



*First Parish Unitarian
Universalist of
Medfield*

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

www.firstparishmedfield.org

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

February 2015 Newsletter

From the Minister

Dear Friends,



I was recently asked by a member of the congregation when they could, or even should, call the minister. That's a good question; years ago Unitarian Universalist minister Peter Lee Scott wrote a good column about that, and in the years since it has been adapted and added to by others. Here's my version:

Call me:

...If you are going into the hospital.

...If you or your children don't know me, but would like to.

...If you have a joy and want to share the good news.

...If someone close to you is seriously ill or has died or if you are dealing with a significant loss of some kind.

...If you would like to discuss a spiritual concern, or talk about the religious dimensions of your life.

...If you would like to be visited, at home or in the hospital.

...If you would like to help the church in some capacity.

...If you know someone who would like the minister's attention.

...If you are pregnant and glad you are or wish you weren't, also if you aren't pregnant but wish you were.

...If you are troubled (mad or sad) and would like to talk.

...If you would like to arrange for a child dedication, a marriage ceremony, or memorial service.

...If you would like to discuss a possibility for the church.

...If you are planning to be married. If you are in the midst of the challenges of marriage. If you are separated or planning to get a divorce.

...If you are considering becoming a member of the church.

...If you or a family member are ill.

There are many more possibilities, but these are some good basic guidelines. Be in touch!

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

Neighbors as Spiritual Teachers

We've lived in our house for ten years, and the house next to us has been mostly uninhabited the whole time. First there was an elderly woman living there who rarely came out, never spoke with us, and eventually went to live in a nursing home. The house sat empty for years, except for a family of raccoons that scampered in and out through broken windows. A few years ago, a developer bought it, gutted it, and rebuilt it from the foundation. This week, it went on the market.

Yesterday was the first open house, and I watched people swarm through it, inspecting it, and even looking over at our house (where I was sitting in the window), presumably wondering who their neighbors might be. I had the strongest desire to run over and interview each and every one of them as neighbor "candidates." I still can't quite believe that I have absolutely no control over who will move in there. After all, these folks, whoever they turn out to be, will live just a few feet from us. My kids' basketballs will roll into their yard. My dog will get into their garbage. I will be able to see what they watch on television and I will know when they go to bed or go on vacation.

I've lived most of my life in apartments, and I've had a lot of neighbors. More than once, I've called the police to report different neighbors for violence and abuse. I've also relied on neighbors to babysit two of my kids when I've had to rush the third kid to the Emergency Room. I've gone years without knowing the neighbors, and other years when, as a kid, I practically lived with my downstairs neighbors. Likewise, two of my kids spend so much time at their neighbor friends'



houses that I don't see them for days. We love our neighborhood now, which is maybe why it feels so strange that strangers will be moving in. Most of us don't choose our neighbors, any more than we choose our families. Sometimes neighbors, like families, are not at all who we would choose. Their music, their dog, their leaf blower, their lawn signs... What kind of neighbors do you have? What kind of neighbor do you want to have? What kind of neighbor do you try to be? What are the things that make a difference between you and your neighbors?

I am deciding, since I don't have the option of screening the next door neighbors, that it's a greater exercise in faith and in community if I learn to love whoever happens to end up there, the same way we learn to love people in our congregations. Our spiritual teachers aren't just the Martin Luther Kings and the Gandhis; they are the people who cross our path, or sit in the pew next to us, or occupy the next cubicle, or move in next door. When we first meet them, we don't know who they are or what they have to teach us or whether they will ever be important to us, but we know that they are there, living their lives alongside ours. We have to take them into account as we hope they will take us into account. (The Golden Rule of Neighbors!)

Seventh graders at First Parish take Neighboring Faiths, in which they learn about and visit other faith communities and places of worship, in the spirit of becoming good neighbors. If only this spirit were cultivated in every way, every day, among people everywhere. If only "Open Houses" were less associated with real estate sales and more common as a spiritual practice for building and sustaining neighborhoods!

--Alison Streit Baron



Owl Schedule for February

Jr. High Our Whole Lives (JOWL) for grades 7-9 meets in the U-house from 7:00 pm-9:00 pm on: Sunday, February 15th and February 22nd.

High School Our Whole Lives (HOWL) for grades 10-12 meets in the Vestry from 7:00-9:00 pm on: Sunday, February 8th.

Youth Group – Grades 10-12

Our next Youth Group/Popcorn Theology will be on Sunday, February 22nd @ 6:30 pm.

Featured film: Easy A.



Membership Committee



Please welcome new members Theresa and Phil and children Josefina, and Philip and Rose (twins).

From Theresa & Phil: Thank you for welcoming us to First Parish. We decided to become more involved and more regular participants in a spiritual community for our children and for ourselves. We are looking for community, friends, and spiritual guidance for our family. Right now our time is very limited because we have small children, but eventually we would like to be involved in religious education or worship & music committees. Before staying home Theresa worked as a reference librarian in a large public library. We all love to read, take hikes/nature walks and watch movies. Phil plays classical guitar in his spare time.

Notes from the Music Director

NUTS & BOLTS OF THE MLCP



Dear Friends,

I am now exactly half-way through the UUA Music Leadership Certification Program (MLCP), and I wanted to take this opportunity to give you a little information as to what the program entails. The program was created by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and the Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network (UUMN), the professional musical organization of the UUA. The MLCP is a three-year program that:

- 1.) Summons music leaders to their calling of music ministry
- 2.) Enriches their service to Unitarian Universalist congregations
- 3.) Enhances their professional perspective and skills

After being accepted into the program, the candidate is assigned a Mentor, usually someone who has gone through the program. My mentor is

Shawn McCann, who has been Music Director at the First Parish Church of Groton since 1995. The candidate also selects a Sponsor from their own congregation. I selected Greg Beedy for this position because he has been a long-term church member, has served on the Worship & Music Committee for many years, and is a member of my choir. Each fall, Shawn, Greg and I have a Triad Meeting in which we discuss three goals for the upcoming year and check in regarding the current year's curriculum. In the spring, we also have a Triad Meeting, which reviews the church year and the highlights and challenges of the year. We have had a wonderful working relationship together, and I am truly thankful for the support of Greg and the guidance and wisdom of Shawn.

The MLCP also requires three courses per year which is designed on three foundational areas of knowledge:

- 1.) Music Skills and Resources
- 2.) UU Heritage and Values
- 3.) Leadership and Interpersonal Skills

Out of the six required courses, so far I have taken the following: Creating Worship Collaboratively, Care & Ethics, Leading a Rehearsal, Growing Your Music Ministry. I have also taken Professional Development courses in Adaptive Leadership and Music as Story: Gazing Into Mystery, History and Beyond. All of the courses are taken at the UUMN Annual Conference, and the certification ceremony takes place at General Assembly, when a candidate has completed all requirements. We take the courses with our peers—there are usually 6-8 new candidates each year from all around the country—and we have Facebook and e-mail groups which we can post on throughout the year to get guidance from one another, ask questions and share ideas. It is a wonderful community of talented musicians from diverse backgrounds and congregations, and I have learned so much from our sharing with one another.

Another article required each year is a revised Statement of Philosophy of Music Ministry. We submitted this with our applications, and we revisit

and revise it each year as our understanding of music ministry deepens. I will be very happy to share this with you next year when it is completed. Finally, a culminating third-year assignment is organizing a community related project. More details on that to follow soon, but the project will reach out into the community and involve many more people than those at our church. I will write another article on how valuable this program has been to me as your Music Director and how the classes have translated into my work and philosophy. It is too much to summarize here, but I can say that it has been extremely educational as well as inspirational, and I am happy and honored to be a participant in this program.

Best wishes,
Eva



February Coffee Hour Host Schedule

Thank you Alison Galley for being the Coffee Host Coordinator for February.

Sunday, February 1st - Mary Corthell

There are opportunities for others to host on several Sunday mornings in February. Please contact Alison for more information.

Notes from the Executive Board

An Executive Board meeting was held on January 15, 2015



Financial Update:

FY 15 - at 47% through the fiscal year:

Pledges: \$72.2K (57%) out of \$127.7K (budget) collected

Fundraising: \$3.2K (33%) out of \$9.7K (budget) raised

Rentals: \$8.3K (75%) out of \$11K (budget) collected

Cash on hand (Rockland Trust Account): \$33.6K

Report from the Annual Fund Drive Committee: Duncan Glover reported on planning for the Annual Fund Drive. Requests have been sent to all committee chairs for budget requests for next year so that a budget can be developed by the board.

Capital Reserve: The Board is continuing to build a set of priorities for capital expenses and to develop a plan for funding a capital reserve fund over time.

Green Sanctuary: We discussed the idea of the church endorsing efforts toward a revenue neutral carbon tax for Massachusetts. Fritz will write a summary of the carbon tax proposal.

UUA Fair Compensation Consultant: Margaret is scheduling a consultant from the UUA to assess our compensation for paid personnel in light of the UUA fair compensation guidelines.

Mission Statement Workshops - We scheduled two mission planning workshops:

Sunday, February 8 11:30 - 1:00pm

Tuesday, February 10 7:30pm - 9:00pm

Our next board meeting will be Thursday, February 19, 2015 at 7:30pm.

Margaret Rolph
Executive Board Chair



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

Annual Fund Drive

SAVE THE DATE: SATURDAY MARCH 28, 2015 – ANNUAL FUND DRIVE EVENT

Keeping with First Parish’s tradition, our 2015-16 Annual Fund Drive will kick off on Saturday evening March 28 with a celebration combining great company, great food, and great fun; followed by the Annual Fund Drive Sunday service on March 29. 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.

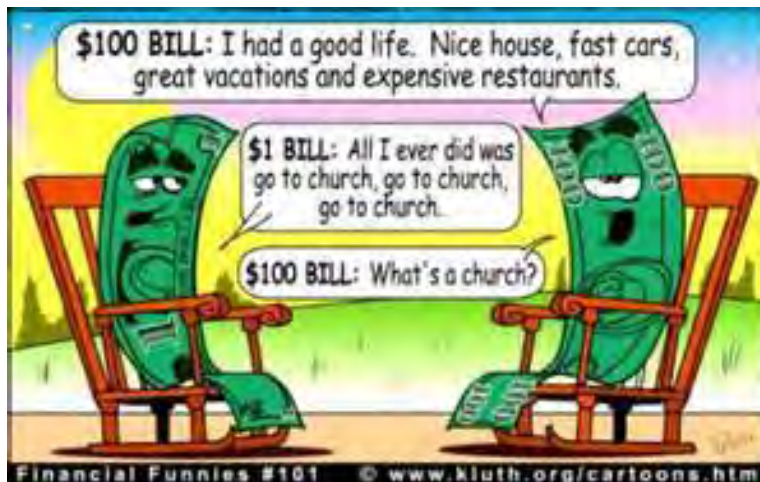
Our 2014-15 pledge total was \$127,665 with pledges from 58 households. The total pledge is 85% of the total income (\$151,066) in the fiscal year 2015 budget. Over the next few months, the Committee will provide more information about

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: Mary Corthell, Chris Flaherty, Duncan Glover, and Marshall Sugarman



This is an invitation!



Please join us at one of the workshops we are planning for February 8 and 10 to develop a new mission statement for our church. (If you cannot attend, please reply to this email with

your thoughts on the questions below.)

First, a little recap. At the beginning of this church year, one of the goals the Executive Board set for itself was to work with the congregation to create a new vision statement for our church and, to make the vision a lived reality, an updated mission statement. During a retreat in the fall, the Board agreed on some thematic areas that we felt were most important. In November, Rev. Meg co-led two all-church vision conversations, the first with Richard Mastronardi, and the second with Fritz Fleischmann.

These produced excellent discussions and built on each other; at the second one, a consensus emerged for the following vision statement:

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

This working draft was presented by Board chair Margaret Rolph at the Semi-Annual Meeting on December 7. Margaret also shared our plans for developing a mission statement that translates the vision statement into more specific areas of emphasis and engagement: Meg, Rich and Fritz were to lead two workshops this winter, to which the entire congregation would be invited. The plan

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is that we will all join together in this work, with the goal of an affirmed vision statement and a new mission statement that will be brought before the congregation for a vote at the annual meeting in June.

Where and when: in the vestry, on the following dates:

Sunday, Feb. 8, after church: 11:30 -1:00, and
Tuesday, Feb. 10, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Child care will be provided both times. On Feb. 8, we will provide a light lunch, and on Feb. 10, dessert with coffee or tea.

What, and how: the draft Vision Statement highlights three major themes: "loving community," "spiritual exploration," and "a safe and welcoming world."

We hope to engage you in an intensive process of discernment and exchange of ideas guided by the following questions:

- What do these themes mean to you?
- Which of the three themes in the vision resonates with you the most and why?
- Why are they important for our congregation?
- How might these themes be translated into practice by and within our congregation?

If you can attend a workshop: please RSVP by e-mail (just click "reply"). Please do this at your earliest convenience! Please tell us the date(s), and if you need childcare.

If you cannot attend, please take a few minutes to give us your thoughts about this by replying to this email, using the above questions as a guide.

We look forward to hearing from you, and we hope to see many of you at the workshops!

Blessings, Fritz, Rich and Meg

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 Firstparishmedfield.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:

White rice

Cookies

Salty snacks

Canned tuna in water

Canned chicken

Coffee, tea, hot chocolate
4 pack toilet paper
Individually wrapped paper towels



Have you got your walking shoes ready?

Family Promise Metrowest is excited to announce our

6th Annual *Walk Away Homelessness* Walkathon

SATURDAY, April 11, 2015 on Natick Common, registration opens at 7:45am
Walk begins at 8:30AM

Entertainment, raffle prizes and refreshments to follow post-walk.



Gather a group of colleagues, friends, fellow parishioners, family members, or strangers – ALL AGES WELCOME!

Alternatively, you can sponsor a walker.

TOGETHER WE WILL “WALK AWAY HOMELESSNESS”

This year’s goal is \$80,000 - we need your help!

By participating your proceeds will benefit families who are homeless with housing, job training, healthcare services, transportation and life skills counseling, to name a few.

For details of the day visit our website: www.familypromisemetrowest.org or call 508-318-4820.

FPUU Calendar of Events for February

Sunday, February 1	RE Committee Meeting/12:00 pm/Vestry
Monday, February 2	Medfield Historical Society Meeting/6-9 pm/Vestry
February 3-6	Rev. Meg away at the UU Minister's Association Professional Development Seminar
Sunday, February 8	Church Mission Workshop/11:30-1/Vestry HOWL/7:00 pm/Vestry
Tuesday, February 10	Church Mission Workshop/7:30-9 pm/Vestry
Thursday, February 12	Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:15 pm/Vestry
Sunday, February 15	FPUU Book Club/12:00 pm/U-House JOWL Meeting/7:00 pm/U-House
Thursday, February 19	Executive Board Meeting/7:30 pm/U-House
Saturday, February 21	NewLife Home Refurnishings/Volunteer Day
Sunday, February 22	Newsletter Deadline Youth Group/6:30 pm/U-House



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