

First Parish Unitarian Universalist Of Medfield

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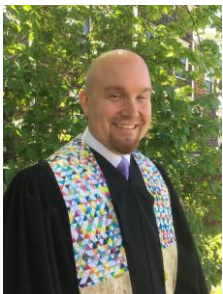
www.firstparishmedfield.org



October 2024 Newsletter

Ministerial Musings

Dave Egan, Minister



I've always been moved by the image of those early suffragists dressed in white, some finely attired with bustles & bonnets, many with signs and banners held high, and all raising their voices as they demanded the right to vote. How strong those women were. How persistent as they and their sisters were spat upon & derided in the press. How courageous as some were beaten, thrown into prison, & even force-fed with tubes jammed down their throats. All because they wanted the right to vote.

So, too, those images from the 1950's & 60's when activists went door to door encouraging African Americans to register to vote. And the courage of those who, dressed in their Sunday best, marched in spite of police dogs, fire hoses, & club-wielding cops. People were hauled off in paddy wagons, lost their jobs, and even died so that African Americans would have the right to vote.

And yet it would seem that too many Americans have forgotten the courage of those who wanted so much to be full participants in this democracy of ours that they were willing to put their lives on the line in order to win that right. Only 16% of registered Massachusetts voters made the effort to go to the polls during the most recent primary.

What do you suppose is going on? Have too many decided that their vote isn't going to make a difference anyway? Are people getting home too late from the office or are they too busy shuttling the kids from one after-school activity to another? Is this their excuse? Or is it that they just don't care?

If you know someone who hasn't registered to vote yet, remind them that all they have to do is go to the Town Clerk's office and sign up before October 26th. If there is a possibility that you or someone you know won't be able to make it to the polls on November 5th, make sure that you vote early or go to your Town Clerk and ask for an absentee ballot.

There are a lot of us FPUU folks who have been actively involved in the political process this time around—making phone calls, going door to door, holding signs supporting our favorite candidates, signing petitions, sending money. And so, I don't have to tell you how important this upcoming election is. But I would ask that as you walk into that booth on November 5th, that you pause for just a moment and remember what a privilege it is to be able to do so. And how fragile this privilege has become.

In faith,
Rev. Dave

From the Music Director

Eva Kendrick

I hope this fall season finds you well! You may have noticed that several congregation members were on their phones during the service last week. That is because our church has been chosen to participate in the UUA's Virtual Hymnal Beta Testing Project.

A UUA taskforce is in the process of creating a versatile and updatable virtual format for our next hymnal, and they are asking congregations to try it out over the next two months and offer their feedback.

I have asked members from the choir and Worship & Music Committee to participate, but I would love to include more members of our church!

Volunteers will:

- Log into the Virtual Hymnal website (using the church Wi-Fi) and access the hymns during the service.
- Provide feedback to me via a Google Doc which I will summarize and sent to the taskforce at the end of November.

I am looking for feedback from musicians and non-musicians alike, and from those who do and do not consider themselves to be tech savvy individuals.

To sign up or learn more about the Virtual Hymnal Beta Testing Project, please e-mail me at evakendrick@comcast.net or catch me at coffee hour. Thank you! :-)



Upcoming Services

October 6

Valuing Inherent Dignity

Michael Jones

Today we will welcome Michael Jones, the Executive Director of Chaplains on the Way. Michael will speak about Chaplains on the Way, their beloved community and how the organization lives out their mission by valuing the inherent dignity of every human soul.

October 13

Whose Story is It?

Rev. Dave Egan

What are the stories that we tell ourselves of the history of the United States of America? Who controls how our past is told and how will it be explained to future generations? This weekend, are we marking Columbus Day or Indigenous People's Day... or both? This Sunday we will explore how our shared cultural narrative shapes who we are as Americans and as Unitarian Universalists.

October 20

Blessing of the Animals

Rev. Dave Egan

This is the Sunday when our animal/fish/bird/reptile companions come to church to receive our blessings and thanks for the role they play in our lives. Please make sure that your pets are safe in their containers or appropriately controlled on leashes. This is an intergenerational service so there will be no religious education classes today.

October 27

Working for Trans Liberation

**Rev. Dave Egan &
Rev. Laura Randall**

On this Sunday, Rev. Laura Randall from the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee will share the pulpit with Rev. Dave Egan. Thirty-eight states currently have anti-transgender legislation on their books, with the number of new bills growing daily. This service will address the history of bigotry and state-sanctioned violence inflicted upon transgender and gender diverse people in the United States, and what we can do to help.

Church Office Reminders



Church Newsletter: Third Sunday of the month. **The next deadline is October 20th.**

Order of Service: Wednesdays by 5:00 pm.

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

Email: admin@firstparishmedfield.org

Sandra Andreassi-Administrator

Religious Exploration



About 26 of us attended the 2nd annual RE volunteer breakfast held this past Sunday, and it was a terrific success. The egg and sausage frittata and fresh fruit were especially well

received, and Lucky Charms was the favorite cereal among the kids.

The whole congregation was invited to the RE breakfast, whether or not they have current involvement in the program. The breakfast was held for 3 main purposes:

- 1) EAT & MEET: An excuse to have the entire congregation gather for good food and fellowship, and to meet and mingle with our CRE, Kate Ciavarra!
- 2) VOLUNTEER: to remind anyone interested in volunteering in RE or LL to read and submit their 'qualified volunteer paperwork', and to sign up for

a few volunteer RE slots using the link posted on the members page of FPUU website.

- 3) REGISTER KIDS: to collect family registration forms from the RE parents.

Several people suggested that next year we should offer the breakfast to the general public, similar to the pancake breakfasts once held at FPUU. Those discussions morphed into the idea of having 'Friday Family Fun' nights, with pizza, games, and a movie corner for kids- no RE paperwork associated- for the express purpose of fellowship and serving young families in the community. We LOVE that idea. Please do contact the RE committee or the MOC if you have ideas or suggestions about launching monthly 'Friday family fun' events this winter.

Finally, thanks to all who attended, helped set up and clean up, and submitted their RE paperwork. Kate was excited to be able to meet many of you for the first time, and our only disappointment was that we forgot to photograph the event, because we were all so busy eating and talking!

Sanctuary Flowers Request

Your help is requested to ensure that we have Sunday Worship Service Flowers. Flowers are a wonderful way to celebrate or memorialize an occasion, event, or a loved one.

If you would like to provide worship service flowers, please contact Louise Rachin at lrachin@comcast.net.



Safety Update from the Executive Board



Keeping our First Parish community safe is a continual process covering a range of issues. Over the years, we have developed

protocols for working with children and youth, created a policy to deal with disruptive persons, and improved our fire safety panel. More recently, the Executive Board has discussed the need to enhance our awareness of and responses to any type of emergency (intruder, fire, or health-related).

The 6/16/22 *Safety Task Force Recommendations to the Board* included establishing an usher role for Sunday morning greeting and installing a video surveillance system. Last spring the Board decided to move forward on these recommendations.

Many thanks to Wes Sutton for spending hours installing video cameras to monitor movement in the Meetinghouse. The tech team are observing these cameras during the worship service. We will also be installing outdoor cameras to monitor activity on the grounds. This is a huge improvement in our security.

In August, Medfield's Assistant Police Chief toured our building with Rev Dave and recommended that

we limit Sunday morning entrance through the vestry door. The Board decided to move forward with that recommendation recognizing that it may not feel as welcoming as we would ideally like. We began the church year with that change.

We want to be clear that First Parish has not received any threats. These recent changes are part of a Safe Congregation policy recommended by the UUA and being implemented by houses of worship across faiths.



We hope to receive training from the Medfield Police in the near future which we will share with as many members as possible so that we have a congregation ready to respond to any emergency situation. We believe this training will empower us all to feel safe and secure.

Thank you for your patience and support as we move forward with these safety enhancements. If you would like to be involved in this work or have any questions/concerns, please contact Martha Castle (marthaholt@gmail.com), Bill Wians (wwians@mac.com), or Kay Bennett (kay8941@gmail.com).



LGBTQIA+ and Allies Circle

Held on September 22, 2024 - Shirley Riga Facilitator

(Photo credit to Tong Su.)



Opening Words and Chalice Lighting:

We light this flame

To ignite the sacred power of justice.

We light this flame

So that it may be a beacon of hope

In moments of uncertainty, fear, anxiety, and the unknown.

We light this flame, and are emboldened by its blaze,

Knowing our strength as a prophetic and powerful people

Is rooted in the diverse ways we answer the call to love.

By Jami Yandle, UUA Transgender Support Specialist, ministering on the Organizing Strategy Team that holds the outward-facing justice work for the UUA under the banner of [Side With Love](#). Rev. Yandle is a non-binary minister and board-certified chaplain currently residing in Texas.

I did not know my destiny in this world was to live as a lesbian. I was married to my high school sweetheart, two daughters and expectations lined up in my house with a fence, a dog and a cat. My idea of life was shaken up by my terminally ill daughter. I had no normal anymore. I was consistently let down by people who I trusted. I started defining my happiness by genuine caring of those who stepped into my circle. I realized I was living a façade. I lived in a battlefield with myself. Unhappiness was my enemy and truth became my sword.

My life journey became a pilgrimage of truth seeking. I learned to redefine decades of programming of what defined me, my values, and my goals. I fought for my daughter's life and redefined my own life, walking away with more meaning that held more value for who I am. My discoveries became the new structure of my being which I guarded closely as I imparted them onto my two daughters facing the very world I was raised in. We all have differences. No one has the right to define whether these differences are good or bad, accepted or shunned. We are all humans striving to be loved, and treated with respect. A true celebration of happiness includes a sense of belonging, love, creativity and resilience. It all comes down to love or fear.

My inner strength is defined by my belief in myself. When my sense of self becomes corrupted by the outside societal pressures, I recharge at the very well where I found my original values. Safety, self-love, self-care, my Higher Power, and silence that affords me the space to listen within.

Focus Questions:

- How do you define your inner strength?
- How has this inner strength demonstrated itself in your life?
- How does inner strength and sense of safety correlate?

Discussion

Closing Words and Extinguishing the Chalice:

Spirit of life and love;

Spirit that lives within us, and between us, and among us right now:

Within this beloved community, and in our work for collective liberation,
may we continue to weave the web of trust and care to keep our bodies safe.

But more than that! May our bodies be the site of healing, joy and freedom.

May we refuse to let our spirits be depleted and hardened by the forces of hate,

Instead, may open ourselves to be nourished and transformed by the movement for justice,

Knowing that our collective story is not what we are fighting against, but what we are fighting for.

For ours is the work of creation.

Ours is the work of inviting people into an irresistible movement,
rooted in our belief that a new world is possible.

And the center of our work is love, and joy, and the spirit of abundance.

These are the things we are fighting for, and these are the things we are fighting with.

May we know, deep in our bones, that this is the call of our faith.

Amen, and Blessed Be

Lisa Garcia-Sampson

A Message from Chaplains on the Way



hope is found in hearts connected

The demands for chaplaincy, daily hot breakfasts, our interfaith worship services, clothing and referral services are skyrocketing.

The following items would be gratefully received by the growing unhoused Waltham population:

- Cans of caffeinated coffee for the breakfast program
- Men's and Women's new or gently used winter coats and jackets, sizes medium – extra large
- Men's sweatpants & hooded sweatshirts, sizes large & extra large
- Women's sweatpants & hooded sweatshirts, sizes medium & large
- Winter hats & gloves, sizes medium – extra large
- Warm socks, long underwear, sizes medium – extra large
- Warm blankets & sleeping bags

If you would like to donate items, they can be placed in the donation box in the Vestry. Feel free to contact Louise Rachin at 617-429-7319 or at lrachin@comcast.net with any questions.

Thank you for your ongoing generosity and support.

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 Rev. Dave Egan and David Russell.

**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 the 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, Martha Castle, and John Bowman.

Green Sanctuary Committee

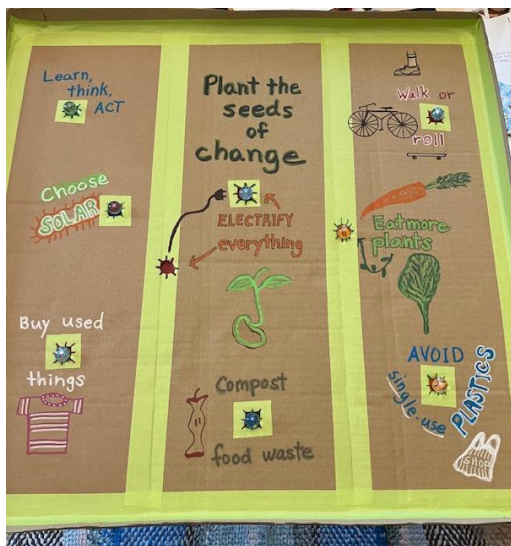


Our next meeting is Oct. 22, 2024, at 7pm via Zoom. All are welcome! Email [Jeanette Ruyle](mailto:Jeanette.Ruyle) for link and more info.



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.

New attic insulation for the church/meetinghouse—installed by the same company, AGI through Mass Save, that did the U House attic, at no cost to FPUU. Will more be done? Stay tuned.



Medfield Day 2024 at FPUU will include some “climate games” for any age. Pictured here is one of them. Get all nine marbles (seeds) in the holes!

Raising awareness is an important part of GSC’s mission. Come and join in.

The UU Climate Justice Revival, 2024



**Reimagine Together
From An Extractive
Age To A New Era**

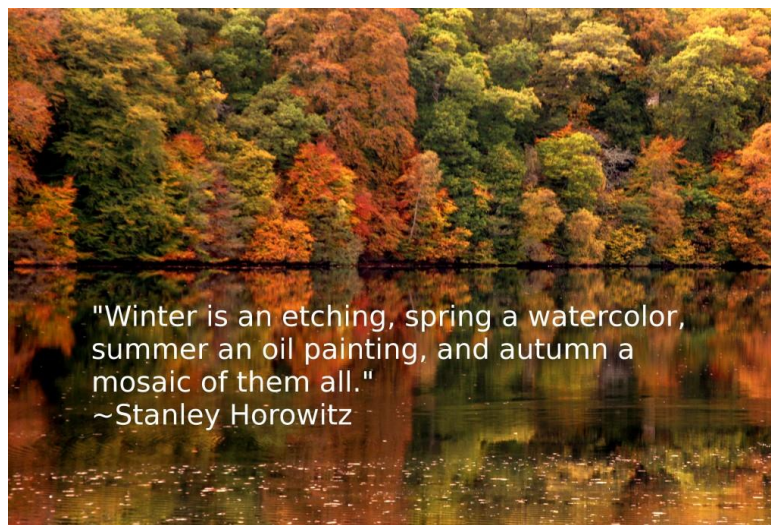
UU Climate Justice Revival | September 28-29, 2024

“This weekend, across the U.S. more than 370 congregations, or 36% of our denomination, will join the [UU Climate Justice Revival](#) to reimagine a spirit-filled, liberatory future collectively.”

The UUA, the UU Ministry for the Earth, Side with Love, the UU’s for Social Justice—all these UU-related groups and more have been posting about the UU Climate Justice Revival happening Sept. 28 and 29. The FPUU Green Sanctuary Committee has been aware of this for a while, but felt we did not have, and neither did the rest of our congregation, the capacity to sign on. However, the messages kept encouraging us, saying we could do this anytime we choose. Soooo, we registered! This allows us to get all the materials available, and at the same time support this wonderful effort. Our Climate Justice Revival will be happening around Earth Day in April. Stay tuned.

Everyone still can get in on some of the action from this weekend, however. On Sunday, our UUA president, Rev. Dr. Sophia Betancourt, will preach at the First UU Congregation of Ann Arbor MI. This will be [livestreamed](#) at 11:30 am ET and available on [YouTube](#) later.

From the UUSJ: “Our UUA President is expert on UU ministerial leadership, UU theologies, preaching, environmental ethics and liberation, womanism and Earth justice, mujerista and Latina feminist theologies, and combating oppression. How will she articulate the call for UU Congregations and Churches to “Understand their role in the interdependent ecosystem of creating climate justice and [collective liberation](#)” made via the Revival?”



“Winter is an etching, spring a watercolor,
summer an oil painting, and autumn a
mosaic of them all.”
~Stanley Horowitz

Monthly Mediation & Reflection

Shirley Riga, Spiritual Director

Member of the Pastoral Care Committee

(photo credit Susan Holt Simpson)

People have observed me as a strong woman.

Sometimes I am surprised by this observation and



other times I answer with a denial. I do what I must do. Life deals us challenges, sometimes one after the other,

and some of these challenges feel impossible.

Some challenges are way too big and devastating, and others I manage like an adept skier finessing around moguls.

Jana Stanfield, a singer, and songwriter wrote this song entitled ***It Doesn't Mean that I'm Not Strong***. You can listen to it [here](#).

The lyrics are engaging, but most importantly, the chorus really speaks to me:

*If I'm afraid, it doesn't mean that I'm not brave
And if I doubt, it doesn't mean that I've lost faith
And if I fall, it doesn't mean I can't go on
And if I cry, it doesn't mean that I'm not strong*

Whether you are a man or a woman, fear enters our lives, makes our knees shake, diminishes our voices, immobilizes our actions, and impacts our whole lives.

I have learned through my 71 years of living how important it is to acknowledge my emotions by taking a moment to do so, and not categorizing them with a future to-do date.

Emotions move through us. They change, sometimes slowly sometimes fast. By acknowledging emotions, we are showing ourselves we are aware, and we are important. So often we put ourselves last. Our inner self is listening. You may think this is hogwash, but it works.

It is so easy to shun myself when I need attention. If I ignore me, maybe my emotions will go away. Guess what? They don't! They store themselves up until they are acknowledged and heard.

Remember the power of inspiration. It raises our energy and lifts our mood. As we move into the Fall, stress is building with the upcoming election. Pressures are building around us in a collective unconscious energy. Self-care with our physical bodies as well as our emotional bodies is an utmost.

As I age, I have amassed a toolbox of ways to deal with life. Some of these tools are outdated, originating from my childhood. It is time to update our toolboxes and get with the program, so we can all coast into the Fall and Winter with more wholeness.

We surround ourselves in community. Let us make sure we include our whole selves in this endeavor so we can glean the benefits of our supportive and loving community.

Save the date - Saturday November 23rd American Red Cross 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>

Coffee Hosts Needed



Coffee hour hospitality after the worship service is a very important time to welcome new members and guests and enjoy some fellowship with one another.

If you are interested in hosting a coffee hour, please sign up for a specific date using the following:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10Co44BAEAF2AA7F94-51244848-social#/>

Dignity Matters



FPUU supports Dignity Matters, a local non-profit that provides menstrual supplies and undergarments to 15,000 women and girls in Massachusetts living in poverty and/or experiencing homelessness.



They are collecting donations of tampons, pads (including Depends type pads/underwear), new underwear, and new/gently used bras. Donations can be left in the bin located on the porch of the U House.

If you prefer, shop their [Amazon Wish List](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/lz/2AoBMFSCYN4W/refnav_wishlist_lists_1?) for shipment directly to the Dignity Matters warehouse. https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/lz/2AoBMFSCYN4W/refnav_wishlist_lists_1?

Medfield Food Cupboard

Please contribute non-perishable items to the Medfield Food Cupboard basket located in the narthex.

Most needed items:

Boost/Ensure (chocolate or vanilla), Rice mixes (e.g., Rice-a-Roni), Spaghetti, Peanut butter, Jelly.

Thanks in advance for your generosity!



FPUU Calendar of Events

Wednesday, October 2	Rosh Hashanah Begins at Sunset
Sunday, October 6	Building & Grounds Workday/11:30 am/U-House
Monday, October 7	Staff Meeting/11:00 am/U-House Medfield Historical Society Meeting/7:30 pm/Vestry
Wednesday, October 9	Membership Outreach Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Thursday, October 10	Worship & Music Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Friday, October 11	Yom Kipper Begins
Sunday, October 13	Men's Group/11:30 am/U-House
Monday, October 14	Indigenous Peoples Day/Office Closed
Thursday, October 17	Executive Board Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Sunday, October 20	Newsletter Deadline Women's Group/11:30 am/U-House
Tuesday, October 22	Green Sanctuary Committee Meeting/7:00 pm/Zoom
Thursday, October 24	RE Committee Meeting/7:30 pm/Zoom
Sunday, October 27	LGBTQIA+ and Allies/11:30 am/U-House

