

2026 Annual Report

First Parish Brewster

Established  Oct. 16, 1700



Building Community for

325 Years



We cultivate liberating love by:

Living with mindful intention.

Acting with kindness.

Serving needs greater than our own.

**First Parish Brewster Unitarian
Universalist**



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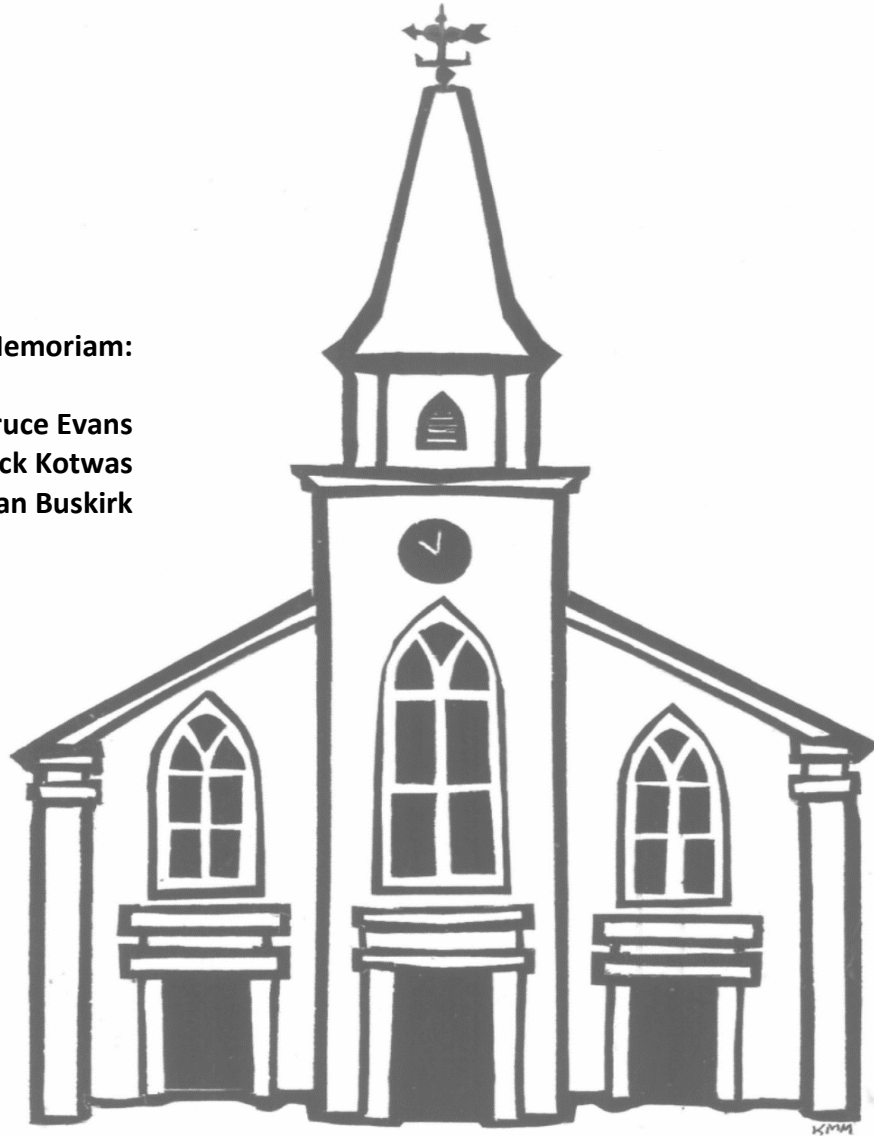
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Church Life Passages - July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

In Memoriam:

**Bruce Evans
Dick Kotwas
Joy Van Buskirk**



New Members:

**Bird, Cameron Blomdahl, Ina Cole, Michael Cole, Suzanne Costello
Jeff Keffer, Mark Kesling, Paula Koch, Nick Lawrence, Tim Lippold
Melinda Maryniuk, Liz Murphy, Dana McCoy, Elizabeth Murphy, Liz Perkins
Paula Segenchuk Koch, Marilla Scudder-Davis, Roy Scudder-Davis**

A. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees is charged with overseeing the short-, medium- and long-term health of the church.

A two-day orientation /retreat was convened in August to review best practices, and expectations for Board members. The goal of the retreat was to learn the responsibilities of being a Board member, and to decide how best to work together as a team. We were graced at the retreat by the presence of our then, brand-new ministers Julia Jones and Scot Hull. They helped us continue to build on the many positive practices and procedures that have been put in place by previous Boards.

This year is the 325th anniversary of a church being located at our site. During the entire year there has been, and will continue to be, a wonderful montage of celebratory events. The “church on the hill” has weathered many challenges in those 325 years, and this past year was no exception, as we found out in July that our interim minister, Rev. Kaaren Anderson, had resigned from the ministry as a result of the findings of an investigation carried out by our denomination. Many in the church were shocked by this, and many felt that the investigation was poorly carried out and that its conclusions were questionable. As a result, the Board has made, and is still making, great efforts to understand how the investigation was carried out, what precipitated it, and how its conclusions were reached. In an effort to make similar future investigations within the denomination less difficult both for ministers being investigated, and the churches they operate within, the Board has submitted proposals that will be voted on at the UU General Assembly this year. Additional proposals may be submitted next year. In essence, we are trying to turn lemons into lemonade by using the difficult situation we faced last year as a catalyst to change the way our denomination treats ministers being investigated, and the churches they are involved with, more fairly and kindly going forward.

After welcoming our new ministers last summer, we quickly formed a Transition Team to help them get acquainted with church members, and to help church members get to know them. In December church members voted overwhelmingly to select Julia and Scot in as our settled ministers. A Housing Fund that was funded by the generosity of our members has helped Julia and Scot with the high rents on the Cape and is poised to help them purchase a house here. Much gratitude is owed to Rev. Kaaren Anderson for being the driving force for getting the Housing Fund off the ground.

In August we hired Anna Smith as our new Director of Children and Youth Ministries. Anna has helped stabilize things during a transitional period in the Children and Youth program. We are now advertising to fill the Church Administrator (CA) position. New job descriptions were written for the CA and the Financial Administrator (FA) positions, with our outgoing treasurer, Karen Witting, playing a big role in writing those descriptions and in training the FA. We owe Karen much as she has worked hard to streamline all things financial at FPB during her 4 years as Treasurer!

During this past year the Right Relations Team (RRT) was reinstated by the Board to act as a resource for FPBUU members, staff, ministers, friends, and volunteers to help manage conflicts, grief, grievances and other communications in a healthy manner. In addition, a Strategic Planning effort was begun that shows promise of acting as a priority guide as we forge ahead in coming years.

With all the positive happenings at FPB over the past year, there seems to be a growing sense of optimism in the church as evidenced by the fact that 16 people have become church members since last May. Going forward, the Board endeavors to continue to help strengthen FPB’s ability to be a beacon of truth, justice and kindness to our members and the world at large.

Current members of the Board are Scott McLane (President), Gail Webb (Past President), Paula Lieb (President Elect), Karen Witting (Treasurer), Niki Popow (Clerk), and At-Large members Ed Klein, Janet Treanor, Allison Coleman and Jeff Talmadge. We thank At Large Board member Rob MacIver, who was

unable to complete his term mid-year, as well as Gail Webb, Karen Witting, and Niki Popow whose terms will be expiring at the end of June. Each of these folks put their hearts and souls into maintaining and improving the well-being of FPB. We also thank Allison Coleman who was appointed by the Board mid-year to fill Rob's position.

Submitted by Scott McLane, Board of Trustees President

B. MINISTERS

This year has been one of transition, rebuilding, relationship, and possibility. Arriving at First Parish at a time of significant change, we spent much of our first-year listening, learning, building relationships, and beginning the work of helping the congregation move from recovery toward renewal. Throughout the year, our focus has been simple: strengthen connections, support staff and volunteers, deepen spiritual life, and help position FPB for its next chapter.

Worship and Spiritual Life:

Worship is and remains the heart of congregational life. Together, ministers, staff, musicians, volunteers, guest preachers, and lay leaders offered services exploring themes of belonging, resilience, grief, wonder, justice, memory, hope, renewal, and community. Highlights included holiday and seasonal services, new member welcoming, Christmas Eve celebrations, the Blessing of the Backpacks, Día de los Muertos, and our participation in regional pulpit exchanges with neighboring UU congregations.

A major emphasis this year was broadening participation in worship. The Worship Team began taking shape as an ongoing collaborative body, and we intentionally expanded worship opportunities for members to bring their own voices, experiences, and gifts into Sunday morning life. That work is ongoing and developing robustly.

We also completed *The Shared Pulpit*, an eight-session course exploring sermon writing and worship leadership. Participants engaged deeply with the craft of worship creation, and the class will help inform future educational offerings.

Congregational Healing and Relationship Building:

One of the clearest calls of this year was the need for healing and renewed trust. Early in our ministry we participated in "Meet the Minister" gatherings, office hours, family conversations, and numerous individual meetings. Particular attention was given to listening to families impacted by previous congregational conflicts and leadership transitions. What emerged for us, repeatedly, was a congregation that cares deeply, holds its values seriously, and wants to move forward together.

We have continued encouraging efforts toward transparency, communication, and reconciliation while recognizing that healing and progress are not singular events but rather a long-term process. Conversations have begun around future conflict-engagement work, and we have encouraged the re-constitution of the FPB Right Relations team but also an exploration of the UUA's *Hope for Us* program as a possible next step in addressing past wounds while orienting toward the future.

Staff, Administration, and Organizational Development:

This year included significant staffing transitions and restructuring. We welcomed new leadership in Children and Youth Ministries and continued rebuilding that program with patience and realistic expectations. Early signs have been encouraging, with growing participation and renewed engagement among families.

Unexpected staff departures created challenges and required organizational adaptation. Work began to separate administrative and financial responsibilities into clearer roles, while also exploring longer-term communication needs and possible future investment in communications capacity.

Throughout the year we maintained regular staff supervision, worship planning meetings, executive coordination, and board collaboration. Our goal has been not only keeping operations moving but growing systems that are sustainable and supportive for staff and volunteers alike.

Faith Development and Community Building:

A major focus of this first year has been continuing and strengthening pathways into belonging. Covenant Groups and “Spirit Groups” provide meaningful opportunities for connection, reflection, and spiritual growth. We see these efforts as important parts of a larger ecosystem of adult faith development. We also explored future educational possibilities, including lay worship leadership development, public theology, social justice education, and adult learning opportunities.

For families, Rev. Julia launched the Parent Forum, creating intentional space for connection, support, and community among parents involved in Children and Youth Ministries. Participation has been strong, and we view this as an important strategic investment in congregational life.

Pastoral care also continues through office visits, home visits, memorial services, and a growing collaboration with the Caring Committee.

Vision, Strategy, and Looking Ahead:

As the year progressed, attention increasingly turned toward the future. Strategic planning conversations accelerated through congregational workshops, board work, visioning events, and collaboration with Rev. Kimberley Debus. While First Parish has no shortage of history, ideas, or plans, the emerging goal is to create strategy not simply as a document, but as a process actively guiding decision-making, investment, and ministry. We envision a congregation where vision informs action, where ministries align around shared priorities, and where progress is regularly reviewed and supported. At the same time, conversations continue around strengthening communication, coordinating social justice work across teams, improving internal collaboration, and expanding public presence in the wider community.

Gratitude:

Our first year at First Parish has been marked by extraordinary generosity, patience, honesty, and welcome. We have met people carrying grief and hope, history and possibility. We have seen volunteers step forward capably, selflessly, and repeatedly. We have watched new relationships form, new members arrive, and energy return. This congregation has endured much. It has also remained resilient. The work ahead is real, but so is the promise.

Thank you for welcoming us into this community and into this shared ministry. We love it here and we are so grateful to be walking this path with you.

In faith and gratitude,

Rev. Julia Jones

Rev. Scot Hull

C. MUSIC MINISTRY

What an incredible year it's been because of the vast talent and generosity of FPB musicians who uplift and color worship with a range of musical styles, moods and instruments! This spring's Music Sunday's theme of "Honoring Water" brought a beautiful world premiere composition by choir/congregation member Neil Bartholomew. The program also featured a local high school student singing soprano solo. Rev. Julia Jones also shared her talent – lucky us! The choir has performed regularly usually twice per month, and we added a couple of popup choirs (no evening rehearsal) during the year for the enjoyment of congregants who just want to jump in. Choral accompanist and musician extraordinaire Dan Anthony continues to share his jolly humor alongside accompanying on piano or other instruments, and we enjoy the occasional swapping so he conduct and I play. What a treasure! Thanks to the continued leadership of Judy Jollett, the clarinet ensemble met and participated in some worships this year, sometimes with Dan Anthony playing a clarinet. The Handpan ensemble was featured at Audubon in "Tunes and Tales on the Trails" and the group has attracted a couple of new players, so that's exciting. For the first time at Music Sunday, the handpan ensemble performed with the choir, which was thrilling to our handpan folks. The limited space and acoustics made it a little tough for the choir to hear the handpans, but nevertheless we pulled it off!

We hosted two collaborative events with Jane Lowey – a September community sing on International Day of Peace and a May concert called "Many Cultures, One World". Both of these featured First Parish Brewster's choir along with Jane's group Common Voices and the drummers of Drummah Queens. The feedback for both was that they were both very uplifting!

Our tech volunteer is growing (yay)! Adding to our Tech Manuals, Rikki Bates and I completed A/V Manuals for the sanctuary livestream, and we created a Winslow Computer and Display Monitor Manual, which includes detailed photos about how to operate a hybrid Zoom meeting. We also added a monitor in the sanctuary that will help the choir to hear the sermon. Wearing her music-making hat, Rikki jumps in on percussion regularly, which is a blast!

Kaeza Fearn, Music Director

Choir musicians: Neil Bartholomew, Lisa Bosley, Reese Brewer, Allison Coleman, Mary Gamerman, Mary Anne Germain, Laura Gill, Marie Hartley, Kip Keene, John Kielb, Maureen Osborne, Jane Perkins, Pamela Phipps, Dan Rabold, Jennifer Rabold, Chuck Ross, Topper Roth, Deb Selkow, Rosanne Shapiro, Bill Sheehan, Sarah Sheehan, Josh Skolnick, Pat Stover, Lindsey Straus, Barbara Sykes, Sue Trask, Gail Webb, Cindy Wood

Clarinet Ensemble: Judy Jollett, Mary Jo Jollett, Chris Morin, Lisa Bosley, Deb Whippen

Handpan Ensemble: Bev DiPaolo, Ries DiPaolo, Judy Jollett, Joan Kapp, Linda Shelburne, and Marilla Scudder-Davis

Other volunteer vocal and instrumental musicians: Neil Bartholomew, Rikki Bates, Allison Coleman, Kayli Cullen, Bev DiPaolo, Dan Feerick, Ricky Hillson, Rev. Julia Jones, Dana McCoy, Pam McLane, David Sutherland

A/V Volunteers: Finn Allen, Marie Hartley, Jim Lieb

Choir Librarian: Deb Selkow

D. BREWSTER THRIFT STORE MINISTRY

Overview: For the first time since the onset of Covid, winter weather significantly impacted our operating hours. Alongside other interruptions, this resulted in the store being closed for a total of two and a half weeks. Despite these challenges, we remain resilient and have been actively working to recover the lost ground. Thanks to our loyal customers and dedicated volunteers, the Brewster Thrift Store continues to serve as an inclusive and vital retail hub within the town of Brewster.

Key Highlights:

- Extended Hours Remain in Effect
- We continue to operate until 4:00 p.m. throughout the summer and maintain our Monday openings year-round. This schedule adjustment has played a crucial role in maintaining steady revenue streams.
- Community Engagement:
 - A new poster has been prominently displayed in the store, outlining our connection to the church and highlighting FPBUU's social justice initiatives and mission. The Brewster Thrift Store serves not only as a retail outlet but also as a welcoming community space where people gather, connect, and support one another. We are proud to nurture this sense of community belonging.
- Building Improvements:
 - A new central air-conditioning system was installed, the parking lot was leveled and repaved, and the building's exterior was freshly painted.
- Volunteer Recognition:
 - Our volunteers are the cornerstone of our operations, and we are sincerely appreciative of their unwavering commitment. Their efforts are essential to the smooth functioning of the store, and we are grateful for their ongoing support. We could always use a few more consistent and able-bodied volunteers!
- Looking Ahead:
 - As we approach 2026-27 our goals, as always, include strengthening community partnerships, increasing volunteer involvement, and expanding donation drives to further the store's mission and impact. Revenue directly correlates to quality and consistent donations
- Supporting Social Justice:
 - Proceeds from the Brewster Thrift Store directly fund the social justice programs of First Parish Brewster UU. These initiatives target critical issues like homelessness and food insecurity in our community.

We extend our gratitude to everyone who helps make the Brewster Thrift Store a cornerstone of community support and engagement.

Thrift Store Volunteers: Pat Amos, Mary Gamerman, Al Glasstetter, Lindsay Harvey, Marcia Kleib, Paula Lieb, Rosemary Moeller, Elizabeth Sjogren, Janet Treanor, Maureen Osborne, Nikkia Powpow, Carol Yerby, Susan Oneill, Cheryl Bartholomew

Staff: Celine Crook and Lisa Ascii.

E. FINANCIAL MINISTRIES

The 25-26 fiscal year brought many changes and opportunities for improvement of the church office.

For years, First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist employed an AFD – Administration and Finance Director. The AFD’s responsibilities included overseeing daily church operations including COVE (Church Office Volunteers Extraordinaire), building management, meeting with volunteers, committees and financial reporting.

Since February 2025 we have had much transition in the office.

My employment at First Parish Brewster began in late October 2023 as a part-time bookkeeper (10 hrs./wk.). After the Administration and Finance Director who was here for ten years left in late February 2025, my hours and responsibilities increased.

In July 2025, the Bookkeeper’s responsibilities and hours expanded again, and the title of the position became Financial Administrator.

Working closely with our Treasurer, Karen Witting, updates were made to the church’s financial reporting, procedures, and policies.

In February 2026, after the Church Administrator resigned, the Financial Administrator’s job description expanded to 30 hours a week. The Financial Administrator is now responsible for all finance related activities, including management of member’s pledge accounts. The Church Administrator job description was revised allow that person to focus on office administration.

I am grateful for the opportunity to be of service and work with First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist members, volunteers, and staff. Our mission is vital to the well-being of our community, especially in the current climate.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Treasurer, Karen Witting, for her two plus terms (5 years) of service. Karen guided us through these last few years of challenges and transitions. I value her guidance as my mentor as I took on expanded responsibility of Financial Administrator.

Submitted by: Victorea Luminary, Financial Administrator

F. 325th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION COMMITTEE

This year we have had activities throughout the year to celebrate the founding of this congregation on October 16, 1700, with the theme, “Building Community for 325 Years”. We kicked off the celebration with a Harvest Home Potluck on Sunday, October 12 when we gathered on the lawn at Winslow House to share food, fellowship, and community and celebrate the coming of Rev. Scot and Rev. Julia. In December--January, we explored the evolution of our campus with a gallery exhibit in the Parish Room, “325 Years of Gathering on the Hill” telling the stories of our buildings (inside and out) through photographs, paintings, and historical artifacts. On February 1 we held an organ concert featuring our 1861 Edwin Holbrook organ--the last surviving Holbrook organ in existence--with music from the last 400 years performed by four distinguished Cape organists: Deborah Gemma, Marcia Hempel, Richard Busch, Jeff Cutts. (The concert was a great success and drew in many people from outside and we anticipate doing this again!) In May—

June we presented a photo gallery exhibit in the Parish Room titled, “The People of First Parish Brewster, 1985-2026” where many photos told the history of our congregation over the last 40 years.

In May we also participated in the Brewster in Bloom parade on May 3 by creating a beach-themed “float” (a decorated pick-up truck) and having a lawn party with free ice cream cones on the lawn for parade watchers. The float was a joint project of the 325th Anniversary Committee and CYM and a great time was had by all creating the float and riding in the parade, despite the cold, rainy and windy day.

During the year we sold 325th anniversary mugs and T-shirts and plan to raffle off a bird house replica of the church during the summer. Any proceeds left at the end of the celebratory year will be donated to the restoration of the church’s clock and bell.

Also, under the umbrella of our 325th year there will be a Democracy Festival Day on Saturday, September 19 and a Wampanoag Day on October 4.

The last celebratory event to tie up the anniversary year will be a church-wide celebration of our ministers’ Installation on Saturday, October 3, 2026, and publication of an addendum (2000-2026) to the history of the congregation published in 2000.

325th Anniversary Committee: Paula Lieb, Chair; Susan Smith; Kip Tourtellot (addendum editor); Susan Binkley (logo design and addendum layout); Sue Trask; Mary Wallace; Rosanne Shapiro (publicity) and Allison Coleman (organ concert coordinator).

G. BUILDING OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The 25-26 year found the Building Oversight Committee grappling with a persistent problem of mold/mildew smell in Winslow House. We had some old ductwork replaced, cleaned the air ducts, installed a heat pump a/c system, but the problem remains perplexing. It will remain a focus for the 26-27 fiscal year as well.

In better news, we replaced a small section of the Parish Hall gutter, saving the cost of a full replacement; painted the trim and dormer on the Barn; painted Dawes Hall and cleaned the roof, as well as installing a heat pump for a/c for the Thrift Shop; removed wallpaper and painted the Winslow House kitchen and painted the stairwell; added insulation in Winslow House through MassSave; added two thermostat sensors in the Meeting House; and installed a railing at the steps into the Tap Room in Winslow House.

Kudos to Barry Powers, who responded to our plea for help with the Dawes Hall parking lot. The lot was graded, repaired, patched, and the rear portion also graded and hardened. We appreciate greatly this gift from Barry to the church and Thrift Shop clientele!

Finally, we welcomed two new members to the Building Oversight Committee: Dan Harkinson and Mark Cullinane have jumped in with rigor and enthusiasm to the management and upkeep of our five buildings. We are so glad they joined us! We always welcome anyone with an interest in historic buildings and keeping our campus beautiful to come along to a meeting to check us out!

Mark Cullinane, Judy Fenner (chair), Dan Harkinson, Wayne Jenkins, Elenita Muñiz, Roger Smith, Kris Yerby.

H. CARING COMMITTEE

The Caring Committee tries to reach out to members of our community who need extra comfort and support. Some are vulnerable, disabled, perhaps unable to get out much, sometimes elderly, sometimes in grief, in post-op recovery, or home with a newborn.

We meet monthly to share information and suggest best support. We try to visit them often. A few times a year we bring plates of homemade cookies along with pots of pansies in the spring, mini pumpkins in the fall, and poinsettias at the holidays, which are often donated by the Agway Foundation. We help set up rides to doctors or physical therapy. We help to arrange Meal Trains when appropriate.

As we have good connections with these friends, we often pass information along to the ministers, who may take over the pastoral needs of our most vulnerable.

Suzanne Sullivan and Susan Smith, co-chairs

I. CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY COMMITTEE

This was a year of new beginnings for CYM. After a tumultuous period, the program has regained stability. We are very happy to welcome Anna Smith as our CYM Director and to have Rev. Julia as a regular attendee and advisor to the CYM Committee.

We met Anna Smith in early 2025 and were delighted to hire her as the Director of SNO@UU. She brings a rich variety of experience and skills in the areas of education, management, social justice, children's programming and social media. It was fortuitous that she was able to continue as Director of Children and Youth Ministries.

- The committee has undertaken projects in support of the CYM Director:
- Review of Board Policies relevant to children and youth
 - o Active shooter: The committee met with members of the Brewster Police Department to evaluate our current Policy. They made suggestions for the safety of the children, which the committee is working to carry out. They also presented ideas relating to the adult congregation. We provided this information to the organizers of the greeters and ushers, and they have scheduled a training by the BPD in May.
 - o First aid: The Policy itself was complete, but the required kits listed were not available. This was passed on the Reverends, who appointed an ad hoc committee to review the recommendations and purchase the kits. We will schedule a First Aid training for staff and volunteers of CYM and SNO@UU and interested congregants. A CPR course will also be offered to CYM staff and interested congregants.
 - o Safe congregation: The Policy had not been updated since 2017 and included only issues of sexual misuse. Rev. Julia decided that she would prefer a Policy which included all aspects of safety, and she is working with the Board of Trustees to formulate a new Policy, to which we will contribute ideas.
- Continuation of a Tween/Teen Program: A full program for middle schoolers is evolving.
- With the direction of Anna and Finn Allen (and help from Maia Selkow), group activities were planned and a weekly curriculum was created using materials from Soul Matters.

- The activities included a fire circle and ritual at Nickerson Park, a movie night, a book group about anti-racism, and an upcoming field trip to Nantucket for a special Juneteenth program. These activities were successful. The Sunday curriculum did not fare as well. It was difficult to ascertain the optimal time and location and attendance was not good. We will formulate a plan for next year, likely concentrating on monthly activities for team building and faith development.
- Continuation of Sunday nursery and elementary school programs: The committee helped arrange volunteers to help with the nursery and elementary programs. Elementary group activities were drawn from Soul Matters. Attendance was highly variable, ranging from one to 12 participants. The average number of attendees is around 7 per week
- Fellowship Hall: Following Anna's direction, the committee aided in changing the space by moving the elementary school space to the front and the nursery space to the back, which provided more room for youngest children to play.
- Celebrations: The Committee helped in the planning and execution of special programming for Halloween/Day of the Dead, the Christmas Pageant and Easter egg hunt.
- Childcare for church events: This service was formally offered this year, and the committee volunteers enabled more parents to participate, providing care during Starting Point, congregational and committee meetings, and the newly initiated Parent Forum, led by Rev. Julia.
- The recruitment of new families remains an important goal for the program. The committee has supported the director in increasing our presence on social media; Anna has opened an Instagram account in addition to Facebook and has uploaded creative posts on parenting sites. We helped create the FPB Brewster in Bloom float, and distributed flyers about the CYM program, SNO@UU and the church. A Craft Café is planned for the community, as we endeavor to expand our reach.

Members: Deborah Madansky (chair), Deb Selkow, Finn Allen, Niki Popow, Janet Treanor (Board liaison)
 Additional Attendees: Anna Smith, CYM Director, Rev. Julia Jones

Submitted by: Deborah Madansky

I. CIRCLE ALLIANCE (formerly known as The Women's Circle Alliance)

When we dropped the "Women's" description, our attendance this year at our monthly programs has increased, including FPBUU members, friends of the church, and neighbors who are interested in a presentation or two.

Another increase was in paid membership. (Dues for our year, which begins in September are \$20). They pay for our presenters, two charities (the UU Women's Federation and the Clara Barton Diabetes Camp for Girls), along with a generous donation to FPBUU.

One of our primary purposes is to provide refreshments after a Memorial Service for our departed members. We comforted several families this past year. We really would appreciate more volunteers for this important responsibility. To sign up or if you'd like more information, our "Team Captain" is Julia Enroth. Feel free to give her a call or an email.

A wonderful joint effort occurred when the "325th Committee" and we had a potluck luncheon to sort through wonderful old photos to identify our members through the years. If you've viewed the gallery

photographic presentation in our Parish Room, you'll see snapshots of our FPBUU Life through our many years together

As Music and Art are two favorites of our monthly gatherings, December brought us a wonderful Holiday concert with Vicki Goldsmith (former FPBer) on flute with her talented ensemble. Kathy Meyers made another appearance this season for another wonderful Scherrenschnitte, having us create beautiful paper cuttings of our own and having lots of fun playing!

Writing and Reading are big favorites as well. We always enjoy having Jessica Devin of the Brewster Book Store share a selection of new book titles as excellent suggestions for gift giving, along for your own enjoyment. It's a great bookstore, right in the "center" of town. Also popular was Nature, which combined beautifully with Rosemary Dunn Moeller's kickoff presentation of her latest book of poetry, along with John Hanlon's presentation about "Birds of Cape Cod." We also became writers when Joanne Powers did a writing workshop for us and almost all of us even read them aloud.

We got to know our two new ministers better in January and we ended the year with a popular and local Kripalu-certified Chair Yoga instructor, Marty Zurn.

We're always welcoming new members. Young and older, men and women, all are welcome to join us! Submitted by Linda Hladek on behalf of our Steering Committee: Sue Bowser, Karen Davis, Julia Enroth, Joanne Hush, Betty Pickering, Anne Southworth, Suzanne Sullivan, Betsy Wentworth, Carol Ann Yeaple

Other members are Barbara Draper, Diane Heart, Joan Isenberg, Joan Kapp, Marcia Kielb, Paula Lieb, Deborah Madansky, Kathy Meyers, Rosemary Moeller, Elenita Muniz, Niki Popow, Althea Schoen, Jennifer Smith, Janet Soja, Joan Sullivan, Barbara Sykes, Janet Treanor, Karen Watson-Etsell, Marilyn Watson-Etsell

K. COVE: COMMUNICATION, OFFICE VOLUNTEERES, ETC

What a joyous bunch we are and a true pleasure to be part of. Our Team always has room for you. We are Neil Bartholomew, Barb Draper, Bob Flanagan, Susan Flaws, MaryJo Jollett, Debbi Klein, Rog Smith, Susan Smith and Bob Spencer.

We support the work of FPBUU as Winslow House office volunteers Monday through Thursday from 9:00 to noon. Our responsibilities include communications, website updates, split plate management, counting and depositing money. We greet visitors at the door, chase down answers to questions, sort mail, answer the phone, schedule room usage, develop/print/fold the order of service, print copies of this and that and freshen the pew information holders. We also laugh at some pretty funny jokes!

We serve as our own caring committee, working hard to find the fun and joy in life amidst the world's chaos. By the way, we still have no agreement on what COVE stands for; some say Church Office Volunteers, Etc. Others say Communications Office Volunteers Extraordinaire! Either way you cut that cake we would welcome you to our team. We do good work (sometimes mistake free) and foster community, all while helping the Church meet its mission.

We offer up a special bouquet of gratitude to Debbi Klein for helping steer the ship this past year!!

L. 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. We had seven groups this past year. Through the practice of deep listening and sharing personal 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, 7 different Covenant groups met in live and zoom formats, making many. Two facilitators per group also met once a month in person 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. Our success was in attracting over 60 members. A challenge was to meet the needs of individuals who could no longer attend in person but had trouble accessing the Zoom format.

The 14 Facilitators for 2023-20234 were Gloria Bailey-Davies, Linda Bailey-Davies, Daniel Beltran, Marilee Crocker, Lindsay Harvey, Jim Hild, Kip Keene, Dave Rogers, Maureen Osborne, Tavia Ossola, Roger Smith, Margaret Rice-Moir and Bob Spencer.

Submitted by Maureen Osborne and Bob Spencer, co- chairs

M. ENDOWMENT BOARD

The Endowment Board serves as steward of FPB's Endowment Fund, whose purpose is "to enhance the mission and work of First Parish Brewster, apart from the general operation of the Congregation."

This year the Board spent much of its time fielding funding requests from FPB committees. For FY 2025-26, \$67,134 was available for distribution.

With Board of Trustees approval, we OK'd distributions for: UU the Vote, a native pollinator garden along Route 6A, 325th Anniversary projects, SNO@UU summer children's program, moving expenses for Rev. Julia and Rev. Scot, air conditioning for the Thrift Store, new skylights and exterior painting for the Barn, and office renovations and mold remediation at Winslow House. As in prior years, maintenance and improvements to FPB's historic buildings accounted for the majority of distributions.

In October, we met with Cape Cod 5 Trust and Asset Management for the annual review of the Fund's investments and outlook. As of the end of the third fiscal quarter (March 31, 2026), the Endowment Fund balance was \$1,354,804.

The Endowment received memorial gifts this year in honor of Sue Daly, Bruce Evans, Dick Kotwas, Lester Moeller and John Myers. We also received our annual gift from the Henry W. & Lucy B. Patterson Fund of the Cape Cod Foundation.

Looking ahead, the Endowment Board is focused on growth. Watch for events encouraging members and friends to invest in FPB's mission and longevity by giving during their lifetimes or naming FPB in their wills or planned giving. We are spotlighting Homer P. Clark, whose 1937 gift resulted in a \$350,000 bequest

to FPB in 1998, jumpstarting the Endowment's growth. We honor donors to the Endowment and those who include FPB in their estate plans by enrolling them in the Homer P. Clark Legacy Society.

Members: Marilee Crocker (Chair), Susan Flaws, Howard Hayes, Barry Powers (Recording Secretary), Topper Roth (Financial Secretary). Ex-officio members are the Ministers, the President and Treasurer of the Board of Trustees, and the Financial Administrator.

Submitted by Marilee Crocker

N. FAMILY FAITH KITCHEN

First Parish Brewster has worked with Faith Family kitchen at the Faith Assembly of God church in Hyannis for over 12 years to provide meals for food challenged people of Cape Cod.

Every 4th Friday of the month, a team of 7 people show up to help prepare and serve a meal. It is a rich and rewarding experience and we are always pleased to have new people willing to help on a regular or part-time basis!

Anyone interested can contact Katharine Farnham.

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, comparing spending to date against the budget and against spending in the prior year. The purpose of this review is to identify concerning trends or errors as soon as possible. In addition, the committee reviews finance related concerns, adjusting processes, policies, and plans when appropriate. The committee works closely with the Board of Trustees, Endowment Board, and the Stewardship Committee to understand the broader financial circumstances of the congregation.

This past year the committee has accomplished the following:

- Monthly monitoring of budget to actual results
- Delivered a mid-year financial report
- Delivered a comprehensive Year End financial report
- Provided regular updates to the congregation via Angle articles
- Enhanced the Finance Committee's part of the FPBUU website, including a guide to getting reimbursed for money spent on a church project
- Worked with Board and Personnel Committee to adjust the responsibilities and job description for the Financial Administrator position
- With Policy Committee, reviewed and updated the Financial Controls Policy
- Developed resource for congregation to provide information on the status of our budget and who is responsible for line items
- Conducted an RFP for payroll services and chose vendor to create a smoother and more efficient operation; for implementation in the next fiscal year
- Investigated options for repayment of mortgage, following interest rate increase.

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. In June the budget is presented to the congregation for approval.

Submitted by Karen Witting, FPBUU Treasurer

Members: Karen Witting (chair), Rog Smith, Jim Lieb, Allison Coleman, John Kielb, Johanna Gurland.
Representing the Endowment Board: Susan Flaws (outgoing) and Marilee Crocker (incoming).

P. FINANCIAL FUTURES

Three times a year, representatives from the six groups most focused on the financial well-being of First Parish Brewster: the Board of Trustees, the Endowment Board, the Finance Committee, the Stewardship Committee, the FUNdraising Committee, and Building Oversight Committee gather.

We meet to update each other, share energy and ideas, further clear communication, and maintain transparency. In the past small working groups, called the Financial Futures Tiger Team, met to explore and enhance financial initiatives outside the box of what we have done in the past. We have an eye towards increasing our income beyond pledging and other creative fundraising efforts. Many of these initiatives have now become part of the fabric of the church: SNO@UU and enhanced rental income for example. We would like to revitalize our efforts applying for grants.

This church year we had hybrid meetings on September 9, January 13 and May 12. After a welcome and chalice lighting, we get about 10 minute updates from the Financial Futures Tiger Team (Susan Smith), the Board of Trustees (Scott McLane), the Finance Committee (Karen Witting/Allison Coleman), the Endowment Board (Susan Flaws/Marilee Crocker), the Stewardship Committee (John Kielb & Susan Smith), the FUNdraising Committee (Debbi Klein), and the Building Oversight Committee (Judy Fenner). The remaining time is allotted to ideas, questions and concerns.

Susan Smith, convener

Q. FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

This year the FUNdraising Committee has been tasked with raising \$25,000 toward FPB's operating budget. The Fundraising Committee looks to offer a variety of events, focused on gathering our church community together. Quite often we look to present activities that involve food and/or music and have a pleasant appreciation for the response we receive.

This past year, we returned to scheduling our Holiday Fare event to the second weekend in December. We felt that last year's event, before Thanksgiving, did not bring the holiday spirit as in years past. Back by popular demand, we offered decorated fresh green wreaths for sale. We encouraged pre-sale sign up and were pleasantly surprised we SOLD OUT of all the wreaths!! We have several FPBUU authors offering up their books for sale, and let's not forget the holiday carols and Santa appearing for photos!! We raised \$11,453, an increase over the previous year.

We just completed our annual Spring Festival, and we are in the midst of balancing the numbers in the hopes of having raised \$10,000. Our Biodiversity Task Force organized this year's Plant Sale, offering an incredible array of seedlings and home-grown varieties. Much thanks to Lake Farm Gardens of Orleans for their support in supplying seedlings at a discounted rate and Rand Burkert for supplying local varieties through the Nauset Greenhouse initiative that he runs with the students. Let's also give a big shout out to the

many gardeners that split plants from their own home gardens that were offered up for sale. Big thanks to our fabulous FPBUU bakers that continue to create such incredible yummy goodies!

Our biggest obstacle continues to be scheduling. As we are a very busy and robust church community, it is often difficult to plan and try to execute an event to raise a substantial amount of money and then be faced with rescheduling and/or canceling the event all together. The FUNdraising Committee will continue to look for more creative ways to raise funds and help support the missions here at First Parish Brewster. We are always looking to expand our committee and welcome some newer and fresher ideas to pair with our two auction events.

FUNdraising Committee: Rand Burkert, Barb Draper, Judy Jollett, Debbi Klein, Patsy Roberts, Rog Smith, Carol Yerby

Submitted by Debbi Klein, Chair

R. LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE

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

The Memorial Garden is lovingly tended, weeded, and planted and is a main focus of the committee. It is in this garden that the Memorial Posts stand bearing the names of those we remember and honor. The committee held its annual garden-side service in early September to remember those whose names had been newly engraved.

In the spring and fall the group met for campus clean-up, weeding, and sprucing up. Over the summer, members signed up for two-week stints of weeding and plant care. Trimming the knockout roses along the driveway was one of the duties.

On “hedge day”, members met with trimmers and rakes to trim the hedges and shrubs around the properties. There is ongoing work of thinning out the dead wood of the older hedges to give them new life and keep them healthy.

During the winter holiday season, we met to decorate the sanctuary, adding lights and displays of greens and berries in the windows and swags of greenery at the rear of the sanctuary. We put up wreaths and set up the lights on the front of the church entrance.

This year we met in late March to clean up tree and brush damage from the winter storm. The wood was cut to fireplace or stove length and stacked for anyone wanting it.

We are a vibrant committee who actually 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.

In Mud and Mindfulness, Judy Wilkins and Dan Harkinson, Chairs, Marilyn Watson-Etsell, treasurer
Members: Gail Buschmann, Karen Davis, Julia Enroth, Liz Gordon, Charles Harris, Susie Hine, Joan Kapp, Kevin Lowey, Mark Preu, Frank Re, Dave Rogers, Jan Soja, Janet Whittemore.

S. LEADERSHIP NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Leadership Nominating Committee (LNC) is comprised of six members who are elected by the FPBUU Congregation at the Annual Meeting. The committee's purpose is to present a slate of qualified and interested nominees to be voted on by the FPBUU Congregation for open leadership positions on the Board of Trustees, Endowment Board, and Leadership Nominating Committee. The intention is to seek nominees who represent the diverse groups within our membership.

The LNC reports directly to the FPBUU Congregation and is independent of the Board of Trustees and the Endowment Board. However, we consider input from officers of both boards, and other interested parties. This year, the Leadership Nominating Committee selected President Elect, Treasurer, Clerk, and one Member at Large for the Board of Trustees. Two candidates were selected for the LNC. Two members of the Endowment Board agreed to serve for another term. Terms of Service are prescribed in FPBUU By-Laws.

2026 LNC Members: Anne Berry, Linda Hladek, Frank Re, Suzanne Sullivan, Co-Chair, Joan Talmadge, and Carol Yerby, Co=Chair.

Submitted by: Suzanne Sullivan, Co-Chair

T. MEETINGHOUSE GALLERY

The mission of the Meetinghouse Gallery at First Parish Brewster UU is to provide a space for local and regional artists to display their work. This is in keeping with our values of embracing inclusion, diversity, and justice in our lives, our community, and the world around us. In particular, we hope to amplify the work of BIPOC and other oppressed groups, underrepresented artists and subjects whose work reflects the diverse Cape Cod community and beyond. These pieces will not only enhance our enjoyment of the space, but through Openings and Special Events, serve to share First Parish Brewster and its Mission with the community at large.

Some months of the year, we showcase the work of the creatives who are members of our congregation. This year we twice honored our 325th anniversary and offered monthly exhibits as follows: September - "The Border" Brooke Eaton-Skea; November - "A Little of This, A Little of That" Nancy Douthiel & Diane Willcox; December & January - "325 Years of Gathering On the Hill" Historic prints, Paula Lieb & Susan Binkley; February - "Authentic Selves"-trans families and March - "Nothing To Hide"-mental illness, were both from the Family Diversity Projects in conjunction with First Federated of Orleans; April - "Courage Unleashed"- abuse survivors Independence House & Chris Morin; and May & June - "325 The People of FPB, 1985-2026" Paula Lieb & Susan Binkley.

Barb Draper, Niki Popow, Susan Smith chair, Joan Talmadge, Sue Trask, Mary Wallace.

U. MEETINGHOUSE SPEAKER SERIES: Voices of Cape Cod

For four years we have been presenting speakers here each month at the Meetinghouse, centering voices of black and Indigenous People, of marginalized people, and of trans people in our midst. We have not heard enough of these voices. We must work harder to dismantle oppression and racism in ourselves and in others.

We begin our introduction of each event by reading our FPBUU land acknowledgement. This year we presented in September 14 - Jo-Anne Wilson-Keenan & Haishleen Ramos "We Are Better Than This" talk & book sales, proceeds to BBT; October 19 - Meadow Dibble- "How to Resurface an Unsunk Ship";

November 16 - Linda Pierre "From Haiti to Cape Cod-One Woman's Journey"; January 18 - Abby Law & Sarah Rogers "Community is for Everyone: All Means ALL", disability & inclusion task force; February 22 - Lynne Rhodes, President NAACP Cape Cod "Finding Resistance When You're Tired"; March 22 - Leslie Dominguez Santos "Human Rights On Cape Cod"; April 12 - Dallas Ducar "From Crisis to Power. Transforming Trans Health For the Future", LGBTQ Welcoming Congregation; May 24 - Sara Roy "Can Anyone Hear Us?: On Gaza's 'Day After'".

Dianne Ashley, Tia Cross, Barb Draper, Niki Popow, Rosanne Shapiro, Susan Smith (chair), Sue Trask, Mary Wallace

V. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Cheryl Bartholmew took over as Membership Chair from Paula Lieb as of September 2025. Cheryl had to step aside in February 2026 after a fall which resulted in broken bones and a need to focus on recovery. Paula jumped back into the position as Interim Chair. Cheryl plans to move back into the Chair position in September 2026. This report is provided jointly by Cheryl and Paula.

Status of Our Present Activities:

Between 2023-2025 we established an effective membership orientation process with Rev. Kaaren Anderson's support and have kept it going in 2025-26 with some very minor adjustments. We appreciate Rev. Julia and Rev. Scott's support in continuing what we have found to be successful.

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- Here is our process as of May 2026:
- Step 1: UU101, a session for visitors held after a Sunday service every four to six weeks for about 45 minutes where we invite newcomers to share something about their religious past and why they came to First Parish today. We give a very quick overview of UU and invite questions.
- Step 2: "Starting Point", a one to two-session class where participants connect with each other as they explore Unitarian Universalism through the lens of our individual theological journeys; the journey/history of UU and practice our approach to deep/disciplined listening.
- Step 3: UU 201, a session for the Starting Point participants after a Sunday service where we review what membership at First Parish means and help the prospective members analyze whether they are ready to join. We talk about and answer questions about pledging. We have had three groups go through the Starting Point course this year: October 20 and 29, 2025; February 12 and March 19, 2026.
- Step 4: Signing the Membership Book and making an initial pledge: Soon after UU201, those who are ready, make a pledge (online or with a pledge card) and sign the Membership Book. Name tags are ordered.
- Step 5: New Member Reception, a party for new members and board members is held where the new members are asked to share their vision, hopes and dreams for First Parish (May 29, 2026)
- Step 6: New Member Recognition, a ceremony during a Sunday Service in the spring where new members are acknowledged and welcomed by the entire congregation. (May 17, 2026)
- Step 7: Soul Matters Group or Covenant Group, a small group ministry which new members are invited to join to strengthen their connection to people in their Starting Point class.

New Member Count: It is important to note that we need to grow significantly each year just to keep our membership hovering around 300. Between May 18, 2025, and May 17, 2026, 16 people became members.

Connecting New Members through Small Group Ministries: Two Soul Matters groups, (i.e., small group ministries) have continued and will continue in the 2026-27 church year to absorb and help people connect who have become members mid-year as spaces have not been available in the existing Covenant Groups mid-

year. Each October, new members have the option of joining a Covenant-style, Soul Matters discussion group during their regular sign-up process.

Other Accomplishments:

In the last few months, the Membership Committee has:

- Created a new, more attractive Welcome Card for the pews to enable us to capture information about visitors and reach out to them.
- Researched how to create self-sustaining affinity groups, used Survey Monkey to do an interest survey and provided an opportunity for congregants to sign up for groups on Sundays after services. Three groups have gotten started: Walking/Hiking (lead is Greg Breining); Games and Snacks (lead Marilla and Roy Scudder Davis; and Books (lead is Jen Rabold).
- Regularly shared information on visitors to ensure we get to know them and help them connect with us and with others.

Our goals in the next few months include:

- Completing a welcome/information card for visitors.
- Continuing to grow the affinity groups.
- Focusing on outreach to families; young adults (broadly defined as people 21-50 years of age!).
- Sensitizing committees, etc. to the importance of considering working people's hours and needs of families when planning activities so that they can participate.
- Providing four Starting Point sessions in the next year and linking participants who are interested with a Covenant or Soul Matters small group ministry.
- Focusing on increasing the Greeter pool and providing a Greeter Orientation in the fall to review safety policies and tips on how to be a super greeter.
- Working with a new Communications Committee on the First Parish website and other outreach vehicles to alert people to the possibilities of membership.
- Assisting new and existing members with using the Breeze Directory to ensure connection with others across the community.

Committee: Cheryl Bartholomew, Chair, Paula Lieb, Interim Chair, Kris Yerby, Deborah Madansky, Joan Talmadge, Cheryl Bartholomew, Diane Willcox, Mark Cullinane

W. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

FPBUU's Personnel Committee serves to review and develop policies and procedures related to employee management in our congregation. We are not a human resources department, though our members can be called on to help arbitrate specific employee-grievance complaints.

In the past year, we've worked to clear up language in the Personnel Policy Manual that contradicted actual practice and to ensure policies were in line with UUA standards. We've also aided employee search efforts by serving as members of the hiring teams organized for this purpose.

On the list of possible work in the next year is assisting efforts to review employee benefits to see how they compare to what other UU congregations offer. We look forward to working with our incoming ministers and Board on this and other personnel-related issues.

We would welcome new members – especially those with HR or other personnel management experience – to help us carry out our vital, behind-the-scenes work.

Respectfully submitted: Chuck Ross (chair), Neil Bartholomew, Nancy Benben

X. POLICY COMMITTEE

The role of the Policy Committee is to respond to requests by the FPBUU Board of Trustees (BOT) to develop language, in the form of policies, to guide and inform the actions and decisions of both individuals and groups in ways consistent with FPBUU's mission and values. Once approved by the BOT, these policies are posted on the FPBUU website (see "Board Policies" under "Governance" in the "Members" menu).

Members of the Committee are Topper Roth (Chair), Karen Witting (also serving presently as BOT liaison), Marilee Crocker, Kip Tourtellot, and Dan Harkinson. The Committee meets monthly from September through May/June.

During 2025-26, the Committee developed one new policy (Contractual Practices) and developed revisions of several existing policies (Financial Controls, Board Meetings, Use and Protection of Personal Data, and Special Funds).

Y. ST. JOSEPH'S SHELTER MONTHLY MEAL

Members of FPBUU have been preparing meals for our housing-insecure neighbors at St. Joseph's Homeless Shelter in Hyannis for over 30 years.

On the third Saturday of every month, a team of 25 volunteers prepares a healthy meal for the 50 guests at the shelter. A team of drivers takes turns delivering the food to the shelter.

The hearty and nutritious meal includes meatloaf, baked potatoes, green beans, salad, fruit, and brownies. Thanks to all the members of the St. Joseph's Shelter Monthly Meal Team, 600 meals were provided this year.

If you would like to join the team, please contact Carol Yerby.

Z. SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRIES

Social justice is an essential part of the mission of this congregation supported by our affirmation that "service is our prayer" and our mission's directive to serve needs greater than our own. We have five social justice task forces at First Parish engaged in education, advocacy and activism to drive positive changes in areas of great concern which we are passionate about.

Z1. BIODIVERSITY TASK FORCE

Our mission is to protect our fragile natural environment by increasing biodiversity on our FPBUU campus and offering educational and service opportunities via biodiversity projects.

The Biodiversity Task Force began as one of three subcommittees of the Environmental Task Force in 2024-2025. In the fall of 2025, the subcommittees on climate and waste disbanded, but the biodiversity subcommittee continued to meet. The members applied and were granted status as a Task Force.

Many congregants have expressed an interest in this endeavor and have attended committee meetings. In addition, community members belonging to the Brewster Pollinators have joined in our efforts. Their goal is to provide support for organizations located on 6A to create a true pathway for pollinating bees, butterflies, moths, flies, beetles, birds, bats and others.

The Task Force intends to plant or expand at least one native pollinator garden each year on the FPB campus. In consultation with the Landscape Committee, a plot in front of the Thrift Store was chosen for our first project. We are grateful to The Endowment Committee, which granted \$1,000 to the Task Force to purchase compost from Brewster Sand and Gravel and plants from the Native Plant Trust.

The bed has been prepared, the design is finished and planting will take place at the end of May or early June. The Task Force intends to educate church members and members of the public visiting the Thrift Store about the importance of using native plants to enhance wildlife habitat and boost ecosystem resilience and pollinators to preserve biodiversity and food production.

Members: Rand Burkert, Deborah Madansky (co-chairs), Mark Cullinane, Jeff Talmadge, Greg Breining, Stan Selkow, Dan Harkinson

Submitted by: Deborah Madansky

22. BUILDING A BIGGER TABLE TASK FORCE

Charge: To welcome, support, and empower immigrants, asylum seekers, and refugees by providing advocacy, resources, education, and compassionate assistance that promotes dignity, inclusion, and opportunity. Over the course of the last year, we have followed our Charge and done this work in a variety of ways.

Advocacy/Accompaniment:

- Continuing to work with families and individuals to provide financial support, to assist in navigating an ever-changing system, and to help achieve self-sufficiency and a sense of belonging: rides to appointments and events, food pantry visits, birthday parties and showers, and driving lessons.
- Support Immigration Justice Legislation e.g. MA Protect Act
- Support Casa De Refugio in Mexico
- Support the Brazilian Resource Center and Latinx in Action
- Continue to teach ESL classes
- Assistance adjudicating immigrant cases
- Fundraising efforts, as needed

Education:

- Networking and collaboration with other organizations e.g. Nauset Interfaith's Refugee Support Team
- Meetinghouse Speaker Series: Linda Pierre
- "The Border" Parish Room exhibit
- Julia Cumes "Invisible Threads" series at CCMoA
- CCCSC
- International Women's Day Resource Table
- BBT members taking LUCE training

CHAIRS: Julia Enroth, Janet Treanor, Janet Emack

Members: Sue Bowser, Shelley Cohen, Karen Davis, Katharine Farnham, Leslie Feddge, Sue Fleming, Pat Gubbins, Sue Gubbins, Chris Jenkins, Jim Lieb, Kevin Lowey, Ben McKelway, Maxine Minhoff, Marietta Nilson, Cate O'Neill, Joan Piontek, Carlos Tun, Patty Tun, Anne Walsh

Submitted by: Jeff Talmadge

Z3. LGBTQ+ WELCOMING CONGEGATION TASK FORCE

This committee works to fulfill the church's mission through support, education, and advocacy for the needs and social justice interests of the LGBTQ community.

This year, we sponsored two major events – the first being our annual “Gayla Ball.” In addition to providing a context for joy and celebration for the LGBTQ community and allies, we honored a person who has contributed significantly to the community, Joe Lima, the president of PFLAG Cape Cod. We also gave a significant portion of the Ball's proceeds to PFLAG Cape Cod and to the FPBUU operating fund.

Our second major project was to organize and host a well-regarded speaker as part of the Sunday Meetinghouse Speakers series – Dallas Ducar, MSN, RN, PMHNP-BC, CNL, FAAN, the Executive Vice President of External Affairs at Fenway Health, one of the nation's leading LGBTQ+ health centers. She delivered the presentation: “From Crisis to Power: The Dangerous Consequences of Banning Access to Healthcare” and it was very well attended.

Additionally, our task force offered split plate contributions to 6 local organizations that support our mission and also voted to provide additional needed financial resources to a local support group for trans youth – THRIVE. As the meeting year winds down, our committee members will be marching in the “Lower Cape Pride” parade on June 13, proudly carrying our committee's banner, and we also approved a significant financial donation to the parade.

The members of this year's committee met once per month on Zoom. This year, Maureen Osborne and Rick Koonce served as co-chairs of the committee, but Rick is stepping down and will be replaced by Aimee Saulnier.

Members are Finn Allen, Linda Bailey-Davies, Gloria Bailey-Davies, Allison Coleman, Susan Gregory-Davies, JoAnne Hush, Rick Koonce (co-chair), Maureen Osborne (co-chair), Rona Robinson, Aimee Saulnier and Lindsey Straus. A big shout-out to our big-time assistants in Gayla Ball execution: Bob Spencer, Skip Bell, Neil Bartholomew, and Kip Keene.

Z4. PEACEFUL WORLD TASK FORCE

The Task Force for a Peaceful World is still less than a year old. Our mission is to heal and help those war damaged throughout our world, with a particular focus on the Middle East, and to advocate for peace and the prevention of war and violence in all forms. Through the use of films, guest speakers, articles, literature, fund-raisers, split plate offerings, and public action, we seek to further educate ourselves, our First Parish community, and beyond, toward greater understanding, and advocacy on behalf of, justice and peace in Palestine/Israel and other global places of conflict.

Highlights of our relatively brief life so far include:

- Our January 31st Fundraiser for the Children of Gaza, featuring awesome juggling, heartfelt poetry, and live music, which raised over \$4,000 in support of two organizations directly benefiting the children of Gaza
- Two Stand-out Vigils for Peace and Against War, on March 15th and April 19th, in front of our Church, calling for an end to the war in Iran and for allowing food and supplies into Gaza.

Co-Sponsorship along with Wellfleet for Palestine of the Oscar-nominated film, “The Voice of Hind Rajab” on Saturday—April 25th

- Regular participation in weekly “Cape Cod for Gaza” standouts in Eastham

- Co-sponsorship in cooperation with the Meetinghouse Speaker Series of a provocative and informative presentation by Dr. Sara Roy of the Harvard Center for Middle Eastern Studies, entitled “Can Anyone Hear Us?: On Gaza’s Day After” on Sunday—May 24th
- Nomination of the following organizations for upcoming Split Plate Offerings: Ukraine Crisis Relief Global Giving, Jewish Voice for Peace, Middle East Children’s Alliance (MECA), Campaign for Palestinian Rights, American Friends Combatants for Peace, and Amnesty USA

Members: Dianne Ashley (Co-Chair), John Gregory-Davis (Co-Chair), Suzanne Sullivan, Joan Kapp, Margaret Rice-Moir, Farrukh Najmi, Trevor Perason, Rona Robinson, Noreen Thompsen, Carl Weis, Sue Flemming, Elenita Muniz, and Abigail Walters

Z5. RACIAL AND INDIGENOUS JUSTICE ALLIES TASK FORCE

The Racial and Indigenous Justice Allies Task Force was formed, under a re-organization of the church’s social justice ministries, by a merger between the former Social Justice and Reparations committees. The mission of the task force is to develop and implement initiatives to engage FPBUU members and the broader community in:

- Raising awareness of the history and current culture of the Wampanoag people and People of Color in Eastern Massachusetts; White people’s oppression of these peoples, and efforts by People of Color and White people to oppose this repression; and our own biases.
- Helping reverse health and wealth disparities by assisting Wampanoag people and People of Color in gaining increased access to better educational, nutritional, cultural, and property resources.

This past year, the task force:

- Donated video equipment (KanDao conferencing cam) to the Cape Cod Chapter of the NAACP to facilitate ZOOM capacity for the Chapter’s monthly meetings;
- Organized another visit to the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe’s Weetumuw School;
- Held a ceremony on Juneteenth to unveil a commemoration stone in front of the church honoring 21 enslaved people who attended who were baptized at First Parish in the 1700’s, and whose “stolen labor and lives contributed to the wealth of this church, the people who enslaved them, and the economies of this region and country”; and staffed a table at Brewster’s Juneteenth celebration;
- Organized the church’s food drive to benefit the Wampanoag Food Pantry;
- Supported the church’s membership drive for the Cape Cod Chapter of the NAACP
- Volunteered for various events of the Native Land Conservancy;
- Convened a meeting of the church’s various social justice task forces and committees to share challenges and accomplishments, and explore possible collaborations;
- Commenced planning for another Wampanoag Day at the church, featuring various aspects of Wampanoag culture and history, which will take place in October 2026.

Task Force Members:

Diane Ashley, John Austin, Rick Draper, Marjorie Kroeger, Jim Lieb, Liz Perkins, NiKI Popow, Rona Robinson, Rosanne Shapiro, Susan Smith, David Sutherland – Co-Chair, Susan Trask – Co-Chair, Mary Wallace

Z6. REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS TASK FORCE

The Mission of the Reproductive Task Force is to ensure that Legislation under consideration in Massachusetts does not interfere with a woman's right to choose an abortion, to Educate people in our community about the needs in our community for Reproductive Health Services, and to assist women to find and/or attend clinic services offering reproductive health services.

Legislative Concerns:

- Two of our members monitor legislative activities of the State of Massachusetts, focusing on potential bills pertaining to Reproductive Rights of Massachusetts women and girls.
- We held a letter writing campaign last fall to push for passage of a bill that would protect the phone number or address privacy of women and girls who seek abortions.
- One of our members met with a representative from Julian Cyr's office to share our concerns about the Privacy Bill.
- We will continue to monitor legislative activities in the fall and promote contact with our representatives through letter-writing campaigns.

Educational Concerns:

- We previewed two documentary films to educate the viewer about issues related to seeking abortions.
- The first was named "Preconceived" and the other was called "Plan C." A local cinema, The Orpheum, was utilized for the showing of the first and the second was shown in the Parish Room.
- We are planning another showing of a documentary in the coming year.

Action Activities:

- Three of our members serve as Escorts once a month at the Attleboro Clinic.
- We will continue to assist clients to ensure safe passage into the clinic.

Members of the Reproductive Rights Task Force:

Marcia Bosshardt, Johanna Gurland, Marie Hartley, Ed Klein, Paula Lieb, Joanne Powers, Jennifer Rabold, Katherine Reilly, Janet Riggs, Carol A. Yerby

AA. STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

February is Stewardship month at FPBUU; however, our plan begins in September. This year, with Rev. Scot and Rev. Julia's help, we set the theme "A New Era, 325 & Counting". A beautiful logo and graphic materials were designed by Susan Binkley. We held Stewardship Training in early January both in person and on Zoom. We had an army of 37 Visiting Stewards, each agreeing to visit 4 individuals or families with pledge cards and materials.

A goal was set by the Board of \$525,000. We have had some headwinds with our campaign this year including the first year of settled ministry and final payments due to the Minister's Housing Fund. Last year in the end we had 174 pledging units for a total of \$462,438. As of this date, with pledges still coming in, we have 173 pledging units for a total of \$488,350. We held a Visiting Stewardship Appreciation Celebration in mid-March. We project to have \$500,000 in pledges by fiscal year end.

Susan Flaws, Rev Scot Hull, Rev Julia Jones, John Kielb co-chair, Paula Lieb board liaison, Victorea

Luminary Financial Admin, and Susan Smith co-chair.

UU Connections annual livestreaming of the Ware Lecture from General Assembly to a strawberry shortcake event at Winslow continues in spite of changes in social media broadcast rights. We aim to continue a proud tradition from the 1920's to present prominent voices from the realm of the world's liberal activists.

Submitted by: Marietta Nilson on behalf of Jim Hild and Carol Ann Yeaple

BB. UU CONNECTIONS

UU Connections connects First Parish Brewster UU to the wider world. This includes other UU congregations, the UUA and its affiliates such as UUSC, UU-UNO and General Assembly, as well as our Partner Church in Jobbagyalva, Transylvania, Romania, and it's minister, Reverend Esemé Jakob. We work locally with Nauset Interfaith Association (NIA) and Cape Cod Council of Churches to support community projects involving youth, environment, and social justice.

This year we have worked with the Board to recruit and train members to represent our congregation at General Assembly. We are happy to say we have the full contingent of six delegates to General Assembly. We hosted a meeting of NIA. We also put on a well-attended Death Cafe event.

Our annual strawberry shortcake Ware lecture event is planned for June 20th at the Winslow House. This offers congregants not attending General Assembly the chance to experience a key feature of the UUA General Assembly.

Submitted by Carol Ann Yeaple, chair. Other members are Marietta Nilson and Jim Hild

CC. UU THE VOTE

UU the Vote continues to be active encouraging registered voters to get out and vote. Following the presidential race, the two organizations; Reclaim Our Vote and Vote Forward provided addresses for the Wisconsin Supreme Court as well as California's redistricting, Virginia's redistricting, plus congressional seats in Pennsylvania and Virginia. It was encouraging that these campaigns were successful. We will be very active getting out the vote this fall for the Midterms!!!!

DD. WORSHIP SUPPORT TEAM

It takes teams of folks, on a rotating basis, to support our wonderful worship services each Sunday. Please consider taking a turn a few times a year and offer a warm welcome to all who join us on Sunday mornings, making First Parish truly special. You will receive a reminder email the week before.

Greeters are positioned at each entrance door to welcome members and visitors, to help answer questions and to provide name tags. Janet Riggs, coordinator.

Ushers welcome all comers to the sanctuary, help find appropriate seating or hearing devices, hand out programs, collect the offertory, and deliver to the office for safekeeping. Barb Draper, coordinator.

Coffee Hour Support Once a month, teams of two church members make coffee, tea and cold beverages for all to enjoy during Coffee Hour. Susan Smith, coordinator.

Food UUs love to gather in fellowship over food and Sunday mornings are clearly one of our favorite social times. Individuals, couples, committees, task forces and groups of friends come together each week to offer a variety of food items: some sweets, some savory, and some fruit for us all to enjoy. Sign up on the poster board. Susan Smith, coordinator.

Flowers help set a contemplative and uplifting tone for our worship. Gather flowers from your gardens or from your friend's. Grab a bunch at the store. Vases are provided in the Parish Room if needed. Take them home or leave them to be delivered by our Caring Committee to brighten up someone's day who is unable to come to church. Sign up on the poster board. Susan Smith, coordinator.