

First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist

Spring Quarterly 2023



"Spring will come and so will happiness.
Hold on. Life will get warmer."
...Anita Krizzan

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Cover photography by Sue Weber

The beautiful, native Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) tree was in full bloom outside of Winslow House.

COVE (Communications, Office Volunteers, Etc.) Team

The COVE team works alongside our hardworking staff, Karena Stroh and Sue Weber, to do the administrative work of First Parish Brewster. The COVE volunteers:

Monday-Bob Spencer

Tuesday-Susan Smith

Wednesday-Bob Flanagan

Thursday- Betty Hayes

Skip Bell and **Susan Flaws** are helping out in so many ways on many days of the week!

Marilyn McDermott will rejoin the group in May on Tuesdays.

We have organized a website update team consisting of Sue Weber, Skip Bell, Bob Spencer, and Susan Smith. Our overall goal is to wind up with a website that says to all who visit, “First Parish Brewster sounds like a welcome place to be. Look at all that’s going on!”

Our contact info: Email: cove@firstparishbrewster.org
508 896-5577

From the Minister

Hello, dear ones,

Thank you so much for your support during this pregnancy. By the time you read this, I will be on parental leave with my daughter Elanor. The trees and flowers will be blooming, and I hope Spring reminds you of the power of joy to bloom again and of the vulnerability of being in relationship.

We have wonderful guest preachers lined up for March, and we look forward to welcoming Rev Kenn to the pulpit starting April 1st. The pastoral care coverage schedule for March is Rev Joe Cherry March 1-9 contact (216) 390-7657, Rev Kate Wilkinson- March 9-16 contact revkate@uumh.org, Rev Tracy Johnson March 17-24 contact (203) 217-7991, Rev Joe Cherry March 25-31, Rev Kenn will begin on April 1st, and his email is revkenn@firstparishbrewster.org.

I will return on *Annual Meeting Sunday*, June 11th. If you have any questions about my parental leave, please contact the Executive Leadership Team, Carol Yerby, Barry Powers, and Tavia Ossola. I am grateful to them and the staff for helping to care for this community while I am gone. I am also grateful to all of the FPBUU leadership for the ways that they lead and care for this community as well. I love all of you and will miss you very much.

Rev Jessica Clay



Notes From The Board of Trustees

The Board voted to approve the hiring of Leave Minister Rev Kenn Hurto to fill in for Rev Jessica while she is on parental leave. The Leave Minister Search Committee and Rev Jessica were impressed by Rev. Hurto's experience, presence, and passion for the ministry. He will be with us from April 1 through June 15. Rev Jessica established an Executive Leadership Team to support staff members while she is on parental leave. Members include Tavia Ossola, Barry Powers, and Carol Yerby. The team will meet every two weeks starting at the end of March.

Richard Holden, CEO of Holden Building Corporation, located at 2022 Main Street, would like to lease access to Route 6A from his storage lot through our Annex Parking Lot. A group of parishioners, including three members of the Board of Trustees, will meet with Mr. Holden to discuss our concerns (zoning restrictions, insurance liability for potential damage to the solar field and drainage system, use of the driveway easement) and report back to the Board at the March meeting.

Members of the staff and Board met with members of the UU Meetinghouse of Chatham to explore areas of collaboration. We discussed our social justice initiatives, youth program, Meetinghouse Speaker Series, and ways to find administrative support.

The *Financial Futures Tiger Team* has been exploring the possibility of purchasing a parsonage for our minister. We anticipate the need to provide housing due to the high cost of real estate and the low inventory of affordable rentals on Cape Cod. We have scheduled an information session on Sunday, March 26, at 11:30 in the Sanctuary to discuss this topic with the congregation.

Carol Yerby, Board of Trustees President

Board of Trustees 2022-2023

Carol Yerby, President
Susan Smith, Past President
Jim Lieb, President-elect
Karen Witting, Treasurer
Rand Burkert, Clerk
Members-At-Large:
John Kielb, Liz Libby,
Tom O'Brien, Diane Willcox

Administration and Finance Ministries

There is a quiet beauty in giving oneself time to simply be. This is what I did last July through October on my sabbatical. Taking that time away changed me in ways still unfolding, and there is a vulnerability in all of this. Stepping back into First Parish Brewster UU has been like getting on an airport moving walkway. It can feel strange if you haven't been on one in a while. There are unspoken but fundamental rules that one must follow because we are all navigating this moving thing together. What I do affects you, and what you do affects me. One must recognize that some people will continue to walk, while others will need to simply stand and let the walkway carry them along for a bit. There is no one right way for all, and staying aware of one's own needs as well as the needs of others is important.

Taking extended time away from work is often reserved for sickness, tragedy, or other reasons that are out of our control, but to do it intentionally is an act of resistance. We live in a society that values overworking as if it's a valid investment in the future. My experience of returning to work after my sabbatical is one of wonder and curiosity. Both my broader and up-close perspectives of the work of FPBUU have shifted. It's a creative process of putting all the many pieces back together and turning them into a meaningful collage.

Karena Stroh, Administration and Finance Director

Introducing our Parental Leave Minister

The Reverend Kenneth Gordon Hurto, Unitarian Universalist Minister will be with us from April 1 through June 15. Rev. Kenn is a graduate of Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, and of the Divinity School at Harvard University. For 45 years as an active parish minister until his retirement in 2017, he served Unitarian Universalist congregations, small and large, in Indiana, Iowa, Virginia, Florida, New Zealand and Australia. Kenn concluded his ministry while serving for twelve years as a member and Lead of the UUA Southern Region field staff.



Throughout his ministry, Kenn has been sought out for his expertise in Bowen family systems theory as applied to congregational life. Kenn continues teaching systems theory, congregational growth, and leadership development. He serves our wider ministries as ministerial search committee coach for congregations in transition. His particular interests including Mission/Vision work, nurturing accountable leadership, results-based stewardship, and managing congregational conflict.

Kenn is a colorful preacher with a conversational style, emphasizing our Universalist heritage commitment to be inclusive of diverse perspective and inclusive of many identities as we strive to create Beloved Community. A self-describe “mystical, religious humanist,” Kenn celebrates a ministry of living in love, with respect for human dignity and courage for justice. Kenn lives in Vero Beach with his wife, Jeannie Kelly. They have a house in Barnstable. He is an avid scuba diver, cyclist, and novice gardener.

FIRST PARISH BREWSTER



Unitarian Universalist
2023 - 2024 Pledge

Community • Connections • Commitment

Stewardship 2023-2024

Connection, Community, Commitment - Moving Forward Together

The Stewardship Pledge Drive got off to a robust start this year. We started this year's canvas earlier than years past and have received many pledge commitments thus far. We can announce that many within our church community have increased their pledges over last year! If you have not yet submitted your pledge commitment, we ask that you do so by March 15th. We have an operational budget of \$432,000, which only allows us to keep our current staffing and levels.

Therefore, we are asking if all members can increase their yearly pledges to cover our budgetary expenses. We thank you all for your support and commitment to FPBUU.

In gratitude - The Stewardship Committee

Music Ministry

The FPBUU choir and instrumentalists were graced with a very enriching afternoon retreat experience led by guest minister Rev. Shay Mac Kay on Sunday, February 19, entitled "The Spirituality of Sound." Rev Shay, a musician herself, encouraged us to contemplate what it means to bring music to the congregation and to enliven it even more with increased consciousness, intention, and authenticity.

She suggested we take a breath together before we begin a piece and set our intention, whether for healing, joy, or any other personal intention in our music-making. We had fun making rhythms on some small instruments and drums and also had the opportunity to close our eyes and feel the power of how the sound waves from her frame drum touched our bodies, far beyond and even before our brains could recognize and translate the sounds. It was a heartening sharing time, and participants were grateful for the offering.



A shout out to some Choir members and instrumentalists who have been stepping up in recent months: Judy Jollett and her talented ukulele ensemble, including Board member John Kielb both singing and playing, and also to Rikki Bates, Laura Gill, Marie Hartley, Pam McLane, Maureen Osborne, Topper Roth, David Sutherland, Dan Rabold as well as Jennifer Rabold (who also organized a delightful pot luck before our recent workshop). It's wonderful to serve in a congregation with spirited participation by ALL of the many musicians!

Kaeza Fearn, Interim Music Director



SAVE THE DATE

Music Sunday is coming April 23!

During the worship service, we will feature additional selections by the Choir, and reflect on music at FPBUU.

FPBUU Staff Serving the Larger UU Movement

In case you didn't know, we have several staff serving the larger Unitarian Universalist movement in meaningful ways.

Click on each logo or link to learn more about these organizations.



Rev Jessica Clay is on the [UU Mass Action Board](#).

Twinks Hastings is on the Regional Board of [LREDA](#) and serves as the professional development, training, and events coordinator.



Karena Stroh is on the Board of the [Association of Unitarian Universalist Administrators](#) and Co-chair of their Professional Development Team.

Lifespan Religious Education Ministries Vulnerability - Resistance - Creativity

We have all been changed so much in the last few years, like it or not, and those changes have led to larger patterns of change in human behavior. For example, more folks work from home or in hybrid ways than ever before, more meetings take place virtually, folks have access to all sorts of medical services online that were unavailable to them before, and we now have access to worship in our PJs from home!

Thus, First Parish Brewster must change if we are to be a church and faith that grows into the future. Folks will come and go, programs that we love dearly will lose energy, and others will come along in their wake, and yet the heart, the center of this place, the community of love, will be forever.



I believe that in this time, we are being called into a time of vulnerability, of letting go of what we know, long for, or wish was, and instead, we are being called into that magical place of creativity. We are a community of abundance in so many rich ways, now is our time to dream and live our possibilities. In the Religious Education department, we will throw a lot of spaghetti at the walls (figuratively and maybe literally) to see what sticks in the next couple of years, especially in adult and multigenerational religious, educational programming. I invite you to say yes to something that sounds weird or is “not your thing” because it might end up being your thing! In our CYM (Children and Youth Ministry) program, we are seeking ways to serve our families in ways that make sense for 2023, helping instill a sense of wonder in the great mysteries of life and, as always, remaining a home where our children can grow into confident, unique, youth in an open, supportive multi-gen community, in a way that really can only happen at church.

Twinks Hastings, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

Thrift Store...Happy Spring

As the days get longer and the temperatures get warmer, we at the Thrift Store look forward to a busy and exciting spring season!

Spring is the BEST time to clean out your closets. We are accepting ONLY spring and summer clothing at this time. **Donation day is Friday between 10 am and 2 pm**, and please keep your donations at the three-bag or box limit.

Some things we LOVE getting for donations...fun and funky knick-knacks, your collections (owls, frogs, cat figures...you get the idea), household items, and books. Your donations help support the church; we all benefit when we receive quality donations!

Thank you for being so supportive, and as always, a big thank you to our amazing volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please email celine@firstparishbrewster.org.

Celine Crook, Thrift Store Manager

Women's Circle Alliance

Our winter programming brought out many more members and friends; I'm happy to report! As music tends to open hearts and help to grow our souls, we all enjoyed the Cape Cod Saxophone Group (yours truly was one of the SAXy Sextet) for our December holiday festivities. Wonderful refreshments graced our beautifully decorated tables and were enjoyed by all. January brought us our own Ann Berry, with a captivating photo travelogue dotted with many engaging vignettes of her El Camino experiences. February's program brought us Building a Bigger Table, where we experienced turning our love into justice.



Our collation responsibilities begin in March when our congregation celebrates the life of one of our beloved members, John Myers. Our condolences go out to John's wife, Mary Myers, and their loved ones. More information will be following regarding John's memorial service on March 25th. We on the WCA will be organizing the collation.



Here's our Spring Line-up:

March 8th: Independence House presentation by Chris Morin

April 12th: Grandmothers Against Violence

May 10th: Picnic

We take a break for the summer and have a welcome back return on September 13th, usually with a picnic. We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month for special programs led by First Parish Brewster members and various members of our Cape communities. For more information, please contact Linda Hladek or another WCA member. All are welcome, and we hope to see you!

Endowment Board

The Endowment Board has had a busy year with almost double the amount of money to distribute after we paid off our loan! The congregation was very generous in working on getting this paid off, and we are all reaping the benefits.



Some of the projects funded by the Endowment Board include the *Soul of Aging* workshop, which many participants talked about how helpful this was. We funded a CYM retreat. We also have contributed money for advertising for the *Meeting House Series*, which has drawn big crowds from within First Parish and the wider community. In addition to helping with the maintenance of all our buildings, we helped with the playground repair for our children. So, the Endowment Fund has been helping us, from the wee ones to our elders, and even making our buildings look good!

We have approved \$49,656 already and still have \$22,871 available for distribution prior to June 30, 2023. So next fiscal year, we will have \$59,067 for distribution, which is 5% of the Fund's value as of December 30, 2022. This amount will increase as the Endowment Fund continues to grow.

Bob Flanagan, Endowment Board Chair

FUNdraising Committee

The FUNdraising Committee has been busy planning to bring fun events aimed at bringing our church community together while raising money to support First Parish Brewster.



“Souper” Sundays – In response to the success of our Soup Shoppe packages, as seen in previous auctions, we are introducing “Souper” Sundays! You will have your choice to buy either a quart size jar (\$15) and/or a pint size (\$8) from our variety of soup selections lovingly made by members of our church community. We will periodically offer this opportunity throughout the year, so keep watching The Weekly Angle.

Dinner & Movie – There has been much chatter about bringing back the Dinner & Movie series. We would love to see its reemergence! We are looking for people who love to eat, love to watch a movie, and love to discuss the movie topic after it’s viewing. We need a person or persons that would like to spear head this group under the guidance of Judy Jollett. Would you like to be amongst the hosts to preview what movies to present and help arrange the logistics? We are only able to bring this series back with your support! Contact Judy Jollett.



Spring Festival & Auction – It is never too early to start planning for the largest fundraising event of the year. The Spring Festival is scheduled for Sunday, May 21st. Think about how you can support the event by donating items and offerings for our *Online Auction*. Need ideas? The best advice we can give....we all love to eat and we all love to do things together! We will also feature the *Bake Sale* and the *Plant & Garden Sale* (Rand Burkert has suggested, with our mild winter, it’s not too early to start splitting plantings in your garden!

Craft Group – With our fundraising events starting to bring in more visitors from outside our church walls, Elenita Muniz and Tavia Ossola have started a craft group! This guild will get together on a periodic basis to craft various gift ideas to offer for sale at our fundraising events. So join in and have fun together as Elenita and Tavia offer creative project ideas.



We are always looking for great ways to bring our community together while supporting FPB. If you are a creative soul that likes to brainstorm with others and plan events, we would love to have you join us; no idea turned away!

FUNdraising Committee – Rand Burkert, Barn Draper, Susan Flaws, Judy Jollett, Vicki Kendziorski, Debbi Klein, Patsy Roberts, Rog Smith

What's Going On With The Meeting House Windows?

Building Maintenance Committee is happy to announce that ALL the windows in the Meeting House now actually close and are weather-tight! Previously, even when the latches were closed, there were gaps up to half an inch wide between the upper and lower sashes, so we were heating and cooling the great outdoors.

In addition, the old, brittle sash cords have been replaced with shiny new sash chains wherever possible. Every window has at least one new sash chain, preventing the windows from suddenly descending, if the sash cords snap.

Most windows have two new sash chains -- however, due to the vagaries of 19th-century construction, it was prohibitively expensive to dig out the sash weights in a few of the windows. This restoration work was done beautifully by Nancy Barrington of Window Restoration of Cape Cod and her crew.

Every window was removed, refurbished, and replaced. During her careful work, Nancy discovered a couple of rotten spots in window sills, which the Building Maintenance Committee will be drying out and repairing this month. The cost of the window restoration was \$14,000 (despite Nancy having undercounted our windows, of which there are 18.) In addition, Nancy fixed an air leak under one of the south doors of the Meeting House at no additional cost.

We are grateful to Nancy and her crew for their outstanding work and to the Endowment Fund for approving this unexpected costs as part of the Building Maintenance '22-'23 expenses.



Green Sanctuary is Alive & Well & Living at First Parish Brewster UU



April 22, 2023, marks the 53rd observance of Earth Day. What better time to honor our congregation's commitment in 2014 as an accredited *Green Sanctuary* certified by the UUA? As part of the accreditation process, we committed to a lighter planetary footprint by adopting significant changes in our buildings and congregational life:

- installation of windows in our buildings that allow maximizing heating and cooling functions,
- installation of a solar array on our upper parking lot that allows us to reduce our monthly utility bills,
- installation of an Energy Saver dishwasher to clean dishes & silverware efficiently

In addition, we took steps to reduce the use of disposables, especially at our weekly post-service coffee hour, including:

- use of ceramic cups & plates, and glasses to replace paper and styrofoam,
- use of metal utensils to replace plastic forks, knives & spoons,
- use of cloth napkins to replace paper napkins

Let's celebrate Earth Day 2023 by recommitting to a lighter footprint – in our homes and our congregational home. Please take the time to consider ways that you can walk more lightly on the planet.



I welcome the opportunity to talk with you about this process, so look for me at coffee hour and other FPBUU events and gatherings. Rosanne Shapiro, lunaseacreation@comcast.net



Meetinghouse Speaker Series

The Meetinghouse Speaker Series: Voices of Cape Cod has had a robust and enthusiastic response at our first two events in January and February. The series has attracted a diverse audience from all over the Cape. Here are the upcoming offerings:

Sunday, March 5: 12:30-4:30 PM Linda Coombs *Falling Off Our Feet: The Practices of Colonization Instituted Against Wampanoag People and Other Tribal Nations of Southern New England*, Pre-registration required.

Saturday, April 22: 10 AM-Noon Marcus Hendricks (outdoors) Rain date April 23- limited to 25. This is a guided walk on the FPBUU properties with Wampanoag historian and naturalist Marcus Hendricks to learn about the 12,000-year-long history, culture, and land conservancy of the Wampanoag Tribe from pre-colonialism to today. Email: cove@firstparishbrewster.org to get on the waiting list.

Sunday, April 30: 2-4 PM This panel, *Trans Voices* is being presented in conjunction with the *LGBTQ Welcoming Congregation Committee*.

Sunday, May 7: 2-4 PM Hartman Deetz, Mashpee Wampanoag educator, artist & activist will speak about his advocacy of native rights and environmental preservation.

Sunday, June 4: 2-4 PM A viewing of Jim & Robin Miller's film, *Black Kingdoms Matter: Africa The Motherland*, followed by a discussion with the filmmakers.



Financial Futures Group

The *Financial Futures Group* consists of the Board of Trustees, Endowment Board, Finance, Stewardship, Fundraising, and Building Maintenance Committee. We hold bimonthly hybrid meetings and strive to keep the lines of communication open, working towards the long-range financial health of First Parish. Our January meeting was led by our financial consultant Barry Finklestein. The group will meet again in March and in May.

The *Financial Futures Tiger Team* meets more frequently to explore and take action on new funding sources. We are happy to announce *Meetinghouse Motors*, FPB's vehicle donation program. The first donation has been made, a used truck, from a friend of First Parish who lives out of state.

We are also happy to report the award of three local Cultural Council Grants from the towns of Brewster, Orleans, and Dennis in support of our *Meetinghouse Speaker Series*. We are very grateful for all these generous donations in support of FPB. We seek other congregants interested in joining us and working on grants we might be eligible for.

Financial Futures Tiger Team: Laura Gill, Jim Lieb, Susan Smith, Bob Spencer, Gail Webb, and Carol Yerby



MEMBERSHIP

We've been hard at work fine-tuning activities to connect all visitors, members, friends, and the greater First Parish community. Most recently, we developed the *Dine Around with UUs* dinner program, providing social opportunities to get to know each other in small groups by sharing potluck dinners in homes in February, March, and April. Sixty-plus people signed up for the Dine Arouns, demonstrating how much we crave connection as we move away from the pandemic.

We look forward to growing the number of people involved in these dinners next year!

We are also slowly but steadily gaining new members. In the last few months, we have focused on ways to guide people from being frequent visitors to signing the Membership Book to becoming involved in ways that meet their needs, interests, and talents. We have regular greeters each Sunday, but we can use everyone's help! We encourage you to approach people standing apart, looking uncomfortable; we were all there once. Say, "I don't think we've had the pleasure of meeting," and engage them in conversation about themselves, what this community is all about, and what it has meant to you. This is the best way to grow our community and keep it strong.

The next *New Member Recognition Ceremony* will take place on **Sunday, April 16**, and we'd like to see many new members at that ceremony!

Membership Committee: Lindsay Harvey, Marcia Kielb (Dine Around Co-coordinator and Greeter Coordinator), Paula Lieb (Chair), Christine Jenkins, Deborah Madansky, Joan Sullivan, and Kris Yerby

Sign the Membership Book to become a Member of FPBUU!

"Signing the book" to become a member is a tradition that goes back many decades in Unitarian Universalist congregations and signifies that the signer agrees to the congregation's covenant (<https://fpbuu.org/about-us/mission-and-vision/>). If you have been visiting First Parish for a while and would like to become a member, the following opportunities to sign the book will be on **Sunday, March 12, April 2, and May 14**. If you have questions about membership or cannot be at services on *Signing Sunday* and require another opportunity to sign the Membership book—please get in touch with Paula Lieb at paulasliebma@outlook.com; We can make it work for you!

Introducing Meetinghouse Motors



The *Financial Futures Tiger Team* is excited to announce the launch of *Meetinghouse Motors*. As the saying goes, one person's trash is another's treasure. So, if you, a friend, or a family member anywhere in the US, are ready to part with that used car, truck, RV, motorcycle, or motorboat sitting in the driveway or backyard, *Meetinghouse Motors* is ready to turn it into a tax-deductible charitable donation to the *First Parish Brewster Sustainability Fund*.

The process is a simple one; soon to be automated. For the launch, we invite you to submit your questions to MeetinghouseMotors@gmail.com to learn more.

Staff Directory

Minister:

Rev. Jessica Clay *Currently on leave

Leave Minister (April 1 through June 15th) Rev. Kenn Hurto revkenn@firstparishbrewster.org

Administration and Finance Ministries:

Karena Stroh, Director (Ext. 304) karena@firstparishbrewster.org

Sue Weber, Office Assistant (Ext. 313) suweber@firstparishbrewster.org

Celine Crook, Thrift Store Manager (508) 896-8744 celine@firstparishbrewster.org

Dave Caolo, Sexton dave@firstparishbrewster.org

Ted Jalowick, Bookkeeper (Ext. 305) ted@firstparishbrewster.org

Rikki Bates, AV Tech Support rikki@firstparishbrewster.org

Lifespan Religious Education Ministries (includes CYM):

Twinks Hastings, Director (Ext. 312) twinks@firstparishbrewster.org

Claudia Hardwicke, Childcare Provider

Music Ministries:

Kaeza Fearn, Interim Music Director (Ext. 316) kaezafearn@firstparishbrewster.org

Our Mailing Address:

First Parish Brewster

1 Harwich Rd (Mailing Address)

Brewster, MA 02631 508-896-5577

email: cove@firstparishbrewster.org Website: www.fpbuu.org

Masks are required in all large gatherings, including worship.
Masks are recommended but optional at other times.



Thank you for helping to keep our community safe and healthy.

Deadline Reminders

FPBUU Sumer Angle

Due May 1st, 2023

cove@firstparishbrewster.org

FPBUU Weekly Angle

Due each Wednesday by 12 noon

weekly@firstparishbrewster.org

*Submissions for Facebook & Updates for the
FPBUU website*

karenastroh@firstparishbrewster.org