



The Parishioner

News of the First Parish in Bedford

Unitarian Universalist

On the Common, Bedford, Massachusetts

Spirit...Justice...Community

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June 2025

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Rev. Annie Gonzalez, minister of faith development

Nathan Sellers, director of faith development for children

Susan Lincoln, parish board president

Rev. John Gibbons, minister emeritus

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Bradford Conner, music/choir director

Natan Wythe, youth choir director

Sandra LaBarge-Neumann, organist

Brenda Rybicki, parish administrator

Stacey Katz, assistant parish administrator

Joe Mitchell, sexton/custodian

Inside this issue:

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Minister's Musings	3	Sunday, Jun 1st Title: "Love Beyond Limits All-Ages Service" (<i>Led by Rev. Annie and Nate Sellers</i>) Join us for a special all ages service featuring music from our youth choirs, a bridging ceremony honoring our graduating seniors, and a moment of gratitude for our dedicated faith development volunteers. Nate will share a story, and together we'll reflect on how love not only sustains us—but also expands beyond known limits, following us wherever we go.
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FP Committee Fair!	6	Sunday, June 8th Title: "Flower Communion All-Ages Service" (<i>Led by the Worship Team</i>) Join us for our traditional end-of-the-church-year service in which we sing familiar beloved songs, acknowledge the year's births and deaths and transitions, and share in our annual Flower Communion. The Flower Communion (also known as the Flower Celebration) is a ritual in which we each bring a flower(s) to share, and everyone leaves with a different flower than the one they brought.
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SRC Update	9	Title: "Slow and Steady Gets 490 th Place" (<i>Led by Rev. Annie</i>) With many demands on our time, hearts and minds and with an ever present sense of political urgency, it can be hard for many of us to find sustainable paces in our lives. I'll share some practical and spiritual lessons about pacing drawn from marathon training and long haul organizing that I learned on a recent sabbatical.
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Next deadline is TBD

The Parishioner is published monthly. Deadline is generally the **last Monday** of each month. Send submissions to: editors@uubedford.org.

A Note from Jamie

Dear First Parish Members and Friends,

Here we are closing out the church year again! Two Sundays from now we will begin our summer schedule. Here is a reminder of what that looks like:

- June 8: All-ages service and Flower Communion, 10am; Pride Celebration on the Common, 2-4pm; Annual Meeting in the Sanctuary, 4pm.
- June 15: No regular Sunday service.
- June 17: Lay led Juneteenth Celebration (details to be announced).
- June 22: No regular 10am service. We will livestream the General Assembly Sunday Morning Service in the Sanctuary at its special time, 11am ET.
- June 29 – August 31: The Summer Worship Consortium services begin, with the June 29 service at First Parish Bedford.
- September 7: Ingathering!

This summer, we are again having our summer worship consortium program, where five area UU congregations, including First Parish, will take turns offering Sunday services in order to collectively provide a full slate of Sunday services over the summer. Members of all the churches are invited to move around the circuit each Sunday and join in the service wherever it is being hosted.

The five participating churches are First Parish in Bedford, First Parish in Concord, First Parish in Waltham, First Parish in Lincoln, and First Parish in Lexington. The full schedule of services will be posted soon on our website and sent out by email. Bedford will be hosting June 29 (Rev. Annie preaching) and August 10 (I will be preaching). Steve Sussman will be providing piano for our two services.

All services will be at 10am ET. An online option will be available, either by Zoom or livestreamed to YouTube. Childcare will be provided for every service.

Minister's Summer Schedule:

Rev. Annie and I will both be away for General Assembly from June 18 – June 22. I will be away on study leave from July 7 to July 28. Other time away will be announced.

I will save my annual report for a lengthier goodbye to this church year. But suffice to say, it has been a remarkable year, and you are a remarkable community. Have a wonderful summer, and I look forward to next year!

Peace,

-Jamie

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the "J" and "a" being particularly prominent.

Minister's Musings

When I returned from sabbatical, many things were comfortingly the same. Worship, community hour, youth groups, so many same faces and rhythms welcoming me back. But one thing that was noticeably different was the code I needed to use to get into the building. Yes, we have a new security system.

I am not generally the most security minded person. I tend to be trusting and not-very-fearful which has pros and cons. But in this moment we are living in, I am recognizing the need for more technical tools for security. Yes, even as I curse repeatedly over my inability to effectively use Cryptpad while crying out my sad love for the totally not secure tech mega giant Google. Even as the absurd number of notifications in Signal rises. (For any who don't know, Cryptpad is an encrypted document sharing platform, aka Google Docs for people trying to be security minded and Signal is an encrypted messaging app. But I'm sure everyone knows that one thanks to that journalist from the Atlantic.)

I've come to appreciate technical tools like Cryptpad or keypads with unique entry codes on doors even though they are annoying and inconvenient. They are helpful forms of protection to mitigate risk. And I also appreciate that we as a community continue to choose courage and connection. I'd much rather struggle through Cryptpad and keep working on outreach to people whose loved ones are detained. I'd much rather put a keypad on the door and keep making our pro-immigrant, pro-LGBTQ, pro-democracy politics known publicly.

This is a wild time. And we need one another more than ever. We need to balance safety and integrity, caution and boldness. I think we are doing a good job. I hope we all stay connected this summer, stay brave, stay clear and stay as safe as we can.



Office Matters

As the weather has finally caught up to the calendar, we find ourselves at the last newsletter of the 2024/2025 church year. We've had so many fun-filled events too many to name. By the time you read this version, our remaining events in June will be commencing. This Sunday after services, we have the FP Committee Fair with scrumptious Bedford Farms ice cream and various toppings. Later next week, don't forget about the first Friday potluck (with a slightly different format). Then on Sunday, June 8th, we have our Annual Meeting at 4PM. As always, please be sure to read further in this newsletter and visit the main [Calendar](#) to see all of our upcoming activities. **Thank you for your patience and grace during the entire year. On behalf of the office, Stacey and I wish you all a fabulous summer!!!**

***REMINDER: Security System**.....all three phases of the security system have now been installed. Unfortunately, we are experiencing some quirks as we finish the first full month, with the alarm panel being armed during the day on Memorial Day weekend, the entry system periodically failing, etc... ADT technicians will be on site this week to hopefully rectify these issues. Please bear with us as we muddle through these early stages.

***REMINDER: New Pledge Year/Payments**.....although our official Stewardship campaign has ended, as you start sending in payments for your new pledge, **PLEASE** make sure to write the appropriate campaign year on the memo line of your check (i.e. Pledge Year 24/25 or Pledge Year 25/26). Also, if you are making an online payment, please make sure to select the appropriate year from the drop-down menus in One Church. These steps will help us accurately credit your current and future pledge. If you have any questions, please email or call me at the office.

***Reimbursement Requests**.....there are green reimbursement forms in the office, so if you would like to grab a couple the next time you are in the building, please feel free. Hold on to your receipts and submit them (along with the reimbursement form) to the appropriate Committee Chairperson for approval/signature. **Also, it's very important to check with the Chairperson on which line item in the budget should be debited.** Once it's complete, please submit everything to me in the office or leave them in my mailbox out back. Also please remember to include the address where you wish to have the check mailed. Typically, I work on accounts payable every Thursday morning and checks go out in Friday's mail.

***Booking Rooms/Zooms**.....in an effort to accommodate everyone fairly, I ask that all requests for rooms/Zoom meetings be made in advance by at least 3-5 business days. We understand last minute requests will occasionally happen, but if everyone tries to work within these parameters, we will be more successful in meeting your needs.

***Hybrid Meetings/Technology**.....If you're having a hybrid meeting, please reach out to the office and request our OWL camera or our new speakerphone. The camera, phone and all the accessories can be found in the locked cabinet under the mailboxes. Also, we now have ethernet cables (and two types of adapters available) in the following rooms: Common Room, 204 and 203. To book the Owl camera, the speakerphone or request to use one of the adapters, please contact Stacey at the office.

***IMPORTANT REMINDER: Leftover Food Policy**.....with all of the food events coming up, this is a reminder about our leftover food policy we put in place with regards to Memorial Services, receptions, parties, etc.... This policy was created in conjunction with the members of the Hospitality Team to addresses safety concerns (i.e. food allergies) and food waste concerns. Below please find the details:

- Leftover perishable foods can only be served to children/youth the same day;
- Common allergen food labels in bowl/basket to be put out with foods being served to reduce accidental consumption;
- Provide communication to internal/external groups that all food must be removed after the event, with the exception of packaged food or one medium tray per item (i.e. one vegetable tray, one fruit tray, etc...);
- Tape/marker will be left in the kitchen for easy labeling of dates on food;
- Ice cream related toppings need to be checked for expiration dates so they don't pile up.

***Email Lists**.....please find below an explanation of **our three email lists** for use by the First Parish community. For anyone who would like to join one (or more) of the three email lists, please contact me so I can verify whether or not you're already signed up. If you're not, I can add you with your preferred email address. (Note: sometimes these messages might end up in your Spam/Junk folders, so please double-check those folders). As always, we ask that you be mindful of each of their uses, and please remember to be kind and respectful with your communications.

- Parish Business (ParishBiz) List – communicates important news and events from FP staff and leadership to the parish. **We encourage all Parishioners to subscribe to ParishBiz.**
- Announcement (Anno) List – used to *facilitate* announcements of news and events of general interest to the community (i.e. Does anyone know a good chiropractor?).
- Discussion (Disc) List – a means of promoting (*or responding to*) the discussion of issues of general interest to the community.

- Brenda Rybicki, Parish Administrator

Parish Board Notes

It's amazing to me that a full twelve months have passed since I started my term as Parish Board President. The privilege was not something I previously had considered and I was humbled to accept. I am so grateful to have had the

opportunity to serve as President and appreciate all the assistance I have received during this past year. What a great experience. I thought I understood so much about the church, but I have learned more than I could have imagined. I now know in greater detail what it takes to keep the church functioning on many levels, I have deepened my relationship with so many fellow parishioners, and I appreciate more fully what it means to me to be a Unitarian Universalist.

This is the second year of my three year commitment as a member of the Board and I look forward to what comes next. Thank you to all who have helped me along my journey this year. More importantly - thank you to everyone who continues to show up and do their part to make this community the amazing congregation that is First Parish.

Don't forget that the Annual Meeting takes place on Sunday June 8th at 4PM. I look forward to seeing you there (or on Zoom). Enjoy your summer, be well, and please keep in touch!

With gratitude and appreciation,
Susan Lincoln



Musical Notes

"High in some silent sky, love sings a silver song, making the earth whirl softly, love makes the world go round." – lyrics from the song “Love Makes the World Go ‘Round” from “Carnival!” (1961) by Bob Merrill (1921-1998)

Here is music information for the final two Sundays of this church year –

Sunday, June 1st: Steve Sussman will be playing piano. Natan Wythe will conduct the youth choirs singing an arrangement of The Chicks’ emotional “Landslide” and an arrangement of Joni Mitchell’s beloved “The Circle Game”. This is Natan’s final Sunday with us and we will honor him during the service and at coffee hour.

Sunday, June 8th: Sandra LaBarge Neumann will be back after knee surgery to play organ. Steve Sussman will be playing piano. The adult choir will sing the cherished song “As Torrent in Summer” in honor of Lois Pulliam; they will also sing “Will the Circle Be Unbroken?” in honor of the circle of life ceremony included in the service. The congregation and choir will sing First Parish’s traditional year-end anthem by Dean Groves, “Another Year”, as well as hymns including Jason Shelton’s “Life Calls Us On” and our traditional “The Sweet June Days”. Carol Epple (flute), Elizabeth Connors (clarinet), Benjamin Sears (vocal) and I (piano) will perform an arrangement of “Love Makes the World Go ‘Round” for Flower Communion.

Before launching into summer, I would like to personally thank all the musicians who made this past year at First Parish a year of extraordinary music making. We are blessed to have a group of immensely talented, flexible and dedicated choir members and instrumentalists who continue to be part of the music program and generously share their talents with us. I want to give special thanks to the members of the youth choirs as well as their parents and give more special thanks to Sandra LaBarge-Neumann, to Steve Sussman, and to Bob & Fran Tyler for their highly professional and heartfelt contributions this past year. I also want to thank all the guest musicians who came to fill our spaces with beautiful melodies and positive energy. Much gratitude is owed to the Music Committee for their continued work and devotion on behalf of First Parish and the music program. I want to give a huge thanks to Natan Wythe who brought all of us great joy by sharing his musical skills and inspiration with us. We will miss him. Finally, I want to give an extra

special thanks to Reverends Jamie and Annie and Brenda Rybicki and Stacey Katz for their incredible and constant support. First Parish is indeed a very special place.

Finally, I also hope you'll think about joining the adult choir because we've got terrific plans for 2025-2026 including wonderful music in the fall, winter and spring, music by J.S. Bach for Christmas Eve, and music reflecting the "melting pot" in celebration of the 250th anniversary of the U.S. for Music Sunday 2026. Have a great summer!

- Bradford Conner, Music Director

Youth Happenings

Senior Youth Group (High School)

Last month members of our SYG led a worship service on May 18th and took a field trip to do community service at Eastie Farm in East Boston on May 21st.

We'll close out our church year with two events:

5/31 - End of Year SYG Cookout (rising 9th graders welcome!) 6-8 pm in the yard behind the church building (rain location will be sent if needed)

6/8 - Bedford Pride festival 2-4 pm on the Common. Come meet up with other SYG youth to enjoy this festival of music, activities and treats.

FP Committee Fair!

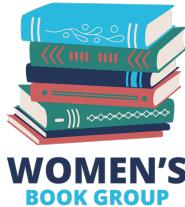
How do the committees at First Parish contribute to the vibrancy of this Church and what can you gain from joining one? Find out next Sunday at the after service Make your own Sundae event!



First Parish Women's Book Group

The last meeting of the church year will be a lunch potluck at 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, June 8 at Margaret Jackson's house, 5 Richard Road, Bedford.

We will choose the books for the 2025-2026 church year so please think about books you would like to read and discuss next year.



Vespers Services

Vespers are on summer hiatus and will resume in September!

Update on First Friday Potluck Suppers

Potluck suppers on the first Friday of every month have been a cherished tradition at First Parish going back many years providing a time to share delicious food and wonderful company.

For the last several years, Ron Green has been our stalwart leader in organizing these events and we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to him for his dedication and leadership. He has ensured that everything runs smoothly, from sending out reminders each month to setting up the Common Room, turning the ovens on, purchasing wine, and overseeing cleanup. After many years at the helm, now it is time for him to take a well-deserved break and simply enjoy attending!

Going forward, we would like to rotate this responsibility so it does not fall on just one person/couple. Currently, three couples (Carla & Paul Bradford, Sandy & Mike Boczenowski, and Marge & Norm Heckman) have agreed to rotate coordination of the potluck each month. It would be great if we could get a few more people to jump into the rotation so each of us would only have to do it 2-3 times/year. If you are willing to help out, contact any of those listed above.

We are making one more change. The tradition has always been to collect donations for the wine or beer from those partaking! We would like to simplify things a bit and suggest we switch to a BYOB approach. Bring a bottle of wine or some beer to share or whatever other types of drinks you might wish, e.g. seltzer, apple cider, soda. At the end of the evening, take home anything that is left. Water is always available!

If you have never attended, we encourage you to come check it out! **Our next First Friday Potluck is Friday, June 6th!** It is always a relaxing evening of connecting on a more intimate level than is possible during coffee hour. All are welcome! Bring a potluck dish (appetizer, main course, or dessert) for 6-8 to share. Appetizers start at 6 PM and main dishes are usually out by 7 PM followed by dessert.

Hope to see you there! Again, many thanks and kudos to Ron Green.

Second Annual Flower Communion is June 8th!!!



Last year, the Lay Pastoral team began a new tradition following in the footsteps of the Cookie Express. Now, we are delivering floral bouquets to homebound parishioners instead of cookies!

Following the Flower Communion Service on June 8th, we will kick off Flower Express 2025!

We are looking for folks to sign up to bring extra flowers to the service for making bouquets and/or to help with delivering bouquets after the service. If you can help with either of these tasks, please contact Liz Connors to learn how to sign up.

Flower Express Help

If you are bringing extra flowers, please deliver them to Room 204 prior to the service. If you can help deliver bouquets, come to Room 204 after 11:30 to pick up a bouquet and the name and address of your assigned parishioner. If you have any questions, you can contact Marge Heckman, a member of the Lay Pastoral team.

69th Annual Plant and Craft Fair

Thank you, First Parish Community, for a great Plant Fair May 17th!



Have any ideas on what we can do better for our next Plant Fair? **Please send them to Bea by June 1st at committees@uubedford.org!**

A big shout out to the tireless organizational committee: Dorothy Africa & Bea Brunkhorst, co-chairs & Plants; Crafters and Treasurer – Bea, Susan Lincoln; Bake Table and co-chair Sara Angus; IT- Natalie McClain; entertainment- Linda Conrad and Melinda Ballou; Melinda youth outreach (seedlings); Publicity- Gene Kalb, Linda Conrad, Christine Bennet; Facilities- Joel Parks, and Paul Bradford. We also thank our local business sponsors New England Nurseries and the Scimone Farm.

Thanks to all who staffed the FP Info table, children's table -thanks Nate and Annie and face painters (Thanks Carinna West!).

We had lots of plants, 27 crafters (up from 20 from last year). Thanks to all the great musicians from FP- Joanne Glover and Ted Carlson, Dave Southard Melinda Ballou & Nathan Kimball.

Thanks to all for plant donations, doing all the plant digging, seedling growing, hosting a sign, crafter spot marking, set up, coffee making, baking, publicity, being a cashier, floater, being a plant expert, plant sitting and of course taking the whole thing down!

Let's do it again next year, the 70th Plant and Craft Fair!

Carleton Willard Village Discussion Groups

Carleton Willard Village: Please note, the CWV discussion group led by Rev. Jamie does not meet from June to August. The last meeting was in May. We will meet again in September.

Small Group at Carleton Willard Village: The Small Group at CWV led by Rev. Annie will meet in the Bedford Room at 2pm on Thursday June 26th before taking a summer hiatus for July and August.

Juneteenth

The First Parish Juneteenth Observance this year will be on June 17th from 10 a.m.-noon. Since Juneteenth coincides with the UU General Assembly meeting this year, it will be an informal gathering, with remarks by Sharon McDonald on what we know about slave-holding in colonial Bedford and a visit to the Old Burying Ground to scatter flower petals in the African Reservation section of the cemetery. We will meet outside FP at 10 a.m. if the weather is good, and in the Common Room in the event of rain. After visiting the cemetery we will return to the Common Room for light refreshments. This is a First Parish event, but anyone else who wishes to attend will be welcomed. If you are interested in contributing refreshments, flower petals, or would like to help with the event, please contact Dorothy Africa at committees@uubedford.org

Social Responsibility Council (SRC) Update

*The only day in life
where the sun doesn't set
is called
hope.*

~ [Humberto Ak'abal](#)



Greetings from your SRC! The final recipient of this year's Share the Plate program carries forward a message of hope for the future. Come to the service on Sunday, June 1, to learn about Sowing Opportunities, an organization that works collaboratively with indigenous communities in rural Guatemala to cultivate self-sustainability, education, and wellness and to help them remain safe and food secure. You can donate to support their good work via cash/check or online at OneChurch.

Sometimes volunteer work can seem like . . . well, work. We schedule meetings, create goals, craft agendas, plan and implement projects, and activate Zoom links. Sometimes we can get bogged down just trying to find the time to meet.

But then . . . oh then! We gather. We laugh. We commiserate. We support. As SRC members, we hear from amazing people doing amazing things in Community, who remind us that the needles we are helping to move do not change things overnight. Rather, change happens in the repeated, consistent, and reliable actions of well-meaning people.

Our SRC motto this year came from a marathon meeting where many of us arrived feeling emotionally and physically exhausted between busy schedules, seasonal illnesses, and an overwhelming news cycle. After hearing from six groups doing work in our communities, as the last visitor left the room and several of us wiped away tears, Elise announced, "Best. Day. Ever!"

We now regularly call back to that phrase — that feeling of gathering, being present, pushing back the darkness, and supporting work that has an impact. And we invite you to join in that feeling during the next church year by attending an SRC meeting and [proposing](#) causes to support.

- Moriah Tumbleson-Shaw (Chair), Heather Black, Doug Denny-Brown, Pamala Foresman, John Laferriere, Jaclyn Olsen, and Elise Randazzo

Capital Campaign Definition Task Force Update

During the 2025-26 church year, our task force evaluated the physical needs of FPB's historic building and parsonage over the coming decade. We sought input from multiple FPB stakeholders including the physical plant, finance, music and environmental justice committees, staff, the Parish Board and the entire congregation. We also considered FPB's values and commitments with regards to sustainability and accessibility. Given our goals of moving away from fossil fuels, some of this proposed work may require upgrades to our electric service. Based upon feedback received, we recommend prioritizing major FPB infrastructure work as follows:

High priority:

- Replacement of end-of-life HVAC rooftop system serving the rear addition:
 - ❖ In-kind replacement of three units, least green, estimate \$120K
 - ❖ Replace all four units with dual fuel units, more efficient, estimate \$208K
 - ❖ VRF air source heat pump system with improved zoning within building, even more efficient, estimate TBD
 - ❖ Geothermal heat pumps, very efficient, estimate \$750K
- Backup power: Information gathering in process. Options include batteries, and emergency generator
- Organ repair: Estimate \$56K
- Replace gas range in main kitchen: Estimate \$10K - \$20K. Options include:
 - ❖ Replace in kind with new gas range, least green
 - ❖ Induction range, electric powered, more green
 - ❖ Induction cooktop with new counter below, more green
- Continued improvements to the fire suppression system: Estimate \$140K

Medium priority:

- Common Room rear ramp for ADA accessibility: Estimate \$75K
- Parsonage bathroom renovation for improved accessibility: Estimate \$75K

Low priority:

- Additional solar panels
- Power co-generation
- Digital wayside pulpit
- Improved acoustics
- Parsonage window replacement

Items in this last category are deprioritized based on their compatibility with current systems, genuine need assessment, project permission likelihood and/or urgency.

Previous campaigns greatly benefited from guidance from outside consultant guidance. So this February, we requested a quote for situation analysis, feasibility study and capital campaign support from a UUA Stewardship Consultant. The consultant proposed performing 3 phases of work from planning through the completed capital campaign. The total cost would come to approximately \$20K if all the proposed consulting work is approved.

There is significant uncertainty in the US economy at this time. Capital campaign planning should take economic conditions into account. Assuming the economy does not suffer major setbacks over the coming year, our task force recommends the following campaign schedule:

- Jun-Aug 2025: Continue gathering cost information for highest-priority candidate projects and develops a tiered budget incorporating contingencies
- Sep 2025: Stewardship consultant performs initial analysis over one weekend
- Sep/Oct 2025: Parish board appoints Capital Campaign committee
- Nov 2025 Semi-annual meeting: Announce feasibility study led by UU consultant
- Nov/Dec 2025: Consultant performs feasibility study
- Jan 2026: Special congregational meeting to vote on undertaking Capital Campaign
- Apr 2026: Capital Campaign runs in conjunction with Stewardship Campaign
- 2026-2029: FPB receives pledged campaign funds from congregation

This task force will continue to develop technical information and cost estimates until the successor Capital Campaign committee is formed.

-Dan Bostwick, Joan Bowen, Peter Cho, Jamie Hinson-Rieger, Brett Leida & Jenn McClain

Update from the Parish Council

Have you ever wondered about the work of the Parish Council? The Parish Council consists of Bea Brunkhorst, Chair; Rev Annie Gonzalez; and Wendy Innis, as well as chairs and leaders of committees of the church.

The purpose of the Parish Council is to promote communication and coordination across the church committees, Leadership Team, and Parish Board regarding church programs, scheduling, and the development of the annual operating plan and budget.

The Parish Council met three times this year. All of the committees were asked to update their charters consisting of the committee's purpose, roles, and responsibilities. This was a significant endeavor which we believe improved transparency in the work of the church.

Additionally, each meeting included discussions on how to share information across all committees. "Best Practices" and 'Publicity How-To' documents are now available to all committee members. New member recruitment was a hot topic with many members highlighting that sharing the benefits of participation is key to increasing volunteer engagement. At the upcoming Sunday after-service FPB Committee Fair-make your own Sundae event (June 1st), we plan to have volunteers share information about their committees. Interested? See the Flier in this issue for more information!

-Submitted by Bea Brunkhorst, Parish Council Chair

Gallery@First Parish

WHAT DOES DEMOCRACY LOOK LIKE?

THIS IS WHAT DEMOCRACY LOOKS LIKE!

The First Parish Gallery Committee would like to open the next church year by sponsoring a show about Democracy, an idea suggested to us by Karen Frederick. What does Democracy look like to you and your family and friends? We are calling for art on this theme...from protest signs, photos of protests (maybe photos of the Friday afternoon protests), or things that you value and want to protect and nurture in our democracy. Perhaps you might like to make a huge copy of parts of the US Constitution !

You will have the summer to create something to inspire, uplift, and empower all of us. Watch the Parishioner for dates to submit your work. In the meantime, we will bring life to the work as we stand up and speak out!!

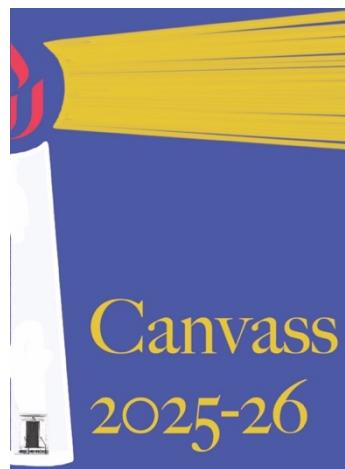
Stewardship

Stewardship - Congratulations to all who've made our campaign successful!

To support our FY25-26 budget, the Parish Board requested a Stewardship Campaign goal to raise \$584,000 from 206 pledging families. The campaign began on March 16th and officially ended five weeks ago on April 20th, Easter Sunday. Since then, we've been reaching out to those who had not pledged and thereby received additional pledges of \$53,370. As of today, the congregation has pledged a total of \$552,604, which represents 95% of the \$584,000 pledge goal. Those pledges come from 194 households, a participation rate of 94%. We are also 'cautiously optimistic' that some other pledges will still come in.

A few stats: Last year's pledges totaled \$544,891 from 193 households. This year's total of \$552,604 reflects an additional \$8,213 in pledges. This year's average and median pledges are currently \$2,848 and \$1,950, respectively. The corresponding values from last year were \$2,818 and \$1,800.

This year's campaign theme "A Beacon of Light" likened our church to a lighthouse – a signal of safety and hope in troubling times. That this has been a turbulent year is undeniable but with your generous support, that light continues to burn bright!



THE WARRANT

FIRST PARISH IN BEDFORD UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
BEDFORD, MIDDLESEX COUNTY, COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MIDDLESEX SS:

To the Clerk, First Parish in Bedford

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts you are hereby authorized and instructed to notify the voters of said First Parish in Bedford in the County of Middlesex to meet in person or remotely via Zoom on Sunday, the eighth day of June 2025, at four o'clock in the afternoon and then and there to act on the following articles, viz:

- I. To elect a Clerk and Moderator to serve from now until at the June 2026 meeting. Nominees are **Rebecca Green Neale**, Clerk; and **Robert Dorer**, Moderator.
- II. To appoint a Minutes Committee. This group of three people will be responsible for reviewing the Clerks' minutes of today's meeting in a timely manner, prior to being presented for a vote by the parish.
- III. To hear and act on the minutes of the Parish Meeting held on November 10, 2024.
- IV. To hear the reports of the Senior Minister, Parish Board President, Minister of Faith Development, Director of Faith Development for Children, and Treasurer.
- V. To elect two members-at-large to the Parish Board. Nominees are **Robert "Ted" Carlson** (term ending 2028) and **Mark Bailey** (term ending 2028).
- VI. To elect two members to the Social Responsibility Council. Nominees are **Moriah Tumbleson-Shaw** (term ending 2028) and **Heather Black** (term ending 2028).
- VII. To elect one member to the Nominating Committee. Nominee is **Jennifer McClain** (term ending 2028).
- VIII. To adopt an Operating Budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025 thru June 30, 2026.
- IX. To authorize the Parish Board to approve funding for programs and services based on additional pledges received during the first six months of the fiscal year.
- X. To approve revisions of the By-laws of First Parish in Bedford Unitarian Universalist as follows:
 - Article III (Membership) item C: on last line change the word "Destructive" to "Disruptive"
 - Article VI (Governance of the Parish) item C: Standing Committees; *item 1 and item 2 (a-i)*; [see handout with revised wording and additions]

- Article VII (The Nominating Committee) item C; reword the last sentence to read "No member may serve more than one consecutive three-year term, fractional terms being disregarded."
- Article VIII (The Social Responsibility Council) item B: add "..., another to serve as treasurer, and another to serve as communications officer" at the end of the second to last sentence.

XI. To hear from any members of the congregation who have short statements (less than three minutes) that they wish to make to the assembled group.

You are directed to serve this Warrant by posting an attested copy thereof at the Meeting House eight days before the eighth of June, 2025 and to return this Warrant with your doings thereon at said meeting.

Witness our hands this 28th day of May in the year of 2025.

The Parish Board:

Susan Lincoln, President Susan Lincoln

Mark Bailey Mark Bailey

Bea Brunkhorst Bea Brunkhorst

Stacy Chandler Stacy Chandler

Peter Cho Peter Cho

Wendy Innis Wendy Innis

Jenn McClain Jenn McClain

First Parish Committees

2024-2025

Parish Board

Susan Lincoln, *President* (2026)
Mark Bailey (2025)
Bea Brunkhorst (2027)
Stacy Chandler (2027)
Peter Cho (2026)
Wendy Innis, *Treasurer* (2027)
Jennifer McClain (2025)
Rev. Jamie Hinson-Rieger, *ex officio*
Rev. Annie Gonzalez, *ex officio*
Nathan Sellers, *ex officio*

Clerk: Rebecca Green Neale
Moderator: Bob Dorer

Leadership Team

Rev. Jamie Hinson-Rieger, *Sr. Minister*
Rev. Annie Gonzalez, *Min. of Faith Dev.*
Nathan Sellers, *Dir. of FD for Children*
Susan Lincoln, *Board President*
Bea Brunkhorst, *Parish Council Chair*
Wendy Innis, *Treasurer*
Brenda Rybicki, *Parish Administrator*

Parish Council

Bea Brunkhorst, *Chair*
Rev. Annie Gonzalez
Rev. Jamie Hinson-Rieger
Wendy Innis, *Treasurer*
[All Committee Chairs]

Social Responsibility Council

Moriah Tumbleson-Shaw,
Chair (2025)
Pam Foresman, *Treasurer* (2026)
Heather Black (2025)
Doug Denny-Brown (2026)
John Laferriere (2026)
Jaclyn Olsen (2027)
Elise Randazzo (2027)

Nominating

Linda Pollitz, *Chair* (2025)
Sarah Dorer (2027)
Dave Southard (2026)

Environmental Justice (EJC)

Corinne Doud, *Co-Chair (rotating)*
Renu Bostwick
Don MacIver
Lois Pulliam
Marjorie Roemer
Ginny Steel

Faith Development

Rev. Annie Gonzalez, *ex officio*
Nathan Sellers, *ex officio*

Children's FD Team

Kristin Hall
Moriah Tumbleson-Shaw
Ian Carroll
Eloise Carroll (child)

Jr. Youth Team

Mark Bailey
Devin Sonpal (youth)
Nina Sonpal (youth)

Sr. Youth Team

Bob Doud
Jerry Ross
Carinna Dogan-West (youth)
Taelor Nichols (youth)

Adult FD Team

Randi Currier
Doug Muder
Jerry Ross

Finance

Wendy Innis, *Chair & Treasurer*
Vicki Gaw, *Asst. Treasurer*
Joan Bowen
Irene Gravina
Bill Rabinowitz
Jeff White

The Gallery@First Parish

Maria Green, *Co-Chair*
Doris Smith, *Co-Chair*
Bob Batt
Raquel Bauman
Stacy Chandler
Kati Oates
Chris Tohline
Christine Wojnar
Christine Dudley-Marling
Nancy Willett, *emeritus*

Hospitality

Catherine Van Praagh, *Chair*
Carla Bradford
Kath McCafferty

Immigration Justice

Ellen Scheiner, *Chair*
Christine Dudley-Marling
Deb Flannery
Tom Flannery
Carolyn Grose
Sabrina McClain
Cecile Mercado
Luanna Read
Anne Schmalz
Ginni Spencer

Information Technology (IT)

Sandy Currier, *Chair, Lead Network*
Renu Bostwick, *Lead Workspace, Google Groups*
Craig Jackson, *Lead Website*

Worship Technology Team

Audio Team
Sandy Currier
Bob Dorer
Abby Hafer
Kath McCafferty
Natalie McClain
Bill Rabinowitz

Camera Team

Bob Bass
Bob Batt
John McClain
Chris Tohline

Video/Zoom Team

Em Bradford
Paul Bradford
Craig Jackson
Cecile Mercado
Cath Van Praagh

Interiors Committee

Erin Dorr, *Chair*
Carlough Faulkner-Carroll

Lay Pastoral Care

Liz Connors, *Chair*
Sandy Boczenowski
Marge Heckman
Anita Raj
Rich Suval
Lisa Tohline
Rev. Jamie Hinson-Rieger

Membership

Dave Southard, *Chair*

Outreach Team

Em Bradford
Joanne Glover
Benji Linden
Natalie McClain
Deb Picciuto
Chris Tohline
Rev. Jamie Hinson-Rieger, *Staff Liaison*

Pathway to Membership Team

Sharon McDonald
Doug Muder
Dave Southard
Rev. Annie Gonzalez, *Staff Liaison*

Sustaining Membership Team

Sarah Dorer, *Chair*
Sandy Boczenowski
Carla Bradford
Ron Green
Jenn McClain
Nina Wampler
Rev. Jamie Hinson-Rieger, *Staff Liaison*

Music

Lisa Tohline, *Chair*
Sara Angus
Dot Bergin
Mike Boczenowski
Bea Brunkhorst
Nancy Daugherty
Carol Epple
Dean Groves
Cynthia Mork
Luana Read
Bill Rasschaert
Chris Tohline
Lee Vorderer
Brad Conner, *ex officio*
Natan Wythe, *ex officio*

Partner Church

Sharon McDonald, *Chair*
Dorothy Africa
Nancy Daugherty
Rich Daugherty
Sarah Dorer
Marge Heckman
Linda Pollitz
Ben Sears
Julie Zacharakis
Ron & Cathy Cordes, *emeritus*

Personnel

Bob Dorer, *Chair*
Carol Gregory
Ed Schwartz

Physical Plant

Joel Parks, *Chair*
Bob Dorer
Vern Gaw
Norm Heckman
Brett Leida
John McClain
Christine Rabinowitz, *Parsonage*

Stewardship

Sarah Dorer, *Co-Chair*
Bill Rabinowitz, *Co-Chair*
Irene Gravina
Jenn McClain
Rev. Jamie Hinson-Rieger, *ex officio*

AD HOC, TASK FORCES & TEAMS

Capital Campaign Task Force

Peter Cho, *Chair*
Dan Bostwick
Joan Bowen
Brett Leida
Jenn McClain
Rev. Jamie Hinson-Rieger

Council on Ministry Team

Ian Carroll
Sharon McDonald
Kiya Nicoll
Joe Pompei

Fundraising Teams

Auction
Peter Cho, *Chair*

Plant & Craft Fair
Dorothy Africa, *Co-Chair*
Bea Brunkhorst, *Co-Chair*

Chili Cook-Off
Linda Pollitz
Gene Kalb

Memorials Task Force

Carla Bradford, *Chair*
Kath McCafferty
Wendy Innis
Rich Suval

UU Urban Ministry Delegates

Cecile Mercado
Robert Schmalz

Worship Associates Team

Jenn McClain, *Chair*
Ian Carroll
Marya Dantzer
Ron Green
Doug Muder
Joe Pompei
Rich Suval
Andrew Van Praagh