



First Parish Brewster UU 2023 Annual Report

Congregational Covenant

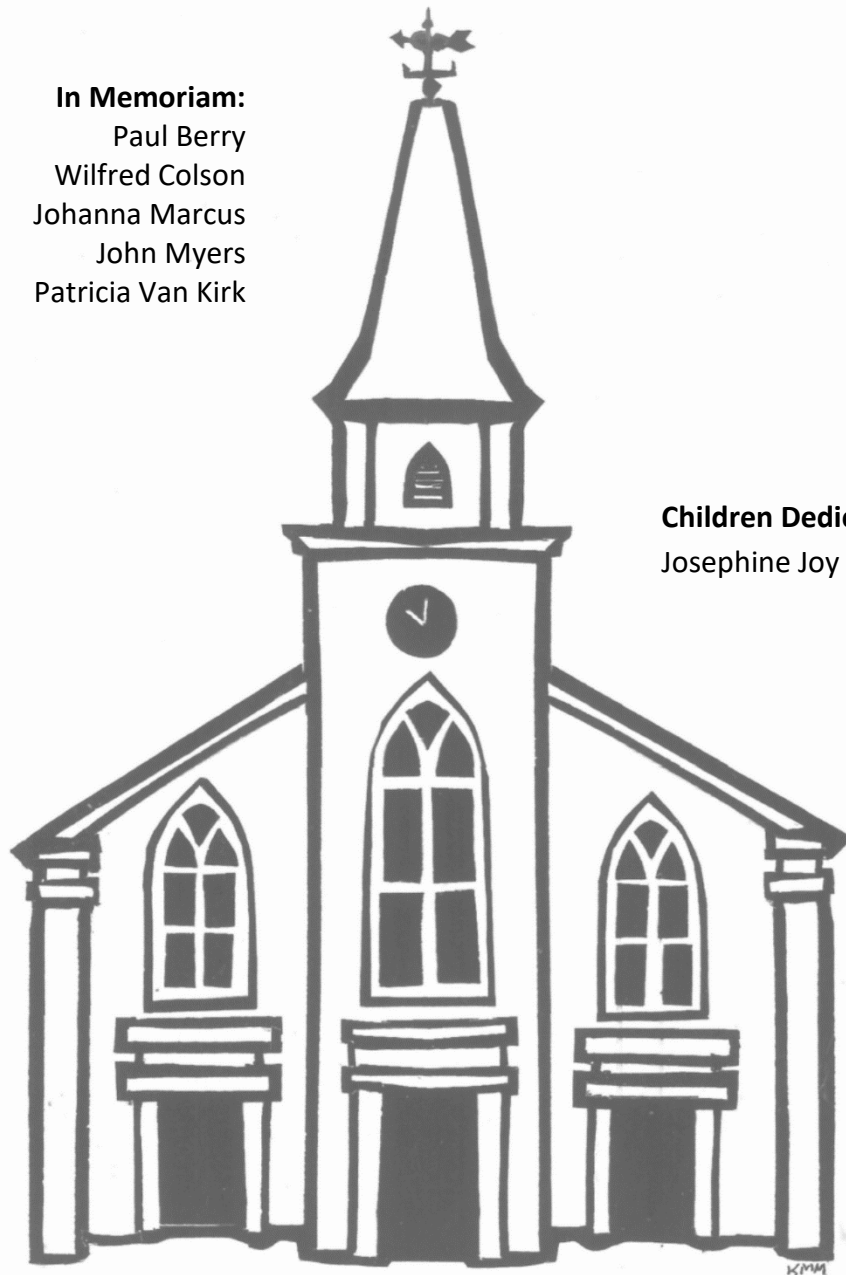
1. We respect the wisdom of all in a friendly and loving manner. Everyone deserves to be heard, including our children and youth.
2. We approach one another as spiritual partners. Before speaking, we take a breath and think: Is it true? Is it kind? Will it help? We speak directly and openly with empathy, compassion, and kindness. We use "I" statements and respect healthy boundaries.
3. We act in good faith according to our UU values. We listen carefully to the decisions made by leadership and expect our leaders to honor the voices of those who disagree. When needed, we follow processes of reconciliation and resolution through right relations.
4. We embrace questions and engage directly, listening deeply. When conflict appears, we see it as an opportunity for change and growth. Understanding our differences, we allow for missteps and welcome feedback. We seek the goal of reconciliation, encouraging peer and social support when needed.
5. We aspire to be our best selves. Whenever we need to, we have the capacity to gently remind and call each other back into covenant, into the widening circle of our loving community.

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*Committees of the Board of Trustees

Church Life Passages - July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

In Memoriam:
Paul Berry
Wilfred Colson
Johanna Marcus
John Myers
Patricia Van Kirk



Children Dedicated:
Josephine Joy Burns

New Members:
Sarah Bogoiar, Shana Brogan, Shawn Dahlstrom, Laurie Davis, John H. Emilian,
Rob MacIver, Deborah Madansky, Michael Mullen, Maureen Murphy, Jennifer
Rabold, Suzanne Requa-Trautz, Janet Riggs, Jeff Talmadge, Joan Talmadge, Karen
Thompson, Pamela Trummer, Anne Walsh, Carl Weis, Danny Williams,

A. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Last fall, we chose three main goals for this year: Achieve Financial Sustainability to Support our Mission, Foster Relationships and Connection in the Congregation, and Live Into the 8th Principle Through Inner Work and Community Outreach

The Financial Futures Team met bimonthly to promote communication and collaboration between its members, including: the Finance Committee, the Endowment Board, the Stewardship Committee, the Fundraising Committee, the Building Maintenance Committee, and the Board of Trustees. This partnership was evident when the Endowment Board agreed to split the cost of the UUA dues, enabling the Board of Trustees to budget for equitable raises for our staff.

The Financial Futures Tiger Team met every two weeks to discuss innovative ideas for revenue-generating activities. Meetinghouse Motors is one of the initiatives that came to fruition.

Board members fostered relationships and connection in many ways, including: joining key committees, participating in worship services, volunteering, singing in the choir, engaging in UU the Vote, hosting coffee hour, supporting fundraising activities, and CYM.

The Meetinghouse Lecture Series provided the opportunity for us to live into the 8th Principle and widen our circle of welcome. The lectures were open to the public.

After Jessica's resignation on April 4, 2023, the Board voted in an Interim Minister Search Committee. They submitted the Congregational Interim Record Sheet on April 20th and completed Interviews on May 15th. We plan to hire an Interim Minister by mid-June, and hope that they can start on August 1st.

Members: Carol Yerby (President), Susan Smith (Past President), Jim Lieb (President Elect), Karen Witting (Treasurer), Rand Burkert (Clerk), Members at Large: Liz Cable (formerly Libby), John Kielb, Tom O'Brien, and Diane Willcox.

Submitted by Carol Yerby, Board of Trustees President

B. ENDOWMENT BOARD

The Church Year 2022-2023 was the year that we got the full benefit from completely paying off our loan. With that pay-off and a good stock market on December 31, 2021 for our Socially Responsible Investments portfolio, we had \$72,527 to distribute for program enrichment, enhancement of buildings and grounds, community outreach and developing the wider mission of the UUA.

We were able to fund the following projects:

Administration & Finance Director substitute	\$8,000
CYM retreat	\$3,300
Meeting House windows repair	\$14,000
Barn painting	\$9,450
Power washing the Meeting House	\$1,850
Electrical upgrades	\$4,000
Soul of Aging program	\$3,200
Playground repair	\$600
Voices of Cape Cod*	\$1,500
Barn wood rot repair	\$3,756
New PC & monitor for COVE office	\$1,500
Thrift Store credit card processing	\$350
Thrift Store wire racks	\$200
Building Maintenance Committee – various other projects	\$8,065
Steeple Project (partial payment)	\$10,000
Electronic Bulletin Board	\$1,200

New folding chairs with cart	\$900
Pew renovations	\$3,000

*Note: Voices of Cape Cod was able to get grants and gifts to pay back the \$1,500 to the Endowment Fund.

The Endowment Board has determined that any money available at the end of the year will be paid to the Capital Reserve Fund and allocated to the Steeple Project.

The Endowment Fund will have \$59,067 available for distribution in the Church Year 2023-2024. Some of these funds are already allocated to the Steeple Project and a one-time gift to the UUA.

Members: Linda Bailey-Davies, Bob Flanagan (Chair), Bruce MacGregor, Barry Powers (Recording Secretary), Topper Roth (Financial Secretary)

Submitted by Bob Flanagan, Endowment Board Chair

C. MINISTER

Will be published after the Annual Meeting due to Rev Jessica being on parental leave.

D. ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE MINISTRIES

Beginning this year with a four-month sabbatical was exactly what I needed. I deeply appreciate everyone who balanced additional responsibilities during my leave including other staff members, the COVE volunteers and our Treasurer who bore the responsibilities of running reports for review and sorting out accounting questions as they arose. When I came back to work in November, our Interim Administrator accepted a new position as Office Assistant, and I reduced my weekly hours. This was a division of the responsibilities of the Administration and Finance Director between two positions with nearly the same number of hours.

This year was additionally challenging with the resignation of our Music Director, Kevin Badanes after only one year with us, the absence of Rev Jessica during parental leave and the news of Rev Jessica leaving to serve another congregation. There was much joy as well with the birth of Elanor, hiring Interim Music Director, Kaeza Fearn, who began with us in November, the amazing success of the Meetinghouse Speaker Series and a long overdue paint job for our steeple. It has been a year of many people choosing to show up with rolled up sleeves and a commitment to this beloved community and a few making the hard decision to seek spiritual growth elsewhere.

I am deeply encouraged by the success of this year’s pledge campaign, and the dedication of our financial leaders to find creative solutions for the long-term financial stability of the church. I am buoyed by the commitment of the Board to propose a budget that reflects a commitment to equity. The conversations around this year’s budget by Stewardship and Finance Committees and the Board of Trustees were deep and full of engagement.

As we prepare for our new Interim Minister, I remain curious about what new shape this congregation might take. Time and time again, I have seen this congregation rise to the challenges before it and grow more deeply as a beacon to those looking for spiritual growth and the lifeline of community.

Submitted by Karena Stroh, Administration and Finance Director

E. LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MINISTRIES

It’s so hard, to sum up in 200 words all of the beauty, wonder, and learning that happened in the Religious Education program this year.

Some highlights from our Adult Ed program were getting 20 members trained in CPR, finger painting, and dancing in our “Move to the Muse” class - a collaboration with Kaeza Fearn, our Interim Music Director.

This year the Children and Youth Ministry Program (CYM) started the year weaving a web with all ages together to remind us that we are part of a greater CYM community. With our older youth, we spent much

of the year reconnecting and relearning how to be together post Covid. Our elementary-aged children completed the World of Wonder program. Exploring and learning in the great outdoors, we made some worm farms, and were visited by an author who taught us all about bees(!) and the nursery feels full of the energy of toddlers and babies. We also ran two very successful weekend retreats for Our Whole Lives program.

This summer we are preparing for our two-week summer program that serves to fill a need in our local community and acts as outreach and fundraising for FPB.

As for me, this year I completed the UUA Pastoral Care for Religious Professional course, participated in UU Wellspring, served on the Liberal Religious Educators Association New England Board, and co-facilitated a day-long retreat for religious educators.

Submitted by Twinks Hastings, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

F. MUSIC MINISTRY

Within the congregation, the talent and willingness to participate in a shifting musical landscape is remarkable! Musicians openly embraced new leadership and ideas, and have been enthusiastically offering their skills, time, and spirits to contribute toward a dynamic worship atmosphere. Musicians collaborated, learned new music, and enjoyed bringing back some past favorites. For the choir, the challenge of masked singing was met with continued patience and respect. Many rejoiced at being mask-optional as of late April. Our recent Music Sunday service entitled “Music Rising – A Celebration” was received with gratitude and excitement; it included a collaboration of choir and instrumentalists, an innovative improvisational meditation involving handpan and vocalists, sparked by a February music workshop. Seeds are planted for future explorations and growth. We’re blessed to have several reliable and skilled instrumentalists and vocalists who regularly contribute toward music at services. As a result of the pianist having departed quite suddenly in January due to personal travel, the Interim Music Director now plays consistently, and we’ve had a substitute choral accompanist since then. We anticipate hiring a choral accompanist soon, to start in September. Behind the scenes, we now have an online choral library, helpful for present and future. And let us not forget the ukuleles dazzling a few services!

Choir musicians: Marilee Crocker, Tia Cross, Laurie Davis, Mary Gamerman, Mary Anne Germain, Laura Gill, Marie Hartley, Jane Higgins, Kip Keene, John Kielb, Marcia Kielb, Maureen Osborne, Jesse Lang, Pamela Phipps, Dan Rabold, Jennifer Rabold, Chuck Ross, Suzanne Requa-Trautz, Topper Roth, Deb Selkow, Rosanne Shapiro, Bill Sheehan, Sarah Sheehan, Pat Stover, Lindsey Straus, Barbara Sykes, Sarah Sykes, Sue Trask, Gail Webb

Instrumentalists and other musicians: Rikki Bates, Liz Cable, Kayli Cullen, Beverly DiPaolo, Linda Hladek, Judy Jollett, Mary Jo Jollett, Pam McLane, Chris Morin, David Sutherland, Janet Treaner

Choir Librarian: Deb Selkow

Submitted by Kaeza Fearn, Interim Music Director

G. THRIFT STORE MINISTRY

The Thrift Store continues to generate consistent income to help further the programs of FPB. We changed our credit card processor this year, which will reduce our fees and add to our profits. Our volunteers have been dedicated and do a wonderful job spreading friendliness and good cheer to local customers and visitors alike.

Our social media pages continue to gain followers and we have benefited from good reviews and repeat customers. Because we are lucky enough to get a good amount of clothing donations, we were able to donate over 1,000 pieces of clothing to the Family Pantry this year. We also provide ongoing donations of socks to the homeless shelter in Hyannis.

As always, our biggest challenge is finding enough reliable and capable volunteers to extend our hours of operation. There is no doubt that we could increase our revenue, if we were able to stay open until 4 pm. This is especially true during the busy summer months.

Submitted by: Celine Crook, Thrift Store Manager

Thrift Store Volunteers: Pat Amos, Connie Curtis, Mary Gamerman, Al Glasstetter, Lindsay Harvey, Marcia Keilb, Paula Lieb, Rosemary Moeller, Elizabeth Sjogren, Maureen Osborne, Janet Treanor

H. BUILDING A BIGGER TABLE

Building a Bigger Table Committee is a humanitarian community that supports asylum seekers, refugees and migrants. BBT has been through organizational changes in the last year. In August we became an established committee of FPBUU and in January adopted an organizational document which lays out officers and subcommittees. In April, the Fundraising Committee organized a well-attended book talk and lasagna dinner featuring “Fake Smiles And Lasagna” by Christine Jenkins.

We continue to support two thriving families. We were able to help an owner of a rental property in Brewster find a Ukrainian family in need of temporary housing. Many of us got to know the family helping them learn English, taking them shopping and to the library, bingo and COA. Sadly, they will be moving on in June to find housing elsewhere in Massachusetts.

We have transitioned from Zoom meetings to in-person meetings on the first Tuesday of the month in the Parish Hall at FPBUU. All are welcome at our meetings. To learn more or receive updates and minutes contact one of the Co-chairs.

Members: Sue Bowser, Barbara Draper (Recording Clerk)*, Rick Draper (Co-Chair)*, Sue Eitel, Janet Emack (Co-chair)*, Julia Enroth, Katharine Farnham*, Susan Fleming, Monica Goubaud, Susan Gubbins*, Pat Gubbins*, John Hanlon, Christine Jenkins, Jim Lieb, Ben McKelway, Becky Mendible, Marietta Nilson, Cate O’Neill (Treasurer)*, David Ross, Karen Ross, Diane Scheffler, Anne Southworth, Janet Treanor, Patty Tun, Anne Walsh*

* Executive Board

Submitted by Rick Draper, Co-chair

I. BUILDING MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

This year, we adopted a shared leadership model, with the following positions rotating among the members for each meeting: convenor, notetaker, timekeeper, vibes watcher. This has worked very well, as each member becomes more actively involved in setting the agenda and leading the meeting.

Our building maintenance accomplishments this year:

- \$5,000 of electrical upgrades to the campus.
- \$14,000 restoration of the Meeting House windows to make them weather-tight.
- \$3,500 rot repair on Barn southwest corner.
- \$7,450 painting of Barn west side exterior.
- \$1,850 pressure-washing of Meeting House exterior to determine painting needs for next fiscal year.
- cleaned attic and basement of Parish Hall/Meeting House and organized the space. Needs to be done again due to random storage in basement.
- \$2,350 masonry repair to Dawes Hall steps, front entrance.
- \$2,715 replacement Barn door, east side.
- \$1,000 programmable thermostats campus-wide.

- steeple repainted and clock faces repaired at total cost of \$42,700, of which \$28,000 was paid in this fiscal year.

Thank you very much to the Endowment Fund, which has been extremely generous this year. We are still catching up on the wear-and-tear and normal aging issues of our buildings that escaped our notice during the Covid shutdown.

We have a small but mighty group of members. It's hard work but we have a lot of fun and we welcome new members who are interested in managing the upkeep of our buildings. No professional building skills required, only a love of our campus!

Members: Judy Fenner, Wayne Jenkins, John Kielb, Elenita Muñiz, Roger Smith, Kris Yerby;
Ex-officio: Karena Stroh, Dave Caolo

J. CARING COMMITTEE

The Caring Committee began a new project in September 2022. Our 19 to 20 members charted a new course in addition to what we have been doing for years (rides, soup, cards,). This year we have been in touch 2 to 3 times each month with approximately 30 members who are either in care facilities, or at home.

We have established a more solid relationship with people, and they seem to enjoy this monthly plan as well as we do. In addition, we delivered plates of cookies and poinsettias at Christmas as well as cookies in the spring.

On an overall basis, the Committee Coordinator works directly with the office staff and the minister as we hear about people who might have needs for support in a whole variety of different ways. Then we attempt to provide for some of those needs. We did a lot during the time of Covid, even though people were concerned about their own health and providing for others.

We consider every request, and if we cannot provide for it, we will assist the person in finding a resource. We are grateful that Caring Committee members make these contacts happen on a regular basis.

Members: Pat Amos, Sue Bowser, Kathy Budreski, Rand Burkert, Dick Curtis, Julia Enroth, Liz Gordon, Joanne Hush, Judy Jollett, Tavia Ossola (Coordinator), Betty Pickering, Frank Re, Susan Smith, Suzanne Sullivan, Sue Trask, Janet Treanor, Mary Wallace, Diane Willcox, Carol Yerby.

Submitted by Tavia Ossola, Coordinator

K. CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

As another CYM year draws to a close, we look back on Sundays filled with children and youth interacting with adults who give generously of their time, their knowledge, and their passion for growing the next generation of UU's. Every week we remind our children and ourselves that every one of us brings something essential to this table, that each of us is needed to create this spiritual home that we call First Parish Brewster UU, and that all of us are entwined together in this great interdependent web of existence. We have watched our kids grow comfortable here; they are known and celebrated by this congregation; they know how things work; they have seen that their gifts are valued and that their voices and their presence in the sanctuary are celebrated.

We have been busy this year; the CYM Committee has supported multi-generational activities including Halloween on the green, a brand-new Christmas pageant, cookies and cards delivered to FPBUU members who needed a visit, Valentines created and shared at coffee hour, our Maypole decked with new ribbons, as well as picnics and ice cream on the lawn. We have welcomed an ambassador from WildCare to teach us about animals, Sara Blandford from ArtPeace Makers to talk with us about Martin Luther King and bullying,

and author Loree Burns who told us about Rescuing Honeybees and hosting a Moth Ball. Thanks to Laura Gill and Scott McLane, the playground on Winslow lawn has been made safe again. And all along CYM Committee members teach classes, serve as Coming of Age mentors, and support the important work of Twinks Hastings, our Lifespan Faith Development Director.

Thank you to the CYM Committee and to all of the generous volunteers at FPBUU who make our CYM program possible.

Members: Dale Cotter, Laura Gill, Kristin Knowles, Deborah Madansky, Kathy Meyers, Deb Selkow (Chair), Claudia Williams

Submitted by Deb Selkow, Chair

L. COVE TEAM: Communications, Office Volunteers, Etc.

The COVE office volunteer works year around, most mornings, to support the administrative work of First Parish Brewster UU. Besides answering the phones, replying to emails, greeting visitors, running errands, and working on tasks and projects assigned by Karena Stroh and Sue Weber, COVE (Communications, Office Volunteers, Etc.) volunteers have specific duties on their volunteer day. The COVE office volunteers meet monthly to facilitate communication, problem-solve, and streamline our procedures.

On Mondays, Bob Spencer and Susan Smith record Sunday service data and work on the continuous task of website updates. Tuesdays, Marilyn McDermott keeps our busy Events calendar current. Bob Flanagan creates the first draft for the weekly Order of Service on Wednesdays. On Thursdays, Betty Hayes finalizes and prints the Order of Service. Skip Bell works from home, often coming in on Mondays and Thursdays, as he answers COVE emails and manages the many submissions for our Weekly Angle. Finally, Susan Flaws assists most days with our financials, including but not limited to making deposits and recording pledge payments, offertory donations, and other income streams.

We have had a wonderful office makeover this year, thanks partly to funding from the Endowment Board. We love our new 2-person desk, desktop computer, keyboard, and printer. Come visit us!

Members: Skip Bell, Bob Flanagan, Susan Flaws, Betty Hayes, Marilyn McDermott, Bob Spencer, Susan Smith

Submitted by Susan Smith

M. COVENANT GROUPS: A Program of Small Group Ministry

Covenant Groups, a program of shared ministry, meet once a month, and facilitators also meet monthly for consultation, on-going training, and our own spiritual growth. Through deep listening and sharing reflections on the themes from the UUA Soul Matters program, Covenant Group members build pathways to connection and bonding as we “open our hearts” together. Participants grow our souls through examining personal and collective values as we embark on journeys which can be truly transformative, both individually and as part of a caring community. Love turns into justice when we share our intimate stories and build better understanding of our diverse perspectives and differences. Loving justice can also be characterized by wholeness making and transforming relationships. Through the sharing process, we deepen our sense of connection, bonding and belonging.

This year, seven different Covenant groups met in live, zoom, and hybrid formats, making many options possible for participation. Two facilitators per group also met once a month to process our experiences in the group sessions, to plan the following month’s group content, and to share with each other our responses to the focus questions planned for our upcoming groups, allowing us to bond with one another as well as to “preview” our next sessions.

Putting our faith into action is an element of Covenant Groups. We try to participate in a service project to help the FPBUU community, or the greater community beyond our walls. During the 2022-2023 year, our groups joined other community members in the “Beautify Brewster” day, as well as other activities.

Facilitators: Gloria Bailey-Davies, Linda Bailey-Davies, Marilee Crocker, Liz Gordon, Jim Hild, Kip Keene, Cari Keith, Maureen Osborne (Chair), Tavia Ossola, Margaret Rice Moir, Topper Roth, Karen Witting, Gail Webb

Submitted by Maureen Osborne, Chair

N. COVID TASK FORCE

The Covid Task Force has met monthly since spring 2020 to evaluate and re-evaluate our policies and procedures in light of local COVID-19 CDC risk levels.

Since last June, we have been slowly loosening our guidelines to meet changing risk levels and the availability of vaccine boosters. In early summer we started mask-optional outdoor coffee hour, which was a great success, giving congregants the opportunity to socialize maskless. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the herculean effort to make it happen.

Over the fall we gradually approved mask-optional activities including indoor coffee hour, Wabi Sabi dancers, small group meetings, RE programs outside of the sanctuary and outdoor activities. In April, we decided that the choir could be unmasked for Music Sunday. Each member of the choir and orchestra self-tested before the service. Based on congregational survey results, on April 30th we moved to mask-optional services, keeping several areas of the Sanctuary aside for required masking.

Our primary goal has been and continues to be to make decisions for our congregation that promote an equitable and inclusive environment. We will continue to meet monthly for the foreseeable future, until such time our task force is no longer needed.

Members: Rev Jessica Clay, Marie Hartley, Irie Mullin, Susan Smith, Karena Stroh

Submitted by Marie Hartley

O. FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee provides oversight and advice regarding the major financial policies, goals and budgets that support the mission, values, and strategies of FPBUU. The overarching concern of the Committee is the long-term financial viability of the congregation. We exist to ensure a financially healthy foundation for the ongoing work of the church.

Each month the Committee reviews FPBUU financial reports generated by the Administration and Finance Director, comparing spending to date against the budget and against spending in the prior year. The purpose of this review is for early identification of concerning trends or errors. In addition, the Committee reviews finance related concerns, adjusting processes, policies, and plans when appropriate.

This past year has been a busy one, with several significant accomplishments:

- We communicated to the congregation about our financial status through Angle announcements, an FPBUU By the Numbers article, and a six-month budget review.
- We have applied for and received \$89,549 from the IRS through the Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC), a part of the pandemic relief package.
- We have reviewed the possibility of applying for 501(c)3 status and debated the pros and cons of doing this.
- We recommended, and the Board of Trustees approved, renaming the Emergency Reserve Fund to become the Sustainability Fund.

Each Spring the Finance Committee prepares the next fiscal year budget, gathering input from the congregation, Staff, Board of Trustees and based on current budget projections. It is always a challenge to build a fair but balanced budget. This year we used a collaborative approach, working closely with the

Stewardship Committee, Personnel Committee and Board of Trustees. We thank all those we helped along the way and to the many people who committed to the congregation by submitting a pledge, allowing us to build a fair and balanced budget.

Members: Susan Flaws, Bob Mauterstock, Diane Pansire, Rog Smith, Gail Webb, Karen Witting (Chair)
Ex-officio members: Rev Jessica Clay and Karena Stroh (Administration and Finance Director)

Submitted by Karen Witting, Board of Trustees Treasurer

P. FINANCIAL FUTURES

One year ago, encouraged by our financial consultant Barry Finkelstein, the groups who hold the financial well-being of First Parish Brewster UU gathered for our first Financial Futures Meeting. The Board of Trustees, the Endowment Board, the Finance Committee, the Stewardship Committee, the FUNdraising Committee, the Building Maintenance Committee, and the Financial Futures Tiger Team have met every other month since then. We have taken time to update each other, to share ideas and energy.

Something important has emerged in the fabric of First Parish Brewster UU this year. These Boards, Committees and Teams are learning to communicate more fully with one another, to partner with one another, and to lean on each other. There is real momentum, and it is palpable.

Submitted by Susan Smith, Chair

Q. FINANCIAL FUTURES TIGER TEAM

We are always exploring ways of increasing our revenue sources. The Tiger Team has split into smaller action groups. One is partnering with Twinks and CYM, developing SNO@UU, Summer's Not Over at UU, a two-week summer program for children and youth. The estimated net income is currently budgeted at \$15,000. Under Kris Yerby's leadership, an Energy Group has formed and is doing research into non-traditional revenue generating opportunities for churches. We are particularly excited about the placement of the latest generation of battery technologies to provide efficiency and resiliency in the electric grid. There would not be upfront costs to the church and an estimate of yearly revenue is in the range of \$36,000. The Grants Group continues to explore Grants from many sources. We have written and been awarded 4 grants this year for the Meetinghouse Speaker Series, 3 from the Cultural Councils of Brewster, Dennis and Orleans and 1 from Cape Cod 5, for a total of \$1,200. We can fairly easily boost our outside rental income. Barry Finkelstein has stressed to us that our beautiful campus is underutilized. Members of the Tiger Team have met with Karena Stroh and a wedding planner. With a little cleaning and freshening of our spaces, as well as more robust marketing, we can better offer our outdoor and indoor spaces for outside rental. Led by Bob Spencer, Meetinghouse Motors has been launched, and we have received our first truck donation. We expect to receive between \$1,200-\$1,500 from this first donation.

Financial Futures Tiger Team Members: Margaret Emmet, Laura Gill, Howard Hayes, John Kielb, Jim Lieb, Susan Smith (Chair), Bob Spencer, Jeff Talmadge, Gail Webb, Carol Yerby, Kris Yerby

Submitted by Susan Smith, Chair

R. FUNDRAISING TEAM

The FUNdraising Committee started off this fiscal year to a slow start. Initially we had designs to repeat the BBQ Fall Picnic. Scheduling proved to be challenging. Plus, the costs involved and the planning and executing hours needed, netted low return. We, as a committee, set about to come up with events that would not only raise funds, but increase community connections and allow everyone to enjoy their time together.

Our first event for the 2022-2023 fiscal year was the Holiday Fair. Our online auction had a solid performance and we raised \$6,200. This year's in person event featured baked goods, homemade ornaments, knit wear, Kid's Corner, Caroling in the Sanctuary, and an array of gently loved holiday

ornaments. With the help of Sue Weber, we laid out a PR/Marketing strategy to reach out to the surrounding community. Our planning paid off! We raised almost \$2,000, and we were hopping with activity!!! We were ecstatically caught off guard with the number of attendees.

We introduced an author presentation with our own Rog Smith. Rog did an incredible historical journey through his writing process and discussion of his current book and hints to his future publications. We had a full Parish Room of approximately 70 people, offered a light lunch of chili and accepted at will donations and raised \$600. Rog generously offered 50% of his book proceeds sold at this event.

Our next new venture was SOUPer Sundays, kicked off on Super Bowl Sunday. Members of FPB made a variety of homemade quarts of soup and bread offered to our congregation for purchase. This fundraising event was so positive for our church community that we offered it a second time. We increased the soup variety, baked extra bread items and offered a whimsical selection of homemade napkins. Both events raised over \$1,200.

We now look forward to our Spring Festival, offering an online auction consisting of the time, talents, and treasures within our church community. We are continuing our in-person event featuring a Plant Sale, Bake Sale and introducing a Gift Shop consisting of handmade items created by FPBUU members open to the community at large.

Much thanks and gratitude to the members of the FUNdraising (yes, it is FUN) Committee. We have had an energetic and creative group of people that have been together for 2+ years! We are always looking for creative ideas and energy for those of you that would like to join in on our fun! Thank you for a great year!!

Members: Rand Burkert, Barb Draper, Susan Flaws, Judy Jollett, Vicki Kendziorski, Debbi Klein, Patsy Roberts, Rog Smith

Submitted by Debbi Klein, Chair

S. LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE

The Landscape Committee, also known as the Mud and Mindfulness Committee, tends the gardens that have been created at the church and Winslow house. The Committee meets on the first Monday of the month to make plans for beautifying the grounds and to address specific landscape needs.

“Chainsaw Charlie” and the chainsaw crew have trimmed or felled damaged trees and cut up the wood for firewood to be sold at the Thrift Store or at the Spring Auction.

The Memorial Garden is lovingly tended and a focus of the Committee. Memorial Posts stand within this garden bearing the names of those we remember and honor. The Committee held its annual garden-side service at the end of August to honor the individuals whose names had been newly engraved.

In the spring and fall the group met for an overall campus clean-up, weeding, and sprucing up. Over the summer, members signed up for two-week stints of weeding, plant care and trimming the knockout roses along the driveway. On “hedge day”, members met to trim the hedges, shrubs and thin out the dead wood of the older hedges giving them new life.

During the winter holiday season, we decorated the Sanctuary by adding lights and displays of greens and berries in the windows, swags of greenery at the rear of the Sanctuary, and a tree on the chancel. We put up and decorated the tree with lights on the front lawn.

We are a vibrant Committee who have fun raking, weeding, spreading mulch, and spending time together. We love it when new members join the group. There is plenty of work for everyone.

Members: Rand Burkert, Julia Enroth, Liz Gordon (Chair), Charles Harris, Susie Hine, Joan Kapp, Mark Preu, Frank Re, Dave Rogers, Janet Soja, Anne Southworth, Sylvia Stringer, Marylin Watson-Etsell, Judy Wilkins

Submitted by Liz Gordon, Chair

T. LEADERSHIP NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Leadership Nomination Committee (LNC), as stated in the FPBUU By-laws, is charged with identifying and nominating qualified members from the FPBUU congregation to fill leadership positions. LNC's slate of nominees for the Board of Trustees, Endowment Board, and Leadership Nominating Committee is placed before the congregation at the Annual Meeting held each year in June. The process has many dimensions: evaluating and updating the Committee's own charge, interviewing Committee and organization leaders to assess the needs of the church community and identify potential leaders and assessing identified candidates with an eye toward incorporating a spectrum of ages, interests, backgrounds, and experience. The final steps are to cultivate and ask congregants to step into vacant positions thus ensuring a continuity of steady, balanced, and strategic leadership.

Members: Jim Hild, Debbi Klein, Margaret Rice Moir, Maureen Osborne, Rog Smith (Chair), Janet Treanor
Submitted by Rog Smith, Chair

U. MEETINGHOUSE SPEAKER SERIES: VOICES OF CAPE COD

A consortium was formed from the Board, the Reparations Task Force and Social Justice Committee members to bring about this exciting outreach to the greater community. After years of the Covid pandemic shut-downs, bringing back our iconic Meetinghouse to its former function as a gathering place and forum has been a joy. The MSS amplifies the voices of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and other marginalized folks. The monthly free series ran from January-June. Speakers have been: Rev Dr. Kristen Harper; Janet Robertson & Robin Miller; Linda Coombs; Marcus Hendricks; A Trans Panel moderated by Dr. Maureen Osborne with Rev Bran Lennox, Rikki Bates, Jake W and Mara Betti; Hartman Deetz; and Jim & Robin Miller. We have written and been awarded four grants this year, three from the Cultural Councils of Brewster, Dennis and Orleans and one from Cape Cod 5, for a total of \$1,200. This very popular and impactful series is also being funded by free will donations at each event and generous contributions from the Endowment Board, the Welcoming Congregation, and Social Justice Committees.

Members: Dianne Ashley, Rand Burkert, Tia Cross, Barb Draper, Katharine Farnham, Tom O'Brien, Janet Riggs, Rosanne Shapiro, Susan Smith (Chair), Sue Trask, Mary Wallace

Submitted by Susan Smith, Chair

V. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Membership Committee made strides in helping First Parish Brewster UU fulfill its mission to be an inclusive community and grow to enable it to amplify its voice as a liberal congregation.

Procedures were reviewed and a sequential list of steps was developed to guide onboarding and retaining new members, e.g., holding regular membership book signings, ensuring access to Breeze, communicating with Stewardship, providing New Member Recognition ceremonies (October 23, 2022, welcoming 9 new members and May 7, 2023, welcoming 10 new members), etc.

Post pandemic, the Committee made a special effort to create person-to-person activities. A New Member Reception was held in August 2022, and another is planned for June 2023. A Dine Around dinner program was resurrected; 60+ people signed up for four small, purely social dinner parties, which took place successfully in January, February, March, and April 2023.

The greatest challenge during the year was developing a meaningful orientation. We tried providing one each month (third Sunday) after the service on different topics; these did not draw participants. Revised Orientations will be provided; sessions are planned for April 23 (overview UU and FPBUU history) and April 30 (personal journeys to FPBUU) and periodically thereafter during months with five Sundays.

Members: Christine Jenkins, Paula Lieb (Chair), Deborah Madansky, Joan Sullivan, Kris Yerby
Submitted by Paula Lieb, Chair

W. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee was reestablished at the Board of Trustees' request over a year ago. We have a specific charge from the Board of Trustees under which we operate. We are involved in hiring, reviewing job descriptions, reviewing salary recommendations, employee-employer concerns, and a variety of other things. Our role is to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees as to how to proceed from our point of view, which includes being sure that the employees' point of view is represented. Our concerns are mainly with the employees and what impacts them.

This past year we met every other week. Our first task was to rewrite and update the personnel manual, which was then approved by the Board of Trustees. In the employment field, things change because of state and federal laws on a regular basis and so this manual is for personnel and is reviewed and updated as needed. We are looking for an additional member to join us this year.

Members: Daniel Beltran, Tavia Ossola (Chair), Chuck Ross

Submitted by Tavia Ossola, Chair

X. POLICY COMMITTEE

The role of the FPBUU Policy Committee is to produce policy documents, based on input and direction from the Board of Trustees. These documents, in turn, help to guide group and individual behavior within the FPBUU community so that it is as consistent as possible with Unitarian Universalist principles and the mission of FPBUU. The policies may be found on the FPBUU website, under "Governance." Our aim is to use clear, precise language, and to develop policies that are both internally consistent and consistent with each other. During the current FPBUU year, the Policy Committee has written new policies regarding the Use and Protection of Personal Data and Conflict of Interest (Boards). Policies that have been revised include Communications, Financial Controls, Donation Acceptance, Fundraising, Active Shooter, and Board of Trustees Meetings. The Committee meets monthly from September through May/June.

Members: Marilee Crocker, Topper Roth (Chair), Lindsey Straus, Karen Witting. John Kielb serves as liaison between the Committee and the Board of Trustees.

Submitted by Topper Roth, Chair

Y. PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

It has been a quiet season of meeting monthly to knit and crochet together and create some lovely shawls. Six shawls have been distributed these past months, as several families were grieving losses, and two were for congratulatory service to Women's Alliance. As always, we ask that if anyone knows of a need for a shawl, please contact me or Tavia or the minister and we will help you out. If you are interested in joining us, we meet in the living room of Winslow House on the 3rd Thursday of each month, at 10:30 am. Zoom connection is available if requested. All yarn crafters (and others!) are welcome.

Members: Pat Amos (Chair), Mary Gamerman, Diane Heart, Denise Litz-Walters, Rosemary Moeller, Marietta Nilson, Karen Ross, Carol Ann Yeaple

Submitted by Patrice Amos, Chair

Z. REPARATIONS TASK FORCE

The FPBUU Reparations Task Force combined its "History" and "Action" components into a single Reparations Task force this year, with meetings held on the 4th Monday of the month.

The Task Force was created in August 2020 to explore ways to acknowledge and repair the hurt resulting from our church community's involvement in chattel slavery, in both African and Indigenous people."

The Task Force is inspired by the UU 8th Principle: “To journey towards spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse, multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.”

Accomplishments during 2022-2023 include: “Conversations About Whiteness”, a 5-week intensive program with 12 participants; FPBUU Land Acknowledgement receiving Board approval*; FPBUU Meeting House Speaker Series: Voices of Cape Cod in partnership with other FPB Social Justice groups; participation in the January church-wide Social Justice Fair.

Reparations work is huge and a deep challenge for all of us.

*FPBUU Land Acknowledgement: “First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist occupies land that was home to the Wampanoag people for thousands of years before European colonists violated their sovereignty and assaulted their people, livelihood, and culture. Acknowledging this history, we honor the resilience and strength of today’s Wampanoag Tribe.”

Members: Dianne Ashley, Rikki Bates, Tia Cross, Laura Gill, Peggy Jablonski, Jim Lieb, Chris Morin, Maureen Murphy, Tom O’Brien, Cate O’Neil, Susan Smith, David Sutherland, Sue Trask, Abigail Walters Karen Watson-Etsell (Chair)

Submitted by Karen Watson-Etsell, Chair

AA. SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

The Social Justice Committee, in co-ordination with the Reparations Task Force, worked to strengthen our alliance with BIPOC individuals and groups on Cape Cod through the Meetinghouse Speaker Series. The programs in this series included a film by Janet Robertson and Robin Miller about BIPOC artists on Cape Cod; a workshop by Linda Coombs, Aquinnah Wampanoag, on the Tribe’s precolonial history and culture; and a guided walking tour of the FPBUU campus by Marcus Hendricks, Wampanoag historian and naturalist. These events were well attended by members of our congregation as well as members of the wider community.

The Social Justice Committee participated actively in the UU the Vote campaign for recent elections. Committee members helped to organize this campaign with active participation by congregation members. We were able to send 8,500 letters and postcards to people in states with demonstrated voter suppression, encouraging them to get out and vote.

We also organized the annual Wampanoag food drive as well as the NAACP membership drive.

The above activities are our successes. Our challenge is to expand our committee’s membership to support our ongoing commitment to social justice issues and to the people and groups that are increasingly marginalized.

Members: Dianne Ashley, Tia Cross, Carol DiAnna, Katharine Farnham (Co-chair), Janet Riggs, Rosanne Shapiro, Susan Trask (Co-chair), Mary Wallace

Submitted by Katharine Farnham, (Co-chair)

BB. STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

What a success! We need to give ourselves a pat on the back for the results of all of our hard work. We began with a consult and training in November 2022. The focus was how to organize a face-to-face canvas of our membership. Our goal was to invite everyone to pledge and to consider raising their pledge by 5 to 25% over last year. We wanted to have conversations about what First Parish Brewster UU had to offer in terms of programs, worship, community connections, and our commitment to one another, and to First Parish Brewster UU.

We were unable to reach each and every member in person, because we did not have enough canvassers. So, in addition to meeting with people, we sent out letters and pledge cards, asking everyone in the congregation to join in keeping all that we have to offer at First Parish Brewster UU in place for another year. The result of the direct contact was that members got to know each other in a much more personal way. We were able to share our joys and concerns openly and talk about moving forward.

Our original goal for 2023-24 is \$432,000. However, during the budget process new expenses related to UUA guidelines, health insurance costs and the calling of an Interim Minister to \$441,250. To date we have 174 pledges for a total of \$416,473, and we hope to surpass our goal.

We have had a meeting to critique the campaign and are already planning for next year. We can't thank you enough; your generosity and your joy have made this a great experience.

We want to, especially think our canvassers: Linda Bailey-Davies, Rand Burkert, Bob Flanagan, Susan Flaws, John Kielb, Debbi Klein, Jim Lieb, Bob Mauterstock, Tom O'Brien Tavia Ossola, Diane Pansire, Barry Powers, Bill & Patsy Roberts, Topper Roth, Rog Smith, Susan Smith, Gail Webb, Diane Willcox, Karen Witting, Carol Yerby, Kris Yerby

Members: Susan Flaws, Debbi Klein (Co-chair), Tavia Ossola (Co-chair), Susan Smith

Submitted by Tavia Ossola, Co-chair

CC. UU CONNECTIONS

UU Connections connects FPBUU to the wider world. This includes other UU congregations, the UUA, and its affiliates such as UUSC, UU-UNO and General Assembly. We work locally with Nauset Interfaith Association (NIA) and Cape Cod Council of Churches and support their efforts. Meetings are held monthly via Zoom.

We made an effort to keep in touch with our Partner Church in Romania, but this was not possible first because the Partner Church Council, which used to facilitate the program, has been legally dissolved, and second due to the language barrier issues related to a new non-English-speaking minister. Current efforts to find a solution in concert with Duxbury UU and other congregations, led by the Concord, MA UU, will be reported to our congregation.

The Committee runs the strawberry shortcake event each June when they stream the Ware Lecture from the General Assembly to FPBUU for our congregation.

Members: Jim Hild, Marietta Nilson, Carol Ann Yeaple (Chair)

Submitted by Carol Ann Yeaple, Chair

DD. LGBTQ WELCOMING CONGREGATION COMMITTEE

Our Committee's biggest success this year was sponsoring a program in the Meetinghouse Speaker Series in April featuring our own Dr. Maureen Osborne and a panel of four transgender and non-binary individuals, who courageously shared their own personal stories. They focused on the large and small insults they have endured for trying to live their own truths. They also spoke of their anxieties and fears about how the current political efforts to use transgender rights as a "wedge issue" will harm them and even threaten their safety. Over 80 attendees learned more ways we could open our hearts and turn our love into justice on behalf of our trans siblings.

The biggest challenge we faced continues to be how COVID has limited our ability to have large gatherings. For the third year in a row we had to cancel our Gayla Ball, a well-loved and attended dinner dance that brings together members of the LGBTQ community and our non-gay allies and friends from all over the Cape and beyond. We were, however, able to donate \$2,500 to the scholarship program of PFLAG of Cape Cod and also \$2,000 to First Parish Brewster UU for the year 2023-2024. We continue to hope that February of 2024 will be the year we may begin to resume this wonderful tradition.

Members: Linda Bailey-Davies (Co-chair), Gloria Bailey-Davies, Rikki Bates, Skip Bell, Daniel Beltran, Nancy Douthiel, Mary Ann Germain, Joanne Hush (Co-chair), Maureen Osborne, Rona Robinson, Bob Spencer, Diane Willcox

Submitted by Linda Bailey-Davies, Co-chair

EE. WOMEN'S CIRCLE ALLIANCE

The WCA has been part of Unitarian Universalism since the late 1800's. It was formed originally to assist various committees of a church and has offered timely and entertaining gatherings throughout the years at First Parish Brewster.

While the pandemic threatened the world, our group managed to move from a monthly zoom meeting of 6-9 stalwart souls, ultimately to some wonderful programs with audiences of about 24 members in attendance each month. Our membership is mostly female, but we welcome everyone.

From creating poetry, traveling along El Camino with a First Parish friend, learning about Building a Bigger Table, Independence House, Grandmothers United Against Gun Violence, and more, our group also contributes to a couple of charities each year.

One of our important tasks is our responsibility for the collations after a Memorial Service. We coordinate food, beverages, and servers, along with providing comfort to the grieving attendees. We were unable to provide this service during the pandemic, but we recently celebrated the life of John Myers, one of our church's great historians. Talk about turning love into justice!

For more information, please contact Linda Hladek, or any of our other members!

Members: Sue Bowser, Julia Enroth, Linda Hladek (Chair), Diane Scheffler, Anne Southworth, Suzanne Sullivan, Betsy Wentworth, Carol Ann Yeaple

Submitted by Linda Hladek, Chair

FF. WORSHIP ASSOCIATES

Over the past year, our dedicated team of Worship Associates has played a vital role in planning and leading worship services. With a shared commitment to creating meaningful and inclusive worship experiences, they have collaborated closely with Rev Jessica and Twinks as well as many visiting ministers to curate a diverse range of services that resonate with our congregation. Weekly they delivered meaningful and thoughtfully crafted calls to worship, incorporating personal reflections, theological insights, and relevant social issues. Many have created and led services alone, and we are lucky to have such a talented group.

Worship Associates: Twinks Hastings, John Kielb, Chuck Madansky, Margaret Rice Moir, Elenita Muñiz, Chuck Ross, Wilderness Sarchild, Lindsay Straus

Submitted by Twinks Hastings, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

GG. WORSHIP SUPPORT TEAM

The ushers group came back together after a bit of re-organizing, and training, following two years of Covid. We currently have a great team of ushers, who enjoy getting to know more and more people on a weekly basis. The ushers welcome people; hand out the order of service; help people find seating; take and process the collection; answer many questions from congregants and check on masks and name tags. We thank the Worship Support Team members who have served as ushers on a very regular basis.

Members: Armando Beltran, Daniel Beltran, Rand Burkert, Barbara Draper, Rick Draper, Julia Enroth, Liz Gordon, Linda Hladek, Tom O'Brien, Tavia Ossola (Coordinator), Adam Pettengill, Frank Re, Dave Rogers, Janet Soja, Janet Treanor

Submitted by Tavia Ossola, Coordinator