



# THE FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF MIDDLEBOROUGH

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25 South Main Street, Middleborough, MA 02346    [www.uumiddleboro.org](http://www.uumiddleboro.org)    508-947-1935    September 2023

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*We offer in-person and online worship services at 10:30 a.m.  
The link to each service will be posted on our website every week.*

**Sunday, September 3, at 9:00 a.m.**  
**Susan Land Hotchkiss & Friends presenting**  
***United in Song***

Susan Hotchkiss, Ed & Andrea Priest, and Bet Giddings will lead us in a reflection and singalong beginning with the protest songs of the 1960's and '70's. The popular and powerful songs of that time celebrate community building and strength. Join us as we journey back into a world that looks surprisingly like the world we live in today.

**Sunday, September 10, at 10:30 a.m.**  
**Rev. Peter Connolly preaching**  
***A Covenanted Community***  
***Ingathering and Water Communion***

When church members agree on a bond of covenant, they strengthen their commitment to treat one another with respect and to be so treated. Today, we'll talk about forging such a bond. The Chalice Choir will be singing.

*Please bring a small amount of water from a place that means something to you – a home, a destination, a special time, a special person. We will gather the donations, bless the water, and pour it over our Memorial Garden after the service.*

**Sunday, September 17**  
**Rev. Peter Connolly preaching**  
***When We Grieve***

When we grieve a loss, especially of someone dear to us, we encounter more deeply our shared humanity. In today's service we'll address some of the obstacles to deep grieving. Special music will be provided by a vocal ensemble.

**Sunday, September 24**  
**Rev. Peter Connolly preaching**  
***We Are Who We Are Becoming***

A reminder that the choices we make every day create the path that we take towards becoming who we feel called to be. The Chalice Choir will be singing.

***Please Note:***

*The details in this Newsletter are up-to-date as of the publication, but there may be changes/updates, so be sure to check the weekly "UU Updates" for any updated information. If you are not subscribed to receive the "UU Updates," visit the website at [uumiddleboro.org](http://uumiddleboro.org) and use the link at the bottom of the home page.*

## Minister's Note

It's September, 2023, and the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Middleboro enters its 134<sup>th</sup> church year with a mixture of hope and anticipation. From all reports, our summer services were well-attended most weeks and succeeded in advancing the cause of our mission-- to provide a sanctuary where people can come together as a community to foster spiritual and personal growth through education and open discussion, offering the opportunity for meditation and worship, and serving as a liberal religious voice in Middleboro. Our "Celebration Sunday" in June recognized the many accomplishments of our church body, from providing quality pastoral care, responsible financial stewardship, engaging worship services, a deeply satisfying musical program, and active involvement in actions for social justice. Our members continue to step up to fill important institutional roles, and when we come together as a community, it is with exuberant welcome and a sense of good fellowship. So, we are justified in fostering hope for another successful church year.

The 2023-24 church year will be my last as your interim minister and certainly, we can expect an aura of anticipation during the course of the year as our ministerial search committee engages in its work. In preparation for call of a settled minister or the hiring of a contract minister (the committee will explain the difference, I'm sure), I anticipate that we will create and adopt a bond of covenant which will state clearly how we pledge to treat one another in good times and hard times and will do the work necessary to sharpen our mission statement, which has not been revised in twenty years. I expect that we will create an organizational chart which will clarify lines of responsibility and discernment in the work we do together as a valued institution and that we will continue to gather in joyful community.

In addition to sharing our joys and responsibilities, a significant task of the year will be to grieve together the loss of church leader and most recent recipient of the Elsie Gaudette Award for distinguished service, Bob Waterman, whose sudden death on July 15 left all of us in shock. As I write this, we still have not received notice of a cause of death and are not yet in a position to create a memorial service. Rest assured that we will honor Bob's memory and his life of service throughout the year and will do our best to shoulder together the many responsibilities Bob took on in service to the church. I hope that we will dedicate the coming church year to Bob's memory, honoring him by following his example of love in service.

I look forward to working with you all this year and look forward to our ongoing project of creating and sustaining a loving community.

Blessings abounding,

***Rev. Peter***



*Presented by Linda Thompson on June 11, 2023*

The Elsie Gaudette Award was established in 1991 to honor Elsie and, in due time, any other members who exemplify her kind of work ethic and dedication to this congregation over time.

The person honored never had to be asked to do something – to work on a project, to come when needed, to take charge in a crisis, to provide goods and services without ever a thought wasted on receiving credit – just being the glue that holds us together. When Elsie was around, she was that force of nature that held the church together.

When the congregation was asked to nominate a person for this award this year, there seemed to be a groundswell of recognition for a person whose ears must have been burning as the letters of praise for one person poured in, a person who stood out as the glue during our modern crises as they kept coming. It will be hard to keep this person's identity secret in the litany of contributions made, as he stands head and shoulders above us all.

Since joining the church in 1997, he has made his presence obvious. He was reluctant for a long time to be outspoken in his support for our many projects and needs. The crisis of Covid-19 and its enormous effects on our congregation, services and personnel brought his leadership to the forefront. It brought him out of his quiet behind-the-scenes leadership style and into the forefront of the needs of this church. He saw solutions where others saw problems.

He has been a Parish Committee member, then Vice President, President and Acting Treasurer. He has been on the Fundraising Committee, Committee on Ministry, Governance and Policy Task Force, Leadership Development Committee, Spirituality Group, Staff Support Team, an Online Streaming Team member, Interim Ministerial Search Team member, Ministerial Search Team member, Silent Auction Manager, and Representative on the Board of the Matthew Mission Food Pantry producing the "Get Your Can to Church" campaign. Whew! He has led the Thursday Spirituality Group for many years, developing a style where everyone feels enriched by his presence and leadership. I've probably missed some things. Sorry.

Most recently, he has revitalized the Fundraising Committee, coming up with new events, and resurrecting the Public Relations/Publicity Team.

You never know where you'll see him! He might be the Sunday Worship Associate, giving us announcements and direction, working the sound or streaming service in the back, toting chairs, setting up tables, running wire, giving honest thoughtful advice, facilitating leadership, or maybe stepping in for the minister when illness keeps him at home, or just reaching something too high for anyone else to reach.

Through all his contributions, he has not neglected his wife, his children, his grandchildren, his home or his job. Many people wrote letters of praise and nominated him for this, our own UUnsung hero award. Please recognize our strong, silent, humble, tall leader.

Please stand up for...**Bob Waterman.**



# SEPTEMBER MUSIC MUSINGS

There's excitement in the air as we start the whirling and twirling of a new church year! The Chalice Choir has already started rehearsals (August 29), the Music Committee is cranking into full gear (September 6), new music has been ordered, and plans are well underway for a great year ahead, full of variety and opportunity to make music together. This is good!

For the church and larger community, we are offering a special one-hour drumming workshop on Sunday, October 1 at 3:00 p.m. The facilitator/teacher is Sam Holmstock who is well known through Cape Cod drum circles as well as through his work with Drum Strategies for Healing. Sam teaches a hybrid technique that combines African and AfroCuban styles. You do not need to bring your own drum, but you will need to register because the class size will be limited.

We are also planning a grand fall concert on Sunday, November 19, at 3:00 p.m. This concert is in honor of Avis Clay and her family's generous memorial gift to renovate the Parlor and provide an endowment fund for UU Middleboro music. We are VERY appreciative of this gift.

#### Reminders:

- The Music Committee meets by ZOOM the second Wednesday of each month.
- The Song Circle meets in the Parish Hall the second Friday of each month.

Sing soon, sing often, just sing!

*Susan Hotchkiss, Director of Music*



## **DRUMMING WORKSHOP WITH SAM HOLMSTOCK**

**Sponsored by the Music Committee**

**Sunday, October 1, at 3:00 p.m.**

Join us for an exciting one-hour workshop on drumming presented by Sam Holmstock. Sam has been drumming for most of his life. He received his training at Berklee College of Music and is well known through Cape Cod drum circles as well as Drum Strategies for Healing. Sam will teach us a hybrid technique that combines African and AfroCuban styles. Participants can use any drum that sits on the floor and is high enough to go above the knees. That includes Djembes, Congas, Ashikos, Cajons, or 5–7-gallon buckets with Remo Rhythm Lids on them. Sam can work with most anything!

The workshop begins with basic hand technique for achieving various sounds that Sam works into basic rhythms. One by one, he will stack up rhythms to create the African drum ensemble experience of several rhythms being played at the same time. This can be called a drum-conversation. Sounds like a great experience! This workshop is free of charge, but donations (suggested \$10) are gratefully accepted.

Because we will have a limited enrollment, participants need to register and indicate if you need a drum for the workshop. Sam can bring buckets with Remo Rhythm lids. He has lots of them! To register for the workshop, please send an email to or call the church office: [office@uumiddleboro.org](mailto:office@uumiddleboro.org) or 508-947-1935. You may also speak with Susan Hotchkiss or Bet Giddings.



## **Welcome Back, Everyone!**

Church starts at 10:30 a.m., and we will be meeting during the church service, downstairs after the Message for All Ages, around 10:45 a.m. Registration is rolling and can be completed at any time (see below).

## **Registration Link:**

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScQOe5r9Vrq3mvRsPLXYSRb6Xpcl-uhLg5ChzswG2ZVuPqiJQ/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScQOe5r9Vrq3mvRsPLXYSRb6Xpcl-uhLg5ChzswG2ZVuPqiJQ/viewform?usp=sf_link)

## **Religious Exploration**

This year we are *Building a Bear of Wholeness*. What does it take to make a home? This year we will think about this and what purposes and functions our home serves for both humans and animals. We will explore concepts of belonging, the role we play in our home and our community, and we will think about our faith home. Our faith home, much as our family home, offers joys, protection and responsibilities. Each month we will add items to our "build a bears."

## **Youth Group**

Our Youth Group will begin on September 24 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. This year we will be exploring our power to confront "powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion and transforming power of love." We will use the elements of earth, fire, air and water to explore different forms of power. We look forward to everyone getting together again at the end of September!

## **Parent Coffee Hour**

We will bring back our Parent Coffee Hour and make efforts to meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month after church starting in October. We will meet at 11:45 a.m. I will set up a table in the children's area for anyone interested in meeting in person.

## **Annual Bonfire Party**

We will have our annual church bonfire (aka, Halloween party with roasted marshmallows over a small grill) on October 29, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m., at the church. We will do some of our traditional games – the bone hunt, toilet paper mummies, balloon stomp, donuts on a string and trick or treat as well as some new ideas.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Our first RE Committee meeting will be Wednesday, September 6, at 7:00 p.m. We will meet at church, and new members are welcome. You do not need a child participating in the RE program to join, just ideas and a love of our youth. Please consider volunteering to teach downstairs for a section of our program. We also need volunteers to help with plays and skits during the year as well as readers for our Message for All Ages during the service. Please contact [dre@uumiddleboro.org](mailto:dre@uumiddleboro.org) if you are interested.

*Kelly Lownds*, Director of Religious Exploration



For more information, please visit [Social Justice](#).

### **DE-ESCALATION TRAINING**

**Saturday, September 16, at 10 a.m. at the church**



How can you deal effectively with verbal and/or physical violence that is directed at you? In this time of strong political disagreement, how can we express our opinions while minimizing the chances of very negative outcomes? Whether at Saturday Black Lives Matter events or simply talking with people who strongly disagree with us, what can we do to improve the chances of a positive result?

Impact Boston will provide a **2-hour training session at 10 am on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup> downstairs at the church**. The fee is \$15. (Contact the church office at 508-947-1935 or [office@uumiddleboro.org](mailto:office@uumiddleboro.org) if you would like to attend but can't afford the fee.) We have room for only 33 participants. [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#) Please register as soon as possible, as we will be opening up registration to the general Middleboro community.

### **PEACE, JUSTICE & EQUALITY VIGILS**

**Every Saturday 11:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon**

**Church Lawn**

Sign up for training and/or the vigil by visiting [Vigil Sign-Ups](#). If you are interested in standing with us but would like the training first, please add your name, but put an X in the first column. All are invited.

### **LGBTQ+ OLDER ADULTS & ALLIES – LUNCH AND ENTERTAINMENT**

**Thursday, September 7 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.**

**Bridgewater Senior Center, 10 Wally Krueger Way**

To reserve a space, call 508-697-0929 or email [seniorcenter@bridgewater.org](mailto:seniorcenter@bridgewater.org)

### **SOCIAL JUSTICE CHOIR**

**Beginning Thursday, September 7 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.**

**Bridgewater State University**

Thursday rehearsals. Open to community members of all ages. Email Dr. Sarah McQuarrie at [smcquarrie@bridgew.edu](mailto:smcquarrie@bridgew.edu) to sign up or to ask for more info about this intergenerational choir dedicated to singing music that promotes a message of peace and justice as well as performs acts of community service. No auditions. The choir includes music majors as well as folks who don't read music and everyone in between. Four-part choral repertoire with emphasis on composers from under-represented populations.

Please consider volunteering!  
**VOLUNTEER IN SEPTEMBER!**



We believe that participation in a Sunday morning worship service will help us build community and work together to meet our individual and Society goals. Please sign up [here](#) to be a Coffee Hour Host, Greeter, or Worship Associate on a Sunday morning, or use the sign-up sheets on the Parlor table. Thank you.



## **HOLIDAY FAIR**

**Saturday, November 4 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**  
**Parish Hall**



A Holiday Fair will be held again this year! The date is Saturday, November 4, 2023, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. I wanted to get the word out so that all crafters out there are aware and can make an item or items to donate for us to sell! I am also looking for bakers and cooks for a food table! If you are interested in renting a table for your own crafts, the cost is \$25 and includes a 6-foot table, two chairs and table covering. If you can:

- donate an item or items for sale
- help with setup (Friday, 11/3, in the Parish Hall)
- help with a table anytime the day of the fair
- help with clean up
- be a member of a Fair Team that I have yet to create
- help in any way needed

please let me know by email ([katieallen57@outlook.com](mailto:katieallen57@outlook.com)) as soon as you can. I look forward to having this event and hope that it can be a great fundraiser for our church!

Andrea Priest will, once again, manage a jewelry table that will include scarves! If you have any jewelry or scarves you would like to donate for this table, please reach out to Andrea at [andreapriesto@gmail.com](mailto:andreapriesto@gmail.com).

Thank you in advance for any help you can provide – it is greatly appreciated!

*Katie Allen*



## **SONG CIRCLE**

**Friday, September 8 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.**

We hope you will join us for this fun night of music, sponsored by the Church and open to the public! We will start at 6:00 with a potluck of hearty snacks in the Parish Hall, so bring along a favorite treat to share.

A circle of chairs will be set up along with a portable keyboard, and we will provide some percussion instruments. Participants can bring their own guitars, ukuleles, dulcimers, etc., or just their voices - hands for clapping and feet for stomping!

At 6:30 join folks who enjoy getting together with others to sing - no particular expertise required, the point is having fun and learning! This is a shared activity sponsored by the Church and open to the community at large. So invite your friends! The Song Circle meets on the second Friday of each month. RSVP to [andreapriesto@gmail.com](mailto:andreapriesto@gmail.com) so we can add your chair to the circle! Hope to see you there!

*Bet Giddings, Andrea Priest, Ed Priest*

## NEW MOON MEDITATION ON ZOOM

with Natalie Johnson

Thursday, September 14 6:00 - 6:45 p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/99612143412>



This New Moon falls in the sign of Virgo. It occurs one day before Mercury goes direct, offering us a final look at what we have been reflecting on and fine-tuning as we get ready to set our intentions for the remainder of the year.

We are in the time of harvest, of reaping what we have sown, seeing which of the seeds we planted in the Spring grew into abundance and which ones may suggest a different choice next year. It is a time of winnowing, of separating the wheat from the chaff... of keeping what is valuable and leaving the rest behind.

In the dark of the moon this night, let us gather and decide what we want to winnow in our own lives... discerning what is worthy of keeping and what can be left behind as we continue our journey toward greater light.

Come join us... All are welcome.



## BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Monday, September 18 4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Parish Hall



The Book Discussion Group will meet Monday, September 18, in the Parish Hall at 4:30 to discuss *The Book of Joy* by the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

This will be my last month as part of the FUUSM, and I want to thank all the members for joining me over the past five years for so many wonderful discussions about books and life.

*Carleen M Loper*



## PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING ON ZOOM

Wednesday, September 20 6:30 p.m.

All members and friends are invited to attend the Parish Committee meeting. The link for this event will be sent by email to *UU Updates* subscribers.





## CUUPS MABON RITUAL

Monday, September 25 7:00 p.m.

Parish Hall

Tonight we will gather in ritual to celebrate Mabon, the second harvest. It marks a time of perfect balance between the hours of dark and light. The Wheel of the Year has turned yet again as it moves us toward the season of Winter. Summer's unbridled growth has culminated in the lush and heady fullness of Autumn as the fruits of the fields and vines explode in a kaleidoscope of brilliant color.



Just as Mother Earth is completing her cycle of rebirth, fertility and death, we too mark these same passages in our own lives. Mabon is a time to enjoy the fruits of our labors and to give thanks for the bounty of the Earth and also to reflect upon our own spiritual harvest and to take stock before the cold winds drive us within. Did we plant good seeds? Did we tend and nurture them well? Did we plant enough to share with others? Have we put away enough to sustain us through the harsh fallow time to come? Is our own life in balance or might we benefit from some adjustments in order to best endure the coming winter?

Join us this night as we honor the season and Mother Earth, share reflections and stories and give thanks for all we have been given. You are invited to bring a poem or reading to share in circle. A simple feast will follow the ritual. All are welcome.



ON ZOOM

with Natalie Johnson

Thursday, September 28 6:00 - 6:45 p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/98327472921>

This Full Moon, or Harvest Moon, occurs in the sign of Aries. The Wheel of the Year has turned once again, and we have now officially entered the season of Autumn. We are just past the equinox, when the hours of light and dark are in perfect balance. We spent a bit of time at the dark of the moon fine-tuning our intentions for the rest of the year and are now ready to forge ahead. We enjoy clarity of mind and a greater sense of resolve and purpose as the full moon shines its light on us. Aries, the mover and shaker of the Zodiac, lends his energies to any effort we initiate toward the greater good of all beings. The equinox has reminded us of the importance of balance. Perhaps in the brilliance of the full moon we can contemplate all in our world that is out of balance and collectively imagine solutions while remembering that balance begins with ourselves.

Come join us this night as we bask in the warmth of Grandmother Moon and allow her light to illuminate our path. All are welcome.

**Save the Date!**  
**Don't Miss Our Super Fun**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL UU ROAD RALLY**



**Saturday, October 21 9:30 a.m. to about 1:00 p.m.**

UU Middleboro is once again hosting a Road Rally on Saturday, October 21. Up to 20 cars can participate, and each car carries a team of two to four people. (Hint: Four is easier than Two!) Each team follows directions to navigate a slightly tricky course over public roads. The team's challenge is to use clues to answer questions while safely following all traffic laws along the way.

Cars will "launch" from the Middleboro Town Hall Parking Lot at three-minute intervals starting at 9:30 a.m. Teams with the most accurate combined scores for time, mileage, and answers will be awarded trophies and medals. Entertainment (Ed Priest) and snacks will be provided to contestants at the grand awards ceremony on our Main Street lawn. We're talking trophies and medals!

Detailed information can be found on the [TEAM INFORMATION SHEET](#).

[REGISTRATION AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY FORMS](#) may be filled out before the rally.

Information about the rally can be found on the church website at <https://uumiddleboro.org>.

Questions? Contact [JohnNMullen@gmail.com](mailto:JohnNMullen@gmail.com).



### Parish Care

Parish Care help is available to assist with meals, transportation, emergency babysitting, and hospital visits during illnesses or other family emergencies.

We are a diverse, active and caring community; and we welcome your questions and your participation. You are always invited to call or visit our minister to discuss any matter of concern to you.

Lay Ministry Coordinator: Susan Curtiss  
Lay Pastoral Minister: Sue St. Germain  
Lay Pastoral Minister: Dave Kraemer  
Parish Care Coordinator: Mal Marvill  
Minister: Peter Connolly

### Parish Committee

President: Jim Bonnar  
Vice President: Viola Fairweather  
Treasurer: Marc MacQueen  
Assistant Treasurer: Jeff Giddings  
Parish Clerk: Lois Aldrich  
Members At Large: Stephen Larrett  
Nicole Sykes



**FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF MIDDLEBORO**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING**  
**June 16, 2023**

FUUSM's 2023 Annual Meeting was held in the Church Sanctuary on June 16, 2023. Twenty-four members attended the meeting.

The Congregation was notified of the meeting through FUUSM's *UU Updates* and the Church's website. Notice included a copy of the Warrant, the Church's Annual Reports for 2022-23, the Finance Report for 2022-23, and the proposed budget for the 2023-2024 Church year.

President Jim Bonnar called the meeting to order at 7:11 PM and provided a brief summary of the Annual Report. The Congregation then voted on the following Articles:

**Article I: To accept the minutes from last year's Annual Meeting.**

*Motion to approve Article I made, seconded and passed.*

**Article II: To receive reports of the Society for the past year.**

Bob Waterman highlighted the Congregation's generosity, as receipts for Cash in the Plate for the Church year totaled \$8,787.

*Motion to approve Article II made, seconded and passed.*

**Article III: To recognize the gifts of time and talent given by members who are concluding roles in the Society.**

Discussion: The Church expresses its deep appreciation and gratitude to the following individuals for their longtime service to the Church:

- Marc MacQueen, who served on the Parish Committee for the past 30 years as Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer.
- Linda Thompson, who served on the Music Committee for 33 years.
- John Mullen, who served as Chair of the Music Committee.
- Rick and Cindy Benard, who have supported the Church for many years and who have recently donated and had installed 5 windows for the church.

**Article IV: To elect officers and members of the Parish Committee for the coming Church year (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024): Vice-President, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, At-Large (two positions).**

Discussion: Nominations for the 2023-2024 Church year are:

- Bob Waterman, Vice President
- Jeff Giddings, Assistant Treasurer
- Nicole Sykes, At Large (to serve a 2<sup>nd</sup> term)
- Stephen Larrett, At Large

The Parish Committee will continue its search for Treasurer. Please contact Jim or Bob if you know anyone who may be interested.

*Motion to approve Article IV made, seconded, and passed.*

**Article V: To elect delegates (2) to the 2023-2024 General Assembly (GA) of the Unitarian Universalist Association, or authorize the Parish Committee to appoint these delegates.**

Discussion: The Church is seeking two delegates to participate in the 2023-24 GA, which takes place June 21-25 in Pittsburg, PA in person or online. The Church covers the cost for delegates. The Minister is an automatic delegate, and Rev. Peter will be attending. Delegates must commit to attend all business sessions at GA and to participate in planning strategies for informing the congregation of actions and outcomes of the GA. Decisions will be made at the GA as to what the focus points of UU will be over the next few years.

*A motion was made to authorize the PC to appoint delegates for 2023-24 GA, seconded, and passed.*

**Article VI: To adopt a budget for the coming fiscal year (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024).**

Discussion:

- Marc MacQueen will be leaving his post as Assistant Treasurer at the end of June. He asked that members contact him directly if they have any questions as to where they stand regarding their pledges.
- Jim Bonnar and Bob Waterman provided highlights of the 2023-24 proposed budget:
- The budget is balanced, meaning there is no deficit projected. One of the reasons for this is that staff salaries are level-funded in the budget. This is a different approach from previous years and is focused on “living within our means.” As much as we believe in continuing to move toward meeting the UUA standards for fair compensation for staff, we are also seeing challenges to our revenues. Although the number of pledges has increased for 2023-24, the total amount pledged is less than the amount budgeted. We also anticipate continued uncertainty in the investment market and a need to have sufficient resources to attract a new minister. This budget is an attempt to reflect the realities of who we are and what we have to work with.
  - Congregation members expressed concern with this new approach and would like to see some way to reward staff for all their work and dedication to the Church. Congregation members asked how this approach would address other pressing needs the Church may have.
  - The PC recommended that we use the surplus from this budget year to give staff a cost-of-living bonus. There was considerable discussion concerning the amount of bonus to give and whether other priorities should be considered as well. The PC will decide how the FY 2022/23 surplus will be allocated.
  - Jim Bonnar suggested congregation concerns be addressed in Article VIII and asked congregation to vote on Article VI. After some discussion, the congregation agreed to vote on Article VI.

*Motion to approve Article VI made, seconded, and passed.*

**Article VII: To authorize the Parish Committee or designee to withdraw from investment funds and/or borrow funds in order to manage cash flow and/or cover unanticipated expenses during the coming fiscal year.**

*Motion to approve Article VII made, seconded, and passed.*

**Article VIII: To address any other actions necessary for the business of the Society.**

*Motion to adjourn meeting at 8:30 p.m. was made, seconded and passed.*

Submitted by Lois Aldrich, Parish Clerk

**MINUTES OF THE ONLINE  
PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING  
June 21, 2023**

**Present:** Bob Waterman, Lois Aldrich, Jim Bonnar, Nicole Sykes

**Guest:** Jeff Giddings

Meeting called to order by Jim Bonnar at 6:36 p.m.

Reports: The following reports were submitted and accepted by the PC:

- Music Committee Report submitted to Bob Waterman by Bet Giddings. Bob will forward to the rest of the PC.
- RE report submitted by Kelly Lownds.
- Social Justice Report submitted by Lois Aldrich.
- Treasurer's Report was submitted by Bob Waterman as part of FUUSM's Annual Meeting held on June 16.

Suggestion to have central repository for all reports forwarded to the PC by Committee staff and how to make reports available to members if requested. Follow up with Val Ortel when she returns from vacation.

PC Members: Marc MacQueen's term as Assistant Treasurer ends at the end of this month, and he has decided to conclude his service on the PC. New PC members as of July, 2023, will be Jeff Giddings (Treasurer), and Stephen Larrett (At Large). For the short-term, Jeff will focus on Assistant Treasurer duties while the PC continues to search for a candidate for the Treasurer position. Bob Waterman has graciously agreed to continue to support the Treasurer duties while the PC continues its search. If anyone is interested, please contact Bob or Jim.

Annual Meeting: FUUSM's Annual Meeting was held on June 16, 2023, to discuss and vote on Articles I-VIII as described in the Warrant that was distributed in the *UU Updates* on June 4, 2023. Discussions centered around the proposed balanced budget for 2023-24, this year's budget surplus, and how surplus funds should be spent. Topics included fair compensation for staff; options for possible one-time bonuses; building accessibility; and overall physical needs of the building. Jim Bonnar stated that Deanne Bonnar, who is very knowledgeable in accessibility rules/regulations, is interested in working with Building and Grounds on developing accessibility standards for FUUSM.

The PC will decide on how to spend the surplus in July when we have the June 30 budget report and before we close the books on FY 2022/23. Any monies received after books close will be recorded in the 2023-24 budget.

PC Retreat: The PC agreed to meet in August to welcome new members, review priorities, and revisit the Vision Statement. Discussion as to whether or not our current Mission Statement should also be revised. It was agreed that the Mission Statement should be revised but question as to who would take the lead on coordinating a task force to do so. Bob will email the PC with several options for meeting dates in August.

Next PC Meeting (check in): July 19, 2023 @ 7:00 p.m. to discuss final budget decisions.

Meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Submitted by Lois Aldrich, Parish Clerk

## SEPTEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 9:00 a.m. Memorial Garden Work Party  11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn
3	4 	5 10:00 a.m. Peaceful Quilters, Parish Hall  7:00 p.m. Chalice Choir, Parish Hall	6 12:00 noon Order of Service Deadline  7:00 p.m. RE Committee, Parish Hall	7 12:00 noon LGBTQ+ Older Adults & Allies Lunch & Entertainment, Bridgewater  5:00 p.m. Social Justice Choir, Bridgewater	8 6:00 p.m. Song Circle, Parish Hall	9 11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn  4:00 p.m. Wedding, All Church
10 9:00 a.m. Worship Service	11 7:00 p.m. Search Committee, Parish Hall	12 10:00 a.m. Peaceful Quilters, Parish Hall  7:00 p.m. Chalice Choir, Parish Hall	13 12:00 noon Order of Service Deadline  7:00 p.m. Music Committee on Zoom	14 6:00 p.m. New Moon Meditation on Zoom	15	16 10:00 a.m. De-Escalation Training, Parish Hall  11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn
17 10:30 a.m. Worship Service & Religious Exploration	18 4:30 p.m. Book Discussion Group, Parish Hall	19 10:00 a.m. Peaceful Quilters, Parish Hall  7:00 p.m. Chalice Choir, Parish Hall	20 12:00 noon Order of Service Deadline  6:30 p.m. Parish Committee Meeting on Zoom	21	22	23 11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn
24 10:30 a.m. Worship Service & Religious Exploration  5:00 p.m. Youth Group, Parish Hall	25 October Newsletter Deadline  7:00 p.m. Search Committee, Parlor  7:00 p.m. CUUPS Mabon Ritual, Parish Hall	26 10:00 a.m. Peaceful Quilters, Parish Hall  7:00 p.m. Chalice Choir, Parish Hall	27 12:00 noon Order of Service Deadline	28 6:00 p.m. Full Moon Meditation on Zoom	29	30 11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn



<https://www.uua.org/new-england>

### [Joint Board Retreat: Facing Our Challenges Together](#)

Saturday, September 9, 10:00-3:00 - UU Society of Greater Springfield, MA - [Register for Springfield, MA](#)

Saturday, September 16, 10:00-3:00 - Follen Church, Lexington, MA - [Register for Lexington, MA](#)

Congregational Leaders: Do you find yourself asking any of these questions:

- Our congregation's membership is aging. How do we get younger people to join the congregation?
- All our kids seem to have disappeared during Covid. How do we get them back?
- We don't have enough volunteers! How can we get younger people to volunteer?
- Our financial future is feeling shaky. How can we ensure a sustainable future?

If so, you are not alone! We are hearing these same questions everywhere we go. As the new congregational year begins, we invite you to gather the leaders of your congregation with the leaders of your neighboring congregations. Instead of retreating separately, let's retreat together. Our programming provides ongoing training in some of the most difficult and common challenges faced by church leaders and will help you deal with problems at a deep, thoughtful level that can lead to meaningful, positive change in your congregation.

### [Spiritual Leadership for Culture Change: A Community of Practice](#)

It takes practice to resist and transform cultures we are part of that do not align with our values.

It also takes practice to maintain cultures that already align with our values — particularly when these are under threat.

Maintaining, resisting, transforming — it all takes practice.

And practice takes community — to help us remember, to encourage us, to offer us models and to be a witness.

We launched this community of practice in 2022 for anyone — lay people and religious professionals — interested in embedding [the practices of Spiritual Leadership](#) in their congregational life and beyond. By supporting individuals in these practices, congregations help shape culture to reflect our Principles and deepest values.

Whatever ministries you are part of — worship, music, faith formation, hospitality, social justice, governance, or anything else — the practices of Spiritual Leadership are a theologically faithful way to shape culture within and beyond the congregation. So much pulls us away from living at the center of our values. The practices of Spiritual Leadership help cultivate the creativity, resistance, and resilience that are needed to co-create the world our hearts know is possible. All are welcome—regardless of current familiarity or experience with the Spiritual Leadership practices. Use our [online form](#) to join us anytime.

### [Liberating Governance for Our Times: A Community of Practice](#)

We invite you to consider your congregation's ways of sharing power and making decisions. Are your systems dynamic, accountable, flexible, and responsive? Most of us could use some help with this! We are creating a community of practice on liberating governance for our times. To receive invitations to our gatherings, and to help us know what you particularly need, please sign up for our email list "[Liberating Governance for Our Times](#)". Once you join, you will automatically receive registration details.



The First Unitarian Universalist Society  
of Middleborough  
25 South Main Street  
Middleborough, MA 02346

### COMMUNITY BOOK BOX

Thank you to the Rotary Club for installing the **Community Book Box on our church grounds**. Thank you to Middleborough High School for creating the box.



We are now welcoming donations of books from our church community. We are limiting donations to one reusable grocery bag full. Please place donations on the designated table in the Parish Hall underneath the windows. Please, no books that are musty or have water damage, no encyclopedias, no academic texts (your Psychology 101 book from 1965). We have a team of volunteers who will sort the books and keep our Book Box full. Let us know if you are interested in joining the team. We would love more children and youth books. If you have any questions, email Andrea at [andreapriesto@gmail.com](mailto:andreapriesto@gmail.com).

Looking for more great reads? Visit the Middleborough Public Library for the latest titles, more books by your favorite author, and a broad selection of children's, teen, and adult books. They also offer downloadable audio books and eBooks, streaming music and movies through Hoopla, and discounted museum and park passes. All library services are free with a library card. The library is open Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Visit <https://midlib.org> for more information or call 508-946-2470.