



THE FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF MIDDLEBOROUGH

25 South Main Street, Middleborough, MA 02346

<https://uumiddleboro.org>

508-947-1935

February 2024

***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, February 4

Rev. Dan Hotchkiss preaching

How (Not) to Pursue Happiness

The idea that we should live in the pursuit of happiness is embedded deep in our culture. We lose weight, earn money, make friends, and even cultivate our families and friendships in the hope of making ourselves happy. Dan Hotchkiss will share one of his favorite Bible books, *Ecclesiastes*, which offers some other ways to think about the purpose of our lives. Special music will be provided by Tony Soares.

This morning we welcome Rev. Dan Hotchkiss to the pulpit. Dan is a UU minister and author of *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership*. Dan has consulted with Christian, Jewish, and Islamic leaders in more than 33 faith traditions on planning, leadership, and board governance. Previously, Dan managed ministerial placement for the UUA and served UU churches in New Haven and Boca Raton. He is active in UU Middleboro, where his wife Susan serves as music director.

Sunday, February 11

Rev. Peter Connolly preaching

Mr. Darwin and His God

When he signed on as the ship's naturalist on *HMS Beagle* in 1831, Charles Darwin considered himself a Biblical literalist and a scripture-based moralist; his study of the natural world profoundly challenged those notions. What can we learn from Darwin's spiritual journey? The Chalice Choir will be singing.

Sunday, February 18

Rev. Peter Connolly preaching

African American Voices

From lives of hardship and persecution, Americans whose roots are in Africa have responded in ways thoughtful and inspiring. We'll spend some time with those stories today.

Sunday, February 25

Rev. Peter Connolly preaching

Black Lives Matter. All Lives Matter

Today, we'll look at the reality behind the rhetoric in the continuing struggle for equality for all races in the United States, exploring what we mean by "social justice." 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 and use the link at the bottom of the home page.

A Note from the Minister on the Importance of Covenant

Early in my ministry at UU Middleboro-- I don't remember now, just when-- I devoted a Sunday service to the importance of covenant in church life. I remember making a distinction between contract and covenant, a distinction that is too often not acknowledged and too often misunderstood. We all have experience with contracts, legal agreements that bind one party to another, that delineate lines of responsibility and limit liability. They are essential in our larger society for ensuring that each party is protected from malfeasance and that each party's interests are protected. Their function is to make clear the limits of one's responsibilities.

A covenant works differently. In a covenantal relationship, both parties are interested in contributing what they can to make the relationship work smoothly and productively. When we engage in covenant, we actively wish to contribute to the success of the joint enterprise. We don't seek to limit our responsibility, we seek to extend our goodwill in a generous way to promote the flourishing of community. To this end, I proposed that the church adopt a covenant statement, in effect a promise that each of us makes to do our best to contribute to the best interests of the whole, a promise to behave in a way that honors each other's dignity and individuality. I had been made aware of several times over the past few decades when certain conflicts within the church destroyed or threatened to destroy the fabric of community, and I was convinced that adopting a covenant statement that was read aloud in community on a weekly basis would be effective in reminding us of our duty to one another even when opinions collide and emotions ride high.

Fortunately, it seemed to me, the language and the spirit of a covenant statement already existed, though it was buried in a very long-- too long-- mission statement that the church had adopted twenty years ago. There was language enough to construct several versions of a covenant statement by making only slight modifications. I constructed several sentences that could be used as covenant statements. Each Sunday for eight or so Sundays in a row, I offered one version or another of these statements, three of them, for possible use as a covenant statement. I was careful to explain this process from the pulpit each Sunday. I made it clear that these were "unison readings in the form of a covenant," rather than a covenant statement per se, because that would have to be agreed to by the entire membership of the church.

I asked Andrea Priest to head up a committee to examine the three statements and find the best way to streamline the essence of the covenantal spirit. She recruited Cindy Benard to join the committee; the other three members she approached declined to participate for one reason or another. I stepped up to fill in the third position. The committee came up with a draft statement. This was presented to the congregation to consider for formal adoption. Members were encouraged to speak to committee members with any suggestions they had for modification. No one approached the committee. At the October congregational meeting, the proposal to adopt the language did not pass because there were several objections, the most surprising to me being, "This is the first I've heard of it and I need more time to consider it."

Where did we go wrong? Though I think we did just what we should have at our Sunday services, I'm not sure that we adequately explained the process in print-- in our newsletter and UU Updates. Certainly, we did not mention it on our website. Even more significant, I was unaware until after the vote at the meeting that, according to our bylaws, the language for such a proposal (which was put forward by a member in good standing) should have been explicitly stated in the warrant that announced the meeting.

So-- what are our next steps? The Parish Committee, at its January meeting, offered the following, "Suggestions include post the Covenant in newsletter and Updates; encourage feedback; follow up with announcement at worship service. We also need to be sure language is clear in warrant when the time comes for the congregation to vote on the Covenant."

I am not suggesting that we scrap the process we have adopted and that we start from scratch because the language in the draft covenant statement has already been approved by the congregation in its mission statement of 2002. This is a statement that the congregation claimed as its own and owned as such for over twenty years. The Parish Committee and I hope that this plan for disseminating the relevant information will be acceptable to the congregation. If not, of course, there is an option, which is to wipe the slate clean and begin again. The congregation may wish to take this path. If so, it will meet with my blessing, but the time necessary for that task exceeds the amount of time left in my interim ministry. Perhaps it, as well as creating a vision statement, will be seen as an appropriate task for the next minister. In the meantime, we will continue to use the draft language as a unison reading on Sundays, just not as an official covenant statement.

As always, my blessings, and see you in church,

Peter



February with its winter chill is certainly a time for “musings.” Sometimes I think about the many ways a short musical statement (or song) can be tweaked. In a compositional artform called “Theme and Variations,” the basic theme is laid out followed by a set of variations. Each variation has a change of some kind, such as timing, phrasing, dynamics, tonality, harmonies, inversions...you name it! What began as a short ditty can become a delightful set of variations, all connected to the theme in some way.

Sometimes I look at our music program at UU Middleboro as a composition of theme and variations. The basic theme is excellence (NOT perfection!), camaraderie, flexibility, and communication. This is the given. The variations come with the variety of people who participate and in our repertoire.

We have a couple more months of relative quiet as we make special music on Sunday mornings and continue our musings of winter. But look out for April, when we will spring into action once again! Our Jazz Concert has a firm date of Saturday, April 6, at 7:30 in the evening. Jeannie Gagné and Stan Strickland (with support from the Middleboro and Lakeville Cultural Councils) are bringing a full quartet of delightful JAZZ. Later in the month, on April 27, we will have a “Springtime Gala and Tapas Galore” fundraiser, chaired by Tony Soares, featuring UU Middleboro musicians and friends.

Here’s to Theme and Variations!

Susan Hotchkiss, Director of Music



ANNUAL PLEDGE DRIVE COMING SOON!



About 85% of the church’s operating budget is generously provided by congregation members through their annual pledges. Each year we hold a pledge drive to raise the money needed for the next fiscal year, which begins July 1. The Parish Committee, with input from the Finance Team, is in the process of drafting a budget for the fiscal year to help us determine this year’s pledge goal.

This year’s pledge drive, led by Gil Cote, Jeff Giddings, and Cheryl and Marc MacQueen, will take place from March 3 through April 14. A team of stewards is being assembled to contact potential pledgers individually, talk with them about how the church raises money and uses it to promote our mission, and work with them choose a pledge amount that reflects each donor’s financial situation and expresses their commitment to the success of the church. We will continue to keep the congregation informed as the March 3 launch date approaches.



RE Children

Build a Bear of Wholeness: Sunday mornings we head downstairs after the Message for All Ages and learn more about creating a home. In January we made hearths, and in February we will share the heart of our homes with each other and our families.

Nursery During the Worship Service

Niko Pucillo-Dunphy and Jesse Hoyle offer child care during the church service. Please feel free to bring your infants and toddlers to have fun with Niko and Jesse while you are in the sanctuary participating in the service.

Youth Group

Youth Group is tentatively scheduled for February 11 and February 25, 2024. We will continue with the element of air. We meet from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall, and we always share dinner.

Our Whole Lives

OWL is for youth ages 12 to 16. Our next groups are February 4 and February 11. Please note, we are working hard to respect the youths' privacy during the class and ensure they have a safe and separate place to meet in the Parlor.

RE Committee

Our RE Committee will meet on Wednesday, January 7, at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. New members are welcome.

Registration for RE

Registration is rolling and children and youth are welcome to join anytime.

[Registration Link](#)

Kelly Lownds, Director of Religious Exploration



UU Middleboro contributed \$420 toward the Haitian refugees' Christmas, joining with other churches and organizations to ensure all parents as well as children received gifts. In December our congregation also contributed to Doctors Without Borders (\$1,002) and to the Minister's Discretionary Fund (\$500). The January Cash in the Plate was donated to the Minister's Discretionary Fund. The February Cash in the Plate will be donated to the Brockton Area branch of the NAACP.

Our discussions early this year have highlighted the enormity of the needs facing our community, state and country. So we are attempting to offer programs that address all three levels: For the community, we plan to offer a Saturday morning program in the spring to strengthen the skills of both our congregation and interested others in assisting individuals in health emergencies. We hope to provide training in the Heimlich maneuver, testing for stroke, heart attack response, Stop the Bleed, and Narcan (for use in opioid overdose).

The Team believes the most critical issue facing the country is the state of our democracy. Consequently, we're exploring specific activities to offer the congregation to focus our efforts for maximum effect. Current possibilities include forming a "Democracy Circle," several letter and postcard writing programs to get out the vote in specific states, and also assisting in voter registration. We hope to announce concrete plans in early spring. We're also developing a program to offer a monthly reading and/or film about social justice issues with a discussion session at the end of each.

Bill Howe and the Social Justice Team



DO YOU ENJOY COFFEE HOUR AND BEING GREETED ON A SUNDAY MORNING?



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 or a Greeter on a Sunday morning, or use the sign-up sheets on the Parlor table. Thank you in advance for any help you can provide. It is greatly appreciated.



THE ELSIE GAUDETTE AWARD

The Elsie Gaudette Award can be given this spring (the third Sunday in June) to a person who exemplifies the service and dedication to this church that Elsie did for many years. The Elsie Gaudette Award Committee will be meeting to review the nominations.

If you know of a deserving person to nominate for this award, you must nominate her/him in writing, telling of this person's contributions to the church over time and why this person deserves the honor. Send your signed letters to the Committee Chairperson, Linda E. Thompson.





CUUPS IMBOLC RITUAL

Monday, February 5

7:00 p.m.

in the Parish Hall

We invite you to join us as we gather to celebrate Imbolc, our first ritual of 2024.

This cross quarter time halfway between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox honors the first tentative stirrings of life as it prepares to emerge from its winter slumber and begins its journey toward the sun. Long before it is visible to the eye, it can be sensed as a quickening... the irrepressible impulse of new life toward emergence.

On this night we will welcome and honor Goddess Brighid, who presides over this holiday and who is revered in Ireland to this day.

Our ritual will be followed by a simple potluck feast. All are welcome.



NEW MOON MEDITATION on Zoom

with Natalie Johnson

Thursday, February 8

6:00 - 6:45 p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/98697359553>

This New Moon falls in the sign of Aquarius, the water bearer who oversees communication and the cross pollination of new ideas, beliefs and concepts.



Falling as it does just three days past Imbolc, we are invited to consider the life that is awakening deep inside the Earth and remember the seeds we all planted earlier to bring about a new way of living together on this planet. Seeds sown in faith and hope last year are being gestated deep within the womb of Mother Earth and soon will begin their upward journey toward the surface. Seeds sown in love, which make their journey in total darkness, follow only their faith in the Light as they yearn to be born when the Sun is warm enough to support them on their journey.

In the dark of the moon, let us gather together to send energy and love to those seeds so that they may feel our support and grow strong and true, emerging into the new and better world we are co-creating that honors the flowering of all life.

All are welcome.

SONG CIRCLE CANCELLED



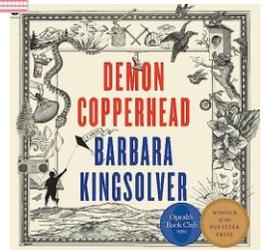
Song Circle is cancelled for the month of February. We're taking a winter break. See you on March 8!



BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP on Zoom

Monday, February 19 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

We are continuing in the tradition of meeting and discussing various genres of books. We continue to meet on the third Monday of the month from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. We are meeting on Zoom this month. The link will be sent to Book Club members a day or two before the meeting. Please contact Lois Aldrich (lois.aldrich63@gmail.com) if you would like to receive the Zoom link. New and old members are welcome.



February's book is *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver. If you enjoy reading, please pick up the book and join us!



PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING ON ZOOM

Wednesday, February 21 6:30 p.m.

All members and friends are invited to attend the Parish Committee meeting. The Zoom link for this meeting will be sent out in the *UU Updates*.



FULL MOON MEDITATION on Zoom

with Natalie Johnson
Thursday, February 22
6:00 - 6:45 p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/93645517679>



This month's Full Moon falls in the sign of Virgo, reminding us of the importance of being particular, precise and thoughtful in our imagining the new world. We are co-creating from the ground up, so we have both the privilege and the responsibility to be discerning. We lay the scaffolding for all to follow in the future. We are the leading edge, the pioneers of the new world to come... both an honor and a huge responsibility.

As we begin to share ideas and lay down the first building blocks, we must always ask ourselves three questions: "Does this reflect my highest ideals... are my mind and heart in coherence?" "Does this benefit all of life?" "Will this still serve the highest good in the future?" We can no longer be shortsighted as we have often been in the past. What we imagine, birth and nurture must be for the very long haul.

Join us tonight as we explore these questions and decide what it is we truly wish to midwife into being as Spring approaches. We will have the amplification of the Full Moon to assist us in our visioning.



Pastoral Ministry and Parish Care

The Pastoral Ministry Team seeks to listen with empathy to concerns of members of the congregation via phone, in-person conversations, or home/hospital visits, honoring privacy and confidentiality within the team.

The Pastoral Ministry Team Members are:
Rev. Peter Connolly (revconnolly@gmail.com)

Sue Curtiss
Sue St. Germain
Dave Kraemer
Mal Marvill

Parish Care: When the Pastoral Ministry Team identifies the need for short term assistance with meals, errands, rides, or more, for members of the congregation, the Parish Care Coordinator, Mal Marvill, contacts the meals coordinator or rides coordinator to enlist volunteers.

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 |
| | Position Open |



Our Mission:

To create and sustain a welcoming and caring community that embodies our UU principles, inspires spiritual growth without dogma or creed, and promotes and serves racial and social justice.

PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING (Virtual)
December 20, 2023

Present: Lois Aldrich, Jim Bonnar, Stephen Larrett, Jeff Giddings, Marc MacQueen, Viola Fairweather, Rev. Peter Connolly
Meeting called to order by Jim Bonnar at 6:40 p.m.

Reading of our Mission Statement provided by Rev. Peter Connolly.

Minutes: 11/15/23 minutes approved as written.

Minister's Report: Report reviewed and approved.

Treasurer's Report: Marc MacQueen informed the PC that he recently needed to move \$10,000 from investment accounts to checking account to ensure payment of payroll. This was primarily due to reconciliation processes but also slow month for pledges. Many deposits have since been made to the checking account, and we are now caught up. Jeff Giddings distributed a graph of pledge payments for the first half of FY 23-24 showing that we are very close to our pledge goal. There are a handful of pledges that need to be pursued to meet our pledge goal. The investment funds that were withdrawn will be re-invested at the end of the fiscal year once all pledges are in and accounted for.

Music Report: Jim Bonnar will forward the report to the PC.

Social Justice Team: Lois Aldrich reported that minutes from the 12/14/23 social justice meeting are under review by the team and will be forwarded to the PC soon.

Religious Exploration: Report from RE for December was reviewed.

Building & Grounds (B & G): Report on hold as key committee members are not available. Marc reported that regular elevator maintenance has been completed and that stained glass work that was completed on one window needs to be redone. Jim Bonnar reported that \$20,000 from the Avis Clay Fund had been allocated to cover renovations of the Parlor, including the windows, and most of these funds have been spent.

Public Relations Committee: Rev. Peter Connolly reported that Public Relations has met several times and discussed the need for lights to illuminate signage on the front lawn (brown sign). It is especially difficult to see the sign at night. Alan Melchior suggested we look into getting solar lights to illuminate the sign. Cost would be around \$50. Jim Bonnar has access to a solar light and offered to do a test run to illuminate the brown sign.

Minister's Agenda:

-Rev. Peter informed the PC that he will not be available on 12/22 and 12/23 due to the death of a family member.

-Currently the church is closed on holidays. Rev. Peter asked the PC if the Office Administrator, who is not scheduled to work on Mondays, could have another day off when a holiday falls on a Monday, as most holidays do. The PC approved the request.

Policies and Procedures: The PC is in the process of reviewing church policies and making recommendations for changes, as appropriate. Policies will also need to include procedures as revisions are made. Rev. Peter emailed the PC changes he recommended to several policies and asked for PC feedback. The following policies were discussed:

- Cancellation Policy: Rev. Peter recommended including names of media outlets to be notified when church is closed due to inclement weather or other emergency. Lois Aldrich recommended that the policy be posted on the church's FB page. The PC approved the revised Cancellation Policy. Rev. Peter will finalize and also post in church Newsletter.
- Rental of Church Facility: Rev. Peter is reviewing the current written policy as well as the current written procedures governing rental of church facilities. Rev. Peter emailed recommended changes in procedures to the PC. The PC reviewed and recommended further changes:
 - Add length of time covered by rental fee (4 hours recommended) and charge per hour thereafter.
 - Add Office Administrator as the person in charge of fee schedule.
 - Ensure that someone from the church is on the premises when facility is rented.
 - Piano cannot be used without PC permission.
 - Rental of kitchen is not permitted.

- Review \$40 surcharge fee for sexton. This fee is the same regardless of time sexton needs to work. Should this be changed?
- Members receive a discount of 50%; non-members can petition the PC for a desired discount.
- Procedures require that the PC review the fee schedule annually. The PC will further review the fee schedule and procedures at the next PC meeting.
- UUA Contributions: The PC will decide each year the amount the church contributes to the UUA. Current policy will need to be revisited.
- Use of alcohol on church premises: Rev. Peter will forward the policy to Stephen Larrett, who agreed to review the policy and make recommendations for change, if any.
- Announcements: Worship Committee thinks guidelines or policies are not needed for announcements at the service but that a microphone must be used to make announcements and that all announcements need to be church related, not personal business. The congregation will be reminded of this prior to announcements. The PC agreed that a written policy is not needed at this time.

PC At Large Vacancy: At large position, formerly held by Nicole Sykes, remains vacant. Looking for someone to fill until the end of the fiscal year, at which time nominations will be taken for the next term (July 2024-June 30, 2026). Jim Bonnar will follow up with someone he thinks may be interested.

Treasurer Vacancy: The position of Treasurer will be vacant as of June 30, 2024. Jim Bonnar had a conversation with Dan Hotchkiss regarding ideas for recruiting someone for the Treasurer position. In addition to Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, Jim proposed having a volunteer “financial manager” or similar position that could be responsible for writing checks and doing bookkeeping. This position would be appointed by the Board and not subject to term limits. Rev. Peter recommended that the Treasurer’s duties be revised to reflect the new understanding if this proposal is accepted.

Budget: The PC members agree Building and Grounds (B&G) is currently underfunded in the church’s budget and that we need to find a way to build the cost of maintenance and facility operations into the budget. Jim reported that the church has spent \$120,000 over the past 8 years in necessary maintenance and renovations. Generally, the church has handled major repairs in a “crisis management” fashion by responding to the need with a specific capital campaign to address the issue, such as the “I Love My Church” campaign.

The Finance Committee, B & G Committee, and the PC have had ongoing discussions on how to ensure that funding for building operations is more readily available. So far, the options appear to be: respond with another capital campaign or designate additional funds in the church’s budget specific for B & G maintenance and operations that will be available when needed to make needed repairs or renovations. The increase needed in the budget is estimated to be \$15,000 annually. To cover this additional funding in the budget, it was suggested we try to persuade members to increase their pledges from 10% to 15%.

The PC agreed input from the congregation on this matter is critical. Jim has drafted a letter which he will share with the congregation to seek their input. PC members suggested we offer congregation members the opportunity to meet with the PC with their concerns/feedback and that we include a package of information for members that is specific to this recommendation. Remind the congregation that they have recently approved a \$5000 increase in the new minister’s compensation package which also has to be covered in the budget, so the total needed to be added to the budget for 2024-25 is \$20,000.

Cash in the Plate: The Social Justice Team recommends the Minister’s Discretionary Fund for the Cash in the Plate for January, 2024. The PC agrees with this recommendation.

Agenda Items Tabled for Next Meeting:

- Membership Committee
- Covenant
- Social Justice Team trainings for spring -- Narcan and Stop the Bleed. The link for more information on Stop the Bleed: <https://www.stopthebleed.org/training/#:~:text=In%20a%20STOP%20THE%20BLEED,to%20correctly%20apply%20a%20tourniquet>.

Closing words provided by Rev. Peter.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m. Next monthly meeting: January 17 at 6:30 p.m. in person

Submitted by Lois Aldrich, Parish Clerk

PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING (In Person)
January 17, 2024

Present: Lois Aldrich, Jim Bonnar, Stephen Larrett, Jeff Giddings, Marc MacQueen, Viola Fairweather,
Rev. Peter Connolly

Meeting called to order by Jim Bonnar at 6:34 p.m.

Opening Words: Rev. Connolly (UU Mission Statement)

Consent Agenda

- Minutes from 12/20/23 PC meeting voted on and approved.
- Reports: Reports from Treasurer, RE, Music Committee, and Social Justice Team were received by the PC and approved.
- Cash in the Plate: The PC approved the Social Justice Team's recommendation of NAACP, Brockton Chapter, for the Cash in the Plate for February. The PC also reviewed the Cash in the Plate calendar for 2024 and recommended one change – the Cash in the Plate for Matthew Mission will change from July 2024 to September 2024. This suggested change had been reviewed and approved by the Social Justice Team. Lois Aldrich will revise the calendar and resend to the PC and the Social Justice Team.
- UUA Annual Certification is due February 5. Lois, Marc MacQueen and Jeff Giddings have been working on different parts of the Certification. Marc offered to complete the Financial section, and Jeff is compiling information to respond to the Membership section. FUUSM Bylaws define who is a member. The UUA has defined non-members for Certification purposes, which Lois has shared with Jeff. Lois has completed the remaining sections.

Discussion Agenda

- Minister's Agenda: Rev. Peter Connolly asked the PC to revisit the process to finalize a Covenant for the congregation. Discussion on how to move forward on obtaining Congregation input. Suggestions include post the Covenant in the Newsletter and Updates; encourage feedback; follow up with announcement at the worship service. We also need to be sure language is clear in the Warrant when the time comes for the Congregation to vote on the Covenant.
Suggestion made that we publicize our new Mission Statement in our daily activities. For example, add the Mission Statement to the worship associate announcement at the beginning of the worship service; add to placeholder page for those who participate in the worship service virtually; include the Mission Statement in the order of service.
- Pledge Drive: Jeff Giddings provided an update on the 2024-25 Pledge Drive. The Pledge Team (Jeff Giddings, Gil Cote, Marc MacQueen, Cheryl MacQueen) has met. March 3 is the date of the Pledge Drive kick-off. The drive will run for six weeks, until April 14. The Pledge Team is putting packages together for stewards and plans to revise the Pledge brochure/flyer. Jim Bonnar will provide the President's letter. Jeff said the team is looking for stewards to assist in the drive. Contact Jeff if you know of someone who may be interested.
- Draft Budget: A draft budget is needed before the Pledge Drive begins. The 2024-25 budget will help determine the goal for the Pledge Drive. Budgets for church committees were discussed. Some committees are not informed of the amount in their budget at the beginning of the year and may over/under spend. In preparation of the draft budget, committee chairs/leads need to be asked what their needs are for the coming year and what it will cost. Marc will send an email to committee chairs on the amount of funds they will need for next year and why and may include what has been spent so far this year.
Jim Bonnar is working with the UUA on setting salaries for staff. The UUA has issued new standards that need to be taken into account.
The PC will meet on 1/31/24 to continue discussion on the draft budget.
- Policies and Procedures:
 - Viola Fairweather is working on Policy folder #2 (Parish Committee/Governance)
 - Continued discussion on Policy on Church Rental Facility (see minutes from 12/20/23). Agreed to delete kitchen language as kitchen is no longer being rented. Rev. Peter will add language to support a base rental

equaling 4 hours, then apply hourly rate afterwards. A four-hour base rental includes set-up and clean-up. Hourly rate will be ¼ of base rate. Existing renters, such as the quilting group, will be grandfathered in.

- **PC Positions:** The PC continues to seek volunteers to fill an At-Large position (currently vacant) as well as the position of Treasurer, as Marc MacQueen will be leaving the position as of 6/30/23. It is critical that we have a new Treasurer identified before the end of May, as the new person will need to be trained during the month of June. Contact Jim Bonnar should you know of anyone interested in filling these positions. Marc informed the PC that he will be away on vacation for 2 weeks in the spring. He reminded the PC that the Treasurer position is more straightforward now and has a good support system in place.
- **Building & Grounds (B & G) Budget:** A meeting was held after the worship service on Sunday, January 14, to hear from the congregation regarding the PC proposal to include additional funds in the B & G budget for repair and maintenance and avoid handling repairs/maintenance via “crisis management.” A list of needed maintenance/repairs was provided to attendees. Attendees were in agreement that B & G needs to be adequately funded. Some ideas to fund the B & G budget included having “parallel pledges” - one for B &G and one for Church, or put an increase into the B & G budget and, if money is not spent, put it into a separate fund designated B & G (similar to the Mary Fuller Fund, which is for larger scale projects). The PC decided that the 2024-25 draft budget will include funding for the B & G budget in the amount of \$15,000. Also included in the draft budget will be an additional \$5000 for the minister salary package and a 3 - 5% increase in salaries.

Tabled for Discussion at the Next PC Meeting

- Signage for church
- Reducing workload of Office Administrator due to possible change in newsletter distribution.

Next Meetings

- PC check-in meeting: 1/31/24 at 7:00 p.m. (Virtual, to review/discuss draft budget)
- Monthly PC meeting: February 21 at 6:30 p.m. (Virtual)

Closing words provided by Rev. Peter.

Meeting adjourned: 8:05 p.m.

Submitted by Lois Aldrich, Parish Clerk



FEBRUARY 2024

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| <p>10:30 a.m. Worship Service & Religious Exploration</p> <p>12:15 p.m. Humanist Voices, Parish Hall</p> <p>12:30 p.m. OWL Meeting, Parlor</p> | <p>7:00 p.m. CUUPS Imbolc Ritual, Parish Hall</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Search Committee on Zoom</p> | <p>10:00 a.m. Peaceful Quilters, Parish Hall</p> <p>11:00 a.m. Lay Ministry on Zoom</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Chalice Choir Rehearsal, Parish Hall</p> | <p>12:00 noon Order of Service Deadline, Church Office</p> <p>3:30 p.m. Search Committee on Zoom</p> <p>4:00 p.m. Meditation Group, Parlor</p> <p>6:30 p.m. RE Committee, Parish Hall</p> | <p>4:00 p.m. Where Everyone Belongs, Online</p> <p>6:00 p.m. New Moon Meditation on Zoom</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Finance Committee on Zoom</p> | <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>1:00 p.m. Organ Practice, Sanctuary</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Search Committee on Zoom</p> </div> <p>1:00 p.m. Organ Practice, Sanctuary</p> <p>4:30 p.m. Social Justice Team Meeting on Zoom</p> | <p>11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn</p> <p>11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn</p> |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| <p>10:30 a.m. Worship Service & Religious Exploration</p> <p>12:15 p.m. Humanist Voices, Parish Hall</p> <p>12:30 p.m. OWL Meeting, Parlor</p> <p>5:00 p.m. Youth Group, Parish Hall</p> | <p>10:00 a.m. Peaceful Quilters, Parish Hall</p> <p>11:00 a.m. Lay Ministry on Zoom</p> <p>12:00 noon UUMA Immigrant Justice Meeting Online</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Chalice Choir Rehearsal, Parish Hall</p> | <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>12:00 noon Order of Service Deadline, Church Office</p> <p>4:00 p.m. Meditation Group, Parlor</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Music Committee on Zoom</p> </div> | <p>1:00 p.m. Organ Practice, Sanctuary</p> | <p>1:00 p.m. Organ Practice, Sanctuary</p> <p>11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn</p> | <p>11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn</p> | <p>11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn</p> |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| <p>10:30 a.m. Worship Service & Religious Exploration</p> <p>12:15 p.m. Humanist Voices, Parlor</p> | <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>3:30 p.m. Book Discussion Group on Zoom</p> </div> | <p>10:00 a.m. Peaceful Quilters, Parish Hall</p> <p>11:00 a.m. Lay Ministry on Zoom</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Chalice Choir Rehearsal, Parish Hall</p> | <p>12:00 noon Order of Service Deadline, Church Office</p> <p>4:00 p.m. Meditation Group, Parlor</p> <p>6:30 p.m. Parish Committee on Zoom</p> | <p>6:00 p.m. Full Moon Meditation on Zoom</p> | <p>1:00 p.m. Organ Practice, Sanctuary</p> <p>4:30 p.m. Social Justice Team Meeting on Zoom</p> | <p>11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn</p> |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | | |
| <p>10:30 a.m. Worship Service & Religious Exploration</p> <p>12:15 p.m. Humanist Voices, Parlor</p> <p>5:00 p.m. Youth Group, Parish Hall</p> | <p>March Newsletter Deadline, Church Office</p> | <p>11:00 a.m. Lay Ministry on Zoom</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Chalice Choir Rehearsal, Parish Hall</p> | <p>12:00 noon Order of Service Deadline, Church Office</p> <p>4:00 p.m. Meditation Group, Parlor</p> | | | |

REGISTER FOR 2024 VIRTUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

GA registration is now open! Adult registration is \$280 and includes access to General Assembly 2024 in the Whova event app, as well as on-demand programming, featured speakers, and major worships. Register through February 29 with a down payment of \$50 by selecting the Early Bird Payment Plan at checkout. Voting delegates who wish to participate only in General Sessions may also register with the business-only option - this option is no-cost, but a donation is suggested.



Registration rates increase March 1.

[GA Registration](#)

