



# *First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Medfield*

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

[www.firstparishmedfield.org](http://www.firstparishmedfield.org)



## MARCH NEWSLETTER

### From the Minister

#### **Money, Money....**

It's one of the two taboo topics in churches, especially New England churches. Well, maybe one of three, sex and politics being the others.

For many of us, money is a source of pride and pleasure, and also a source of shame, like sex. Many of us are deeply conflicted about money. If we have it, we can feel like we have to protect our money by not talking

about it, and if we don't have it, we can feel deficient and vulnerable by talking about it.

Well, that was what I learned growing up, anyway. Money mattered an awful lot, but we didn't talk about it. Now, my family may have been extreme, but for many of us talking about money still is uncomfortable. So let's push the envelope.

Our shared ministry together in this church is about, above all, helping each other to live out our central UU value of love in the world. And given the independent nature of Unitarian Universalist churches, we are the ones who keep this ministry alive and

thriving; there is no other source of support for our church.

There's a great word for taking care of this ministry: stewardship. "Stewardship" is taking care of something entrusted to us, something that's not ours. None of us own the church, but we are participants in this long-lived faith community. And in this way, we take on the shared responsibility for a healthy, thriving ministry that touches ourselves and people beyond our doors in ways that nourish, heal and transform lives. This is a spiritual goal, though it requires material support.

Congregants support the church's ministry through volunteering in many ways, through caring interactions, and through generous financial gifts. With the Annual Fund drive beginning this month, financial gifts are my topic. What we can pledge depends on what we have of course, but all gifts are important. You see, I look at it this way: if we value something, we will put some of our treasure into it. And the converse is true too, if we put some of our treasure into something, we will find we value it even more. So I invite you to think about your relationship to money, your

relationship to the people of your faith community, and your relationship to the church as a whole as you begin to ponder what your annual pledge might be.

And I invite you to speak with me and with each other about what shared ministry is, what it means to support our church, and what you value about this faith community over the coming weeks. I look forward to our conversations.

Whew, that wasn't so bad. Who knows, maybe after talking about money, we might even get to sex and politics!

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



## 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. Please contact Rebecca Stephenson 508 740-0663 or [rgspt1@gmail.com](mailto:rgspt1@gmail.com)



# Religious Education

## From the Director

### **“Don’t just do something, sit there!”**

Some people say this was one of Buddha’s instructions. I first heard it through Sylvia Boorstein, one of my favorite Buddhist writers and teachers. Anyway, it’s something I have to tell myself every single day. Otherwise it’s too hard not to get swept up in the relentless “busyness” of our culture. There’s so much to do, so much to get done, so much to learn, so much to manage, so much to see, so much to “get” (both to “understand” and also literally to acquire).

There’s not a whole lot of time or space for (just) sitting. And even when there is that rare opportunity, it can be hard to relax into it. We are so geared up to do, do, do.

This has actual physical consequences, for many of us. Our nervous systems are truly on overdrive much of the time, as if we’re under threat. The threat is different from the proverbial saber-toothed tigers our forebears faced. The threat might be a threat to our own personal sense of control, or our own belief about how the world should work. But our bodies don’t know the difference. Think about the last time you had to get your little kids ready for school. If your household is anything like mine, there are some raised voices, and probably some raised blood pressures!

Just sitting, the way Buddhists and other practitioners of meditation do it, is a way to soothe our nervous systems. You don’t have to be a Buddhist, and you certainly don’t have to be “the kind of person who meditates,” to benefit from pausing during your day to just breathe.

I used to meditate every day, when my kids were really little. That sounds impossible. I’m not even sure how I found the time. But I took a class on it, and committed to doing it, to be a calmer parent. Now that my kids are a little older (ages 8 to 12), I think I need to revive my practice.

And, more importantly for religious education at First Parish, I’ve been researching various ways of doing mindfulness meditation with children, with the intent to do more of it during children’s worship and RE. Mindfulness is a particular kind of meditation that’s grounded in the bodily experience of the present moment.

A simple exercise in mindfulness, for example, is this: right now, wherever you are, focus your attention on the parts of your body that are touching something else, whether it’s your fingertips on a keyboard, your feet on the floor, your bottom in a chair. You don’t have to be in “meditation position.” Just keep your

awareness on one of those touch points, instead of the seventeen things you have to do today. If you are compelled by the seventeen things, gently bring yourself back to the touch points. This is a way to practice staying present, when our habit is to be churning through the past or fretting about the future.



Of course, kids don't have the worries or responsibilities or "to do" lists that grownups do... or do they? Do we create the space for them to explore their worries (joys and concerns, anyone?), or are we rushing them along to the next thing? How much of what kids do during their day is of their own choosing, rather than someone else's agenda? How often do they get completely absorbed in what they're doing, and then get told they have to stop and do something or go somewhere else? It's hard for any of us, no matter what age we are, to not be able to follow our own rhythm. And we're so used to going at the rest of the world's pace that, when time suddenly opens up for us to "do nothing," we feel bored, or at loose ends.

I say all of this to encourage, not to chastise. It's a difficult practice, but a worthwhile one, I believe.

May we all practice our human BEing, not

just our human DOing. May we help our children, and one another, practice it as well. May this be a practice in our religious education and in our faith community.

---Alison Streit Baron

## Workshop: Dialogue When It's Difficult

Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>  
2:00 - 5:00 pm in the Vestry



Join Alison Streit Baron, Director of Religious Education at FPUU, and an Associate at the Public Conversations Project ([www.publicconversations.org](http://www.publicconversations.org)), for an experiential workshop on staying connected with others, even amidst conflict.

Explore your own habitual responses to difficult conversations, and develop your capacity for reflection, awareness, curiosity, and understanding of the other.

RSVP to Alison via [alisonstreitbaron@gmail.com](mailto:alisonstreitbaron@gmail.com).

## A Bit of First Parish History...



### The Horseshoe in the Narthex

The first meetinghouse was established in 1653 and the present church was built in 1879. But did you know that in the 1970's that First Parish nearly closed down? If you were in church on Sunday February 16, you heard Rev. Meg tell the story, but in case you missed that, here's a reprise.

Rev. Richard A. Kellaway, in his sermon delivered on February 11, 2001 to celebrate First Parish in Medfield's 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary, tells us: "By the 1970's the congregation had diminished to the point that the remnant was about to give up and dissolve. As I understand the story, as that decision was about to be

made, one of the members kicked up a horse shoe in the dirt parking area beside the church. In spite of Unitarian doubts about superstition, it was taken as an omen. People volunteered for the leadership positions, and very shortly thereafter several new families became members. Apparently, the church received a Unitarian Universalist Association award for being the fastest growing congregation on the continent. The membership had doubled - from approximately ten to twenty. Growth continues, and the future is bright."

Long-time member Eve Potts remembers the event and can even tell you the name of the matriarch who found the horseshoe! And today the church has about 100 members and the future is still bright. If you look above the door that leads from the narthex into the sanctuary, you will see the horseshoe itself. Sometimes, it says, we just have to keep going on faith. What an important thing to remember!

More information about the history of First Parish can be found on the church website:  
<http://www.firstparishmedfield.org/cms/aboutusmenu/historymenu/350history>

# Chalice Circle

Starting Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>  
at 4:00 pm



The first small group ministry “Chalice Circle” session to be held at 4 pm on Sunday afternoon, March 9, and thereafter every second Sunday of the month through June.

Do consider joining us, because Chalice Circles offer something very special: deep connections with other people and a chance to explore important life topics.

A Chalice Circle is unlike any other group experience. It's not group therapy, nor a discussion group, nor a support group, nor a brainstorming session. It is a spiritual practice whose main elements are authentic sharing and deep listening.

Chalice Circles consist of six to ten people that meet once (or twice) a month for an hour and one-half, led by a trained facilitator. The gatherings invite intimacy, allow for serious engagement with religious and spiritual topics and usually include some periodic expression of our principles and values in action.

The intention of each session is to balance the personal and the thought-provoking.

The core of the content is your shared life stories in response to important themes, and the insights we draw from those stories. The groups are open, supportive, nurturing environments that promote and facilitate spiritual growth and mutual, interactive care for one another.

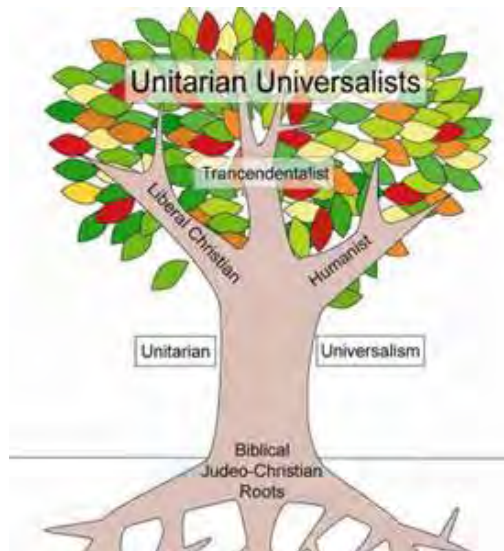
The format of the group consists of a check in among the members, a reading, and a discussion of members' reactions/reflections/thoughts about the readings. Topics can range from world religions to more personal topics such as friendship, community, forgiveness, guilt, nature, etc. The Chalice Circle is a more intimate place to get to know one another at the same time as providing the opportunity to explore meaningful topics with other members of our community.

If this sounds good to you, let me know. Once the first group becomes larger than ten people, we'll split and form a second group. We will always have an empty chair for a new person to join us. I will ask only that you commit to coming through June. And when we have enough people who want to participate in a different time, we'll see if we can get that going, too. If you are interested in more information about chalice circles, see me in the social hour after church, or write me, or make an appointment to come in and talk.

If you want to sign up, send me a note or sign up in the Vestry.

My office hours are Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30 – 2:00, and my email is [minister@firstparishmedfield.com](mailto:minister@firstparishmedfield.com).

# UU Basics Class



**Sunday, March 16, 12:00 to 3:30**

Light lunch included.

Especially for newer folks, but all are welcome.

Come learn about the history and faith of Unitarian Universalism, this church, and what membership means.





**Please Join Us for a  
Family Potluck Dinner and  
Annual Fund Drive Contra Dance Party**

**7:00 PM Saturday March 22  
First Parish Medfield Vestry**

**Bring Your Dancing Shoes & A Dish or Dessert to Share**

**Prizes in the following categories will be awarded:**

- **Most Enthusiastic Dancer**
- **Best Get-Up Adult Division**
- **Best Get-Up Youth Division**
- **Best Bouffant Hairdo**
- **Best Barbecue**
- **Best Fruit Pie**
- 

**Free-will donations to help offset band costs gratefully accepted but not required.**

**RSVP by March 16 with # of attendees  
to [duncanglover@comcast.net](mailto:duncanglover@comcast.net) or 508-528-8456**



A Message from the FPUU Transition Team



**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Rev. Meg's Installation is on Sunday March 30<sup>th</sup>**

We are pleased to report that plans are well underway for Rev. Meg's Installation Service and Reception on March 30<sup>th</sup> at 4:00. As she describes in the February 2014 newsletter, the installation will be a worship service with familiar elements such as readings, hymns, prayer, and a sermon. There will also be three components unique to an installation: the act of installation by the congregation, the charge to the minister, and the charge to the congregation. Following the service we will gather in the vestry for a delicious, full-course, catered dinner.

By now you should have received your printed invitation in the mail. (We mailed to what we hope is the most accurate First Parish Members & Friends list, but please let Louise know if you have not received your personal invitation.) The caterer needs the guest count **no later than March 23**, so please R.S.V.P. as soon as possible to Louise at [lrachin@comcast.net](mailto:lrachin@comcast.net) or 508-528-8456 with your name and the number in your party. While everyone will be welcome at the service, we regret that we can only accommodate people for the dinner who R.S.V.P. by March 23.

As Rev. Meg says, "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." Please join your First Parish Medfield family for this joyful celebration!

**The Transition Team**

Jenifer Bartle, Dan Bibel, Kirsten D'Abate, John Kornet, David Temple, & Louise Rachin



## Message from Membership

### Alexandra ("Ann") Bullock Midttun

We welcome Ann to First Parish. Ann's first connection with First Parish was with Rev. Meg by phone last summer, and she first visited us when she attended a lay-led service last August.

She had been volunteering at the Dwight Derby House and knew of First Parish from that experience. When a schedule shift in her life allowed her free Sunday mornings, she decided to visit us.

Ann especially enjoys our Sunday services. She finds the balance in the services between Rev. Meg and DRE Alison remarkable, loves Eva's music, and finds the whole experience very calming with a reassuring kind of expression. She also enjoys the fellowship experience after the services and finds it just as absorbing as the service.

Ann's previous affiliation was with King's Chapel in Boston, and she loved to attend other Boston churches, in part for their excellent musical offerings. Her interests include classical ballet, music, astronomy and gardening. She enjoys choreography and rehearsing and directs the Boston Chamber Ballet.

Next time you see Ann at coffee hour, say hello. She is warm, friendly and very interesting!



## An Invitation

You are invited to my ordination! I am being ordained by the congregation where I served as ministerial intern for two years. Join us for this celebratory service: Preaching by the Rev. Stephen Shick, Charge by the Rev. Alice Anacheka-Nasemann, Laying On of Hands led by the Rev. Megan Lynes, Offering Words by Jeanette Ruyle, a medley of singing bowls, and more!

*The Congregation of the Unitarian Church of Marlborough and Hudson  
Cordially invites you to join us for the Service of Ordination  
Of Patricia Kay Hatch*

*On March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Unitarian Church of Marlborough and Hudson,  
80 Main Street in Hudson, Massachusetts  
At four o'clock in the afternoon.  
Reception to follow in the church hall.*

*Clergy, seminarians, and religious educators  
Are invited to robe at 3:15 in the church parlor  
And then gather for procession at the rear of the sanctuary.*

*Please R.S.V.P. To [nannierosem2000@yahoo.com](mailto:nannierosem2000@yahoo.com)  
Or call the church office at 978-562-9180  
By March 9, 2014.*

I have many great memories from last year when I served as your interim religious educator. I am happy to invite you to this significant event in my life and ministry.

Warmly,  
Patricia Hatch



## Update from the Welcoming Congregation Refresher Task Force

We have assembled our task force (still looking for an easier-to-say name than the mouthful in the title above!), which now includes Nancer Ballard, Jen Bartle, Don Bowden-Texera, Sara Drumm, Cissy Hull-Allen, Becca Kornet, and Renee Lloyd.

We have already started having some great conversations about the many issues the LGBTQ community is facing today. We closely followed a three-part WBUR series on how a local transgender teen and his family are dealing with the transition, and joined a web chat afterwards to learn the opinions of a panel of transgender individuals and experts from a range of relevant organizations. Cissy attended the Inaugural LGBTQ Conference at Harvard entitled, "45 Years Since Stonewall: What's Next?" and came back with lots of insights to share. We will continue to talk and plan events and activities to begin in the next church year.

If you have any questions, feel free to approach any of the members of the Task Force, or drop a question into the box in the narthex, and we will do our best to answer you. If you wish to leave your name on the card, we can get in touch with you directly with our answer; otherwise we will likely send out a group e-mail answering the anonymous questions a few at a time.

Thanks to everyone for your support!  
Becca Kornet



## 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](mailto: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 [Firstparishemedfield.org](http://Firstparishemedfield.org) and click on the link at the bottom of any page!

## Food Cupboard Needs

**DONATE  
FOOD  
HERE**



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

- 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.*

## FPUU Calendar of Events

Sunday, March 2	Choir Practice/9:00 am/Sanctuary Workshop:Dialogue When It's Difficult/ 2-5 pm/Vestry Coming of Age/7-9 pm/Vestry
Monday, March 3	Medfield Historical Society/7:30 pm/Vestry
Saturday, March 8	WCR Task Force/7-9 pm/Vestry
Sunday, March 9	Choir Practice/9:00 am/Sanctuary Chalice Circle/Vestry/4-5:30 pm/Vestry
Tuesday, March 11	Lunch Bunch/12:00 pm/Church Offices Membership Meeting/7:15 pm/Bunger's House
Thursday, March 13	Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:30-9 pm/Vestry
Sunday, March 16	Choir Practice/9:00 am/Sanctuary Annual Fund Drive Training/12-2 pm/Vestry UU Basics Class/12-3:30 pm/U-House Coming of Age/7-9 pm/Vestry
Thursday, March 20	Executive Board Meeting/7:30 pm/U-House
Saturday, March 22	Annual Fund Drive Event/Vestry
Sunday, March 23	Choir Practice/9:00 am/Sanctuary Chalice Circle/4-5:30 pm/Vestry Coming of Age/7-9 pm/Vestry Newsletter Deadline

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](mailto:admin@firstparishmedfield.org)