



**First Parish Church in Beverly
Unitarian Universalist
225 Cabot Street
Beverly, Massachusetts 01915**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2020-2021**

FIRST PARISH CHURCH IN BEVERLY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
225 Cabot Street, Beverly, Massachusetts 01915
Annual Meeting
Wednesday, May 26, 2021
7:00 p.m.
Moderator – Steve Hoy

TABLE OF CONTENTS

AGENDA	3
WARRANT OF ANNUAL MEETING 2021	4
MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING 2020	5
NEW MEMBERS	7
 ANNUAL REPORTS	
 STAFF REPORTS	
Minister	8
Director of Religious Education	10
Director of Music	12
Church Administrator	12
Sexton	13
 FINANCIAL REPORTS	
Budget to Actual for current year	14
Proposed Budget for next year	16
 STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS	
Parish Board	19
Letter from John Soderblom	21
Parish Council	23
Finance Report	23
Treasurer's Report	24
Investment	24
Building	27
 COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS	
Personnel	29
Diaconate	29
Music and Worship	29
Membership	31
Pastoral Care	31
Communications	32
Generosity Team	33
Elevate First Parish Building Project	34
Family Promise	35
Small Group Ministry	36
Free Outreach Suppers	31
Circle Dinners	37
List of Members as of May 26, 2021	38
Nominations	40

AGENDA
ANNUAL MEETING
Wednesday, May 26, 2021
7:00 P.M. Moderator – Steve Hoy

1. Call to Order
2. Gathering Words
3. Lighting the Chalice
4. Reading of the Warrant
5. Receive Annual Reports:
 - Staff
 - Financial
 - Standing Committees
 - Membership List
 - Nominations
6. Adoption of Church Budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, beginning July 1st, 2021
7. Discuss and vote on following motion:

“First Parish Church in Beverly hereby sponsors its member, John Soderblom, as a candidate for fellowship with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. By this, we affirm our congregation’s confidence in his potential and suitability for the Unitarian Universalist ministry.”

8. Election of Board Members, Officers, Standing Committees, and Committee Members
9. Extinguishing the Chalice

WARRANT OF ANNUAL MEETING 2021

WARRANT – CALL TO MEETING

Greetings: Notice is hereby given to the members of First Parish Church in Beverly qualified to vote in Parish meetings and elections that they are to meet via the teleconferencing service Zoom, Wednesday, May 26, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. to act on the following articles:

1. Receive all committee annual reports.
2. Elect, where appropriate the Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk and Committee Members for Parish, Building, Finance, Investment, Nominating and Religious Education committees and other committees as specified by the Parish Board.
3. Adopt a Church budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2021.
4. To discuss and vote on the following motion:

“First Parish Church in Beverly hereby sponsors its member, John Soderblom, as a candidate for fellowship with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. By this, we affirm our congregation’s confidence in his potential and suitability for the Unitarian Universalist ministry.”

5. Conduct any other business as specified in the printed agenda of the Annual Report.

Witness my hand this 12th day of May 2021

Signed:

Brad Willenbrock, Parish Board Chair

Proxy Voting Information: Any Member may represent and vote by proxy for one and only one other Member provided the Member not in attendance provides to the church office (by phone or email) their name and the name of the Member to hold their proxy, prior to the meeting.

MINUTES
ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, May 27, 2020, 7:00 PM
Moderator, Steve Hoy
Clerk, Laura Knight

Meeting was held remotely via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In person attendance was accepted through either video or phone participation. Quorum was confirmed by combination of in person attendance and proxies. Votes were counted via chat function and verbal yay/nay.

353rd Annual Meeting called to order at 7:13p by moderator Steve Hoy

Gathering Words and Chalice Lighting – Rev. Kelly

Reading of the Warrant – Karen Gendall

Acceptance of last year's minutes

Steve Hoy called vote / unanimously approved

Received Annual Reports – Steve Hoy

All reports were unanimously approved

Church Budget 2020-2021 fiscal year – Gina Coburn

Updates/comments:

- 1) A few new pledges were received but overall budget remained the same.
- 2) FPC applied for Payment Protection loan to pay for staff and utilities during pandemic
 - a. Loan should be forgiven, and budget was finalized before applying for the loan; however, there is a concern that if the congregation is remote all year that there may be loss of members impacting pledges (i.e., income) and impact to fundraising.
- 3) Some committee budgets were cut and while there were no raises, staff salaries were maintained.
- 4) Noted that more than 2/3 of pledging units increased their pledges from prior year
- 5) Paul Willenbrock commented that we would like to give staff raises if possible. This will be revisited if possible.

Budget unanimously approved

Elevate First Parish

Information was presented for discussion of revised scope of the building project as noted in the warrant. Revised scope includes installation of a Limited Use Limited Access (LULA) elevator, relocation of minister's office and hospitality area, expanded narthex/gallery and replacement of church front steps. However, it defers Hale Hall redesign, sanctuary pew repairs, new cushions and flooring.

Updates/comments:

- 1) As of 5/13/2020, the amount gifted or pledged was \$526,633, including \$50,000 that was raised through matching gifts. However, an additional \$125,000 is needed to cover the gap and this amount is requested to be obtained via commercial loan
- 2) Congregants questioned whether competitive bids had been received. It was noted that competitive bids were received for architectural services but until scope is approved, the project cannot be formally bid by subcontractors.
- 3) Noted that the cost estimates are a reflection of booming construction market and current price of services.
- 4) Question also raised about selection of Carr Industries as general contractor and whether any cost savings would be gained by reassessing. It was noted that Carr has been working pro bono for 3 yrs via an informal agreement. In addition, it is Carr's responsibility to solicit at least 3 different bids from subcontractors and ensure satisfactory price on our behalf. No further discussion.

Motion unanimously approved

Nominations

List of officers and committee members nominated in Annual Report has the wrong dates at the top; should be July 2020-June 2021

Russ Hereford and Linda Andrist should be on Diaconate

With these edits, nominations approved

Extinguished the Chalice

Meeting adjourned

NEW MEMBERS
May 2020 – MAY 2021

Ken Diver
Kelly Diver

DECEASED

Elizabeth Duff, May 15, 2020
Helen Lauenstein, April 8, 2021

ANNUAL REPORTS

STAFF REPORTS

MINISTER

This has been a year unlike any other, and I hope – as I believe all of us do – that we will not see its like again. While the COVID-19 pandemic began before the official start of this church year in July of 2020, and though it can be expected to persist in some form at least beyond the official end of this church year at the end of June, this has certainly been our pandemic year. These twelve months have been defined by this painful and disorienting shared global experience. Each year that I have been your minister I have noted in my annual report that it is impossible to draft a truly comprehensive account of an entire year of an entire spiritual community. Still, each year I have made some attempt to make some record of key events. Here, I will do so, one last time.

It is a truism of pandemic life that the world has been more monotonous for most of us for most of the last year. Behaving responsibly in the interest of our own health and the health of others has largely meant staying put, or at least travelling less than we normally would. This has meant not only curtailing international and interstate travel, but in many cases even cutting back on daily commutes, trips to the store, or any number of other things that might have caused us to venture outside our own homes. The general increase in the over-all sameness of each day has made time feel simultaneously much longer and much shorter. In this distorted and often demoralizing reality, the weekly discipline of church – which happens every Sunday, without fail, even in the face of sometimes extraordinary difficulty – has been a key weekly touchstone, at least for some of us.

In our best moments this year, we have reached out to each other and found ways to support one another through this collective trauma. Folks signed on to Zoom to participate in online services, or watched them later as their schedules allowed. Your Pastoral Care committee collaborated with the Diaconate to make sure that every member of First Parish received a phone call multiple times over the past 12 months. At a virtual coffee hour, or game night, or circle dinner, members and friends offered their company to each other, and managed to make some of the magic of community happen even under less-than-ideal circumstances. And even with our building closed to in-person gatherings, it still wasn't only about telecommunications this year. I saw many of you at protests large and small this year, particularly those that swept the country and the world last year following the murder of George Floyd. I also saw some of you at the socially-distanced ritual events held outside the front-doors of the church several times this year. However you managed to find a way to participate, and to offer the gift of your presence to others this year, I thank you for it. Church is a thing that we do together, and this year we have found that to be just as true when we are physically apart.

I also want to note the particular challenges of this year. Not just the painful and frightening backdrop, but also the difficulty in trying to reconfigure and reproduce the experience of religious community in a somewhat alien format. Everything had to be reconsidered, and this year we made many adjustments trying to find the best possible means to share worship and fellowship while still keeping each other and our larger community safe. For some of you, I know, relying on video-conferencing in order to experience church was something you simply had no taste for. Though others managed to find some meaning in it, I believe all of us would acknowledge something was missing. At its worst, entirely-online church has all the potential frustrations and disappointments that a religious community can have under regular circumstances, but with many or most of its benefits diminished to some degree. A Zoom meeting is better than no meeting at all for making a plan or decision, but without the experience of being together in physical space, I found many deep

conversations to be harder this year – and some truly impossible. As I saw it, all the many different things that help us to build goodwill with each other as a community were strained and challenged this year, while those forces that sap goodwill were amplified. All of which is to say, for you who stuck with it, who held on through a difficult meeting, or extended compassion or grace to someone else in our community, I want to offer a special thank-you. It is a hard thing to put aside most of what we know about doing church together and try to reinvent it on the fly. I am deeply grateful to all of you who persisted in this.

In last year's report, as I looked ahead to the potential of a year of socially-distanced church, I asked us, "to stay grounded in the values that guide us as a congregation, starting with the infinite, wondrous value of every human being, and continuing with our sacred duty to offer the broadest, most generous, and most all-embracing welcome that we possibly can." I am gladdened by how we have followed those values this year, and hope and expect that First Parish will continue to do so as we look ahead towards resuming some activities in person in the months to come. A task force created by your Board of Trustees has been working on developing a plan to do so, and our work is still on-going. One learning that I will offer from that project is that in order to put our ideals first, we have to be willing to put our practical concerns second. There is no cutting corners on deep matters of principle; your Re-opening Task-Force is committed to taking the time needed to do things carefully, inclusively, and safely. To move at the pace of trust, rather than allowing the urgency with which we miss the normal and familiar to rush us along.

The hotly anticipated return to in-person events at First Parish is not the only reason for optimism as this church year closes and the next one begins. After many years and a tremendous amount of work by many dedicated volunteers, the Elevate First Parish capitol campaign is finally becoming manifest, and construction is set to begin shortly. An elevator to make Hale Hall accessible has been an identified need at First Parish since long before my arrival eleven years ago. Finding a way to make such a goal achievable within the footprint of our building has required a great deal of imagination, as well as the shifting of existing spaces, so that the final design – once realized – will include not only an elevator but also a substantial reconfiguration of rooms at the front of the church and a new aesthetic contribution to the rear of the sanctuary. Now, really and truly, the conclusion of this huge progress is in sight. When that long-dreamed-of elevator makes its first trip, it will be a milestone worthy of terrific celebration.

I only wish that I could be with you to share in that exultation. As you hopefully already know, my time as your minister is coming to a close and will formally end at the end of July, marking exactly eleven years of shared ministry together. Departing ministers have an ethical responsibility to give their former congregations a wide berth. This is so that the congregation can make its own decisions without the influence of the now-former minister, and so that the congregation's members can begin to see someone else as their minister. I will be leaving Beverly to begin a new ministry in Wisconsin, so there will be a physical distance automatically. But I want to underline that I take my responsibility to the health and wellbeing of First Parish very seriously, and come the first of August that means giving you the space to write your own next chapter together. I am not cold or indifferent to any of you who might have the impulse to reach out to me, but I hope you will understand when I gently remind you that your new minister – whomever they might be – is the one now entrusted with the spiritual and temporal authority you once loaned to me. Just as I am profoundly honored to have carried that mantle for eleven good years, I intend to do it justice by supporting its next bearer from afar.

As this is my eleventh and final report to you, I want to close by offering you my thanks one last time. You, First Parish, took a chance on calling a new and relatively young minister to serve among you. You have always been welcoming to my family, and encouraging of me in my

development as a religious professional and as a human being. And as I have begun the process of stepping away, you have risen tremendously to the occasion of the transitional work that a congregation can only ever do for itself. I have loved being your minister and I thank you for the honor of it. As I have told everyone who has joined our congregation under my watch, people are always free to come and to go. You could sign the membership book today and withdraw tomorrow. But no matter what, you always will have been a member of First Parish Church; that is permanent, no matter what else may change. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your story, and to have had you as a part of mine.

Submitted in Love and Service,
Rev. Kelly Weisman Asprooth-Jackson

ACTING DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

I began my work at First Parish in September 2019 as Acting Director of Religious Education. Just before the pandemic dramatically changed all our lives, I agreed to remain in that role for the 2020-2021 church year.

In this report, I'll highlight the program offerings, contributions to worship services, the work of the RE Committee and my thoughts for the year ahead.

Religious Education Programs

As with most activities, “uncharted”, “pivot” and “nimble” became daily guiding concepts throughout 2020 and 2021 for the Religious Education program.

The primary goal for program decisions was to provide opportunities to maintain community and connection. Here are the programs for which I provided leadership and guidance throughout the year.

Spirit Circle. Spirit Circle became our most regular program, offered most Sunday mornings at 9:30 AM via Zoom. Spirit Circle welcomed children, youth, parents and caregivers into a time of worship, learning and socializing together. Every Circle included music and singing, chalice lighting, sharing “glads and sads”, and a main topic viewed through a Unitarian Universalist lens. Families were encouraged to participate as co-leaders and many did. Contributions included reading stories, teaching crafts, and leading games.

Church-in-a-Box. Every child from Pre-K through eighth grade was provided with a box of materials to accompany Spirit Circle. Materials included supplies to make a chalice, fidget objects and journals.

Agents of Kindness. Ministry to others is an important part of being a member of a faith community. In collaboration with the Pastoral Care Committee, we were able to involve families in creating and sending caring cards to several members.

Special Events. Opportunities to have fun and to celebrate together are fundamental to maintaining and strengthening community bonds. Including young people in planning and leading such activities serves to deepen their commitment to and develop leadership skills within their faith community. We had two events this year that involved several middle-school students to that end. Both events were designed to involve the whole congregation, not just families with children.

- **Halloween Mystery Road Rally** – This event easily captured the enthusiasm of the planning group, the various host households and the numerous families that chose to participate.
- **Spring Talent Show** – Enthusiasm for exercising creativity combined with a love of the performing arts resulted in a second successful event that tapped youthful leadership skills and involved a diverse cross-section of community members.

Middle School Common Read. In keeping with both our congregation's and the greater UU Association's focus on addressing anti-racism, every fifth through eighth grade student received a copy of "This Book Is Anti-Racist" by Tiffany Jewell.

Small Group Ministry for Parents. Because it was not possible to offer an OWL (sexuality education) program for middle-school this year, the RE Committee was interested in alternatives. The choice made was to offer the UUA designed small group ministry program "Parents and Caregivers as Sexuality Educators". This ten-week program was led by volunteer leader, Elizabeth Miller

Sunday Worship Services

The shift from Facebook services to Zoom services allowed me to resume offering the weekly Message for All Ages. I appreciated connecting again with the whole congregation. Likewise, I welcomed discussing the weekly worship themes with Reverend Kelly and crafting relevant Messages. The Zoom format also afforded me the opportunity to learn new tech skills such as creating slideshows and making video recordings.

Religious Education Committee and Volunteers

I cannot speak highly enough of the dedication and determination of this team for all its work throughout the challenges of life in a pandemic. This small group took on a wide array of concerns from working through the practical details of launching a Zoom-based program for children and families, to maintaining community traditions in the form of holiday ornaments, to staying engaged with an ongoing process to evolve and refine the mission and vision for religious education at First Parish Church.

I extend my deepest appreciation to the following volunteers and supporters:

To the RE Committee Chair Nancy Petino and members Lindsley Rice, Diana Neithamer, Julie Long, and Patty Lynch for their ongoing service;

To the OWL sub-committee members Elizabeth Miller, Nathan Seavey, Julia Long, Patty Lynch, and Christine DiSaia for their commitment to excellence in sexuality education;

Additional thanks to Nathan Seavey for supporting the middle-school youth planning the Halloween event; Lindsley Rice and Nancy Petino for their work on preparing the Church-in-a-Box kits; Paul Willenbrock and the Pastoral Care Committee for their support and guidance to involve families in their ministry; Elizabeth Miller for leading the small group ministry program; Patty Freeman-Lynde for supporting the middle-school youth planning the talent show.

Looking Forward

I have agreed to stay on another year in the Acting Director of Religious Education role. The current committee has laid a solid foundation to not only continue to provide responsive programming in the face of shifting pandemic conditions, but to move forward in its goal to renew and refine the purpose of religious education at First Parish Church. This work holds the possibility of extending its embrace beyond families with children to include the whole membership. It is to

that possibility that I extend an appeal to the full membership to consider joining the RE Committee for the 2021-2022 year. There is much that can be gained from one another.

It is a blessing to belong to a supportive staff team. I am grateful to belong to such a team. Many thanks to the Reverend Kelly Weisman Asprooth-Jackson; Carol Collins, Church Administrator; Mike Donegan, Sexton and Robert Littlefield, Director of Music. Thank you also to the Parish Board. Your leadership makes it possible to do our work.
Submitted in faith and service,

Respectfully submitted
Rose Sheehan, Acting Director of Religious Education

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

It has been another good year at First Parish, up until the difficulties of the current crisis. Sadly, both the Requiem and Music Sunday had to be suspended this year. I am glad to finally be able to contribute to Sunday services again, albeit by recording.

Thank you to the staff and choir members for all their help and support.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert F. Littlefield, Director of Music

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

The financial and personal information of church members is updated in an ongoing basis in our church database, MemInfo, and address, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses are updated in Instant Church Directory, the congregant database, As I receive the information to be changed and new members come into the congregation, MemInfo and Instant Church Directory are updated. Individual Quarterly information is e-mailed out to each congregant to keep everyone aware of their pledges and donations to FPC. Reports are submitted to our Treasurer and Finance Chairman and leaders of Annual Stewardship Campaign and Elevate First Parish Campaign weekly as pledges for both campaigns are received. The information for our UUA Certification was filed with the UUA office in Boston in February 2021

Our new web site remains current with events and services as necessary to keep everyone up to date. The annual fire extinguisher service was in October of 2020. The annual fire alarm test was in November 2020. Our building was inspected by the City of Beverly Inspector in September and a Certificate of Inspection was issued. The annual boiler inspection will occur in June 2021. I thoroughly enjoy working with the members of the congregation and appreciate all the assistance I continue to receive.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Collins, Church Administrator

SEXTON

I continue to refine my weekly and monthly schedule. In general, I think the building is clean and requires less time for upkeep. Communication between myself and the other staff members has been excellent.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Donegan, Church Sexton

FINANCIAL REPORTS

First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church of Beverly			
Budget vs Actual	as of		
Fiscal Year 2021	4/28/2021		
	Annual Budget	Jul 2020- Apr 2021	Notes
Revenue			
Contributions			
Current Year pledges	171,091	142,447	
Collections and Pledges for prior years	20,000	7,534	
Total Contributions	191,091	149,981	
Fundraising, Rentals, Memorials	12,000		
Investment Income	34,550		
Carryover from 2020	8,600	27,797	
Total Revenue	247,151	178,035	
Expenditures			
Salaries	161,370	129,205	
Benefits	33,748	27,516	
E.3 Administrative Expenses			
Copier		2,468	
Software		270	
Supplies for Office		771	
Administrative Expenses	4,260	3,509	
Utilities	12,519	8,074	
Building	12,675	12,611	
Dues	5,100	5,100	
Child care	1,200		
Communications	650		
Flowers	850		

Finance	3505	2,477	
Generosity Committee	630	480	includes Paypal fees
Hospitality	0	-	
Membership	100		
Music and Worship	4,000	1,148	
Board	500	1,003	
Pastoral Care	50		
Social Action	5,000	2,148	
Diaconate	50		
Investment Committee	50		
Fundraising Expenses	500		
RE Expenses	2,470	1,429	
Total Expenditures	249,227	194,700	
Restricted Fund Balances			
Family Promise		150	
Ferry Beach		3,058	
Flowers		1,492	
Junior Choir Robes		30	
Suppers		2,162	
Organ Restoration		3,470	
Pastoral Care		1,353	
Woburn Fund		1,267	
Youth group		1,968	

Next Year's Proposed Budget

First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church of Beverly		
Budget Prep		
FY 2022		
	FY 20-21 Budget	2021/22 Budget
Contributions		
Current Year pledges	171,091	184,445
Collections Online and Plate/Prior Year pledges	20,000	15,000
Total Contributions	191,091	199,445
Donations and Memorials		
Fundraising	12,000	10,000
Rentals	500	500
RE Income	0	
Investment Income	34,550	45,000
Carryover from Q4 2020	8,600	0
Misc.	10	
Flower Memorials	400	
Total Revenue	247,151	254,945
Salaries	161,370	161,370
Benefits	32,102	41,923
Administrative Expenses	4,260	4,374
Utilities	12,519	12,895
Building		
Insurance (Building)	8,000	8,500
Maintenance, snow removal, etc.	4,675	4,675
Building	12,675	13,175
Dues	5,100	5,100
Child care	1,200	1,200
Communications (include web hosting)	650	650
Flowers	850	100
Finance	3505	3,610
Historical		
Hospitality	0	200
Membership/NVI	100	150
Music and Worship	4,000	4,000
Board	500	500
Pastoral Care	50	50
Personnel		250

Social Action		
Suppers	3,300	3,300
Family Promise	200	0
General	500	500
ECCO membership	1,000	1,000
Social Action	5,000	4,800
Diaconate	50	50
Small Group	0	
Generosity Committee	200	200
Investment Committee	50	50
Fundraising Expenses	500	1,000
RE Expenses	2,470	2,470
Total Expenditures	247,151	258,117
Balance Income and Expense		-3,172
Assume additional pledges		
Carryover from current year		3,172

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

PARISH BOARD

Dear First Parish Family and Friends,

Amidst a global pandemic, our beloved community spent this year not just treading in unfamiliar waters, but we did our best to make waves as we fulfilled our mission and vision. During these uncertain times, we made adjustments, thought outside of the box, and collaborated from afar to ensure that our congregation remained vibrant. This was a year of transitions, exploration, and renewal. The Board is proud of our congregation's resilience and interconnectedness during this challenging year. Despite the darkness that this year imposed, we continuously acted with our mission and vision as our beacon of light.

This report will review the Board's biggest topics of this church year: Our response to the COVID pandemic, our response to the racism pandemic, our elevator project, and personnel celebrations.

Our Response to the COVID Pandemic

COVID directly impacted our way of worshipping. The previous year's board decided that 2020 summer services would be safest if they were held virtually. Guided by the Music and Worship Committee members, we learned how to hold lay-led services through a foreign virtual platform called Zoom. While we longed for the sweet smells and sounds of our typical Dane Street Beach summer sanctuary, member still convene via Zoom to share stories, reflections, music, and fellowship. In September, the Board voted to forego the use of our church building as a space for public gathering until it was safe to return, so we continued to worship virtually, utilizing both Zoom and Facebook platforms. Evidence of our growth is when we shifted from live to recorded services when we realized that recorded services would provide fewer technological glitches and a richer virtual worship experience. Many thanks to Reverend Kelly, Robert, and Rose for transforming your craft to make it accessible to us during this unprecedented time.

COVID not only impacted our way of worshipping, it also impacted our fellowship. Since we could not meet in person, members creatively designed ways to gather and celebrate. Church meetings, Circle Suppers, talent shows, and game nights, were among the virtual congregational events that allowed us to stay connected. Even though a common phrase became, "You're on mute," we let our patience, humor, and forgiveness radiate as we navigated the unknowns of this new virtual world. As we begin to see scientific evidence that we could begin to consider gathering in person, our congregation began to prepare for reemerging from behind our screens. In March, the Board voted unanimously to assemble a re-opening task force. Task force members include Reverend Kelly, Fran Gerrior, Patty Lynch, Acting DRE Rose, and Nancy Petino. They acknowledge that a reopening plan is complex, and despite our intense urges to return to in person, the procedures to do so need to be centered in our values, mission, and vision. Notably, a return plan will ensure that church-related gatherings are as assessable as possible to all member and friends and that gatherings will be welcoming spaces for families and children.

Our Response to the Racism Pandemic

In June of 2020, the First Parish Board pledge to act on becoming a more anti-racist community. We took our first action in August when Committee Chairs and Board Members held a retreat that partially focused on anti-racism. In February, the board initiated an anti-racism task force and members from the congregation were invited to join. Participants include Duncan and Carol Ballantyne, Paul Drake, David Shawn, Diana Niethamer, Carol Girard, Roberta Villanti, Tony Constantino, Kristen Cotter, Christian Douglass, Paul Willenbrock, and Jay Coburn. The task force has met monthly to listen, learn, and discuss action steps as we further explore becoming an anti-racist community. They created a survey that was completed by members and friends. Data from the survey will inform next steps for the task force.

Our Elevator Project

For years, our mission and vision have called our congregation to make our building more accessible to all, regardless of mobility. This year, the building committee has worked tirelessly with architects and contractors to find a design that suits our values and our budget. In December, when the elevator project seemed overwhelmingly costly, the board approve a new structural layout of the elevator project designed by Mike Hardiman, and the congregation approved the changes a special meeting. The ingenuity and dedication of the entire Building Committee assured that this project moved forward. Certainly, the extraordinary funding from members and friends gave life to this project. Much gratitude to Jay Coburn and the Generosity Team for coordinating the fundraising efforts. As a result of our time talent and treasure, I feel confident saying that the commencement of this accessibility project is imminent.

Personnel Celebration

This year we celebrated Carol Collin's 10th year as our administrator. We appreciate all she does to manage the business of our church.

Our Acting Director of Religious Education, Rose Sheehan, agreed to continue in the acting role for the next church year. We appreciate the creativity and vision she offers to our Religious Education program.

In April, Reverend Kelly informed the congregation that he will be leaving First Parish after 11 meaningful years of ministry. As our spiritual leader, he has shared many gifts with us and helped to transform our congregation. We appreciate all both he and his family have added to our beloved community. We will celebrate him and his tenure at First Parish on June 19th. Many blessings for fulfillment at the First Unitarian Society in Madison, WI.

Soon after the Board heard about Reverend Kelly's departure, we assembled an interim minister search committee. That comprised of Kurtlan Massarsky, Julie Quigley Long, and Gina Coburn. We are grateful for their effort to help us find a 2-year interim minister who will help us search and grow as we prepare for a new settled minister in Fall of 2023.

Finally, at the upcoming Annual Meeting on May 26th, our congregation will have the opportunity to vote on whether or not we sponsor John Soderblom's candidacy for UU ministry. John is a member of the church and is slated to serve on the Social Action and Music and Worship Committees next year. The Board supports his candidacy, and we hope that you do as well. Below, please find a letter that he wrote to the Board.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brad Willenbrock

First Parish Church Board Chair

Submitted on behalf of the 2020-21 Board: Karen Gendall, Emeritus; Gina Coburn, Vice Chair; David Shawn; Kurtlan Massarsky; and Fran Gerrior

To the Parish Board of First Parish Church

Faith Journey—John Soderblom

I was born in Tewksbury, MA. on February 13th, 1954. At eighteen months I was adopted by Stan and Dot Soderblom who would be the only parents I would know. After brief stays in Wilmington, MA and Patterson, NJ my father was transferred to Malden, MA. They bought a house in North Reading where we remain until after I graduated from Gordon College in 1972.

My earliest faith tradition was a duality between the Methodist tradition of my parents and the Universalist tradition of my favorite aunt and uncle with whom I frequently spent weekends. This dual arrangement lasted a few years and gave way to going strictly to the Methodist church in North Reading. In Junior High, I attended a local Lutheran church with a friend and decided I liked it better than the Methodist church. My parents agreed with my choice and this became my faith home until after I graduated from college. Right after college I married my first wife and she convinced me to attend the local Baptist church that she and her family attended. I eventually became friends with most of the ministers who served the church.

As familiar ministers left the church, it began to change as did my faith. My Christian faith was faltering. I was now an up and coming computer programmer with a house, a child, bills and lots of stress. We attended a few local churches and decided none were working for us. A friend had a store in Salem and I began teaching meditation and other classes there for some extra income. This became my default faith home. It led me to explore other faith traditions. It was now the mid 90's. I had lost my job as a Director of IT, did some contract work to pay the bills until I landed a new job. I finally found another full-time job, by that time my marriage had fallen apart. We divorced in 1998.

I met Julie in one of my meditation classes. She was an abuse victim trying to get out of a bad marriage. The class became her support system. We both ended our marriages and started dating. She had three teenage boys and I had visiting rights with my daughter. We started attending the UU church in Salem and found a temporary home there. I moved in with Julie at the boys and Julie's request. A year later we were married. My relationship with the boys grew close very quickly, yet we still did not have a faith tradition per say. I was still teaching meditation and studying other faith, without latching onto any of them. Between 2002 and 2004 I earned a Master's degree in Counseling with the thought of changing careers. In 2005 my world was rocked by tragedy. My daughter-in-law was diagnosed with terminal cancer. She passed away in early 2007 leaving my son with two young children. That was closely followed by the sudden death of a close friend. By the time I came up for air I realized the need to stay

employed where I was. In 2008 my father passed away and the final shoe dropped in 2010 when I was laid off from work.

The next couple of years were marked by two short term contract position, unemployment, serious financial woes, depression and a brush with suicide and finally counseling. At the point where I considered taking my own life, change started. I was cruising the internet when I chanced up a site about suicide. The author must have known well what would be going through a person's head at my stage. What he/she wrote about suicide on that web site talked me down from suicidal thoughts. It changed my outlook. I knew I needed a faith tradition, so I started attending a UCC church, pastored by a friend. At the same time, I found a job with a non-profit. Both events changed me in profound ways. Both gave me space to heal and regain my confidence. A new path appeared for me, one I never would have considered a few short years before. After about a year I made the decision to go to seminary. Any doubts were erased by my wife Julie's support. Her encouragement made all the difference. After about a year in school, it became obvious that this very small church with a part time minister was not able to support my journey. I chose to find a new church, which I did. The Pastor and congregation welcomed me and the Pastor became my friend and mentor. I also realized I had to leave my job so that I could attend the needed classes. Seminary changed me in many ways. I learned to trust again, trust does not happen easily in the corporate world. I learned a great deal more about diversity from my classmates who were white, black, straight, gay trans and of a variety of faith traditions. My faith matured as I learned. Most of all a seed was planted that became my career.

Andover Newton requires what is called an immersion course where a student spends a semester with a population they are unfamiliar with. I had waited until my last year to do this and approached the program director to ask about class options. She recommended a prison ministry that she was teaching. I agreed and worked to do the field work for it at Essex County House of Correction. The facilitator I connected with was from the Christian Science church and my partner was a seventy-year-old lady who had been in a prison ministry for seventeen years. We hit it off right away. I learned about prison ministry from her and fell in love with the work.

When my class ended and I graduated I chose to stay with this ministry, although I had to take time off for my clinical pastoral training. When I returned in September my partner announced she was retiring and asked me to take over. Six months later I was hire as a part time administrative chaplain and a part time clinician. I later became a full-time clinician as it gave me a better opportunity to serve a marginalized population.

Meanwhile I was working on my theology paper, which is a requirement for ministry with the United Church of Christ. Although they maintain they are non-creedal, there are still doctrines one is expect to accept. As I worked on my theology paper, realized there were doctrines I just could non-longer accept. One of which is the trinity, I could not accept a triune God, nor could I accept the idea of heaven and hell, rather I believed in universal salvation. There were additional issues as well around race and the LGBTQ community. I had reached a crossroads. I had worked with Rev. Asprooth-Jackson through the Beverly Multifaith coalition. I

approached him after one of the meetings to discuss joining the Unitarian Universalist church. We met and talked and I became more comfortable with the idea. I attended services over the summer and in the fall of 2019 made the decision to leave the United Church of Christ and pursue membership and ordination within the Unitarian Universalist church. I have not regretted the decision. The move has allowed me to explore my faith more deeply and more honestly.

PARISH COUNCIL

The Council met 3 times this year with just committee chairs and had 2 retreats with the Board. We are planning our final retreat on June 9. All sessions were held via Zoom and attendance was very strong with most committee chairs attending. As we were not able to see each other in person, there was a greater need to share at Council meetings. Our topics focused on unique challenges to committee work when not meeting in person.

Respectfully submitted,
Gina Coburn, Council Chair, Board Vice-Chair

FINANCE COMMITTEE

As with all committees we had unique challenges because of the status of the pandemic but continued to meet in person via Zoom and review our financials. Our congregation was fortunate to receive loan forgiveness for our Payment Protection Plan (PPP) loan which allowed us to supplement income lost as we were not able to hold a fundraiser and missed ‘in person’ Sunday plate collections. The Finance Committee worked with Generosity and Communications committees to enhance the on-line giving through our website. This provided a mechanism for online donations during our virtual services.

We were pleased to see that, despite being virtual all year, our members continue to pay their pledges through mail, online and with stock donations. We continued to support all of our staff salary and benefits as well as committee funding as needed.

Maureen Driscoll worked with us to secure an application for 501c3 status on our own. We are currently under the UUA’s nonprofit status but having one specific to our church has some additional benefits. Maureen also obtained a TechSoup account for us which provides us access to technology discounts for nonprofits. Thank you, Maureen!

Also, many thanks to the Generosity Committee for a successful pledge drive, to our Administrator, Carol Collins who deposits our contributions and keeps our member records up to date and to our Treasurer, Patty Freeman-Lynde for paying our bills and maintaining our financial records.

The Finance Committee
Gina Coburn, Mike Dietze, Kurtlan Massarsky, David Miedema and Russ Hereford

TREASURER'S REPORT

It was challenging for me to keep up with everything this year, while staying safe at home. We are slowly converting many of our bills to be paid online for that reason and others.

Our pledge income, however, is about 5/6 of what we budgeted, which is where we are in the year (10 out of 12 months). I continue to be impressed by people's commitment to paying their pledges, even when they are not able to attend in-person services! Special thanks to Mike Keefe-Feldman for making it easy for people to make their payments through our website.

With the carryover from last year, due in part to the PPP loan that was forgiven, and the usual amount that will be transferred from our investment fund, we should be able to meet the projected income goal for this year. We have not yet used any money from the investment fund, and may not need all of the amount that was budgeted. Needless to say, fundraising and plate collections are down.

Our utility costs are lower than anticipated, not surprisingly since the building was used less. Unfortunately, there were other building expenses that caused us to go over budget by about \$2500, in particular a leak in the boiler. We will cover most of that by using funds set aside for that purpose. In spite of the pandemic, we did pay dues to the UUA, although we paid less than half of our fair share, and we continued our support for community suppers and ECCO. We have money that we did not use for child care, flowers, and music and worship, as well as fundraising expense that will help us cover any shortages and possibly carry over to next year.

I want to thank Gina Coburn for taking up the slack when I could not get everything done.

Respectfully submitted,
Patty Freeman-Lynde, Treasurer

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

Investment Committee Report 2021

Summary

Investment Funds Total (3/31/2020)	\$965,111.90
FY 19-20 Budget Withdrawal	\$34,550.00
Withdrawal Percent	3.58%

The First Parish Investment Committee members serve as Trustees of the First Parish Endowment Fund and provide management oversight of other invested funds for the benefit of First Parish. The church depends on member pledges to fund its programs and operations. However, the operating budget of the First Parish Church currently exceeds the contributions of members. Contributions are supplemented with money from fundraisers and approved disbursements from the investment funds.

First Parish Church has continued to make progress in managing the amount it withdraws from its investment funds. The total withdrawal this past year was 3.58% - below the 4% threshold that the committee and our investment manager presently consider sustainable over the long term.

We recognize the strength and stability the Endowment Fund provides to First Parish programs. We encourage all members and friends who wish to support the continuing mission of the church to consider including the First Parish Endowment Fund in your plans for annual and legacy giving.

Investment Performance

Up until April 24th, 2018 the investment funds were managed by Manning & Napier (M&N). After that date, locally based First Financial Trust (FFT) in Wakefield, MA began managing all of the investment funds of FPC. We have been pleased with their investment expertise, willingness to provide support for our efforts to educate the congregation about legacy giving, tax efficient giving via IRAs, and our commitment to socially responsible investing that better matches our mission.

	Inception (5/1/18)	FY 20-21	2021 YTD
FPC Funds			
FPC Funds Net Fees			
FFT Composite Index Return:			

Investment Accounts

The investment funds under management represent the co-mingled balances of three separate funds: the Endowment Fund, the Muir Fund, and the RE Fund. In an effort to preserve the RE Fund, the principal balance has been capped at \$26,000 with a future annual withdrawal set at 5% (\$1,300), theoretically all interest. The Muir Fund has been handled similarly, with a preserved principal balance of \$85,000 and yearly withdrawals of 5% (\$4,250). The recommendation of the Investment Committee is to continue to reduce the overall draw from the investment funds from the prior fiscal year – this, of course, is dependent upon continued successful pledge campaigns. The RE budget, having been merged with the overall church budget, will continue to be fully funded by pledges, the RE Fund, RE fundraising and income, and the Endowment Fund, as appropriate.

Current market value of all holdings, as of 3/31/2021 totals \$965,111.90 – up from \$745,399.22 on 3/31/2020 as detailed in the 2020 Annual Report. It is believed, as of this writing, that the fund is at an all-time high. We have benefitted from a strong market this past year but have been warned to expect some volatility moving forward. Accordingly, we caution that all investments in the Endowment Fund are subject to unpredictable marketplace forces that could lower this amount in the future.

Investment Philosophy

Consistent with the goals of First Parish Church, the Investment Committee has identified several criteria to be followed in investing the endowment funds of the Church. The criteria of highest importance include Climate Change, Diversity, Environmental Management, Human Rights, Civilian Fire Arms, Sexual Orientation, Tobacco and Workforce (Rights, Benefits, Health and Wellness). These criteria are used by our investment manager, First Financial Trust (FFT), to invest the First Parish Church portfolio in concert with the church mission through a personalized strategy that FFT has developed to highlight the Environmental, Social, and Governance issues that the Investment Committee has identified as important.

In practice FFT employs what is known as an ESG Overlay Strategy. FFT has developed an Approved List of Investments for clients that consist of well-researched securities that they have determined to be appropriate for their client portfolios. This list is stringently managed by their investment team. FFT begins with the Approved List and overlay their ESG research to develop their ESG portfolios. As other highly rated ESG investments come to their

attention, they put them through the same strict research process prior to adding to portfolios.

The foundation of FFT's ESG Overlay Strategy is in the United Nations Principles of Responsible Investing Initiative and the 17 Sustainable Investment Goals developed by the UN as a blueprint for solving the biggest global challenges we will face over the next decade. The strategy is enacted through a two-step process. FFT combines corporate ESG rankings from three industry leading ESG research providers (RobeccoSam, Sustainalytics, and Bloomberg Intelligence ESG Research) to develop an ESG Score (ranking) for each company on our Approved List of Investments.

Next, they incorporate the individual ESG metrics most important to their clients. Some metrics are easily attainable, such as whether management bonuses are linked to ESG results or the percent of women on a company's board, while others are tracked through researching company reports and industry data, identifying how thoroughly companies are setting ESG policies and goals, and how well they are meeting these goals.

FFT has noted that incorporating ESG factors into their research is making a positive difference for their clients. They find that top-rated ESG rated companies are more likely to be their top performers and are increasingly held throughout their client portfolios. FFT provides performance of our portfolio compared to benchmarks of overall market performance in order to ensure that any restrictions that arise from our ESG Strategy is not significantly negatively impacting our funds.

Pledges in Securities

First Parish is able to accept gifts of appreciated securities from members and friends to fulfill pledged obligations or to increase the endowment fund. Gifting securities may have tax advantages for the donor. When gifts of securities are received, they are transmitted from the donor's account to investment accounts overseen by the Investment Committee. The current process requires that the donor notify the Treasurer or the Investment Committee Chair that a gift of securities will be made so that the gift can be processed and accounted for properly. Any member who wishes to make a gift of securities is encouraged to speak with the Treasurer or a member of the Investment Committee. During this past year, the Investment Committee has worked with Generosity and Finance to develop procedures together with FFT to streamline this process.

Availability of Detailed Reporting on Endowment Fund Investments

The Massachusetts General Law Statute which defines our duties, protections, and authority as Trustees of the Endowment Fund (M.G.L. Chapter 285, Approved July 21, 1986) specifies that we present an account to the church at each annual meeting which includes items of information presented above, as well as "the identifying description, cost and market values of all securities of the fund, and the amount of all cash items, in each case as of the first and last day of such fiscal year, or date reasonably proximate thereto."

To address this requirement, we provide copies of the March quarterly report of the investment fund holdings at the Annual Meeting and in the office of the Church Administrator for review prior to the meeting for any member who wishes to review a list of the specific securities held by First Parish. We believe the March report offers the best "reasonably proximate" mid-spring date.

Members with questions about First Parish investment management, or those who wish to review additional detail or a copy of Chapter 285, the Statute governing the operation of the Endowment

Fund, may request this information from a member of the Investment Committee and we will seek to provide the information you request.

If you are a member with talent and interest in investment management or governance who wishes to join the investment committee as current trustee terms expire, we encourage you to make your interest known to either a member of the committee or to the Nominating and Volunteer Involvement Committee.

Respectfully submitted: 2020-2021 Investment Committee
Sheila Costello, David Long (co-chair), John Kennedy (chair), Bruce Egan

BUILDING COMMITTEE

One year ago, our membership stood at 5. Our membership currently consists of 4 full time, active members:

- Mike Hardiman, AIA, Committee Chair
- Gabe Petino, AIA
- Jay Coburn
- Mark Holland

We also have 2 members, who are currently on sabbatical, but who read all our emails and contribute when appropriate:

- James Mitchell
- Rob Cotta

I feel that in terms of membership, we are adequately staffed for now. Ideally for long-range planning and for the health of the committee, we would seek to gain new younger membership within the next 3 years, who have experience in the design and construction industry.

Regular Meetings

We meet on the first Monday of every month at 7:00pm for about 1-1/2 hours to review how we are doing and strategize our out-of-meeting activities. Since March, 2020, we have been meeting remotely via Zoom and will continue to meet this way until we are directly by church leadership that's it's ok to do otherwise.

Main Activities

Currently our main function can be understood to be two-fold:

- 1) **Building Repairs & Maintenance:** We try to keep a list of the physical repairs that need to be addressed around the building and assist where we are needed, although most of the regularly scheduled maintenance and scheduling of various municipal inspections is handled outside the committee by church paid staff.
- 2) **Future Planning:** We keep a running list of potential future projects that the church can tackle as funding and motivation allow. We share this list with church leadership and try to suggest strategies for how the projects could be grouped and executed as well as the inter-relationship of the projects.

Elevate First Parish Design Committee (EFPDC)

Separate from the Building Committee, the EFPDC was set up in December of 2018 and consists of (for the most part) all the building committee members plus two others:

- Rev. Kelly Weisman Asprooth-Jackson
- Nat Carpenter

The purpose of the EFPDC is to steer the work of the project and act as the liason between the church leadership and the outside resources (architects, structural engineers, lawyers, project managers, contractors) helping us to achieve this project.

Since the project inception, the work of the project has occupied about 95% of the time of building committee members, with roughly the other 5% going to core Building Committee activities.

The range of work we have been required to be engaged in is substantial. Here is a sampling of those activities, amounting to hundreds of hours of work over the last year:

- pre-selection, vetting and hiring of our architects
- schematic design review meetings
- research and creation of project specification
- coming up with and illustrating proposals for cost savings
- construction document review meetings
- scheduling and leading site walk-throughs for contractors
- consulting with lawyers on the review of the contract with the architect + the contract for construction
- illustration of alternate design suggestions, most of which have been adopted
- site visits to examine existing conditions
- meeting minutes + project review memos
- project progress reports back to church leadership
- consulting with various church members / committees on programatic issues that affect design
- budget review meetings

The latest activity of the EFPDC is to ready the building (including emptying of certain rooms) for construction; that activity will be under-taken at the start of next week.

Committee Funding

We had about \$2400 in restricted funding in January for unexpected building maintenance. That has now been depleted by 2 required repairs: the boiler expansion tank replacement and the fire alarm actuator replacement. We know that church leadership will fund any other emergencies that happen to come up in the coming year. And we also understand that repair of the belfry, which is deferred for now, remains a high priority for church leadership for a time when more funds become available.

COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

This past year the Personnel Committee has taken thoughtful time editing the UUA's Employee Handbook Template. We have carefully reviewed reporting structure, process and procedures and made some recommendations to the Board for consideration. Our final document was submitted to the Board in May 2021. Due to our timing, we realize that this may not be reviewed nor approved before the next church year.

It is also our plan to conduct employee surveys with members of staff for feedback and input.

Our committee members have been thoughtful in our review of this document and the guidance that we hope it will provide for staff members and the Minister going forward. The Personnel Committee consisted of Nat Carpenter, Scott Gorman, Karen Menezes and Rev. Kelly. I valued their time for this important work and their generous feedback.

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott D. Gorman, Team Lead

DIACONATE COMMITTEE

This has been a challenging year for everyone at First Parish. The Diaconate Committee's mission statement speaks specifically to outreach through activities within the church and the greater community that foster connections, particularly between the generations. Committee members are usually busy from the opening of the church year to the end of indoor services in June planning, hosting, assisting with and participating in numerous church and community activities. As the 'elders' of the church and having long years of service, the pandemic-necessitated shutdown was a difficult albeit necessary transition for the committee.

The Diaconate did continue to stay involved in any way they could this year. Members assisted the Pastoral Care committee in making check-in calls to church members several times during the year, and have offered to assist with a farewell party planned for Rev. Kelly in June.

Thank you to all of the church leaders and members who have kept us going and connected during this past year. We are hopeful that we will be able to gather together again soon and continue to be of service to our beloved community.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kate Salandrea and Karen Menezes, Co-Chairs

MUSIC AND WORSHIP

The Music & Worship Associates assist and supports the Minister in Worship Services on the enrichment and administration of worship for church services along with being responsible, in consultation with the minister, for filling the pulpit with guest ministers or lay-leaders during temporary absence of the minister. We also offer a warm, caring, nourishing and welcoming presence throughout the service.

Music and Worship Committee meet monthly, usually the 1st Wednesday of each month. Over this past year some of our duties included:

- Review ministers' tentative schedule
- Schedule Guest Ministers
- Discuss upcoming services
- Prepare budget for upcoming year
- Presence at Parish Council meetings
- Schedule Summer Services

This past year has been tremendously challenging. We have lived through uncertainty, fear, sickness, loss, and political turmoil. Our normal patterns of work, school, church and more have been disrupted, turned completely upside down. At a time when physically being together as a church community would be a balm for our wounds, that togetherness would be a threat to our own physical wellbeing.

However, Rev. Kelly had figured out how to keep our congregation together during this time that we are apart with the technology of Zoom for services and meetings. In a real way, his innovation kept us alive -- both physically and spiritually. The services have been profound: full of wisdom, energy, connection, beauty, life, blessings, honor, enrichment, call for action, faith and love.

Rev. Kelly has also been creative! We all thank you for receiving our visits on the church steps as we stroll by in well-spaced family units to bring our offerings for flower communion, water communion, and All Souls Days. Your beautiful sidewalk altars of lights, vessels, and tapestry recreate the sense of ritual and tradition that we are used to. These events assure us that we continue to see the church building as our home base, still present and ready to host us back at a time when it is safe.

You are so thoughtful! Your recent gift of water, a candle, a stone, and a message now bless our homes. Each time we see these symbols on our table, shelf, or mantle, we are reminded that our community is part of who we are.

Also this year, we've had some powerful, thoughtful, inspirational messages from our guest ministers including our 'special' services with our neighboring UU Churches.

A special thank you Rose Sheehan, acting Director of Religious Education for weekly "Message for All Ages" that has been a beautiful contribution.

We are grateful for Robert Littlefield and Donna Gale for their gift of music for our Sunday services.

Currently, the committee is working on schedule and obtaining volunteers for our loosely based Summer Services. I hope you will be joining us!

We look forward to working with an Interim Minister in the coming year.

Kelly, we wish you well and we are extremely grateful for your guidance, strength, faith and the gift of leadership to our congregation!

It has been my pleasure serving with a very strong, energized and dedicated team of Worship Associates including our Zoom Technical Hosts: Melissa O'Connell, Kristen Cotter, Patty Freeman-Lynde, Brad Willenbrock and Mike Feldman.

In fellowship and love,
Brenda Briana, Chair

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The pandemic has challenged the church and specifically the Membership Committee as we have connected remotely. We have greeted people on the Zoom services and reached out to newcomers seeking a spiritual experience. Unfortunately there is little way to follow up without an email address or phone number.

As we struggle to fulfill our committee mission, it has been decided to merge Membership Committee with the Nominating/ Volunteer Involvement Committee in 2021-2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen Hoy

PASTORAL CARE

Committee Members: Dan Borghesi-Co-Chair, Anne Egan, Keith Goggin, Ellen Hoy, Arthur Thompson, Paul Willenbrock-Co-Chair and Reverend Kelly

The purpose of the Pastoral Care Committee is to provide comfort and support to members and friends of our congregation. Toward this end many members of our church volunteered to do one or more support activities: send a note or card/make a friendly phone call/provide transportation/make a meal/do an errand like shopping/ provide childcare. Each member of the Pastoral Care Committee coordinated the volunteers for one support activity.

Additionally, throughout the year committee members were in individual contact with members of the church who were believed to need on-going support and comfort.

This year the widespread Coronavirus caused our church to be closed. The Pastoral Care Committee, with the generous support of the Diaconate, will have completed check-in calls on all church members during the months of November, January and June to help foster helpful communication, community, and to identify needs.

Pastoral Care Funds were used for holiday flowers given to members needing brightening joy and food was purchased for a member in need. Rose Sheehan coordinated the RE children in sending out cards and doing helpful chores for members identified by the Pastoral Care Committee.

The committee met every month either in person or with the help of zoom and appreciates the extensive support that members of our congregation provide to each other.

Respectfully submitted with Peace and Love,
Paul Willenbrock Co-Chair Pastoral Care Committee

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Progress Report

The Communications Committee has made progress on a number of fronts. Highlights include:

- Purchasing and implementing advanced online giving features, such as the ability to direct contributions to specific funds (special collections, pledge fulfillment, capital campaign, and establishment of “e-collection plate” for virtual services;
- Google Map search ranking within top 10 for “Beverly MA church” or “Beverly Massachusetts church;”
- Activation/usage of more First Parish committee emails for those who find such useful (Generosity, RE, Personnel, etc.);
- Providing tech support for weekly Zoom services;
- Drafting video recommendations (in progress); and
- Collaboration with Generosity Committee on pledge comms.

Goals for 2021-2022

The Communications Committee has identified the following focus areas for the year ahead:

- Add members to committee. First Parish member Pat Healey has been identified as a communications professional who may be able to offer meaningful contributions to the Communications Committee. An invitation to join the committee has been extended to him, and we welcome other ideas from the NVI Committee if/as they come to light.
- Find a new committee member with expertise in social media who may be able to guide First Parish’s social media strategy.
- Better convey communications options available to members, perhaps during a future View from the Pew once we can meet in person again.
- Weigh pros and cons and deliver recommendations on a live streaming policy.
- Incorporate a chair/co-chair structure to decentralize the work of the committee.
- Budget-permitting, and upon the introduction of a “permanent(ish)” new minister, produce a video to better showcase First Parish to potential new attendees.
- Leverage in-person social opportunities, such as communicating the camaraderie of the Hale’s Angels softball team, to help in attracting new members to First Parish.
- Budget-permitting, placing Google Ads to further increase appeal to local “church shoppers.”

Special note: The Communications Committee is proud of First Parish’s ability to hold remote services during COVID-19 and looks forward to the coming return of in-person services. Thanks!

Respectfully submitted,

Committee Chair: Michael Keefe-Feldman

Members: Barney Beal, Mark Freeman, Morgen/Tom Gallo, Carol Girard, Pam Perkins

GENEROSITY TEAM REPORT

The Generosity Team was convened by the Board in 2019 to coordinate fund-raising activities at First Parish. These responsibilities were formerly carried out by the Finance Committee and typically focused on staffing and conducting a 3-month annual stewardship campaign to support the church. The creation of this group was modeled after successful examples of how other UU Churches have organized to carry out their fund-raising activities. It is intended to be a group that helps to make the activities to support the church financial needs more closely reflect our joys, values, and spiritual practices.

Members of the Team are Kathleen Feldman, Paul Willenbrock, Maureen Driscoll, Rev. Kelly Asprooth-Jackson, and Jay Coburn.

Much of our focus over the past year has been to assess how the challenges of Covid would affect our shared experiences at church and our ability to support in a time when we are not able to meet in person. Thanks to work by our First Parish Administrator, Carol Collins; Treasurer, Patty Freeman-Lynde; Communications Chair, Mike Keefe-Feldman; and our Finance Chair, Gina Coburn; we were able to improve our capabilities to make donations and pledge payments via PayPal on the First Parish web site.

Despite the Covid limitations, members and friends have remained engaged in our multi-generational church community and its work in Beverly and the larger community. We have met new faces online at coffee hour and virtual dinners. Many of you have shared your hopes for keeping our church strong by increasing your pledged support for the coming year when we look forward to meeting again in person.

WE COULD USE YOUR HELP

The goal of the Generosity Team is to help ensure a strong, healthy First Parish as a place to meet new friends and share meaningful times together. Serving as a member has been a great way to meet and learn more about other members and friends. We welcome new Team members to join us in the coming year. **If you enjoy thinking about what makes a church special, writing in a way that engages others, meeting new people, a good phone conversation, thank-you notes, being part of a collaborative team, or just playing with spreadsheets, you can find something fun in Generosity!**

Our goals for the coming year will include:

- Seek to fully fund operating budget with pledged revenue to allow other fund-raising activities to be directed towards outside community support.
- Explore how other churches have made financial stewardship more integral to the spiritual experience of church.
- Review our stewardship communications to make more helpful, informative, and reflective of the joys we find at First Parish.
- Research and implement methods to make pledge fulfillment more convenient, timely, and donor-friendly.

- Consider how FPC web site and electronic communications can better support Generosity goals.
-

Let any of us know if you are interested in learning more or participating in these activities.

Respectfully submitted,

Jay Coburn

ELEVATE FIRST PARISH BUILDING PROJECT

At our Annual Meeting last year, we discussed and approved a change in the scope of our building project to focus on a LULA elevator and related spaces on the sanctuary level, deferring improvements of the lower-level Hale Hall to a future project. This scope change brought the estimated cost within the reach of our project budget. The planned elevator was to sit in the corner of the church where the current Minister's Office is located, and include stops downstairs in a new basement space, and on the mezzanine level/balcony. The elevator had right angle doors to fit the different entry/exit directions of those levels while minimizing the cost needed to create new basement space on the lower level.

The approved scope of the project required that we obtain certain variances from The Massachusetts Architectural Accessibility Board (MAAB) so, with help from Derby Square Architects, we prepared a variance application and requested a hearing.

As we awaited our hearing, we received additional comments on the elevator and a strong suggestion that we replace the right-angle elevator doors with an elevator design that did not require the user to make a turn within the cabin. After some discussion, the Design Team agreed that this configuration would allow easier use by a wider range of mobility devices. This change was viewed to be consistent with the approval voted by the congregation.

At our mid-summer MAAB hearing, we were granted all 5 of the variances we requested, clearing the way for the project to move forward. However, the change in elevator design required redrafting of our plans, which took the project into the early fall. Once the changes were made, we submitted the revised design to Carr Enterprises, our general contract partner, for estimating.

The change to a straight-entry elevator required a significant increase in the amount of new basement space needed for entry/exit; with the right angle doors eliminated, the right angle turn to enter Hale Hall would have to be made on concrete instead of in the elevator. The updated cost estimates showed that this change alone would raise the total by almost \$150,000, making the project financially infeasible.

As we struggled with the possibility that we could not afford the project we had been working on for 3 years, Mike Hardiman offered way to avoid the prohibitive cost of creating new basement space in the unfinished area under the front of the church. He suggested moving the elevator into new enclosed space at the rear of the sanctuary, that had been planned for a kitchenette; and moving the kitchenette into the Minister's Office space that had been planned for the elevator. This simple change accomplished all our initial project goals and eliminated approximately \$200,000 from the cost estimate. Its only drawback was the elimination of the mezzanine level/balcony access. In December, at a Special Meeting of the Congregation, members present voted unanimously to proceed with this new design. The deletion of mezzanine level/balcony access required an

amendment to the MAAB variances, which was sought and obtained. Drawings were again revised and by mid-April, the plans and specifications were sent to Carr Enterprises. Carr moved quickly to submit a permit application to the City of Beverly and to solicit subcontract bids for completing the work. A final round of cost estimates was completed based on these bids.

On Wednesday, May 5, the First Parish Design Team met with our partners from Carr Enterprises and Derby Square Architects to address a final set of decisions to keep the scope of work within the planned project budget. When we receive permit approval from the city, we are now ready to proceed with construction, which could begin as soon as May 24, depending on the expected delivery time of the elevator. Once started it is expected that the Elevate First Parish project will take 16-18 weeks. We will find alternative worship space for the early fall to allow us to meet in person as public health guidelines permit.

Many thanks to all members and friends who have supported this project with your hopes, your vision, your financial support, and your patience! Thanks too to Building Committee members Mike Hardiman, Gabe Petino, James Mitchell, and Rob Cotta along with Nat Carpenter and Rev. Kelly Asprooth-Jackson, who have continued to work as the Project Design Team; and to Board leaders Karen Gendall and Brad Willenbrock for your active participation.

Respectfully submitted,
Jay Coburn

FAMILY PROMISE

Prior to the pandemic, First Parish supported Family Promise by opening our church and providing shelter and food to homeless families four weeks a year. Because of the Covid 19 pandemic, Family Promise suddenly had to stop the church rotational model and start to house families in their Day Center and several rental options-a static site model. It was a very disruptive time for guests and staff alike. Donors from First Parish and First Baptist, our partner church, continued to cover our four weeks of expenses for rent and food thereby supporting the families.

Because of the pandemic, in March Family Promise shifted moved into a larger rental house at 8 Rantoul Street, Beverly. This rental unit now houses two families while also providing office space for staff. An additional family is supported in another rental unit. Despite the pandemic, Family Promise has worked diligently. Several families have been helped to find long term, stable rentals. Along with continuing the traditional model of housing families, Family Promise has now added two new prevention services which work to keep families from ever becoming homeless. They also continue to work alongside former guests helping with their food insecurity and maintaining their stable housing.

Settled in their new space, Family Promise is now working towards their vision of an even larger unit where they will be able to house more families and bring back many of the wonderful in-person volunteer involvement that was so appreciated and valued by guests and volunteers alike.

We frequently hear that Family Promise is very grateful for the continued financial and emotional support of First Parish Church and its members and friends. Our next step forward is to partner with Family Promise as they continue to grow their vision, serve more at risk families, and add more opportunities for direct involvement as a church community.

Looking back over the years, it is amazing to reflect on the many families who are now in stable living situations and continuing to move forward in their lives. This would not have happened without you.

With deep gratitude for your generosity in sharing of yourselves and your gifts.

Carol Ballantyne and Marty Johnson, Co-Chairs

PS. Here is a [link to a video](#) by Rachel Hand, Director of Family Promise, where she thanks FPC and discusses current and expanding programs.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

This is the third consecutive year that this small group of people who identify as female have been meeting together.

This past year we used the monthly study guide from the UUA, *Soul Matters*, for topics and guidance.

Each month in advance of the meeting the *Soul Matters* packet was obtained from the UUA through the minister and then distributed to each member to read, reflect, and prepare for the upcoming meeting.

The group has met via Zoom on the third Sunday in each month. We will take the summer off in accordance with the church calendar.

Members of the group: Gina Coburn, Christine DiSaia, Karen Gendall, Vicki MacLean, Maria Para, Nelda Quigley, Roberta Villanti, Lynn Willenbrock.

Respectfully,
Karen Gendall, Facilitator

FREE OUTREACH-SUPPERS

One way First Parish Church has kept its promise to be a force in the community is by adapting the Outreach Supper program during the COVID-19 pandemic. We needed to move from serving dinners in Hale Hall to making up bagged dinners, bringing them out to Ellis Square on a serving table and having the guests take their meals. This allowed us to provide nourishment without any contact with each other thus keeping everyone safe. We moved from working with our teams to each team leader working with their spouse and/or direct family members. Sandwiches, fruit, water and a dessert became the norm; however, as time went along and the colder weather set in, some team leaders created simple, appetizing hot meals. Our weekly attendance fell sharply to anywhere from a handful of people to 15. The monthly Monday suppers prepared by our group and served at First Baptist church continued in a very scaled down manner as well.

The actual total cost of the supper program to First Parish is less than \$5,000.00 because of the generous donations from Super Sub/Paul Guanci, who donates 6 meals per year; Shaw's in Beverly, who donate 4 meals per year, and Shaw's in Ipswich, who donate foodstuffs through the Baptist church.

First Parish parishioners have led the Monday supper program for over 25 years and the Tuesday supper program for over 10 years.

Before the pandemic overall we had about 30 volunteers participate in the Monday/Tuesday suppers. We miss our teams that we always looked forward to working with each week. We have reached out to them to provide dessert for the bagged meals and they have answered the call. We thank them and can't wait to get back to "normal".

Respectfully submitted by team leaders:

Martha Brennan, Nat Carpenter, Fran Gerrior and Melissa Goggin

CIRCLE DINNERS

What is better to do in a pandemic than to prepare new or tried and true recipes and share them virtually with First Parish friends? Everyone was invited to bring their own meal to eat while socializing via zoom or to have ingredients on hand to follow along as "guest chefs" demonstrated their specialties. All in all, five Circle Dinners were held in February, March and April. Plans to gather in person for a Circle Dinner picnic are on hold until the pandemic and the weather allow. It was a fun and delicious experiment.

Reverend Kelly bravely kicked off the series with a complete vegan dinner. Subsequent dinners featured "Quick and Awesome" dishes such as Amy Smith's "chauffles" and asparagus soup, Gina Coburn's hummous and tapenade and Marcia Spector's Cacio e Pepe. By popular demand, Roberta Villanti demonstrated Cranberry and Almond biscotti while Nelda played camera-person thanks to being fully vaccinated. The series concluded with an Iron Chef version featuring tahini or peanut butter as the star ingredient. Patty Freeman-Lynde wowed us with spinach sweet potato fries and peanut dressing and Nelda Quigley came out with tahini based cookies. We all had a fun and delicious time.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Smith and Nelda Quigley

MEMBERS AS OF 5/26/2021

ANDRIST, Linda
ARMSTRONG, Donna
BAKER, Barbara
BALLANTYNE, Carol
BALLANTYNE, Duncan
BAUMOEL, Doug
BEAL, Barney
BLACK, Elizabeth
BORGHESI, Danni
BRENNAN, Martha
BRIANA, Brenda
CARLIN, Amy
CARNEY, Janice
CARPENTER, Nat
CHAMBERS, Richard W.
CHARBONNEAU, Annie
CIACCIA, Melissa
CLARKE, Laurance
COBURN, Jay
COBURN, Virginia
COLEMAN, Peggy
CONNELL, Patrick
CONSTANTINO, Tony
COSTELLO, Sheila
COSTIN, Liz
COTTA, Rob
COTTER, Kristen
DANIELSON, Kristen
DANIELSON, Pat
DEPREZ, Jennifer
DIETZE, Beth
DIETZE, Mike
DISAIA, Christine
DIVER, Kelly
DIVER, Ken
DOXSEE, Christine
DOXSEE, Josh
DRAKE, Paul
DRISCOLL, Maureen
EGAN, Anne
EGAN, Bruce
ELLIOTT, Susan
FAY, Jillian
FELDMAN, Kathleen
FREDERICK, Elizabeth
FREEMAN, Mark
FREEMAN-LYNDE, Patty
FREEMAN-LYNDE, Raymond
GALL, Norrie
GARDNER, David F.
GAY, Stephanie

GEIKIE, Ann
GEIKIE, David
GENDALL, Karen
GERRIOR, Charles
GERRIOR, Fran
GLOVER, Barrie
GOGGIN, Keith
GOGGIN, Melissa
GORMAN, Scott
GRASSIN, Elizabeth
GRASSIN, Susan
GUERIN, Cheryle
HACKER, Susan
HACKETT, Victoria
HARDIMAN, Mike
HECTOR, Joel
HECTOR, Laura
HEREFORD, Russ
HINES, Madeleine
HINES, William
HOY, Ellen
HOY, Stephen
KENNEDY, John
JOHNSTON, Amanda
JONES, Carol
KEEFE-FELDMAN, Georgina
KEEFE-FELDMAN, Neal
KEEFE-FELDMAN, Michael
KNIGHT, Laura
KNIGHT, Paul
KORSTVEDT, Sylvia
KYROUZ, Bill
LAMPERT-BODEN, Henryka
LAUENSTEIN, Helen
LAUENSTEIN, Milton
LIGHTFOOT, Kali
LONG, David.
LONG, Julia Q.
LORING, George
LORING, Sally
LOW, Julie
LYNCH, Patty
MACKINNON, Susan
MACLEAN, Vicki
MAIER, Beth
MAIER, Louise
MALTAIS, Danielle
MARTIN, Annamarie
MASSARSKY, Kurtlan
McAVOY, Beth
McAVOY, Peter
McGOWAN, Stephanie

MENEZES, Karen
MIEDEMA, David
MIEDEMA, Cristina Prochilo
MILLER, Elizabeth
MILLS, Fred
MITCHELL, James
MITCHELL, Patricia
MOODY, Elizabeth
NALLEY, Betsy
NALLY, Hardy
NIETHAMER, Diana
NOYES, Lauren
O'CONNELL, Melissa
PAYNE, Carolyn
PETINO, Gabriel
PETINO, Nancy
PRAZAR, Andrew
QUIGLEY, Jack
QUIGLEY, Nelda
RATTE, Edith
RATTE, Scott
RICE, Jonathan
RICE, Lindsley
ROGERS PITTMAN, Alex
ROOT, John
ROYS, Robert
SALANDREA, Kate
SALANDREA, Richard
SHAWN, David
SHAWN, Emily
SHAWN, Susan
SLATER, Terry
SMITH, Amy
SODERBLOM, John
SODERBLOM, Julie
STONER, Tina
SWEET, Debra
SWEET, Ronald
TAKATA, Judy
THOMPSON, Arthur F.
TREFRY, Robin
VALLE, Mary
VILLANTI, Roberta
WAINWRIGHT, Candyce
WAINWRIGHT, Charles
WARDLOW, Ann
WEIS, Christine E.
WEISMAN, Sara
WEISMAN ASPROOTH-JAC, Kelly
WHITEHAIR, Bob
WHITEHAIR, Kathleen
WICKBERG, Ann
WICKBERG, Edward

WILKS, Robert
WILLENBROCK, Brad
WILLENBROCK, Lynn
WILLENBROCK, Paul
ZAHARIS, Joanne
ZWICKER, Christine
ZWICKER, Heidi

NOMINATIONS

FIRST PARISH CHURCH OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

July 2021– June 2022

<p><u>Board</u> (start date)</p> <p>Gina Coburn Chair (2020) Scott Gorman Vice Chair (2021) Kurtlan Massarsky (2019) Kristen Cotter (2021) Patty Lynch (2021) Fran Gerrior (2020) Brad Willenbrock Chair Emeritus (2019)</p> <p><u>Council</u></p> <p>Scott Gorman Facilitator</p> <p><u>Moderator</u></p> <p>Steve Hoy</p> <p><u>Treasurer</u></p> <p>Patty Freeman-Lynde Open _____ Vice Treasurer</p> <p><u>Clerk</u></p> <p>Laura Knight</p> <p>*****</p> <p><u>Music and Worship</u></p> <p>Brenda Briana Chair Melissa O'Connell Nelda Quigley John Soderblom Candy Wainwright (youth choir) Lyrallen Kaye (consultant/support)</p> <p><u>Religious Education</u></p> <p>Nancy Petino Julie Long Diana Nieithamer Lindsley Rice open _____ open _____</p> <p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>Paul Willenbrock co chair Open _____ co-chair David Miedema Mike Dietz Kurtlan Massarsky Russ Hereford open _____</p>	<p><u>Investment (5 year term end date, may repeat)</u></p> <p>David Long Chair 2023 John Kennedy 2022 Sheila Costello 2024 David Gardner 2025 Carol Girard 2026</p> <p><u>MVI (Membership and NVI hybrid)</u></p> <p>Brad Willenbrock Co-chair Lynn Willenbrock Co-chair Steve Hoy Member/Greeter Sheila Costello Ray Freeman Lynde Nat Carpenter Maria Wigozki Parra (consultant) Nelda Quigley (consultant) Jay Coburn (consultant) _____ _____</p> <p><u>Building</u></p> <p>Mike Hardiman Jay Coburn James Mitchell Gabe Petino Mark Holland Rob Cotta Charlie Dunn (consultant re Organ) open _____</p> <p><u>Generosity Team</u></p> <p>Kathleen Feldman co-chair Jay Coburn co-chair Maureen Driscoll open _____ open _____</p> <p><u>Pastoral Care</u></p> <p>Keith Goggin Chair Anne Egan Dannie Borghesi John Root open _____</p>
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Communications

Mike Keefe-Feldman Coordinator
Morgan Gallo
Pam Perkins
Mark Freeman
Barney Beal
Tom Gallo
Carol Girard
open _____
open _____

Committee on Ministry

Membership appointed by Minister and Board Chair

Flower

To be recruited when needed

Hospitality

To be recruited when needed

Diaconate

Kate Salandrea Co Chair
Karen Menezes Co Chair
Linda Andrist
Carol Ballantyne
Jay Coburn
Peggy Coleman
Tony Constantino
Maureen Driscoll
Ann Geikie
David Geikie
Fran Gerrior
Barry Glover
Elizabeth Grassin
Russ Hereford
Sally Loring
Melissa O'Connell
Carolyn Payne
Nelda Quigley
Mickie Ratte
Rich Salandrea
Judy Takata
Arthur Thompson
Roberta Villanti
Candyce Wainwright
Charlie Wainwright
Bob Wilks
Lynn Willenbrock
Paul Willenbrock
Christine Zwicker

Social Action

(prior active members - to be updated when conditions permit meeting together again)

Paul Drake co-chair
Amanda Johnston co-chair
Elizabeth Miller
Tony Constantino
Christian Douglass
Amy Grunder
Larry Nelson
Sue Elliot
Fred Frederick
Barbara Baker
John Soderblom
Joel Hector
Mike Spector
Marcia Spector
Jay Coburn
open _____
open _____

Task Force Coordinators

Circle Dinners – Amy Smith, Nelda Quigley

Family Promise – Carol Ballantyne, Marty Johnston

Monday and Tuesday night dinners – Fran Gerrior, Nat Carpenter, Melissa Goggin, Martha Brennan

Wednesday Night Dinners at Life Bridge

Cheri Guerin
Matt Guerin
Ray Freeman-Lynde
Donna Armstrong
Marilyn Driscoll
Braden Willenbrock
Paul Willenbrock

Morrill Gallery – Tony Constantino

OWL

Elizabeth Miller
Nathan Seavey
Andrew Prazar
Julia Quigley-Long
Ellen Hoy