



THE FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF MIDDLEBOROUGH

25 South Main Street, Middleborough, MA 02346 www.uumiddleboro.org 508-947-1935 November 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, November 3

Normand Grenier presenting

The End Is Near! The Archetype of the Apocalypse

From the mouths of ancient prophets to the sandwich boards of Times Square, voices have shouted: It's over. Despite these sober predictions, we're still here. So why it did it persist for so long? Today we will explore the nature of this image and its surprising vitality today. The Chalice Choir will be singing "Hands Across the Aisle" by Georgeann Weaver.

Norm Grenier is a longtime member of UU Middleboro and a student of the psychology of Carl Jung.

Sunday, November 10

Rev. Beau Rivers preaching

Beyond the Ballot Box

In uncertain times it is important to remind ourselves, only love can conquer hate and the work of citizenship continues long after the end of an election. Special music will be provided by Tony Soares.

Sunday, November 17

Rev. Beau Rivers preaching

Indigenous Peoples' History

How does the founding of our nation inform who we are today?
What are some of the myths that constitute American patriotism?
How do we begin telling the truth about our ancestors?
The Chalice Choir will be singing.

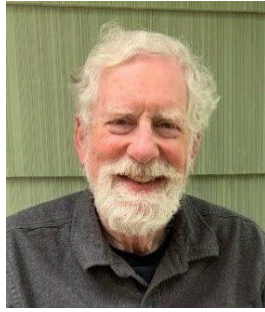
Sunday, November 24

Tony Soares, Sue St. Germain, Bet Giddings, Rev. Beau Rivers presenting

Counting Our Blessings

In this family friendly, interactive service, we will recount the blessings in our lives and celebrate the bounty of the harvest with a cider and cornbread communion. Special music will be provided by a vocal ensemble.

From the Parish Committee



Jeff Giddings, President

Cottage Meetings Stimulate Ideas and Understanding

Cottage meetings are small gatherings of church members with our new minister, Rev. Beau Rivers. Ten cottage meetings are being held in October and early November as a way for Rev. Beau and the members to get to know each other. The meetings so far have fulfilled that expectation. Rev. Beau sparks the discussion with three simple but far-reaching questions: What excites you about church? What feeds your spirit? What are you passionate about? The answers from the participants give the Parish Committee (PC) a deeper understanding of the many reasons people find value in belonging to our church community. The discussions have also generated dozens of suggestions for things we can do together to enrich our experience and make the world better.

A common theme emerging from the cottage meeting discussions is the “inspiring fellowship of the church.” People sense in this church community an openness to new ideas, to diverse perspectives, and to personal and social transformation. As one member put it, we are “decent human beings you can associate with.” This widely shared appreciation is a good sign that we are succeeding in our mission “to create and sustain a caring and welcoming community.”

We are also, of late, bursting with energy, activity, and joy. The feeling is palpable in the worship service, children’s activities, and coffee hour every Sunday and in the many gatherings and events taking place throughout the week. This renewed enthusiasm brings with it an urge to project ourselves more clearly into our local community, to connect with people who are looking for what we offer and to welcome them into our family. We need to look for opportunities to draw people in. Membership development and community outreach are key goals for the coming year.

There is widely shared concern for the needs of those in our local community. We want our church to be of service to our neighbors and to the world. We recognize that we can achieve more when we work together toward social justice. For some of us, social justice activities are the reason we became UUs.

Importantly, many people have spoken about the inspiration they derive from weekly sermons and small discussion groups. Promotion of “spiritual growth without dogma or creed,” as we say in our mission statement, is one of our defining characteristics and one of the main reasons people choose to become UUs. “It’s great to come to a place and not be told the answers but to be challenged by the right questions.”

Five more cottage meetings remain on the schedule, most of them by Zoom ([Cottage Meetings](#)). There is still plenty of room on the sign-up list! You can sign up in person in the church parlor or contact Val Ortelt in the church office (office@uumiddleboro.org).

The next meeting of the Parish Committee (PC) will be held Wednesday, November 20, at 6:30 pm in the parish hall. The agenda will include a review of the cottage meetings, planning for a Committee Fair, and an initial discussion of the budget for FY26 (July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026). We will also hear updates from the Building & Grounds Committee on plans for major repairs to the roof and siding and from the Finance Team on raising the money to pay for those necessary repairs. PC meetings are open to all members of the congregation, and visitors are welcome.

Minister's Message

*Every leaf speaks bliss to me
Fluttering from the autumn tree.*
Emily Brontë



Photo Credit: Glenna Barlow, Creative Commons, Flickr

The Glory of Autumn

Rev. Beau Rivers

Autumn is such a magical time when the
trees beckon me to come outside and play.

Inviting me to dance with the leaves
as they fall gracefully from the trees...

Breathing in the musk of Autumn soil
I fling my arms wide with face to the sky and
twirl amid the swirl of leaves about my feet.

Feasting my eyes upon their radiant colors,
Each tree blazes against the azure sky.
I pause to bask in their brilliance as they
rival the sun, even on the darkest of days.

Each leaf is like the last kiss of summer...
Creating a blanket of leaves to keep me
warm beneath the downy snow of winter.

Each season offers a different
kind of beauty for us to savor.
When all the leaves have fallen, we
enter a time of rest and regeneration

When we tell the stories of our ancestors
from seasons past and germinate
new ideas to emerge from the soil
of our communal lives in the spring.

This is our dreamtime...

continued on next page

Dear Members and Friends,

What a pleasure it has been to meet with you during our cottage meetings! Your vital energy and creativity are an inspiration to me! I look forward to collating, prioritizing, and implementing our ideas in the new year.

If you haven't met with me yet and would like to have a conversation, please text or email me to schedule a time to meet. I am available for office or home visits Wednesdays and Thursdays and phone or Zoom conversations on Fridays.

Since the stakes in this year's presidential election are high, I want to remind us to take good care of ourselves and each other. If you are feeling stressed, turn off the television, walk in the beauty of nature, stay hydrated (it's hard to be fearful and drink water at the same time!), watch a good movie, hug someone you love, and get plenty of sleep.

If the unthinkable happens, we will have a gathering at the church. If we still have a democracy after the election, there may be other concerns for us to consider. Either way, connect with something greater than yourself and hold fast to the belief that the power of love is greater than the love of power.

In This Together,

Rev. Beau



What a glorious season, crisp and colorful! Our fall music program reflects this enthusiasm. Read on...

The featured music event in November is a vocal workshop led by Jeannie Gagné, our former music director and wonderful jazz singer. The workshop will be held on Saturday afternoon, November 9, at 2:00. Please register with me.

We have a small group of Beta-Testers for the new Virtual Hymnal scheduled for release at General Assembly in July. All our comments and suggestions are due at the end of November. This is an ambitious project designed for today's world of computers and will augment (by subscription) our current hymnals.

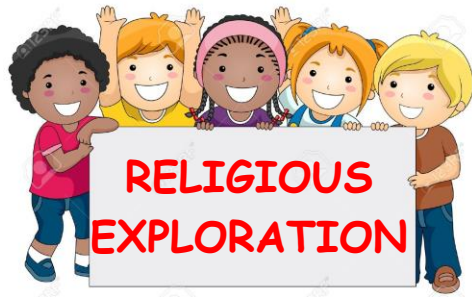
The Third Annual Social Justice Choir Fall Concert takes place on the Bridgewater State University campus on the first Sunday (November 3) at 4:00. This free concert is in Horace Mann Auditorium in Boyden Hall. I hear wonderful things about the Social Justice Choir and am looking forward to picking up new ideas and songs.

Looking forward, each December under our Caring Choir umbrella, we take singers out into the community to sing carols and seasonal songs. We're lining up dates and venues now, including singing at the Council on Aging on December 5 and at Oakhill Healthcare (nursing home) on December 8.

A continuation of HAPPY FALL to ALL!

Susan Hotchkiss, Music Director





We care about the interdependent web of life and taking care of one another.

At UU Middleboro we strive to create a program that allows our children to explore their ideas and faith in a safe and nurturing environment. We have been going on nature walks, learning in the curriculum about nature, the earth and our role in sustainability as well as looking at ourselves and the world and where we fit.

Earth Advocates!

The “Earth Advocates” were able to enjoy our new outdoor space at our Halloween Bonfire. Prior to that event on October 27, they were able to explore the space looking for bugs, slugs and worms as part of our nature walk. This year's curriculum dives deep into our 7th Principle - “Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.” We have explored nature’s interdependence and partnerships, and we will be considering our own leadership roles in our classroom as well as how they impact our “interdependence” in church.

Youth Group

Youth Group is for children 6th grade and up. The youth helped manage the Halloween bonfire this year, planning the games, planning the firepit and playing with the younger children. We are doing some work looking at ourselves and at the broader world. We are going to have some hard conversations about how we can respect and care about others despite differences in values. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Babysitting Available!

Nursery Care continues to be available for babies and toddlers under five years of age each Sunday from 10:15 to 11:45 a.m. Child care is also offered during other church activities.

Registration

Please be sure to register your children for the program. We will need updated (or new) information to ensure we know the children as best we can as our class time goes by fast, and we always want to make sure we have the right snacks! Registration is rolling throughout the year and is available here: [Religious Exploration Registration Form \(google.com\)](#)

Volunteers

Many of you have received requests for volunteers, and more emails are coming for those who have not received one. CORIs are required for all teachers and, if wanted, a short teacher orientation can be provided.

RE Committee

The RE Committee meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. Christine Hoyle is the Committee Chair. We are always looking for new members.

Family Worship Services

The children will remain upstairs for Family Worship Services once a month. Our next one is on November 24, and they will be helping us share a cornbread and juice communion.

Kelly Lownds, Director of Religious Exploration



POSTERS ON HOLOCAUST, FASCISM DISPLAYED IN PARISH HALL

In October the Parish Hall was lined with posters depicting ways ordinary German citizens looked away, or looked on, allowing their government's blaming of Jews for the country's ills to escalate gradually into full-on genocide.

In the run-up to the current election, we felt it important to offer this look at early warning signs of Fascism. Individual efforts can make a difference in stopping hate from escalating.

The poster series, graciously lent to the Social Justice Team by Bridgewater State University's Student Success and Equity Division, was originally created for Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) which falls in the Spring. We believe the posters highlight the subtleties of how democracy can slip away.

NOVEMBER CASH IN THE PLATE

The Cash in the Plate for November will be donated to the Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe Fund (non-profit) to acquire 38 acres of their ancestral land on Triangle Pond in Plymouth. <https://www.herringpondtribe.org/>

According to tribal chair Melissa Ferretti, the land is currently owned by Sagamore Cranberry. If purchased by the Tribe, Ms. Ferretti said it would be used as an educational nature hub, museum of Native artifacts, and community center to host powwows. The tribe would also use spaces on the land to honor specific populations, including dedicating a forest to two-spirit Tribe members, among other dedications.

PEACE, JUSTICE & EQUALITY VIGILS

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

We continue scheduling weekly ½ hour vigils on Saturday mornings from 11:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon on the church lawn. All are invited to join in. Contact Dody Adkins-Perry (adkinsperry@gmail.com).

TEEN LGBTQ+ PEER SUPPORT AND SOCIAL GROUP

Every Monday 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

ADULT LGBTQ+ PEER SUPPORT AND SOCIAL GROUP

Every Monday 7:15 – 8:15 p.m.

36 North Bedford Street, East Bridgewater, 2nd floor, 2nd door on the left

This group is an opportunity to get to know your peers, support one another, share challenges, celebrate, seek support, play games & be; 978-809-2245, speak or text to “J”

LGBTQ+ OLDER ADULTS & ALLIES – LUNCH AND ENTERTAINMENT

Thursday, November 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.



Saturday Nov. 16, 2024

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR!



**QUILTS, POTTERY, JEWELRY, CROCHET, GEMS
CANDLES, SALVES, SCRUBS, BALMS, STAINED GLASS
BAKED GOODS, JAMS, JELLIES, SOUPS**

**UU Middleboro ~ 25 South Main Street
Accessible building ~ All are welcome!**



HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR

Saturday, November 16 10:00 am - 2:00pm

Join us for our annual Holiday Craft Fair! Spread the word, bring a friend and work on your holiday gift list while supporting the church. This year's fair will offer handmade pottery, salves, scrubs, gems, jewelry, stained glass, hand knit and crochet items, candles, and hand-crafted quilts of all sizes. We'll also be offering homemade soups, jams, jellies, baked goods and a holiday décor table.

A raffle drawing for Linda Thompson's beautiful "Anthem" quilt (see below), specially created to raise funds for the church, will cap the event. Save the date! For more information contact co-chairs Dorine Levasseur, dmlevasseur@gmail.com or Holly Begley, hpbegley@gmail.com .



NEW MOON MEDITATION ON ZOOM

with Natalie Johnson

Friday, November 1 6:00 – 6:45 p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/91347227142>

This month's New Moon falls in the sign of Scorpio, perhaps the most misunderstood sign of the entire zodiac.

Scorpio is a water sign and, as such, encourages us to dive deep into the emotional realm, plumbing the depths of long held beliefs and outgrown inherited ways of viewing the world. We are encouraged to become archeologists of our own inner landscapes, digging deep to see what is truly ours versus what has been layered on by others over time. This inner journey of discernment will prove invaluable as we step into the maelstrom that is our outer world at present.

In a few days, we will be asked to make choices that will shape how our lives as citizens of the U.S. will play out in the future. It is often difficult to rise above the frenzy and fear engendered by the media. Scorpio can assist us in this process by reminding us of the importance of discernment, of watching and waiting for the most opportune moment...the place where our unique gifts can be put to the greatest benefit for all. Scorpio helps us to cut through the fog of uncertainty to make the best choice...one that will be in service to the thriving of all life on earth.

Come join us this night as we explore how Scorpio can assist us in making our own best choices.



Song Circle

**First Unitarian Universalist
Society of Middleboro, MA**

SEPT 13, OCT 11, NOV 8
Second Friday of every Month!

6:00 POTLUCK HEARTY SNACKS
6:30-8:00 SONG SHARING

Accessible building
25 South Main St., Middleboro, MA
Please RSVP: andrapriesto@gmail.com
"Rise Up" songbooks welcomed.

All are Invited!



FULL MOON MEDITATION ON ZOOM

with Natalie Johnson

Friday, November 15 6:00 - 6:45 p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/95107432576>

This month's Full Moon occurs in the sign of Taurus, the quintessential Earth sign. Taurus reminds us of the importance of hearth and home, of belonging to a place, a family, a nation, an ideology worth holding onto. Taurus encourages us to send our roots deep into Earth Herself for stability, nourishment and grounding in order to withstand whatever storms might be brewing on the horizon. Like the trees, we can root deeply into Earth and also send our branches of aspiration high into the sky to receive blessings from above.

This is also the time of year to give thanks for our many blessings and to remember from whom we receive them. If we will soon sit down to a traditional Thanksgiving meal, let us pause to remember whose land we are on and what we owe those who have been displaced during colonization. Let us acknowledge the land itself and vow to caretake it with the same reverence its former inhabitants bestowed upon it. As we prepare to feast, may we acknowledge all those whose efforts brought this meal to us: the good earth for growing the vegetables, the animals whose sacrifice is on our plates, the many hands who sowed, tended, and harvested. The rain and sun who in good measure engendered growth. Our very lives depend on the generosity of so many others human and more than. Let us give thanks and remember to offer that same generosity of spirit as we seek to share with others.

Come join us this night as we reflect on our many blessings... All are welcome.



BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP ON ZOOM

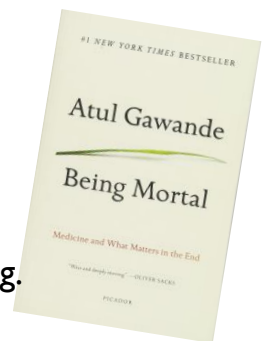
Monday, November 18 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

The UU Book Club continues to meet on the third Monday of the month.

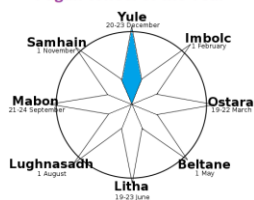
Book Club members will be emailed the Zoom link a few days before each meeting.

The book for our November meeting is *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande.

If you are not on the Book Club's email list, but would like to join us for the discussion, please contact Lois Aldrich (lois.aldrich63@gmail.com). New and old members are welcome.



Pagan Wheel of the Year



CUUPS GATHERING

Monday, November 18 7:00 p.m.
Parish Hall

There is no ritual for the month of November. We are now in the time of deepening darkness, encouraging us to go within and dream of the seeds we will plant for the coming year. We invite you to circle with us this night and enjoy a potluck feast in honor of Goddess Hecate...she who roams the liminal spaces in the night and stands at the crossroads with her torches held high, helping to illuminate the path forward for each of us.

Our potluck will be a traditional Hecate's Supper in her honor. We will use the time to deepen our connections and to share ideas and inspirations. Drawing from our many diverse traditions, we can weave together the ways in which CUUPS can be more vibrant, more earth honoring and more relevant in service to the Light, which is soon to be reborn on the Solstice. All are welcome.



PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, November 20 6:30 p.m.
Parish Hall

All members and friends are invited to attend the Parish Committee meeting.



Can you help?



**PLEASE SIGN UP TO BE A GREETER
OR**

A COFFEE HOUR HOST ON A SUNDAY MORNING!

You may use the sign-up sheets on the Parlor table or click [HERE](#) or email andrepriesto@gmail.com or office@uumiddleboro.org to volunteer to be a Coffee Hour Host. You may contact Dorine Levasseur dmlevasseur925@gmail.com to be a Greeter or email office@uumiddleboro.org. Instructions will be emailed to you. Thank you for participating in this ministry.

Other Ways to Help with Coffee Hour

If you are not able to host Coffee Hour on a Sunday morning, there are other ways you can help.

1. Buy boxed, non-perishable milk. Put on the shelf in the church kitchen (the shelf with the sliding windows to the Parish Hall). Buy 1/2 and 1/2, quart size, and put in the fridge.
2. Purchase packaged baked goods. Put in the bin on wire shelf labeled "coffee hour snacks." Cookies, crackers, non-perishable goods.
3. Buy or bake perishable baked goods and bring on Sunday or put in the freezer. Please label them with the date and message "for coffee hour."



JOIN US FOR A

Holiday Wreath-Making Workshop

SATURDAY DECEMBER 7 10:00 AM



UU MIDDLEBORO, 25 SOUTH MAIN STREET

ACCESSIBLE BUILDING

\$30 COVERS ALL MATERIALS

(BRING HAND CLIPPERS, WIRE CUTTERS, & WREATH BASE IF YOU HAVE THEM.)

REGISTER: OFFICE@UUMIDDLEBORO.ORG

508-947-1935

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING

October 16, 2024

Present: Jeff Giddings, Vi Fairweather, Stephen Larrett, Rev. Beau Rivers, Diane Reed, Nancy Backus, Lois Aldrich, Jim Bonnar

Guest: Kelly Lownds

Meeting called to order at 6:40 by Jeff Giddings

Check-in

Opening Words - Rev. Beau Rivers

Minutes from September 18 PC meeting were reviewed and accepted via email prior to tonight's meeting.

Reports: The following Committee reports had been forwarded to PC members prior to the meeting and were accepted:

- Minister Report (includes Worship and Pastoral Care)
- Music Committee and Music Director
- RE
- Social Justice
- Finance (Treasurer, Accountant, Investments)
 - Treasurer Stephen Larrett informed the PC that there are sufficient funds in checking such that we can move the funds we had borrowed from investments in the spring back to investments. PC approved this action.
 - Bank issues are in the process of being resolved, and all current required signatures are up to date.
- Building & Grounds (awaiting report) - Jim Bonnar reported that Alan Melchior has met with people from our insurance company, Church Mutual. Insurance company staff took pictures and will present to adjuster. There is a possibility that we will be able to complete and pay for needed work over a three-year period, but this has not yet been confirmed by Church Mutual.

Action Items from September 18 PC meeting were completed except for the following:

- Vi Fairweather and Rev. Beau will continue to work on organizing the file cabinet.
- After discussions with several of the people involved, Jeff Giddings decided to wait before convening an ad hoc subcommittee for the newsletter (see Discussion items below).
- FUUSM will not be participating in the UUA webinars on pledge drives as we did not have 3 volunteers come forward to participate, as required by UUA. Jeff Giddings will convey this result to the UUA.
(continued on next page)

UUA Retirement Plan: UUA requires that the PC formally approve changes being made to the UUA Retirement Plan for this year. Currently, only Rev. Beau Rivers and Susan Hotchkiss participate in the plan. Any qualified employee can participate. Stephen commented that the proposed changes are more related to how UUA will manage the plan and will not have an impact on the participants. Motion moved to accept the changes in the plan, seconded, and approved.

Cottage Meetings: Cottage Meetings have been scheduled, and two have occurred. All appears to be going well so far. The main goal of the meetings is for Rev. Beau to get to know the congregation and hear what their concerns, passions, and goals for the church are.

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Discussion Items:

- Committees: The PC discussed how we can work better with Committees and how to involve the congregation as we work on developing an organizational structure for the church. The PC intends to hold a Committee Fair in November. Planning will take place by email and Zoom. Jeff Giddings and Rev. Beau will initiate the planning process.
- Newsletter: Continues to be published, and will continue unless Rev. Beau and Val Ortelt, Office Administrator, determine the workload is no longer manageable. Val has stressed that getting the information for the newsletter in a timely manner is critical. The PC agreed to further explore transitioning to Breeze Church Software in 2025, which could greatly reduce workload.

Recap—what is your take away from tonight’s meeting?

Closing—reading from Rev. Beau.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Next PC Meeting: November 20, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. in Parish Hall.



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 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: Rev. Beau Rivers

Parish Committee

President: Jeff Giddings
Vice President: Viola Fairweather
Treasurer: Stephen Larrett
Assistant Treasurer: Nancy Backus
Parish Clerk: Lois Aldrich
Members At Large: Jim Bonnar
Diane Reed



CHURCH CALENDAR