

At the installation we will be joined by other UU ministers from the area, local clergy and leaders, and after the service we will have a festive reception with delicious snacks. I know this last is a fact, because Louise Rachin is in charge of the installation planning!

The installation will be a chance to celebrate the long ministry of this church, the love and care that still keep it alive, vibrant and growing, and the new era of promise we are stepping into. I hope to see you there!

(Adapted from an article by Rev. Leslie Bicknell Marx.)

Many blessings,
Rev. Meg

**Rev. Meg Soens office hours are
Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30 –
2:30
And by appointment
Work cell: 781-767-7663
Pastoral emergencies: 781-850-3307**

The winner of the recently imported olive tapenade for catching the most errors in Rev. Meg's recent "Almost Weekly Message" is Jen Bartle.

Congratulations Jen!!



The Congregation of
First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Medfield



requests the honor of your presence at
the installation of

The Reverend Meg Soens

as our settled minister

Sunday, March 30, 2014 at 4:00 PM

First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Medfield
26 North Street
Medfield, Massachusetts 02052

A reception will follow the service

Childcare will be provided



From the Director of Religious Education



It's Sunday morning during Religious Education at First Parish UU, with Chris C. and I leading the group. Today is a little less structured than usual: we're meeting in the vestry (the big open room directly underneath the sanctuary).

We've gotten a big donation of toys for Little Lights (the nursery), so it seems like a good idea--fun for the kids, right?--to wash and dry off each toy. So instead of sitting down together for children's worship or some other activity, we're washing toys... for about three minutes. Then the kids

"Have fun AND...?"

start to get restless. Hey, there's lots of room in the vestry, and lots of furniture to climb, and lots of noise to make. ("What? There's a service going on upstairs?")

From then on, it's "Nope, no climbing on the pile of stacking chairs" and "Couches are for sitting, not catapulting over" and "I really don't think chicken fights on the rug are a good idea."

I wonder why no one's listening to me. Then I realize we have gotten this far in our time together without a shared understanding of why we're there and agreements about how we want to be together. In other words, we need a covenant!

This actually does interest a few of them.

I ask them, "Why are we here together?"

They say, "To have fun!"

Well, I'm glad they think so! And yet, it's not the whole answer.

What else? Is there a point to our having fun? Are there any limits to it?

The kids know all about rules, of course. They quickly start drafting a list (see photo). The first thing they suggest is "Play fair." After some prompting, they also say,

“Listen to each other.” (The next item is anyone’s guess... the youngest member of our group got hold of the markers!)

Again, I ask, “Why? Why have fun, play fair, and listen to each other?” What is our larger purpose for being here together at this time, and why are fun, fairness, and listening important to it?”

Of course, having fun is a part of religious education, and religious community in general. When we enjoy each other, and enjoy what we’re doing, relationship flourishes. And relationship makes everything else possible.

But there’s a “but” (or maybe it’s an “and”). Have fun AND play fair: consider other people, and consider the circumstances (like whether there’s a worship service going on nearby!). Have fun AND listen to each other: like when an adult says something’s not safe. Or when a friend is trying to express something.

Have fun, AND learn or experience something new... something UU-ish...

what would that be? UU values? Principles? Sources? Stories?

This will be an ongoing conversation in RE-- what are we there for?--and I encourage you to think about it yourself and talk about it with your kids. If your kids went through RE many years ago, what do you (or they) think they were there for then? We heard some powerful testimonials in the January 5 service from young adults who grew up in First Parish. There’s no one answer to the question. But I’d like us all to keep asking: Why do we have religious education?

I welcome your responses, in person, over email, or on the bulletin board in the vestry that I’ll be putting up shortly.

--Alison Streit Baron

The UUA General Assembly Is coming to Providence June 25-29!

The UUA General Assembly is the annual gathering of UU's, and this year, its right in our own backyard. This is a great opportunity for youth and adults to worship, play, learn, and be with thousands of other UU's. More details at <http://www.uua.org/ga/index.shtml>.



Coming of Age

First Parish's Coming of Age participants are racing towards their June 1st celebration! January activities included meeting with their mentors (and life affirming questions such as "M&M's or Reese's pieces?" and discussing Teleology) and a field trip to the Museum of Fine Arts to study religion in specific works of art, led by mentor Bill Wians. February includes a visit to Lucy Stone Cooperative Home in Roxbury:

The Lucy Stone Cooperative is an intentional community living the values and tradition of Unitarian Universalism through cooperative home ownership. We seek to grow a diverse community centered in justice. Through shared resources and faithful action, we align our daily lives with our core values of sustainability, spiritual practice, and social change. Also in February, we will be helping with the Pancake breakfast, and meeting with different representatives from our committees at First Parish. The group, and their mentors, will be assisting New Life Home Refurnishings followed by a pizza party! Then it's on to writing a skit and planning a service, talking about General Assembly, and more!

A Bit of First Parish History...



Ever wonder about the beautiful window in Sanctuary? Next year will mark 100 years since its installation. According to Richard DeSorgher, member of the Medfield Historical Society, this memorial window was given in 1915 and presented to the First Parish Unitarian Church by the Ladies' Social Club in memory of Elizabeth Sewell.



Executive Board Notes

An Executive Board meeting was held on January 16, 2014

Financial Update for FY 14

Pledges: \$73.8K (67%) out of \$111,063 (budget) collected

Fundraising: \$6.9K (70%) out of \$9.9K (budget) raised

Rentals: \$6.8K (45%) out of \$15K (budget) collected

Cash on hand (Rockland Trust Account): \$55.4K

Welcoming Congregation Refresher – Becca Kornet spoke to the Board about plans for starting up a refresher course on being a Welcoming Congregation, which was endorsed by the Board. More information will be provided in upcoming newsletters.

New Life Home Refurnishings: On Saturday January 18, FPUU volunteers helped move furniture to a new warehouse in Walpole. FPUU plans to volunteer one Saturday morning each month – Saturday, February 15 is the next volunteer date.

Pot-Lucks: The January 10th potluck supper was well attended and considered a success. The Membership Committee is planning February 2 (Super Bowl Sunday) pancake breakfast.

Wayside Pulpit Replica: As of January 14, 2014 we have \$1,420 plus a \$220 stock donation = \$1,640 available in the Church Sign Fund to replace the Wayside Pulpit. Cost to install the Replica is \$2,600. As such, we are \$960 away from finishing this project.

U-House Oil Burner conversion: Conversion of the U-House oil burner to a gas burner is scheduled for February 2014.

Duncan Glover
Executive Board Co-Chair

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



To volunteer to help serve and clear, or with any questions, contact
Kirsten D'Abate at 508 -359-9914, kk@dab8.net.



First Parish Volunteers: Margaret & Don Rolph, Sally Rose, Adam and Kirsten D'Abate, Duncan Glover and son John, help move furniture to NewLife Home Refurnishing's new warehouse

On Saturday January 18, 2014, First Parish volunteers provided a U-Haul truck and people power to help move furniture from NewLife Home Refurnishing's (NLHR's) Medfield warehouse to a new and more spacious warehouse at Walpole Station Business Center. With seven of us from First Parish and a large contingent of volunteers from Medfield's United Church of Christ, we were able to move six truckloads of furniture in less than four hours (move over United Van Lines and Mayflower Transit).

NLHR is a start-up non-profit organization whose mission is to distribute "gently used" household goods at no cost to individuals and families who need help to rebuild their lives. NLHR clients will come through referrals from social service and government agencies, as well as area clergy [www.newlifehr.org].

First Parish plans to participate in NLHR for a few hours one Saturday each month. Our next activity is scheduled for **9:00 - 11:00 am Saturday, February 15** where our volunteer team will include a Duty Officer, 2 Donor Assistants, truck driver and at least 3 furniture movers. If you are interested in volunteering for NLHR, please contact First Parish NLHR liaison Duncan Glover [duncanglover@comcast.net].



Worship & Music Committee

CHANCEL SPRUCE-UP

Members of the Worship & Music Committee have noticed that the Chancel needs some extra attention.

Thanks to Deb Carbarnes, the process began last year when Deb de-cluttered the storage room by removing old floral arrangements and other "leftovers", and organizing what remained.

Here are a few of the tasks we've identified for this year:

- Supplies chest (near minister's pulpit): clean out, reorganize, restock
- Wood Trim (pulpits, choir pews): polish
- Candle holders: remove wax drippings, clean & reorganize back-ups
- Storage room: continue to reorganize contents, label shelves
- Linens: take stock, launder those to keep, organize for storage/retrieval

Is there a task here that interests you? Please join us on either/both of the following dates/times:

Sunday February 16th from 11:30a-12:30p or Sunday February 23rd from 11:30a-12:30p

For more information contact Karen Wians: wianskbad@verizon.net

Attention Singers!



Choir practice will begin next Sunday, January 26th, at 9 a.m., and continue weekly through Easter (April 14). We will have one week off for the Annual Pancake Breakfast on February 2nd.

We will be singing during Music Sunday (March 2nd), Meg's Installation Ceremony (March 30) and Easter.

Hope to see you there! :-) Eva



SAVE THE DATE: SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 14 Annual Fund Drive Event

Keeping with First Parish's tradition, our 2014-15 Annual Fund Drive will kick off on Saturday evening March 22 with a celebration combining great company, great food, and great fun; followed by the Annual Fund Drive Sunday service on March 23. This year the Annual Fund Drive Committee is planning yet another event that promises to be as exciting as past gatherings. We will be in touch with you shortly with the details!

Our Committee is responsible for planning and conducting the annual fund drive each spring. Together with volunteer fund drive leaders, the Committee contacts every member and friend in the church to ask for a pledge. If you would like to participate, please contact any member of the Committee.

Our 2013-14 pledge total was \$111,063 with pledges from 51 households. The total pledge is 79% of the total income (\$140,736) in the fiscal year 2014 budget. Over the next few months, the Committee will provide more information about First Parish finances so we all know why our pledges are important and how they work for us.

First Parish Medfield continues to be blessed by generous members and friends who understand that First Parish needs our financial support every year at the annual fund drive time, in addition to the many hours of volunteer work we contribute.

Whether you value First Parish for the Sunday worship services, the religious education programs, the social events, the opportunity for social action, or because it is important to you to have a home for liberal religious thought in the Medfield area and in this country – or for all of the above reasons – your support is most important.

The Annual Fund Drive Committee: Duncan Glover, Mark Samels, and Marshall Sugarman



Welcoming Congregation Refresher Program To Begin in September

Roughly 15 years ago, First Parish underwent a program to become certified as a Welcoming Congregation. The UUA defines the Welcoming Congregation Program as:

A volunteer program for Unitarian Universalist congregations that want to take intentional steps to become more welcoming and inclusive of people with marginalized sexual orientations and gender identities.

First launched in 1990, the program grew out of an understanding that widespread prejudices and ignorance about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people existed within Unitarian Universalism, which resulted in the exclusion of LGBTQ people from our congregations.

Today, 66% of U.S. Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations and 94% of Canadian UU congregations are recognized as Welcoming Congregations. The program is supported by LGBTQ Ministries.

You can learn more about the Welcoming Congregation program at <http://www.uua.org/lgbtq/welcoming/>.

At its most recent meeting, the Executive Board formed a **Welcoming Congregation Refresher Task Force**, with the mandate of conducting a refresher program during the 2014-2015 church year. This program will be conducted for several reasons:

- It is recommended that Welcoming Congregations conduct refresher programs every 5 to 10 years (and it is something we have not yet done)
- The membership of our church has changed significantly since the initial program was put into place
- The issues faced by the LGBTQ community have changed over time, and our community would benefit from a current perspective on this evolving topic

I am honored to lead this effort, and am currently working on assembling the task force itself. Once this has been done, we will spend the remainder of this church year doing careful research and planning the details of the program. As part of this, we will be speaking with Lucy Masters and Rebecca Stephenson, who led the initial Welcoming Congregation process, to learn from all the good work they have done.

The goal of this refresher course is to educate ourselves about the issues faced by the LGBTQ community and the ways in which the actions we take and the language we use can have an impact, whether we realize it or not. We will also explore what it means for some of us to be a part of a majority with implicit advantages, and what it feels like to be on the other side of that equation. It is not intended to be an action-oriented, decision-making process, but an educational and conversational one.

Over the coming months, we will keep you posted on some of the things we're thinking about. In the meantime, let me know if you have any questions, and I will do my best to answer you. Over the next few weeks we will set up a "question box" at church, into which you may also submit anonymous questions that we will do our best to answer. And if you have memories of the past process you'd like to share – positive or negative – we would love to hear them.

Thanks in advance for your participation in this program, which I think will be a wonderful thing for our congregation.

Becca Kornet
Becca_kornet@yahoo.com
508.359.5654



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 & 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 Firstparishmedfield.org and click on the link at the bottom of any page!

Food Cupboard Needs

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

**DONATE
FOOD
HERE**



- Cereal
- Juice - bottled or boxes
- Raisins
- Applesauce cups
- Raisins
- Cookies
- Crackers (not saltines)

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)

February 2

"Naming Our Loyalties"

Rev. Meg Soens

We each have loyalties we hold dear. A church has loyalties, too, and like individual loyalties, these can change over time. When we know and name our loyalties, we have greater impact on the world and greater intentionality in our life together. When we know and name our loyalties, "then justice can rise up, and hope and history rhyme".

February 9

"Love the Hell Out of this World"

Rev. Robin Bartlett

Hell is on this earth. Hell comes in the form of our separation from one another and from our best selves. Hell comes in the form of violence, addictions, illnesses, fear, hatred, and secrets. We come to church to learn how to destroy this-earthly hells with extravagant, wasteful love. This is the training ground for building the beloved community wherever we go, so that this earth may be called paradise once again.

February 16

"The Body of God"

Rev. Meg Soens

"Who do *you* say I am?" is Jesus of Nazareth's famous question to his follower Peter. Who do we say this earth, this creation, this teeming and changing sea of life is? As Rev. Alice Wesley Blair once wrote, "it matters what we believe, but it matters more what we love."

February 23

"Atheism and Religion"

Rev. Meg Soens

There've been fireworks in the press in the last couple of years between some atheist and religious antagonists. Some of the heat may come from the fact that atheists are a minority and feel treated with disrespect in America and England. But are religion and atheism really destined to be combatants? And what is the place of atheism in our faith?



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

Sunday, February 2	Superbowl Pancake Breakfast/8:30 am/Vestry The Gift of Time Series/4:00 pm/Vestry Coming of Age/7-9 pm/Vestry
Monday, February 3	Medfield Historical Society/7:30 pm/Vestry
Sunday, February 9	Choir Practice/9:00 am/Sanctuary The Gift of Time Series/4:00 pm/Vestry Coming of Age trip to the Lucy Stone House ⁴
Tuesday, February 11	Lunch Bunch/12:00 pm/Church Offices Membership Meeting/7:15 pm/Bunger's House
Thursday, February 13	Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:30 pm/Vestry
Saturday, February 15	Coming of Age/NLHR Project and Pizza Party
Sunday, February 16	Choir Practice/9:00 am/Sanctuary Chancel Spruce Up/11:30 pm/Sanctuary Newsletter Deadline
Thursday, February 20	Executive Board Meeting/7:30 pm/U-House
Sunday, February 23	Choir Practice/9:00 am/ Sanctuary Chancel Spruce Up/11:30/Sanctuary

For bookings of events or meetings in the Sanctuary, Vestry or U-House, please check availability and then contact the church office at admin@firstparishmedfield.org