



*First Parish Unitarian
Universalist of
Medfield*

26 North Street, Medfield,
MA

(508) 359-4594

www.firstparishmedfield.org

Happy New Year!

January Newsletter 2015

From the Minister

Dear Friends,

With 2014 giving up its last breaths, we are sailing into the new year. The wind is at our backs! Giving energy to our emerging life together in the New Year are many things, including

A draft vision for the church to live towards.

A loving community committed to spiritual exploration and a safe and welcoming world.

This is a powerful and wonderful vision!

A commitment to discern a living mission for this church, in this time and place.

Rich Mastronardi and Fritz Fleischmann will lead an effort over the next few months to work out the church's current mission, the "how" statement that guides the church in working to bring about its' vision. A church's mission is only vital and alive when it is truly anchored in *you, our values, and the community around us*, so please, I urge you, take part in the workshops and the conversation as it evolves.

A thoroughly re-invigorated, wonderfully engaging religious education program.

The solstice service gave us a glimpse of this, with twelve children and one youth participating with excitement. Four new families with eight children joined our church this December, the youth groups are up and running, and the kids are coming. Children of all ages are really enjoying their programs, which is truly amazing. We are very, very lucky to have such a superb religious educator as Alison Streit Baron leading the program.

A music program that continues to delight and awe.

The choir continues to attract an unusually large proportion of our congregants to its ranks, and to delight us at many services. This is due to the talent and warm leadership of the music director, Eva Kendrick. An extremely creative and accomplished composer, singer, teacher, piano and organ player and all around music director, the church is very, very lucky to have Eva leading this program.

Action in the world and conversation in our midst about racial justice.

In December, people from our church led an interfaith candle-lit procession in Medfield of 75 to 100 people. It wound its way from church to church to show support for the dignity and worth of black people in the face of continuing racial injustice in this country, especially in the criminal justice system. I am proud that so many of the congregation took part in this and lifted our voices in this way.

Relatedly, we also saw a vigorous discussion on the church email list about the meanings and implications of the words "Black Lives Matter." This was touched off by the fact that, after consulting with the Executive Board, I had hung a banner with these words outside our religious education building. Given the diversity of

perspectives in UU congregations, there will never be complete agreement with any action of the minister, but this respectful dialogue has been a rich way to learn and to be heard.

My prayer is that we continue to have conversation and take peaceful action in the world. Now does seem to be a moment when much is at stake, and thoughtful movement towards reform will serve justice and peace.

A task force that is working hard to determine the probable size of a successful capital campaign that would fund an accessible, efficient and attractive education and administration space.

An extensive assessment by the Buildings and Grounds Committee of the capital expenditures required over the next several years

The good news they shared is that despite several years of deferred maintenance, there is no huge project that must be undertaken immediately! The executive board is consulting with the committee now as to which projects should be undertaken now and to plan for the future.

We are sailing into the New Year now, attended by these freshening breezes as well as others. I am grateful for my ministry with you all. In this New Year, may we continue to use our gifts to give back to each other and to find more ways to serve our world.

Many blessings,
Rev. Meg

**Office hours:
Tuesdays and Thursdays by appointment
Work cell: 781-767-7663
Pastoral emergencies: 781-850-3307**

From the Director of Religious Education

May We All Have a Vision

Happy New Year
Happy New Year
May we all have a vision
now and then
of a world
where every neighbor is a friend

--Abba

(Any other Abba fans out there?)

Abba's songs can be a little trite, but "Happy New Year" always moves me. What could be better than the vision of a world "where every neighbor is a friend"? Friends don't always agree; friends can even hurt and betray each other; and yet, there is a fundamental love and respect between friends that--hopefully--enables friendship to survive differences and conflicts. This is also something to strive for between neighbors, and not just the folks who live next door, but also the folks who worship down the street, or live in the neighboring town (or country), or work in the next cubicle, or ring us up at the cash register.

If you participated in the candlelight vigil for "Black Lives Matter" in December, you experienced walking alongside people from churches that seem to speak different languages than we do as Unitarian Universalists. Maybe you even felt uncomfortable or reactive. But you--all of us--hung in there. The vigil and the procession were important, and an interfaith gathering of any kind is itself a testament to hope: hope that we can find our way through racial discrimination to a world where the dignity and worth of every human being is recognized. Every human being includes every

police officer, every convenience store burglar, every pedophile, every evangelical talk show host, every person addicted to drugs... you can add to this list whoever it's hard for *you* to see as fully human, whoever it's hard for you to imagine as a friend.

What would it take, in this New Year, for you to make such a friend? How might you try to teach -- or learn from! -- your kids, about making friends with "those people"? I sometimes joke that for me, my own husband is one of "those people"... because he hates cats. He's a dog person. While I love dogs, I love cats too, and I can't understand his point of view. But I have to live with it anyway. (And I have to live without a cat.) It sounds silly, but it's truly a challenge for me to accept that his feelings are valid. That's my *husband*. When it comes to someone who has a completely different view of politics, theology, parenting, or education, it's even harder.

My work, and perhaps yours--in this New Year and in every year--is this: to practice loving the Other, whoever that is for each of us; to talk with each other (and with our kids and with each other's kids and with everyone and anyone who will listen) about how hard and how important that is; to hang in with each other (each and every Other!) along the way.

--Alison Streit Baron





Owl Schedule for January

Jr. High Our Whole Lives (JOWL) for grades 7-9 meets in the U-house from 7:00 pm-9:00 pm on: Sunday, January 4th and January 11th.

High School Our Whole Lives (HOWL) for grades 10-12 meets in the Vestry from 7:00-9:00 pm on: Sunday, January 18th

Youth Group – Grades 10-12

Next Youth Group/Popcorn Theology will be on Sunday, January 4 @ 6:30 pm. Featured film: The Princess Bride.





Notes from the Music Director

BEHIND "THE BREAK-UP"

I am very excited to be presenting a concert of arias, art songs and my original opera on January 10th as a musical fundraiser for the church. William O'Neill, the guest performer, is a marvelous bass-baritone, and he is quickly rising in the West Coast opera community. At 36 years old, he is one of the youngest singers in the San Francisco Opera chorus, where he also takes on small roles, and he has performed leading roles in many other opera companies, including Opera Colorado, West Bay Opera, San Francisco Opera Guild, Berkeley West Edge Opera, and Boston Lyric Opera, to name a few. I just wanted to give you a little more of a back-story on how this concert came to be.

William and I were both performers in the semi-professional opera company Ocean State Light Opera when we were teenagers in the late 1990s. I first met William in a production of *Iolanthe*, where we were paired together on stage due to our height. We became fast friends, and we appeared in many other productions together including *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *Ruddigore*, *The Mikado*, *Patience* and *Pirates of Penzance*. We performed in Providence at the Wheeler School and also at the Tabernacle on Martha's Vineyard and at the Maritime Arts Festival in Newport. William has always had a strong interest in musical theatre, and our initial collaboration was for a production of *Bye Bye Birdie*, for which I was the Music Director and he was the Assistant Director. We are also

both "foodies" and have had many wonderful dining adventures together as well.

After I graduated college, I moved to California for a few years and he stayed in Rhode Island for college. He moved to California with his wife Maureen just as I was about to move back to New England for graduate school, but he did appear in the premiere production of *Emily* in 2001 in Pasadena, portraying the role of Reverend Wadsworth and Edward Dickinson. He studied at the San Francisco Conservatory, and commissioned me to write a song cycle for him, based on the poems of Boston-based poet Paul Turner. He again commissioned me to write him a dramatic piece last year. He suggested it would have something to do with love in any form, so I decided to write *The Break-Up*, a comedic mini-opera about the (possible) ending of a relationship between two completely incompatible people. The opera combines many different styles of music, since William and I are both fans of classical and musical theatre, and good acting challenges for both characters.

I am thrilled to present William in concert as he continues to rise in the world of opera, and I hope you can make it for this very special concert to celebrate music, friendship, love and good food!

Sincerely,
Eva Kendrick

Upcoming Musical FPUU Medfield Events



On Saturday, January 10, 2015. 7:30 pm, Bass-Baritone William O'Neill, from the San Francisco Opera, will perform the



World Premiere of Eva Kendrick's mini-opera *The Break-Up*, as well as other classic and contemporary art songs and arias.

This special, one night only event will be a fundraising concert for First Parish Medfield. Please join us for an evening of music, dessert and refreshments! \$20 General Admission. Reserve your tickets today by e-mailing music@firstparishmedfield.org or evakendrick@comcast.net. You can also buy tickets online at Ticketstage.com.

Fri-Sun, May 1-3, 2015. Eva's new full-length musical, *Operator*, will receive its World Premiere at FPUU Medfield, supported in part by a grant from the Medfield Local Cultural Council of the Massachusetts Cultural Council. In this original musical, three telephone operators re-examine their lives and friendships when they learn their jobs are about to become obsolete.



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. All Sundays in January are available. Please contact Rebecca Stephenson 508 740-0663 or rgspt1@gmail.com

Executive Board Notes

An Executive Board meeting was held on December 18, 2014

Financial Update:

FY 15 - at 47% through the fiscal year:
Pledges: \$54.8K (42.9%) out of \$127.7K (budget) collected
Fundraising: \$3K (31%) out of \$9.7K (budget) raised
Rentals: \$7.1K (64.5%) out of \$11K (budget) collected
Cash on hand (Rockland Trust Account): \$29.1K

Report from Buildings and Grounds: Members of the Buildings and Grounds Committee presented their "evergreen work list" of needed repairs/improvements. For many of the items they had quotes and detailed information. Some of the larger items which were discussed are:

Sanctuary & entry Carpet = \$20,000
Vestry, hallway and sanctuary ceiling painting = \$8,000
U House exterior painting = \$19,000
Replace Church Building boilers = \$32,000

The B&G members stressed the need for a capital reserve which is funded each year, thereby putting us in a strong position when, for instance, we need

to replace the roof of the church. For the past several years we have run deficits and have not funded a capital reserve.

Many of the smaller items on the list, such as fixing leaky faucets, replacing vestry curtains, touch-up painting, have already been completed by B&G members, for which we are all very grateful.

The board will continue to look at these items, set priorities and develop a plan for funding a capital reserve.

Membership: We discussed some suggestions from the membership committee on how to best greet and follow up with visitors.

Mission Statement - We discussed the idea of having congregation wide workshops where we will develop a mission statement which aims to achieve our vision. Dates/times will be set up soon.

Our next board meeting will be Thursday, January 15, 2015 at 7:30pm.

Margaret Rolph
Executive Board Chair



From the Green Sanctuary Committee: An Invitation

The Green Sanctuary Committee defines itself as an “open committee” – everyone at First Parish is invited to come to our meetings, as your time permits; there is no obligation for a permanent commitment, nor for assuming any tasks; people volunteer as they are able. A good deal of our work consists of information sharing, and everyone can contribute to that and benefit from it.

And we are a social group! We meet in people’s homes; we always have a potluck dinner, and our first agenda item is eating a meal together. There is much laughter, fellowship, and good work.

The environmental issues we struggle with, notably climate change, affect everyone. If you are interested and free, please join us for **our next meeting at 7:00 p.m. on January 9**. Eve Potts has offered to host us this time (37 Hillcrest Road). Agenda items include: our application for Green Sanctuary candidate status; pricing carbon in Massachusetts; enforcing the no-idling law in our local communities. Plus food and drink!

If you plan to join us on January 9, please let me know ASAP (fleischmann@babson.edu).

Happy New Year!
Fritz



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

WRITING WORKSHOP: JANUARY 11th

Finding the Deep Voice and Writing on Sustainability



Our world is at a crossroads potentially facing a bleak future. Can we as writers and poets help turn humanity around and provide insights for sustainability, consequences, and reenvisioning the future? As C.P. Cavafy said in his poem *To Ithaca*: "Always keep Ithaca fixed in your mind. To arrive there is your ultimate goal." Come learn how to share your thoughts in effectively-written poems, stories, or essays. Learn how to write true to your own voice -- from your deep voice, the authentic voice of your speech, true to your reality and life experiences. When you write like this, it's like the old commercial, "When E. F. Hutton talks, people listen." The techniques presented in this workshop were developed by

award-winning Los Angeles poet Jack Grapes. The Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette* says Grapes' work "cuts to the bone of basic human truth without the pretense that characterizes much of what passes for contemporary poetry." You want your voice to come to the aid of Mother Earth. Do it in a way that will take your reader's breath away.



Date: January 11, 2015

Time: 12noon - 2pm

Bring: a light lunch for yourself and pen and paper

Location: First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church, Medfield, MA

Workshop leader: Dr. Thea Iberall

RSVP: Limited space for 7 participants.

Reserve your place by contacting Thea at theaiberall@yahoo.com or 508-242-3866.

Questions: Feel free to contact Thea

Cost: Free

ABOUT THEA IBERALL



Workshop leader Thea Iberall is a poet, playwright, and scientist. Iberall has had over 50 poems published in anthologies and journals including in *Blood to Remember: American Poets on the Holocaust* (Time Being Books). Her book of contextual poems, *The Sanctuary of Artemis*, explores the roots of patriarchal domination. In her novel, *The Swallow and the Nightingale*, a modern scientist is guided by a 12th century Sufi poet to realize the real moral issue of today: disrespect of the Earth and its inhabitants. The author of three scientific textbooks, Iberall has a Master's Degree in Writing (USC) and

a Ph.D. in Computational Neuroscience (UMass). She offers workshops in creative writing, playreading, and tools for addressing world change.

Discuss Art and Religion at the MFA

Join Bill Wians in a themed visit to
Boston's Museum of Fine Arts
On Sunday, January 25th



Bill will accompany up to 12 First Parish members and friends as they view six works chosen from widely different epochs and cultures. Bill isn't an art expert, but has enjoyed taking students and adults to the MFA and other museums for many years, including several Coming of Age groups.

The visit will be unscripted so that the group will be able to share ideas about what different artworks say about human beings in relation to forces greater than themselves, sometimes benevolent, occasionally malevolent, and often inscrutable.

The group will leave from First Parish following the Sunday service. Cost of admission is the responsibility of individual attendees. To reserve your place or for more information, please contact Bill at wwians@mac.com.

In lieu of an honorarium, Bill asks participants to make a contribution to FPUU.

**The Religious Education Committee
Invites You to a
Family Potluck and Dance Party!**

On

Saturday, January 31st at 5:30 pm.



**Please sign up to bring food or drink (no alcohol, please) on the
bulletin board in the vestry, or let Alison know at
dre@firstparishmedfield.org.**

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 thanks you for your on-going support. Your continued efforts help us to maintain a huge service that would be so difficult to maintain without your generosity.

The following are the Medfield Food Cupboard current needs:

- cereal !!**
- juice**
- canned tuna in water**
- canned chicken**
- peanut butter**
- jelly**
- coffee, tea, hot chocolate**



January Coffee Hour Host Schedule

Thank you Marcia Trahan for being the Coffee Host Coordinator for January.

FPUU Calendar of Events

Sunday, January 4	RE Committee Meeting/12:00 pm/Vestry Youth Group/6:30 pm/Vestry JOWL/7:00 pm/U-House
Thursday, January 8	Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:15 pm/Vestry
Friday, January 9	Green Sanctuary Meeting/7:00 pm/Eve Pott's
Saturday, January 10	Eva Kendrick's-The Breakup Opera
Sunday, January 11	Writing Workshop/12:00 pm/Vestry JOWL Meeting/7:00 pm/U-House
Thursday, January 15	Executive Board Meeting/7:30 pm/U-House
Saturday, January 17	NewLife Home Refurnishings/Volunteer Day
Sunday, January 18	Newsletter Deadline FPUU Bookclub/12:00 pm/U-House HOWL/7:00 pm/Vestry
Sunday, January 25	MFA trip with Bill Wians
Saturday, January 31	RE Potluck/5:30 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