

First Parish Unitarian Universalist Of Medfield

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

www.firstparishmedfield.org

WELCOME BACK

September 2024 Newsletter

Ministerial Musings

Dave Egan, Minister



This past weekend, as you will read about later in this newsletter, a group of us hiked part of the Appalachian Trail, up to Mt. Lafayette in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. We filled our giant packs with sleeping bags, rain gear, clothes, food, plenty of water, and headed up the steep terrain. On this foggy morning, we hoped that the skies wouldn't open up and drown us, but we were prepared if they did. At first it seemed like any regular hike in the woods. The deciduous and conifer trees towered above us, sheltering us from the elements. The path was painstakingly well manicured, with stone stairwells that made climbing all that much easier. As other hikers passed by, we exchanged the ecstatic pleasantries of folks who had enough adrenaline and endorphins pulsing through our veins to power a small city.

But as the hike continued, those well-manicured stairs disappeared. The trail got steeper and more rugged, while the trees got shorter and more scraggly. As I scrambled on all fours up a steep rock dike, I realized why so many of the other hikers were using climbing poles.

When we finally got to our first lookout area, we were enveloped in a cloud, with only trees in the foreground visible. We stopped to catch our breath and rehydrate. Every once in a while, the clouds would break and we would catch a glimpse of the nearby mountains. It was a magnificent sight, one that was fleeting, only lasting a few seconds. Staring out at the distance, surrounded by people I love, I so appreciated those few seconds of clarity.

We had been walking through a cloud for most of the day, and now finally I was able to see the bigger picture. Like many of us, all too often I walk through life staring down at the ground, trying not to trip over rocks and roots, only paying attention to what is right in front of me.

Eventually we got to the hut at 4000 ft, where we would be sleeping that night. We dropped our packs in the bunk room, had some lunch, and then headed back out for the last mile to the summit at 5100 ft. At this point we were above the tree line, completely exposed to the elements. If the weather turned, we were prepared to turn back. But as we neared the peak, we were delighted when we saw some blue-sky peak through, and dozens of carefully stacked rock cairns, reminding us of all the countless others who have made this same journey.

As we begin new church year together, remember if we are enveloped in a cloud of confusion and can't see where we are going, fearing thunder and lightning and maybe even something worse, it is helpful to remember that we are never really alone, and that many souls have walked this path before.

Look for those cairns, those hints of blue sky, and keep going.

In faith,
Rev. Dave

Come join us for this special service...

Blessing OF THE Backpacks

Featuring: Rev. Dave Egan & Eva Kendrick

Sunday, August 25th
10:00 - 11:00 am

*"Trust that what you carry will sustain you,
and take the first step out the door."
- Rabbi Rachel Barenblat*

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Upcoming Services

August 25

Blessing of the Backpacks

Rev. Dave Egan

Come join us for this intergenerational service, where we will pack our backpacks, briefcases, and work bags as we prepare to head out on whatever new adventures await us this fall. All are invited to bring a bag to be blessed by this community, the people who help to support us along the journey. Following the service, there will be an ice cream social, where you will get to meet our new Coordinator of Religious Exploration, Kate Ciavarra!

September 8

InGathering: Waters of Connection

Rev. Dave Egan

During this intergenerational service, we will gather in connection and love, reflecting on what we have been up to over the summer. You are invited to bring water from your travels. Whether your water is from the Seine River, the shores of Ferry Beach, or your kitchen sink, come share your experience with us.

September 15

Our Covenantal Foundation

Rev. Dave Egan

Covenant is the silk that joins Unitarian Universalist congregations, communities, and individuals together in a web of interconnection. The practice of promising to walk together is the precious core of our creed-less faith. During this service, we will reflect on our new FPUU Congregational Covenant that we created together last year and explore why the promises we make to one another matter.

September 22

TBD

Worship & Music Committee

September 29

Your Weekly Spiritual Tune-Up

Rev. Dave Egan

How many of you try to eat a healthy diet? Go to the gym regularly? Get enough sleep? Talk to a therapist? These are all excellent ways to stay balanced and healthy. But here at FPUU we provide another type of self care that is equally important: nourishing your spiritual life. So welcome to your weekly, spiritual tune up. Your soul thanks you for being here!

Deadline Reminders



FPUU Newsletter: Third Sunday of the month. This month it is September 22nd.

Order of Service: Wednesdays by 5:00 pm.

Office Hours: Mondays & Thursdays from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Email: admin@firstparishmedfield.org

Sandra Andreassi-Administrator

Welcome Kate Ciavarra!



I am pleased to announce that we have hired Kate Ciavarra, as our new Coordinator of Religious Exploration. She will officially join our staff on Monday, August 19th. We are thrilled that she is joining us!

She was recommended to the search committee by our former CRE, Samantha Decker Nemeth. When we interviewed Kate we were impressed by her warmth, approachability, and her years of teaching experience. After the interview we unanimously decided to offer her the job.

Please take a moment to read her letter below, and join me in welcoming Kate to FPUU.

Thanks,
Rev. Dave



Hi there!

My name is Kate Ciavarra and I'm so excited to be joining the FPUU community! A little about me: I graduated from Framingham State University with a dual degree in Elementary Education and Spanish. While working at First Parish, I'll also be working at the local after school program (MAP), as well as tutoring on the side.

I've been teaching since I was around 14 when I started teaching swimming lessons at the local Y, and I just haven't stopped! I love working with kids while being creative and bringing in knowledge from my worldwide travels. I'm an artist, an anime fan, a

dog mom, a reader, and an overall excitable person who likes to try new things.

I can't wait to bring this fun energy with me to First Parish, and I am looking forward to meeting all of you!

Sincerely,
Kate Ciavarra
cre@firstparishmedfield.org

Religious Exploration classes begin on Sept 15th

From The RE Committee

New Coordinator of Religious Exploration:

As you've probably heard, FPUU hired Kate Ciavarra as our Coordinator of Religious Exploration. Many thanks to Kara DelTufo, Jeanette Ruyle, Karen Wians, and Rev Dave who comprised the search committee, with Tiane Jennings and Kirsten D'Abate. A big thanks also to Bill Wians and Mike Taylor, who worked diligently this summer to bring Kate on board.

The great news for families is that with a professional CRE on staff, we are now able to provide K-6 children with more than (2) RE lessons per month. This year we expect to offer an average of (3) RE sessions per month, with (1) Intergen -with no RE- per month. Kate's Sundays off will coincide with monthly Intergen Sundays, and kids will benefit from a consistent Lead Teacher.

Kate is very busy attending orientation meetings and reviewing lesson plans these last few weeks in August, and she has already shared lots of classroom experience, insight, and creative ideas. We are excited to learn from her! [Sept 8 is the in-gathering water communion service, which is Intergenerational, and Sept 15 is the first RE class.](#)

In the coming weeks, Kate will be emailing the RE parents about lending materials from home to support a fun, new curriculum she has planned- stay tuned to hear more from Kate about LEGOS and UU values!



Little Lights continues:

Our Little Lights nursery program (LL) for children up to 5 yrs old continues every Sunday, even on Intergen Sundays as long as we have adequate volunteers. We are grateful to the dedicated and reliable Razza siblings, who have agreed to serve again as our paid sitters in LL.



Don't miss Breakfast on 9/22:

Please mark your calendars now for the RE orientation breakfast, which will be held on Sunday, September 22, 8:30- 9:30 before church. You will enjoy a great, free breakfast and will have the opportunity to chat with Kate, and to sign and submit your RE volunteer and family registration forms. While we call this the 'RE volunteer orientation breakfast', the WHOLE church is invited and all are encouraged to attend. Look for an email and RSVP details to follow.

We need your help:

Same as last year, the RE Volunteer 'sign-up genius' will be posted on the members page of the FPUU website for both the RE and LL programs. The sign-up pages should be accessible before Labor Day. By volunteering for just a few Sundays per year, your support makes a huge difference to the programs. The RE Committee thanks you in advance for becoming a 'qualified volunteer' this fall, even if you are uncertain of your current schedule or know that you cannot help until winter or spring.

Moment for All Ages

A unique element in FPUU's Sunday Service is the Moment for All Ages (MFAA): a brief exchange on a subject selected for the children but with relevance for all. This 5-7 minute presentation may be offered by the minister, a guest speaker, or a lay member of the congregation.

Do you remember a MFAA that really struck you? We can refresh it and reuse it!
Or perhaps you've thought about something you would like to share in a MFAA.

I will be coordinating the MFAAs for the upcoming church year. Please let me know if you are interested in offering a MFAA, or have an idea for one. We have resources to share and can provide assistance.

I can be reached at wianskbad@verizon.net or by calling/texting 508-479-2640.

Karen Wians, RE Committee member

Sitting In the Power Saturday mornings

FREE

Beginning Saturday, August 31, 2024

From 8am to 8:30ish Eastern time.

Register in advance [here](#).

Sitting in the power helps expand your consciousness and build a closer relationship with your Higher Self, with your Soul and with your guides.

The first step towards empowering yourself is learning to be with yourself. Silence offers us an ability to listen to the subtle wisdom within. Community practice enhances the energy.

This has nothing to do with the ego and everything to do with your heart; your heart that feels and knows the truth, much like trusting your gut.

"Through sitting in the power, I have built a relationship with my inner guidance so I can consult with it any time. If I am lost or scared, I turn to this guidance. I have never been let down by its presence. I am most often let down by my fear and distrust."

I invite you to join me.

Shirley Riga

Come for Sunday Service and stay for...

**1st
Sun.**



Bldg & Grounds Work Day

Come help paint, repair, and beautify our campus each month. There will be big and small jobs, both indoors and outside. Stay for as long as you are able. All ages welcome. We will meet at the U House at 11:30am.

**2nd
Sun.**



Men's Group

If you identify as male, join us monthly to reflect on things we have in common: fatherhood, marriage, retirement, etc. We will meet in the U House at 11:30am. Co-led by David Russell and Dave Egan.

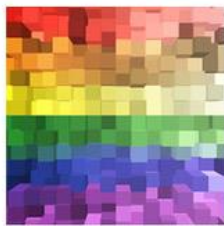
**3rd
Sun.**



Women's Group

If you identify as female, join us in this spiritual space to share our experiences with relationships, societal expectations, motherhood, etc. We will meet in the U House at 11:30am. Led by Shirley Riga.

**4th
Sun.**



LGBTQIA+ and Allies

If you are looking for a safe space to check in and share your experiences and feel a supportive community around you, then join us for LGBTQIA+ and Allies group. Open to anyone of all ages, we will gather in the U House at 11:30. Co-leaders are Shirley Riga, John Bowman, and Martha Castle.

Green Sanctuary Committee News



Our mission is to raise consciousness about the environment, motivate for individual and systemic change, generate commitment to community action, and promote environmental justice, recognizing that all injustices are connected.



1. FPUU now has its own electric battery-powered lawnmower and volunteers have been using it this summer. Thank you, Nate, Alison, and Jeanette! [Gas-powered yard equipment emits](#) a surprising and dismaying amount of greenhouse gases. Now is we can just get the Town of Medfield to switch to electric lawnmowers...

2. FPUU is, as usual, taking part in Medfield Day 2024 on Sept. 28. The GSC has been contributing to this for the past several years, always doing something different and always with the same message: Fight climate change and care for our Earth. This years we are going to offer some climate change games that anyone of any age can play. Stay tuned for more info.



The Social Justice Incubator (SJI)

The SJI serves as an umbrella for all social justice initiatives at FPUU. We communicate with congregants leading various initiatives and help brainstorm and ask for help when needed. SJI members also lead many initiatives themselves.

Below is the current list of social justice initiatives at FPUU, along with associated leaders/contacts:

Anti-Racism Team	<p>Focused on anti-racist work and offering many opportunities for the congregation to get involved, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-racist book group • Small group programs such as Knotty Conversations, Widening the Circle of Concern, and anti-racist role-playing workshops. • Annual anti-racist vigils marking the anniversary of George Floyd's death • Black History Month project, highlighting Black UUs in history. 	Thea Iberall, Arnold Kalmbach, Becca Kornet, Margaret Rolph, Jeanette Ruyle
Blood Drive	Annual event to honor Fritz Fleischmann	Sara Drumm
Chaplains on the Way	Program helping unhoused people in Waltham. FPUU congregants can donate clothing, blankets, and other needed items. https://www.chaplainsontheway.us	Louise Rachin
Dignity Matters	Program providing feminine sanitary products, bras, and underwear to women and girls in need. Collection box outside the front door of the U House. https://www.dignity-matters.org	Becca Kornet
Family Promise Metrowest	Program providing housing and meals to families experiencing homelessness. Primary opportunity for congregants is to prepare meals, then serve to and eat with the families at the center in Natick (orientation required). Other opportunities, some not requiring orientation, are also available. https://www.familypromisemetrowest.org	Becca Kornet
Green Sanctuary Committee	FPUU is a UUA "Green Sanctuary Congregation." The Green Sanctuary Committee guides the congregation to act on its commitment to environmental justice, care for the Earth, and mitigation of climate change, in terms of learning, making choices, and taking action.	Jeanette Ruyle (chair), Katrin Fischer, Fritz Fleischmann, Eve Potts, Margaret Rolph, Susan Stromgren, Thea Iberall.
LGBTQI Luncheon Program	FPUU, in collaboration with HESCCO and the LGBT Aging Project, has sponsored the Meeting House Cafe Lunch Club for LGBT Seniors, Friends & Allies in the vestry one Monday each	Louise Rachin

	month. Although the Lunch Club is currently on hiatus, plans are underway to start up again.	
Medfield Food Cupboard	Program providing food to local residents facing food insecurity. https://www.medfieldfoodcupboard.com	Becca Kornet
UU Urban Ministry (UUUM)	Organization working “across race and place” to dismantle racism and white supremacy culture and to advance racial, economic, and social justice. https://www.uuum.org .	Jeanette Ruyle
Walk for Hunger	For many years, Team First Parish walked in the Boston Walk for Hunger. The WfH went on hiatus during COVID, and currently is back in-person but offering a much shorter distance. In the interim we have had our own Walk for Hunger at Noon Hill in Medfield to raise money for Project Bread. https://www.projectbread.org/the-walk-for-hunger	Louise Rachin
Wayside Pulpit Ministry	Wooden structure outside the North Street door of the church that holds statements we want to share with the public.	Jeanette Ruyle, Susan Stromgren, Martha Holt Castle
Espresso Yourself Coffeehouse	Coffeehouse with social justice themes. Collaborative effort of SJI and MOC	Thea Iberall

SJI members: Becca Kornet (chair), Thea Iberall, Arnold Kalmbach, Margaret Rolph, and Jeanette Ruyle



Have you moved over the summer? Got rid of your landline? Got a new cell phone number? We are working on a fall directory. Please contact the church office at admin@firstparishmedfield with any changes. Thank you.

Pictures from Pride Event at Bellforge 6/9/24

Photos from Jessica Razza and Cissy Hull-Allen

We had a FPUU table that included free swag such as temporary tattoos, stickers, flags, bracelets, as well as U.U. "what are your top values" game. Again this year, we did the interactive public art installation where our guests were challenged to write something about love on a ribbon and weave it into a net to show how we're all connected.

The most important value was "Giving back to the community " followed closely by "Accepting people who are different than me".



Solvitur Ambulando

(It is solved by walking)

By Don Rolph

After the church rafting trip, it was suggested that we might do a church backpack, so on Sat Aug 17 the Egan/Lund family, Dave, Karina, Maya, and Lyla, Marshall Sugarman, and Don Rolph met at the parking area for the Old Bridle Path trail leading up to Greenleaf AMC Hut.



Just under 3 miles and 2500 feet later (having braved the Red Dike and Agony Ridge), the team arrived at the hut. With a stop for lunch at the hut, the team dropped off their overnight gear and ploughed onward for the summit of Lafayette. The summit cleared just as we arrived, giving us a magnificent view of the Lafayette-Lincoln ridge and across to Franconia Notch.



After descending to Greenleaf Hut again, we enjoyed a magnificent dinner of turkey, mashed potatoes, cranberry relish and green beans with apple cake for dessert!



Snuggling into our sleeping bags in the bunk room we could hear the wind whistling through the trees outside the hut.

We were awakened the next morning by the hut staff singing us awake and warning us that breakfast would be at 7 AM.

We enjoyed a wonderful breakfast of oatmeal, pancakes, scrambled eggs and bacon. After packing up we commenced a leisurely descent to the parking lot, arriving and getting in cars just before the rain started.



Everyone had a wonderful time. The comfort of the hut and the luxurious food turned the backpacking trip into a truly comfortable adventure!

There was a strong sense that we should offer some version of this as a church activity again next year.

CHAPLAINS ON THE WAY & FIRST PARISH IN WALTHAM

REQUEST THE PLEASURE OF YOUR
COMPANY FOR A

Silent Auction & Community Barbecue



SUNDAY,
SEPTEMBER 15TH, 2024
50 CHURCH STREET,
WALTHAM, MA
12PM-3PM
(RAIN OR SHINE)

ALL YOU CAN EAT BARBECUE
FABULOUS AUCTION ITEMS
GENEROUSLY DONATED BY BUSINESSES
IN WALTHAM

SUGGESTED DONATIONS:

\$10 PER-INDIVIDUAL/\$30 PER-FAMILY
(UP TO 6 FAMILY MEMBERS)

FREE ADMISSION FOR AUCTION ITEM
CONTRIBUTORS
AND OUR UNHOUSED FRIENDS



**All proceeds to benefit
Waltham's unhoused community**



**Chaplains
on the way**



**First
Parish
in Waltham**

Expresso Yourself Coffeehouse on Sept 21, 7PM in the Sanctuary

By Thea Iberall

In our reboot of Expresso Yourself Coffeehouse after the pandemic, FPUU's goal is to bring First Parish to the attention of the larger community. We are doing this through unique events that raise funds for social justice causes. Our International Folk Dancing event in May was fun for all generations and raised over \$400 for an environmental justice organization. Many people from outside of the FPUU community stated how much they enjoyed the event.



@ THE HISTORIC MEETINGHOUSE

Our next special Expresso event is going to be September 21, 2024, the International Day of Peace. It is a joint project between FPUU and Northeast Storytelling (NEST), a non-profit who is sponsoring similar events across New England. The vision of NEST is a world in which all people value the power of storytelling to connect, inspire, and instill respect. The theme of the

evening is End Racism. Build Peace. Funds will be raised for Medfield Together for their CultureFest in October.

Volunteer bakers will be making special treats for everyone. Coffee and tea. Adults and teens welcome. The performers were chosen for their dynamic skills:



Regie Gibson is an award-winning TEDx speaker and National Poetry Slam Champion. He was selected one of Chicago Tribune's Artist of the Year for Excellence.

"Stand-Up Chameleon" **Jackson Gillman** magically transforms himself into a wide array of eccentric characters through his many talents as mime, actor, songsmith and storyteller.



Andrea Kamens is a master crafter and weaver of stories. She has been storytelling since learning to speak. She creates inclusive experiences that meet all listeners where they are, allowing them to be their full selves.



Setting the excitement and tone for the evening, the **Crone Drummers** integrate song with international rhythms.



Tickets in advance available at <https://expresso-peace.eventbrite.com/> Please help make this awesome, and bring your friends and family!

Save the date - Saturday November 23rd Blood Drive at First Parish

Hello First Parish Friends,

I'm excited to announce our upcoming blood drive on Saturday, November 23 at First Parish Medfield - kick off all those warm Thanksgiving feelings by signing up to save a life!

Please see the links below to donate and to volunteer - looking for help set up and break down, as well as two greeters each hour. As those who volunteered in the past will tell you, this is definitely a feel-good event, and you will for sure enjoy helping out!

Thanks in advance, and please feel free to reach out with questions: bongo_8@msn.com



Help save a life.

Schedule your
blood donation
appointment today.



Drive Details:

Site: First Parish UU of Medfield

Address: 26 North Street, Medfield, MA, 02052

Room Name: First Parish Vestry

Date: Sat Nov 23, 2024

Time: 9 am - 2 pm to donate, 8 am to 3 pm for volunteers

Link to donate blood:

[Click here to make an appointment](#)

Link to volunteer:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040C4BADAD2EA46-50582231-help>

Monthly Mediation & Reflection

Shirley Riga, Spiritual Director

Member of the Pastoral Care Committee



As a woman in this world, we face so many obstacles directed at us from public media, familial pressures, our quests to find love and acceptance, tradition, raising our children and other loved ones with our full and true hearts, fearing the worst and planning for the best, and above all grief for our losses, our dreams and hopes. There are other obstacles I cannot think of right this minute but as a woman you know what they are.

I want connection with my Higher Self, with my Source, my Creator. I want to help myself and thus help others. I want to demonstrate to those giving up that they are worth fighting for because I am worth fighting for. I have fought for and will continue to fight for me.

Like weeds wound around my body, pulling me down, while lying for weeks unable to move due to a broken leg, I saw clearly all the tendrils and murk that lies below the surface of me. I came face to face with my bitter doubt about myself, my life, my purpose, my love, my life, and my losses. My face was right up against a struggle that I have never won, always being the fighter who gets out once again leaving behind the mass of strangling pain waiting for another time.

Parker J. Palmer writes about an experience in his memoir, "Let Your Life Speak":

"Imagine that from early in my life, a friendly figure, standing a block away, was trying to get my attention by shouting my name, wanting to teach me some hard but healing truths about myself. But I – fearful of what I might hear or arrogantly trying to live without help or simply too busy with my ideas and ego and ethics to bother – ignored the shouts and walked away."

"So this figure, still with friendly intent, came closer and shouted more loudly, but I kept walking. Ever closer it came, close enough to tap me on the shoulder, but I walked on. Frustrated by my unresponsiveness, the figure threw stones at my back, then struck me with a stick, still wanting simply to get my attention. But despite the pain, I kept walking away."

"Over the years, the befriending intent of this figure never disappeared but became obscured by the frustration caused by my refusal to turn around. Since shouts and taps, stones and sticks had failed to do the trick, there was only one thing left: drop the nuclear bomb called depression on me, not with the intent to kill but as a last-ditch effort to get me to turn and ask the simple question, 'What do you want?' When I was finally able to make that turn – and start to absorb and act on the self-knowledge that then became available to me – I began to get well."

What do I want?

My life has got my attention.

My accident makes me pay attention.

I have always known better what I do not want. Easy to feel ick with choices. But what do I want? So much more comes into the declaration. Once I start imagining my wants, in comes the wandering minstrels reminding me if I change up who I am, what I am doing or where I am going, who is it going to effect? How will it impact others? I give myself away again by taking care of other's needs.

Parker goes on to identify what he believes was his "true self" who was speaking to him. "This is not the ego self that wants to inflate us"... "nor the intellectual self that wants to hover above the mess of life in clear but ungrounded ideas, not the ethical self that wants to live by some abstract moral code. True self is true friend."

My proverbial silver cloud slowly emerges after such a tragic accident in my life. First, I survived a harrowing, bone-breaking, head-first tumble down stone steps without a concussion or broken neck.

Second, I clearly see my plans, direction and purpose swept clean off the platform of my life, leaving me with what appears to be nothing, an empty, blank space that was my life.

Finally, I feel gratitude to be alive which does not coincide with depression. Can I feel grateful and depressed at the same time? My depression needs help. I want to start listening and stop denying it exists. It is there. I have many reasons to be depressed and yet I continue to dance around reasons and whys and ignore my truth.

As a woman in this world, we face so many obstacles directed at us from public media, familial pressures, our quests to find love and acceptance, tradition, raising our children and other loved ones with our full and true hearts, fearing the worst and planning for the best, and above all grief for our losses, our dreams and hopes. There are other obstacles I cannot think of right this minute but as a woman you know what they are.

We begin our church year soon. I look forward to our women's group commencing on Sunday, September 15th at 11:30. If you identify as a female, join me for lunch and connection.

