



# THE FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF MIDDLEBOROUGH

25 South Main Street, Middleborough, MA 02346

[www.uumiddleboro.org](http://www.uumiddleboro.org)

508-947-1935

January 2025

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

**January 5**

**Rev. Beau Rivers preaching**

***Living with Intention***

Join us as we welcome the new year in this family friendly service! There will be opportunities to make a joyful noise with body percussion, guided meditation, ritual, and individual blessings as we express our hopes for the new year. Music is provided by Erik Lindgren. In addition to being a friend of our church, he is a contemporary composer who has played for us many times in worship services and concerts.

**January 12**

**Rev. Beau Rivers preaching**

***Hope in the Dark***

What do mushrooms, uprisings, and revolutions have in common? How do we counter oppressive forces who would have us believe they are invincible? Where do we find hope as we enter the new year? Join us as we consider the wisdom of Rebecca Solnit in her book, *Hope in the Dark*. Special music is provided by the Chalice Ensemble.

**January 19**

**Rev. Michael F. Hall preaching**

***Liberating Love***

These are times we feel beset by personal or social conditions. They leave us questioning: What am I to do? What is the meaning and purpose of my life, never mind 8 billion lives? Is there really anything meaningful that holds us together? If you are feeling the post-holiday blues or, worse still, a full-on existential crisis, make sure to join us this morning as we welcome former FUUSM member Michael Hall back to our pulpit.

Rev. Michael F. Hall has been an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister since 2012. After serving the Keene, NH congregation for 12 years, he accepted a position as the contract minister of the UU Congregation of Franklin, NH. Michael is enjoying the ministry he shares with the congregation in Franklin, while having almost too much fun doing pulpit supply all over New England! Rev. Hall lives in Keene, NH, with his family, including three opinionated pets.

**January 26**

**Rev. Beau Rivers**

***Gender Diversity Matters***

This collaborative service offered by members of the transgender and non-binary community will be followed by a discussion forum after coffee hour. Come learn how you can support the trans community in 2025. The Chalice Choir will be singing.

## *From the Parish Committee*



Jeff Giddings, President

### **Adjusting Our Priorities**

Last August, when the Parish Committee (PC) began the church year by setting goals for 2024-2025, the top priorities were: (1) to integrate Rev. Beau into the church; (2) to address the need for major restoration of the building's exterior; (3) to strengthen our committees; and (4) to have fun. The PC and the congregation have made progress on all of these goals during the past 4 months and this will certainly continue into 2025. But rapid changes in our social and political environment have significant implications for our church and our denomination. Protecting our church family and property is now a top priority for the PC, and supporting vulnerable people in our community and beyond becomes a top priority for our Minister, our Social Justice Team (SJT), and the UU Association.

The PC and Rev. Beau discussed these issues at length during our monthly meeting on December 18. Rev. Beau described resources available to UUs to help congregations prepare for challenging situations such as threats, vandalism, and violence. She outlined steps she is taking to work with other churches to re-build an Interfaith Coalition to strengthen our mutual safety and security. We will hear much more from Rev. Beau and from the SJT about these initiatives in the coming weeks.

The PC identified steps that can be taken to assure the safety and security of our building and its contents. We plan to ask the State Police to provide a threat assessment for the building. The Building and Grounds Committee will investigate security systems including cameras and keypad entrances. The SJT will coordinate another de-escalation training early in the new year. Rev. Beau will develop new content for the Wayside Pulpit (the small framed message board facing Nickerson Ave) to let the public know who we are and what we value, which is key to building support within the local community.

The PC will continue to work on the other goals identified earlier, especially membership development, creating a system for digital file sharing and archiving, and policy updates. The next PC meeting will take place by Zoom on January 22, 2025, 6:30-8:00 pm. All members and friends are welcome to attend – please contact the church administrator ([office@middleboro.org](mailto:office@middleboro.org)) or myself ([president@uumiddleboro.org](mailto:president@uumiddleboro.org)) if you would like to receive an agenda and a link to the Zoom meeting.

## *Minister's Message*

January 2025



### *My Hope for You in the New Year*

Joyce Rupp, adapted

I hope...

...the single most significant dimension of life is your relationship with the Spirit of Life and Love, who never ceases to sing love songs to your soul.

...you daily find meaning, purpose, and vitality in all you do.

...you treasure your loved ones and let them know how precious they are to you.

...you make choices and decisions that reflect your truest self.

...you look in the mirror at least once a day and smile in happy amazement.

...you remember relationships are what count above all else, more than work or money, or the material things we spend so much time tending.

...you live in an uncluttered manner, enjoying the freedom to be content.

...you keep your sense of humor when things don't go as planned.

...you find adventure in each new day and marvel at the wonders of creation which constantly present themselves to you.

...you never give up on yourself when others turn away or do not understand.

...you are attentive to the health of your body, mind, and spirit.

...you take risks and accept the growth-filled challenges as they come.

...you draw on your inner strength and resilience when you need it.

...you carry peace within yourself, and encourage it to slip into the hearts of others, so our planet becomes a place where violence, division, and war are no more.

Wishing you all this and so much more...

With Great Love and Affection,

*Rev. Beau*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ***Membership Committee Needs You!***

Do you feel called to warmly greet new visitors, sit beside them during worship, accompany them to coffee hour, and introduce them to people with similar backgrounds or interests? To learn more about how you can support this vital ministry, please contact Rev. Beau at [minister@uumiddleboro.org](mailto:minister@uumiddleboro.org).

### ***Understanding the Transgender Community***

Are you knowledgeable about the experiences, challenges, and hopes of the transgender and non-binary community? Would you like to participate in our January 26<sup>th</sup> service to help raise awareness about trans lives? Contact Rev. Beau to learn more at [minister@uumiddleboro.org](mailto:minister@uumiddleboro.org).

### ***New Member Ceremony***

Have you been visiting us for some time and think you might like to become a member of this beloved community? Let us know so we can schedule a group orientation with you in January and welcome you into the life of the congregation at our New Member Dedication Ceremony Sunday, February 16, 2025. For more information, please contact Rev. Beau at [minister@uumiddleboro.org](mailto:minister@uumiddleboro.org).

### ***Celebrate Women's History!***

Each year we dedicate a service to recognize and celebrate the achievements of women. This year's service will be March 09, 2025. If you would like to participate in this service, please email Rev. Beau at [minister@uumiddleboro.org](mailto:minister@uumiddleboro.org).



After all the hullabaloo of December holidays, the thought of a shift into quiet contemplation is MOST welcomed! It's cold, but the light is returning, slow & steady. We have heat in our homes, food in our bellies, fresh water, friends, family, and the constant wonder of exploration. It's good to be a part of our beloved community, UU Middleboro!

Many of you know Erik Lindgren who is a friend of our church as well as a personal friend. Erik is an explorer of that crossover between genres of music: classical and rock, spiritual and light jazz, contemplative and wild. He started his music career writing advertising ditties, but you'll never find his music piped into your local elevator. In maturity, his voice is unique and expansive.

Erik will be subbing for me on January 5. On January 12 at 3:00, we will welcome Erik and one of his "bands" (Bespoke Consort) to our church for a concert not to be missed. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for details.

I wish you all, both great and small,  
a happy, healthy, and bright new year!

*Susan Hotchkiss*, Director of Music





**Erik Lindgren, piano; Thomasine Berg, flute; Mark Finklestein, bassoon; Torben Hansen, clarinet**

## **BESPOKE CONCERT**

**Sunday, January 12, at 3:00 p.m.**

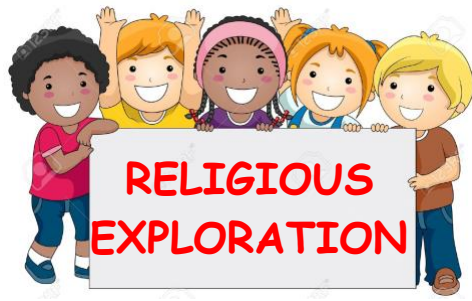
**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Middleborough**

SAVE THE DATE FOR THIS GREAT CONCERT! The Bespoke Consort will perform live at UU Middleboro on Sunday, January 12 at 3 PM. There is no admission at the door, but donations are gratefully accepted. The quartet will present a program of Classical-A-Go-Go! - chamber music-sans-boundaries that includes neo-Baroque escapades, Impressionistic tone poems, quirky Musical Novelties, Tangos, rollicking arrangements of Erik Satie, Raymond Scott, Leroy Anderson, plus original works.

Musicians include members of the Brockton Symphony, and features compositions and arrangements by Middleborough resident Erik Lindgren who has played for us many times in worship services and concerts. Lindgren has also recorded and performed with his New Music ensemble, Birdsongs of the Mesozoic, which has recorded 12 CDs and toured Internationally over their 45-year existence. Birdsongs' music has been described as "cacophony meets classicism in a mesmerizing instrumental venture into the space age jungle."

As a contemporary classical composer, Lindgren has a catalog of over six dozen works, ranging from solo piano pieces to chamber music to orchestral works. In 1978, Lindgren established Sounds Interesting Productions, a commercial recording studio and music production company now based in Middleborough, MA. National and regional credits include original scores for all three networks, PBS, Eastpak, Boston Globe, Basketball Hall of Fame, Jordan Marsh, Prentice-Hall, and the Christmas Tree Shops.

Hope you can make it to this concert - A pleasant time is guaranteed for all!



The program we are sharing this year explores the interdependent web of life. Our Sunday morning RE program occurs during the church service and has an open enrollment. We are very excited to have a new outdoor space that we share with the church and are hopeful to grow flowers and plants as we continue to explore nature. We do nature walks, crafts, tell stories and share ideas about our local environment, animal habitats and native plants. We consider our role in sustainability. Registration is rolling throughout the year and is available here. [Religious Exploration Registration Form \(google.com\)](#)

### **Earth Advocates!**

We are learning about animal habitats and decomposition this month. The kids have loved exploring the new outdoor space, and we are going to start to think about how we can make rich soil for our plants in the spring. We are going to play with earthworms and think about decomposing plants.

### **Youth Group**

Youth Group is for children 6<sup>th</sup> grade and up. We will be meeting at least once a month in the new year. We are hoping to create an interfaith program that can be shared with the church

### **Babysitting Available!**

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

### **Family Worship Services**

The children will be upstairs for family worship services once a month. Our next Family Worship Service is on January 5, 2025.

### **RE Committee**

The RE Committee meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. We are meeting next on Wednesday, January 8, 2025. Christine Hoyle is the Committee Chair, and we are always looking for new volunteers.

*Kelly Lownds, Director of Religious Exploration*

## JANUARY CASH IN THE PLATE

The Cash in the Plate for the first week of January will go to World Central Kitchen. The Cash in the Plate for the remainder of January will be donated to the Minister's Discretionary Fund.



The World Central Kitchen (WCK) was founded in 2010 by José Ramón Andrés and his wife, Patricia, in the wake of the earthquake in Haiti. Cooking alongside displaced families in a camp, he was guided on the proper way to cook black beans the way Haitians like to eat them, mashed and sieved into a creamy sauce. It wasn't just about feeding people in need. It was about listening, learning, and cooking side by side with the people impacted by the crisis. This is the real meaning of comfort food.

WCK uses the same approach wherever they operate. In Gaza, they have recently lost staff in yet another drone strike; the third in a year. Each time, they take a few days to grieve and regroup, then they're back to cooking, serving and delivering food.

Please give generously on this one-day collection for them.



**SUSTAINABLE  
MIDDLEBOROUGH**

*Want to make your home  
more resilient to floods,  
drought, brush fires,  
extreme storms,  
and wind?*

# Climate Resilience

**in your own landscape**



Breeka Li Goodlander  
Wetland Scientist &  
Certified Ecologist

Learn landscape strategies  
to prepare for this year's  
growing season and for  
wetter, warmer weather  
ahead.

Bring questions about  
your yard, garden, or farm.



Meg Riley  
Plymouth County Extension  
Agricultural Educator

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 6:30 PM**  
**Middleborough Public Library**

A free workshop sponsored by Sustainable Middleborough  
[sustainablemiddleborough.org](http://sustainablemiddleborough.org)



## CUUPS COUNCIL CIRCLE

**Monday, January 13 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

**Parish Hall**

There is no ritual for the month of January. Our next Sabbat will be Imbolc, which we will celebrate on Monday, February 3, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall.



The purpose of this Council is to gather together to discuss ideas about the direction we would like to see CUUPS take in 2025. We have been missing longtime members who, for a variety of reasons, have not been able to attend regularly this past year. We have been blessed with several new visitors since the Fall. Some are solitary practitioners, some were circle members elsewhere, some are simply looking for a spiritually minded community that is safe and welcoming. All have come with openness, curiosity and a willingness to share ideas, practices and aspirations.

Please join us for an open discussion of how CUUPS might grow in the new year...of what we might co-create beyond the 8 Sabbats, and how we might partner with the church at large to incorporate our love for Gaia and our practice of earth based traditions with the values inherent in our UU tradition.

Please join us with your ideas, enthusiasm and open hearts.



### **FULL MOON MEDITATION ON ZOOM**

**with Natalie Johnson**

**Tuesday, January 14 6:00 - 6:45 p.m.**

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



This month's Full Moon falls in the sign of Cancer and is known as the Wolf Moon. As we enter into the first month of the new year, we are reminded of Janus, the Roman god with two faces...one looking back and the other ahead. Janus is a god of duality: exits and entrances, endings and beginnings. He is the threshold, the doorkeeper, the ruler of transitions.

All of humanity stands at the threshold of birth and death at this moment in time. We are being asked to attend the dying of the old, outworn paradigm that has ruled us for millennia, while seeding and germinating a new way of living. We are called to both hospice the dying world of oppression, greed and inequality and to birth the new world that awaits our co-creation.

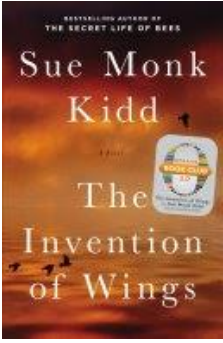
Cancer is the embodiment of the Great Mother, the Divine Feminine...She who brings forth, nurtures and protects all of life. We shall call upon Her this night to assist us in stepping into our new role as both death and birth doulas. Together we shall participate in Drawing Down the Moon. Bathed by her luminous brilliance, we shall fill ourselves with her gifts of mother love and creativity, assisting us to step into in our role as the Ones who will bring forth the new world.

We invite you to join us. All are welcome.



## BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP ON ZOOM

**Monday, January 20      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 January is *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd.

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](mailto:lois.aldrich63@gmail.com)). New and old members are welcome.



## PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING ON ZOOM

**Wednesday, January 22      6:30 p.m.**

All members and friends are invited to attend the Parish Committee meeting. See Jeff Giddings for the Zoom link.



## NEW MOON MEDITATION ON ZOOM

**with Natalie Johnson**

**Tuesday, January 28      6:00 - 6:45 p.m.**

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



This month's New Moon falls in the sign of Aquarius, the cosmic equivalent of the "world wide web". Aquarius helps us to expand and magnify our vision beyond personal concerns in order to disseminate our wisdom more broadly.

Beginning in November, Pluto entered fully into Aquarius, heralding the long awaited beginning of a New Age and the potential for a novel way of expressing our humanity

on planet Earth. In March we will finally depart the great cycle of the past 5,000 years known as the Kali Yuga. This age has been marked by strife, war, the rise and fall of empires, the cruel suppression of the feminine, including Mother Earth and the denigration of all that is loving and kind. We will finally escape the shackles that have bound us, the illusions that have clouded our vision, and begin to step more fully into who we truly are. A great influx of cosmic energies are now available to assist us in rising into our full human potential. We are moving beyond being "homo sapiens" in order to become "homo luminous."

Join us tonight under the Dark Moon as we consider how best to prepare for these shifts and ensure that we benefit from the incoming light being streamed to us at this time. Please join us. All are welcome.



## 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.



### PLEASE CHECK THE CHURCH CALENDAR!

<https://uumiddleboro.org/calendar-of-events/month/2025-01/>

Before scheduling your next event, meeting, or rehearsal, please be sure to check the church calendar on our website to make sure no other event is taking place at the time and place you need. Thank you!



## GET READY FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2025 IN BALTIMORE:

### Registration and Housing Opened on December 9!

Exciting news! Registration and housing for the 2025 UUA General Assembly in Baltimore opened on December 9. This is your chance to secure your spot at the largest annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists.

### Why Use the GA Housing Reservation System?

Booking through the official GA Housing System helps the UUA secure critical meeting space at the convention center and hotels while negotiating for accessibility and sustainability requirements on behalf of attendees. Staying in our hotel block ensures the success of GA while keeping you close to the action! Learn more and explore hotel options here: [GA Hotels](#)



For more information on General Assembly 2025, visit [General Assembly: The Unitarian Universalist Association's Premier Annual Gathering | UUA.org](#)

# MINUTES OF THE PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING November 20, 2024

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

**Guests:** Kelly Lownds (RE), Alan Melchior (Building & Grounds), Norm Grenier (Finance Committee)

Meeting called to order by Jeff Giddings at 6:35 p.m.

## Check-in

Opening words read by Rev. Beau Rivers.

## Discussion Items

- **Building Preservation Project:** Alan Melchior distributed a “Draft Plan for Exterior Repairs” to meeting participants for their review and comment. The plan addresses concerns raised by the Church’s insurance company, Church Mutual, as well as other major building repairs that are needed due to aging of the building. Church Mutual has informed the church that the required repairs they cited must be completed or FUUSM risks losing insurance for the building.

The plan proposes that repairs occur in 3 phases over a 3-year period (2024-2027). This would also allow funding to be staggered over the 3-year period. Alan has worked with Church Mutual to develop the plan and has also met with Paul Macuch to develop preliminary cost estimates. (Many thanks, Alan!!) Preliminary estimate to complete all needed work during the 3-year period is \$155,435 - \$190,170. Alan recommends the “heavy duty work” occur in years 2 and 3, and the “easier” (and less costly) tasks be completed in the first year, which will allow more time for the church to raise the funds.

The Finance Committee has been meeting to review funding options. Norm Grenier spoke to the PC about the Finance Committee’s ideas for a Fund Drive to pay for this project. Norm and Rick Benard have volunteered to co-chair fundraising efforts. Norm conducted a small “feasibility” study with several people in the congregation and believes this will be a doable project. It is important how we engage the congregation in this activity. Congregation members are the “shareholders” of our church, which Norm described as “a house of our values.” All agreed it is important to immediately move forward with this project, as we want to be sure this project is kept very separate from the Annual Pledge Drive, which will begin late March, early April in 2025.

Our job is to develop a coordinated messaging effort between Building and Grounds, the Fund Drive, the PC, the minister, PR, and the congregation. Norm recommends we start with a joint letter from Rev. Beau Rivers and Jeff Giddings to the congregation describing this project. Jeff has already written a summary for the December newsletter. Rev. Beau is working on a Sunday service with the theme of “the Spirit of Generosity.” She suggests a pot luck be held afterwards to “kick off” the project, at which time the congregation can hear more details of the plan, ask questions, and even have a tour of the sites in need of repair. Alan Melchior is developing a power point presentation that will provide more details. Alan said that Bill Howe from the Finance Committee is developing a handout



that will help people to better understand the options for giving, including IRA and tax deductions. The PC agreed to schedule a date for the service, pot luck, and project “kick-off”. The date will be **Sunday, December 15**.

Vi Fairweather made a motion to approve moving forward with the Building Preservation Project as proposed in Alan’s draft. Motion seconded and approved by the PC.

- **Committees:** The PC discussed the work that needs to be done with Committees and Teams. Jeff Giddings explained the main objective is to enhance communication between the PC, Committees and Teams, and the Congregation. Some Committees and Teams do not appear to be sure of their relationship among the various church stakeholders. Several ideas were proposed that would help achieve these objectives:
  - Develop a Handbook for Committee and Team leaders that would help them meet their goals. Jeff Giddings, Vi Fairweather, Nancy Backus and Kelly Lownds volunteered to work on this task over the next few weeks. Stephen Larrett suggested that any work on the Handbook be done electronically and stored on a shared drive, accessible to all who need it. (The PC agreed that we continue to need to streamline storage electronically and decide how and where to archive records.)
  - Coordinate an informational meeting/retreat for Committee and team leaders.
  - Obtain an annual budget from each Committee and team.
  - Clarify who Committees and Teams report to.
  - Clarify the responsibilities of Committees and Teams with respect to record keeping and submission of reports (as appropriate).
  - Work with Committees and Teams to develop any needed policies and procedures.
  - Work with Committees to develop a charter, if not already in place.
  - Once the above work is completed, we will coordinate a Committee Fair and share this information with all congregation members and possibly recruit more members for the Committees and Teams!
- **Cottage Meetings:** Rev. Beau provided an update on the Cottage Meetings. All meetings have been completed. Rev. Beau is planning to meet with 2 members who are unable to attend the meetings at the church. Jeff Giddings provided the PC with a copy of the notes from each of the meetings. Next steps are to recruit a team to review, analyze, and summarize comments from the meetings. The Committee on Ministry has offered to take a look at the notes and see what the common themes appear to be and come up with the top 5 or 6 areas. To obtain input from the congregation as to what areas the church will focus on in the coming years, congregation members will be able to place a sticker on what themes most interest them.
- **FY 26 Budget:** Jeff Giddings emailed the PC the first draft of the FY 26-27 budget. The PC agreed there appears to be a few changes from this year’s budget (Building Preservation Project not included). The Social Justice Team requested \$1000 for next year’s budget, which the PC approved.

Stephen Larrett informed the PC that he has researched Breeze Church Management software and found out that Breeze does not do Newsletters, which was one of the tasks we were hoping they could do. Basically, Breeze automates the distribution of information. Need to explore further to see how much it can actually help us with and

how it can reduce current workload in the office. Stephen reminded us that our church has an archaic computer system that needs to be updated. Increased memory, internet speed, updated software, increased storage, updated phone system... all are needed if we move forward with electronic storage and archiving of records and documents. Estimate cost would be  $\approx$  \$2000.

- **Social Justice Team Charter:** Motion moved to accept SJT charter and accepted unanimously. It was mentioned that Building and Grounds and PR also have developed good charters, which may be shared with other Committees as a tool to develop their charters.

Other Business:

- Approval of PC Meeting Minutes will be done via email each month and will no longer be an agenda item.
- Office Coverage: Jeff and Rev. Beau will discuss.
- New Year's PC slate of officers: We will need to appoint a Nominating Committee to move this forward for nominations at the 2025 Annual Meeting.
- Diane Reed raised the concern of using our personal emails for church business. The issue is that the church has a limited number of email addresses available. Every Committee should have an email address for its committee or team. Further discussion needed.
- Stephen Larrett has developed or revised many church Policies/Procedures and has forwarded to the PC for review (Thank you, Stephen!). The PC members should review and get back to Stephen via email with any comments/questions.

Next PC Meeting: December 18, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in Parish Hall

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

# MINUTES OF THE PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING December 18, 2024

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

**Guest:** Kelly Lownds

Meeting called to order by Jeff Giddings at 6:34 p.m.

## Check-in

Opening Words - Read by Rev. Beau Rivers.

## Business Issues

- Reports from Minister, Music, RE, Treasurer, Accountant, and Social Justice Team (SJT) were distributed in advance and accepted; no discussion necessary.
- Building Restoration Project: Potluck and presentation held on December 15 in the Parish Hall to introduce congregation to the project and fundraiser. The PC agreed it was a successful event. Great presentations provided by Alan Melchior, Norm Grenier, and Rick Benard.
- The office computer is in serious need of upgrade. Motion to fund and purchase an Apple Mac computer for the office made by Jim Bonnar and approved by the PC. Stephen Larrett estimates the cost to be around \$1,000.

## Minister's Agenda

Rev. Beau discussed concerns related to post-election, especially potential impact on the more vulnerable groups of people, including trans, gay, immigrants, and disabled population. Many people of targeted minority groups have become used to not relying on established institutions for help, creating their own resources to draw on. Rev. Beau presented resources that are available to UUs to help congregations prepare for challenging situations, which could include harassment and acts of violence (as evidenced in the vandalism and destruction that occurred at the Kingston UU Parish this past year).

- The Revolutionary Love Project: Founded by visionary civil rights leader Valarie Kaur, the Revolutionary Love Project inspires and equips people to build *beloved community*, centered on the ethic of love and how to counter hatred and oppression with love, with joy as an act of resistance. The organization produces educational tools, training courses, art, films, music and empowers citizens from all walks of life “to harness love as a force of justice”. For more information: <https://revolutionarylove.org/>
- UUA offers community resilience resources. How does one prepare if they are a target in their community? How do we keep our buildings safe and secure? How do we ensure safety in our communications? How do we stay in the fight without being attacked? Some of the actions to promote safety and security include:
  - UUA has created a social media platform only accessible to UUA members. Sadly, many minority groups are trolled on social media, and the UUA is taking action to create a safe space for community interaction.
  - UUA wants to help us to be ready for any threats or attacks. The UUA has distributed two surveys to gather information for rapid protest response. The first survey is about assets of the congregation, and the second survey is about skills and experience of

individual members. Rev. Beau is working with several PC members to complete the surveys. More information on the surveys can be found at <https://secure.everyaction.com/T-BrDNTI1EGLU7k8-mGe0Q2>. The UUA has asked that we notify them of any threats in our congregation.

- UUA renewal of welcoming congregation has been modified to specifically include the trans community. This must come to a vote before it is final.
- For further information on UUA community resources: <https://www.uua.org/safe/community-resilience>
- Believing that community is one key to safety and security, Rev. Beau informed the PC that she has been working with other churches to re-build an Interfaith Coalition. Lakeville UCC is on board. Kelly Lownds has also offered to reach out in this effort.
- Some members of the congregation have reached out to Rev. Beau wanting to learn more about the trans community. Rev. Beau has proposed providing education to those interested, which the PC supports.

#### Next steps re: safety/security:

- The PC agrees security of building, both internally and externally, must be a priority going forward.
- Complete UUA surveys. Jeff and Stephen will work together on the congregational survey (building facilities, etc.). Rev. Beau will urge members to complete the individual skills survey.
- We may need to consider changing our locks or installing keypad entrances.
- Security cameras are also needed and are a priority.
- Kelly Lownds offered to contact the State Police to see if they could provide a threat assessment of our building.
- Lois Aldrich informed the PC that one of the goals of the SJT is to coordinate another de-escalation training for the beginning of the year. Last year's training was well attended. SJT worked with Impact Boston to provide the training. Lois will check with the SJT to see where this is at.
- Rev. Beau will develop new content for the Wayside Pulpit with production assistance from Stephen.

#### Other Business:

- Membership Committee: In an effort to expand our membership, Rev. Beau is looking for volunteers to assist in reconstituting the Membership Committee. Please contact Rev. Beau if you know of anyone who may be interested.
- Policies: Diane Reed distributed a copy of the Table of Contents for the Policies for a UU church in Oregon, which appear to be comprehensive and well organized. Diane offered to review and compare with FUUSM policies. Stephen reported that Valarie Ortelt has a similar document, which he would like to review. Diane offered to work with Stephen on the Policies if needed.  
Stephen has distributed a thumb drive containing FUUSM policies to each PC member, which they can now review and comment on from their own computers.
- PC meeting schedule: Given the amount of work that needs to be done, the PC discussed the possibility of meeting more frequently. PC members are OK with additional meetings via ZOOM. Additional meetings should have a specific topic and clear objectives.

**NEXT PC MEETING WILL BE JANUARY 22, 2025 (THE 4<sup>TH</sup> WEDNESDAY) at 6:30 p.m. via ZOOM.**



Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm

**Parking Lot (items not discussed today that need resolution):**

- Office Coverage
- FY 26 budget
- PC slate for 25-26 nominations
- Newsletter
- New member ceremony
- Policies
- Consolidate docs, archives
- Cottage meetings—summary, etc.
- Alternatives to using our personal email addresses
- Update phone system
- Organize Committees/Committee Fair



**THE FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY  
OF MIDDLEBOROUGH**

**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:	Sandy Smiley
Lay Pastoral Minister:	Cate Vanzant
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](#)**