



*First Parish
Unitarian Universalist
Of Medfield*

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

www.firstparishmedfield.org

April Newsletter 2014

Dear First Parish friends,

Do you know the Christian miracle story about the five loaves and the two fishes? It begins with Jesus trying to get away from a very large crowd that

hastily gathered round him after everyone had heard some disturbing news about another preacher, a friend of Jesus'. But the people won't let him go off, they are worried, afraid, angry – they want something from him, so even when he gets in a boat to try and escape, they follow him along on the shore.

Finally, relenting, he invites the crowd of five thousand plus to sit down for a meal. With only five loaves of bread and two dried fish to feed them, somehow everyone can nevertheless eat their fill, and there are baskets full of food left over. Conservative Christian folks see a miracle in this: Jesus' making more loaves and fishes out of thin air.

I see a different miracle: a huge group of anxious, unprepared, *poor* people gathered with Jesus in a remote area, were invited to sit down in the grass to eat, and then shared what little they had with each other so generously that there was enough for everyone.

This story spoke to me so strongly because the hero of the story isn't the teacher Jesus. The hero of the story is the community of people that gathered around him, and shared so generously.

Jesus' role was as the facilitator of this creation of blessed community. He represents and articulates the spiritual center of the group, through his actions: blessing the food, and inviting the people to sit down and break bread together, and because of his central message: we can usher in the ideal world here on earth through love for neighbor, and love for the holy.

In this way, those agitated individuals milling around the Judean hills were transformed into a community of people living out that message of love for neighbor.

The generosity that this temporary community

showed to each other foreshadows the way many early Jesus followers would choose to live after Jesus' death. In several places in the Christian Bible, groups of Jesus followers are described as "sharing everything they had, so that there were no needy persons among them."

We of First Parish in Medfield in 2014 aren't as radical as those early Christian socialists. But we are radical – it is radical to find in each other, as those forebears of ours did, a spiritual home that encourages us, calls us, to share with each other and with people beyond our doors, a spiritual home that reminds us that while we are many we are also in fact One. When we remember this, we do have all that we need.

So you see, my role on this first day of our annual fund drive is just to remind you of who you already are. So that when you are visited by the person seeking your pledge, instead of feeling troubled or put on the spot, you will be grounded in your knowledge of being a part of this great fellowship, this spiritual community that is our home. Grounded, you will give generously, whatever that means in your *particular* circumstances.

Now, "generous" is a subjective thing.

"Generous" does not measure the impact your gift has on the person to whom you are giving. No, "generous" measures the impact it has on you! If the gift something you can give and then forget about, then it isn't really generous no matter how large the dollar amount -- it has no impact on you.

And being "generous" matters to you, or I hope it does, because we gather in our faith community to grow in our ability to love, to give and to receive.

In fact, we only *become* members of this spiritual home after we have decided to try and nudge ourselves and our individual needs a little out of

the absolute center of our lives, to open up some space in that center and try putting our values there instead.

I told you that my job this morning is to remind you of who you are, and this is who you are:

- A faith community that perform acts of great generosity in reaching out, welcoming and supporting people who are struggling, even when they are not well known to you, even when they are strangers.
- A faith community that engages in acts of great generosity to members in need, acts that don't get trumpeted, or known by the church at large. But such things are in the very fiber of this congregation, in the sinews of who you are.
- A faith community willing to show up in significant numbers to help in social service projects.
- A faith community that reaches out to each other and to newcomers and share each other's sorrows and joys with tenderness and love.

This is who you are.

Many ministers talk about the specific programs of their churches at fund drive time. I won't because, in a way, our programs are really all the same thing: just the gifts of the loving community gathered around a spiritual center, sitting on the grass and sharing their loaves and fishes, healing and be healed.

You are blessed, and a blessing. See you in church,

Rev. Meg

My letter this month is adapted and shortened from the sermon I gave March 23.



From the Director of Religious Education

Making Space for Play and for Spirit: Yours

Believe it or not, we're planning for next year already.

I've spent this past several months getting to know First Parish, and the kids, and the grownups, and the culture, and trying to understand what Religious Education has been here, and learning about how other congregations do it.

Throughout this year, I've asked experienced religious educators, "How can we engage a group of kids who range in age from 4-12 in a single classroom?"

And I've asked, "How can we make space for kids to know themselves and each other and our UU faith in a meaningful and developmentally appropriate way?"

The one thing that keeps getting suggested to me is Spirit Play <http://www.spirit-play.com>. It's a Unitarian Universalist adaption of Dr. Jerome Berryman's Godly Play, which is a story-based approach to religious education, in which children hear and then create their own stories, both verbally and with the use of objects and props. As I understand it, Spirit Play invites children to explore some of the "big questions" about life and faith and community. Children of various ages and

stages of development play and learn alongside one another, but each at their own pace.



Spirit Play was developed by, among others, the Rev. Dr. Nita Penfold, who herself is offering a day-long training to

potential Spirit Play facilitators on Saturday, June 14, in the Boston area.

So guess who's signed up to take that training? Yes, me! Also Chris Conley. (For anyone who doesn't know Chris, he is The Rock of RE at First Parish. He doesn't have kids in the program, and yet he co-facilitates RE with me almost every week.)

Also Jessica Razza. (Jessica is the mom of Jackson and Avery, who are both in RE; with dad Nate, they are among the newer faces at First Parish.)

Here's where you come in.

Maybe you check out the Spirit Play website and think, "That sounds like a fun thing to be a part of, and I'd be interested in taking the training too!" (In this case you should let me know right away, because there aren't many spaces--or much money in our budget--left.)

Or maybe you think, "You know what? I want to cultivate my own spirit and my own play, and it could be really cool to help out



with this program once a month next year." Or you realize, "I'm not that into storytelling or story-creating, but I've been meaning to sign up to help with RE for a while now, because there's a new generation of kids coming up in First Parish, and they have a lot to teach me!"

(You get where I'm going with this.)

If you are 14 or over, you can help facilitate RE, whether it's Spirit Play, or children's worship, or an activity based on a holiday or theme or some passion of yours.

If you are a parent, if you're not a parent, if you believe in God, if you don't, if you're an experienced teacher, if you've never taught in your life, you can help teach RE.

If you aren't sure what you have to offer to kids, ask yourself, "What do I remember about being a kid?" and "What makes me come alive?" Chances are, somewhere in your answer is something a kid would love to know about.

Before the church year starts in September, I will be scheduling an orientation and training session for any and all potential facilitators of RE (and Little Lights childcare providers), and I hope you'll consider coming. In the meantime, I'd love to hear from you if you like the idea of doing something with our First Parish kids next year (or this year, for that matter), even if it's just once in a while.

May each child's spirit and play be nourished. May your own spirit and play be nourished. May they be nourished in the very same moment, in our very own U House.

--Alison Streit Baron
dre@firstparishmedfield.org

Coming of Age Program



Our Coming of Age group is becoming more integrated into our larger religious community.

During this transition time, our young people of First Parish are responsible for caring for our Little Lights children (with Lizzie Bryant as the scheduling liaison), they're participating monthly in our NewLife Home Refurnishings work (Adam D'Abate has volunteered for all so far), and they have welcomed us at our Sunday services (including Jack Kornet, Alice Galley, and Henry Rose). Nate Schwartz has become a greeter; and you may have seen Skilly Bryant and Evan Springer at the contra dance. On April 6, the group will be part of Rev. Meg's service, sharing what we have learned about the Rev. Egbert Ethelred Brown.

A Special Thank You from Jeanne Cooke on Behalf of the Bowdoin Manor



I am writing to the congregation to thank

you all for contributing to the holiday party that was held this winter at Bowdoin Manor. Bowdoin Manor is a single room occupancy supportive housing facility operated by the nonprofit group Commonwealth Land Trust. The mission of Commonwealth Land Trust is to prevent homelessness while preserving communities by acquiring property in danger of gentrification or dilapidation and the renovating and renting this property to individuals suffering from chronic homelessness, mental disability, physical disability, HIV/AIDS and drug addiction and recovery. The holiday season proved to be a rough time for many at Bowdoin Manor, and the original date of our celebration was postponed. After much debate about when to reschedule, we held our holiday party on February 10, 2014.

February 10th came and we began setting up for the holiday party. It would be a winter holiday bonanza encapsulating all of the holidays from Christmas until Valentine's Day. Residents joined us in the common area of the facility and we enjoyed fruit, chips, pizza, desert and light refreshments. Everybody held their stomachs towards the end of the party, filled with delicious treats and joy. People socialized and laughed, and gifts were bestowed upon our residents by taking part

in a raffle in which each attendee got a least one gift.

I am incredibly indebted and thankful to you, the UU Church for your kind donations that made our holiday at Bowdoin Manor so special. The smiles on the faces of residents seemed to warm the entire building despite the cold weather. People beamed while wearing their new scarfs, hats, gloves and sweaters. Thank you for validating not only the humanity but the desires and hopes for a warm and happy holiday season that not only residents of Bowdoin Manor possess but that everybody possesses.

A little over a month after the party, residents still cherish their gifts, waving to staff and pointing out that they are wearing what they received from the party. Currently in my art group, we are working on a project to display our gratitude for your donations that we wish to send to you upon its completion. You helped to strengthen and deliver joy to our warm community at Bowdoin Manor. I would like to thank the UU Church for not only donating to the residents at Bowdoin Manor, but also for welcoming me warmly back into your community by helping a cause dear to me and giving me support. The beliefs and values of the UU Church have helped to mold the person who I am today, and I still cherish those beliefs and values. Thank you for being the wonderful community that you are.

With Warm Regards,
Jeanne Cooke

A Bit of First Parish History...

The U-House as a Parsonage

Ever wonder when the U-House was used last as a parsonage? I did. So I asked Austin Buchanan, member of First Parish since 1951. (That's right folks, 1951!)



"The last minister to use the U-House as a residence was a retired gentleman sent to Medfield by UUA to provide Sunday services."

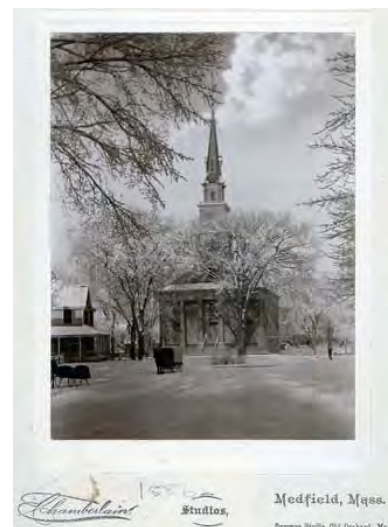
"Eureka, it was Dr. Kaucher sent to Medfield by the UUA to provide Sunday services and that is just what he did! He and his wife lived in the U-House and received a small salary from UUA as First Parish could not support a minister at that time. Between Sunday services he worked on his autobiography. I am not sure about the date nor the duration of his stay. (According to the church website

at www.firstparishmedfield.org, Albert Nicholas Kaucher, PhD, was with First Parish from 1951-1955.)

"When Dr. Kaucher left the church, the house was rented to a couple who were house painters. As I remember it they did a lot of work sprucing up the interior of the U-House."

"When the parish had income enough to hire a minister, Rev. Bill Moors and his family lived in the U-House for very short time and then moved to a home on Nebo Street, and the building started to be used for religious education." (William R. Moors was with First Parish from 1956-1965.)

Thanks Buck!



Do you have a question or information about something regarding the church history that you would like to see in the next Newsletter? Please let Sandra know at admin@firstparishmedfield.org.

COME & WALK – JOIN TEAM FIRST PARISH MEDFIELD ON APRIL 12TH



Family Promise Metrowest 5th Annual Walk Away Homelessness Walkathon!

Proceeds support: Housing, Job Placement, Childcare, Tutoring, Health Services,
Life Skill Counseling, Clothing, Advocacy & Transportation for Families who are Homeless

- **SATURDAY , April 12, 2014 on Natick Common**
- **Registration at 7:30am**
- **Warm up at 8:20am**
- **Walk begins at 8:30am**
- **Wrap up and prizes at 10:30am**
- **Raffles and refreshments**

Registration Fee: \$10.00 for Adults, \$7.00 for Children.

To register under Team First Parish Medfield or if you wish to sponsor a walker visit:
www.familypromisemetrowest.org or call 508.318.4820. You may also contact the team's leader, Barbara
Bunger for details at bbunger@verizon.net

TOGETHER WE CAN “WALK AWAY HOMELESSNESS”

New Member Worship Service

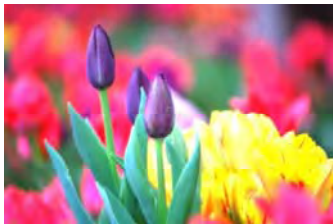
First Parish Medfield has been growing, and during our worship services on Sunday April 6, we will have a special ceremony to recognize and formally welcome our newest members. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us!

Annual Pot-luck Passover Seder Tuesday, April 15th in the Vestry



The Seder will start at 5:30 pm in the Vestry - it is a pot-luck family dinner. We will read the story of the Exodus, sing some songs, drink wine (or grape juice), and be together as we celebrate the story of a people's fight for freedom.

Please contact Dan Bibel, Becca Kornet or Louise Rachin if you have questions. Please do let us know if you will be coming so we will be sure to set enough places.



April 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. Flowers are needed for April 13 and 20th.

Food Cupboard Needs

**DONATE
FOOD
HERE**



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

- Juice- boxes and bottles
- Crackers
- Cereal
- Pasta Sauce
- 4-packs of Toilet Paper
- Condiments
- Baking Mixes

Thank you for all your efforts. We try to be specific so that people know what we really need, but as always, any donations are greatly appreciated.

Please double check your food items to ensure that they are undented, unopened, and unexpired.

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

Among Ourselves

Our deepest condolences go out to Don Bowden-TeXera and Ron Texera on the loss of Don's mother, Rita Lorraine Sharon and to Ron Waclawik and his family on the loss of Ron's mother Pauline Waclawik.



Green Sanctuary Committee Hosts Pot Luck Saturday, May 3rd



You may have had an energy audit performed on your home, switched to Viridian as your electric utility supplier and taken other steps to live a greener lifestyle. But did you know that one of the best things you can do to lower your personal carbon footprint is to make a healthy change in your diet?

In a comparison of global warming emissions by food type, red meat (beef and pork) tops the list -- with emissions three times higher than for fish, and eighteen times higher than for pasta, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists. Why is this so?

To learn more, come to a "meat-lite" pot luck hosted by the Green Sanctuary Committee on Saturday, May 3 (time to be determined).

Dishes which use meat as a flavoring, rather than the main ingredient, will be featured. We will be collecting information you may have for locally sourced food, as well as your recipes and ideas that help you and your family eat less meat. This information will be shared at the pot luck to help us all learn more about this issue.



be
sourced

If you have ideas on the subject you would like to share, we'd love to hear them. See any one of us on the Green Sanctuary committee: Kay Bennett, Katrin Fischer, Fritz Fleischmann, Nancy Kingsbury, Eve Potts, Margaret Rolph, Sally Rose, David Stephenson, Susan Stromgren, or David Temple.



2014-2015 Annual Fund Drive

On April 13, we are doing a new thing at First Parish. In a service called Commitment Sunday, which features a collective offering ceremony, we will renew our commitment to this remarkable church and to the principles that bind us together as a congregation. We will be sharing more about the service in the coming weeks.

Our calling of Rev. Meg Soens to be our new minister has ignited a fire in our church—a fire of renewed purpose and wondrous possibility. As we prepare for Commitment Sunday, we invite you to reflect on those parts of First Parish that fire your spirit of commitment:

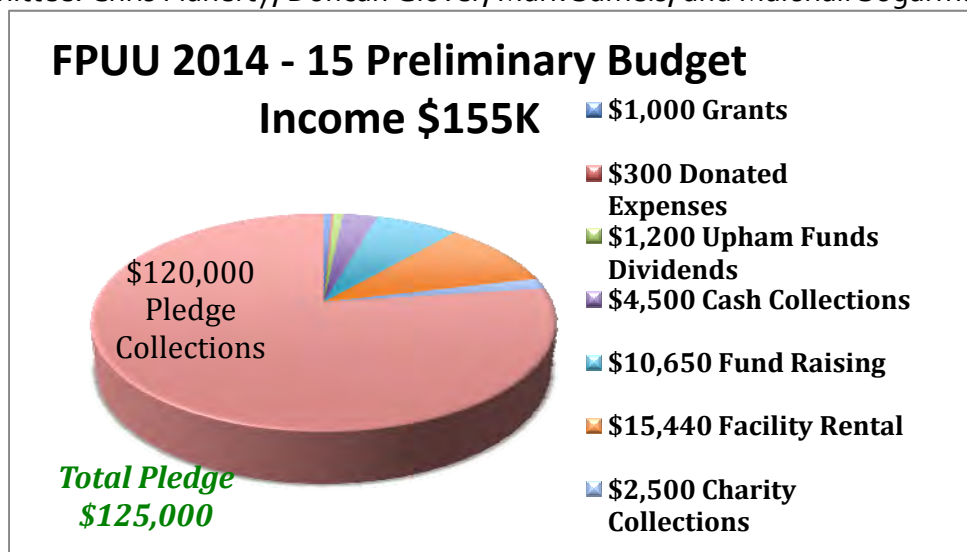
- Have you felt the flame of a renewed vision for pastoral care—adult education classes, more pastoral sermons, small groups and one-on-one pastoral care?
- Is the church’s direct engagement in social action, which harkens back to our past, strengthening your bonds of compassion?
- Are you engaged by new events, such as Mondays at UU Medfield, that we offer to enrich our neighbors & ourselves?
- Do you participate in church potluck suppers, and warm in the spirit that arises from a sharing community?
- Does our church’s strong welcoming message make you proud?
- Are you inspired by the rekindled sense of spiritual growth at First Parish?

Your commitment of financial support is vital to the mission of the church. It has sustained our community for many generations, enabling us to meet many challenges and evolve in ways that help us to continue to nurture our spirits, and help heal the world. Your generous contribution will ensure that a powerful spiritual fire continues to burn at First Parish.

Attached you will find a breakdown of the church’s estimated expenses and income sources. You will also find something new: a Gift Pyramid that visualizes the number of contributions at each level we need to sustain First Parish. We hope your renewed sense of commitment allows you to climb up a rung on the pyramid this year.

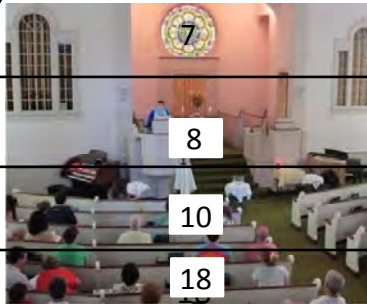
In the coming days, your Fund Drive Leader will contact you about your financial pledge for 2014-15. Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns with your Fund Drive Leader. And please accept our sincere thanks in advance for supporting First Parish.

Fund Drive Committee: Chris Flaherty, Duncan Glover, Mark Samels, and Marshall Sugarman

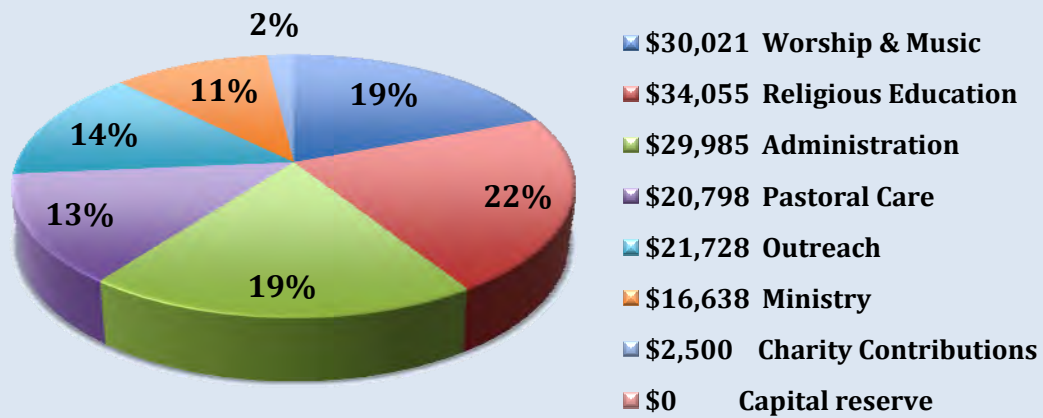


FIRST PARISH MEDFIELD PYRAMID GOALS 2014-15
55 PLEDGES FOR \$125,000
\$2,273 Average Pledge Amount

Pledge Amount	X	Number of Pledges	=	Tier Goal
\$15,000 +		2		\$30,000+
\$10,000 - \$14,999		2		\$20,000+
\$7,500 - \$9,999		3		\$22,500+
\$5,000 - \$7,499		5		\$25,000
\$2,500 - \$4,999		7		\$17,500
\$1,500 - \$2,499		8		\$12,000
\$1,000 - \$1,499		10		\$10,000+
Up To \$1,000		18		\$10,000+



FPUU 2014-15 Preliminary Budget Expense: \$155K



Notes:

RE includes all ages;

Outreach includes social action, UUA, MBD, UUSC, Urban Ministry, etc.;

Ministry includes minister's activities to strengthen the Congregation from within;

Historic Building expenses are allocated across all categories.

Medfield Farmers' Market to re-open on Thursday, June 5th!

The Medfield Farmers' Market will return to the grounds of the First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church for a 4th season on **Thursday, June 5th from 2:00 to 6:30 pm and continue each Thursday through September 25th.**



Thanks to our new sponsor, Needham Bank, Eve Potts, returning Medfield Farmers' Market Manager and Alison Galley, our new Co-Manager, were able to attend an all-day professional development program at the College of the Holy Cross on March 14th. It was such a worthwhile program and they are excited to try some of the new ideas they got from the other managers coming from neighboring towns.

We will be announcing our vendors for this upcoming season in the next newsletter. For more information, please contact Eve Potts (evempotts@gmail.com.)

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 www.firstparishmedfield.org and click on the link at the bottom of any page! It's easy!



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



FPUU Calendar of Events

Saturday, April 1	Pastoral Care Team/U-House
Sunday, April 6	Choir Practice/9:00 am/Sanctuary Chalice Circle/4-5:30 pm/U-House Coming of Age/7-9 pm/Vestry
Monday, April 7	Medfield Historical Society/7:30 pm/Vestry
Tuesday, April 8	Lunch Bunch/12:00 pm/Church Offices Membership Committee Meeting/7:15 pm/Vestry
Thursday, April 10	Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:30 pm/Vestry
Saturday, April 12	Family Promise Walk-a-thon/Natick Common
Sunday, April 13	Choir Practice/9:00 am/Sanctuary Coming of Age/7:00/U-House Tues
Tuesday, April 15	Passover Seder/Vestry
Thursday, April 17	Executive Board Meeting/7:30 pm/U-House
Sunday, April 20	Chalice Circle/4-5:30 pm/U-House Newsletter Deadline
Sunday, April 27	Coming of Age/7-9 pm/Vestry
Monday, April 28	Rippling Workshop/Mondays UU Medfield/Vestry 7 pm



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