



May 8, 2013

Dear Member of First Parish in Brookline,

Join us on Sunday, May 19th, from 1:00 to 2:30 for our Annual Meeting. We plan to celebrate people and programs so please join us! Child care provided!

Our Agenda

Call to Order by Moderator

Chalice Lighting and Opening Hymn

Approve Minutes of 2012 Annual Meeting

Recognize and elect new members

Elect Officers and Committee Members

Affirm congregation-wide social action issues

Progress Reports:

 Vote on FY 2013-14 Budget

 Resolution on becoming multi-racial, multi-racial congregation

 Start of a capital campaign and congregational conversation on values related to our assets

 Presentation on search for second minister and hiring of interim minister

 Vote to use endowment proceeds to pay for repair of stained glass

 Authorize Parish Committee to sell historical silver with proceeds to go into the endowment

 Perspective of the Parish Committee on the year

Any Other Business

Closing Hymn

Adjourn

Hoping to see you at 1:00 pm in Lyon Chapel on Sunday, May 19th!

Chip DeWitt,
Parish Committee Chair

382 Walnut Street
Brookline, MA 02445-7563
617-566-1933

New Parish Members

The following 46 people have signed the membership book since our last Annual Meeting:

Ann Marie Allara	Ben Davis	Coleman Mark	Bill Reyelt
Judy Ashton	Lori Day	Colleen McKenney	Olivia Reyelt
Prilla Smith Brackett	Richard Day	Ginger Melton	Susan Singer
Chip Bradish	Djems Domerson	Adrian Mendoza	Joey Ullrich
Monica Brady-Myerov	Gina Giamei	Senofer Mendoza	Emily Walton
Priscilla Brown	Evan Hanlon	Branch Moody	Margaret Williams
Nora Cameron	Stephen Hart	Bernadette Murphy	Meredith Williamson
Richard Cameron	Laura Hatfield	Caitlin Murphy	Norman Wilson
Catherine Cappelli	Emma Hryniwicz	James Neal	Dan Wylie-Sears
Nancy Clark	Debi King	Marissa Nucci	Jill Wylie-Sears
Nora Collins	Howard Lehr	Sophie Palashis	
Tom Collins	Alice Mark	Deborah Putnam	

Officers and Standing Committee Members

The Leadership Development Committee nominates the following members:

For Clerk of the Parish	Jake Walters
For Treasurer	Ryan Kim
For Moderator	Janet Sanders
For the Parish Committee	Ann Dinsmoor Stacey Razcek
For the Finance Council	Midge Wilcke (Chair) Sonya Abbott (Parish Administrator) Sue Andrews (Annual Stewardship Chair) Steve Davis (Parish Committee Chair) William Dwyer (Senior Deacon) Ryan Kim (Treasurer) Rev. Jim Sherblom (Senior Minister) Will Spears (B&G Co-Chair)
For Leadership Development Committee	Andrea Willette Don Kilburn (TBD)
For the Religious Education Committee	Bijan Etemad-Gilbertson Sarah Griffen

Respectfully submitted,
Jake Walters
Clerk of the Parish

FIRST PARISH IN BROOKLINE
Minutes of the 295th Annual Meeting
May 20, 2012

Call to Order

It is voted to end the meeting at 2:30

Chalice Lighting and Opening Hymn

Approve Minutes of 2011 Annual Meeting

The minutes of the 2011 Annual Meeting are approved

Recognize and Elect New Members

The 29 new members are elected unanimously

Elect Officers and Committee Members

Officers and committee members are elected

Celebrate Robin Barraza's Ministerial Internship

Introduce Sarah Napoline as Next Year's Intern

Approve the Ordination of Jennifer Dillinger

Motion to ordain Jen Dillinger into the Unitarian Universalist ministry from this community is approved unanimously

Progress Reports

Policy Governance

Chip explains what policy governance is. Essentially, under policy governance, larger congregations empower staff and ministers to act as day-to-day administrators of the church, with the committee volunteers and chairs guiding the overall policy of the church.

Chip brings up the bylaws definition of who can vote for the call of a new minister. Bylaws say someone has to be a member for at least one year. That means the people approved today in the annual meeting as new members could not vote. Chip lets the congregation know that the Parish Committee is working on a bylaws change to allow these people to vote.

FY 2013 Budget and Sustainability

Ray Wellbaum (Treasurer) gives an overview of the past year's finances. He reports that we are ahead of where we budgeted for this past year, due in part to revenue from the film that paid to use our space. He highlights the six guiding principles of the Finance Council (Annual Report page 25). He then goes over the budgets from FY11, FY12, and FY13. In response to a question, Jim and others explain that there are no actuals here because they haven't been completed yet, but that if anyone wants more information Jim can provide it. It was also explained that we are a fair wage congregation and what this means. We are a mid-sized two congregation in the most expensive wage bracket under the UU guidelines, and we aim to be right in the middle of the wages required by those guidelines for this category. Sonya was recognized as parish administrator.

Vote on FY 2012-13 Budget

The proposed budget for FY 2012-13 is approved.

Engagement Committee

Jodi Leader introduces the members of the Engagement Committee. She explains that the co-ministry is ending with Martha's retirement. There will be three kinds of conversations: 1) Conversations (June 3, June 10, July 12) to discern what the congregation values in a ministry. This will be a one-hour discussion. There will be five opportunities to engage in this first phase. 2) Second phase August- December. 3) Third phase October – when? Additional conversations will happen January and March. Parish Committee will decide whether to hold a meeting to decide whether to call Reverend Jim or to engage in a ministerial search.

Jodi explains that there are yellow inserts on everyone's chair with frequently asked questions.

Affirm Congregation-Wide Social Action Issues

Clint Richmond asks congregation to affirm our membership in these organizations:

- UU Service Committee
- UU Mass Action
- UU Urban Ministry
- Boston Youth Sanctuary Movement
- Massachusetts Interfaith Power and Light

Jamie Jordan mentions that last year the congregation agreed to participate in the Jericho Road feasibility study. She reports that Jericho Road Roxbury is an organization that helps nonprofits in Roxbury find professional volunteers interested in helping with their work. Participants in Jericho Road include our congregation, First Church in Boston, First Parish in Milton, and the UU Urban Ministry.

Any Other Business

A youth member thanked Nadia Schwartz for helping get youth more involved in this congregation. She expressed that there hasn't been enough conversation about preserving the stained glass outside of the Stained Glass Committee. The ministers are thanked.

Closing Hymn and Adjourn

Rev Martha Niebanck delivers closing hymn

Respectfully submitted,
Jeremy Schwab
Clerk of the Parish

SENIOR MINISTER'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2013

Dear Ones,

As I said in our April 14, 2013 Unitarian Universalist Faith Healing service: faith, hope and love abide even in the face of suffering and death. I would add, given the events of the following week, especially in the face of terrorist acts. We are living in a time of climate destruction, gross inequality, and race based injustice, with our own personal safety eroded through globalization. If we attempt to address any one of these issues, while leaving unresolved the rest, we are ultimately doomed to failure. As a community we yearn to foster deeper connections which feed our spiritual needs. We are a part of the interdependent web of all existence. We are a community in transition, often failing to meet our goals, yet ever aspiring to live into our future. None of this is easy and certainly not even close to completion.

We are approaching financial sustainability, for the first time in a generation, but now must come to terms with our legacy assets and the costs to remain in this building. That will require some difficult conversations, and a capital campaign, for us to truly be able to consider this community financially sustainable for the longer term. We have more pledge commitments for FY14 than we have ever had for any year before, and yet we are stretching to afford a full ministry team adequate to the size of our congregation. Some of the decisions before us will be unpalatable to at least some of us. But we have gotten better at listening to each other and making hard decisions as a community. I trust and hope these financial conversations and decisions will lead us into even deeper connections in community.

Being actively engaged in work for social justice has never been more core to what it means to be an active member of First Parish in Brookline. We are intentionally living our faith in our congregation and in the broader communities of which we are a part. We are embracing our growing racial, gender, age, ethnic, GLBT, and socio-economic diversity, even though we often don't do it well, or fully, and are likely to be in this process of becoming more fully human for the foreseeable future. This work is hard. For some of us changes in worship have been a delight while for others they have been truly painful. Perhaps nothing has caused greater discord in our community this year than changes in our religious exploration and faith formation programs. This has been a year of experimentation, where many things worked, and will be maintained, while others failed miserably and will be replaced. That is the nature of navigating this community through a time of intense change. If we do it with love, we will thrive.

Our April 14th service ended with this mantra from Rev. Forrest Church, from his final months of living, he said: "Want what you have. Do what you can. Be who you are." I am seeking to live into my call as your minister by learning to listen more deeply and growing in my gifts for ministry. I am mindful that the congregational vote to settle me as senior minister included a substantial minority voting "no". I am humbled by this call and determined to build a ministry team, and become the senior minister this congregation needs, for its next chapter of existence. With all humility, recognizing my own limits as a minister and as a human being, I am attempting to faithfully live into your call. I ask only that we each, like Forrest Church, try to want what we have, do what we want, and be who we are. If we can do this in community, I am certain in the end faith, hope and love will abide, the greatest of these being love.

With love and gratitude, Rev. Dr. Jim Sherblom

REPORT OF THE PARISH COMMITTEE

Congregational Year 2012-2013

The following members served on the Parish Committee for the 2012-2013 term: Chip DeWitt (Chair), Steve Davis (Vice-Chair), Ryan Kim (Treasurer), Jake Walters (Clerk), Julie Horvath, Ann Gilmore, Greg Buckland, Anya Thomas and Ann Congleton.

Reverends Martha Niebanck (through December) and Jim Sherblom regularly attended the monthly Parish Committee meetings.

The following is a brief summary report on the significant activities of the Parish Committee for this year.

Ministerial Transition - The major focus of activity was the engagement and voting process for our ministerial transition. At the beginning of the year, the Parish Committee prepared an amendment to the by-laws that would allow members who had been accepted at an annual meeting and were in good standing as of the annual meeting preceding a vote on the selection of the senior minister. The by-laws had provided that one had to have been a member for at least one year in order to vote. At the special meeting called to approve the by-law amendment, the congregation voted to change the by-laws but added a proviso that one had to have been a member in good standing for at least six months before becoming eligible to vote.

The Parish Committee worked closely with the Congregational Engagement Committee on the congregational conversations leading to the vote on our ministerial transition. The Parish Committee met regularly to discuss the status of the conversations and the process for going forward. The Parish Committee drafted answers to Frequently Asked Questions that arose during the conversations, the most significant being the need for additional ministerial services.

The Parish Committee drafted a ballot for the vote ministerial transition and set the schedule leading to the vote: 1) a town meeting with the congregation on February 3 to discuss the proposed ballot and answer questions, 2) a congregational meeting with Rev. Jim on February 10 to answer questions and address concerns, and 3) the special meeting culminating in the vote on March 3. The congregation voted to call Rev. Jim for the position of senior minister.

The Parish Committee is preparing the contract for Rev. Jim, which will be completed by June.

Second Minister - In considering the ministerial transition, the Parish Committee decided to add a second minister to provide support for the senior minister as the congregation grows and becomes more diverse, provided that the pledge revenue is sufficient to fund more services.

It appears that the pledge drive has generated funds sufficient to support a part-time second minister. The Parish Committee will select the minister in consultation with Rev. Jim. The Parish Committee will appoint a committee to undertake a search and draft a charter for its work by the end of June. The charter will describe the roles of the Parish Committee, the search committee and Rev. Jim regarding the search and the values that should guide the committee.

It is expected that the committee will begin its organizational work this summer and be prepared to begin discussions with the congregation at the beginning of the next church year. The selection process will take the better part of the year; therefore, the Parish Committee, in

consultation with Rev. Jim, expects to select a part-time interim minister who will serve for the next year until a permanent second minister is selected.

Multi-Cultural, Multi-Racial Congregation - The Parish Committee worked with the Diversity Caucus to develop a process for our congregation to build our multi-cultural, multi-racial congregation. In September, the Diversity Caucus brought Paula Cole Jones, a member of the All Souls congregation in Washington, D.C., to facilitate a workshop about how intentionally to put Beloved Community at our center and how to assess where we are in terms of becoming a multi-racial, multi-generational and welcoming congregation.

The Diversity Caucus then met with the Parish Committee and made three recommendations, all of which were adopted by the Parish Committee:

1. Ensure that our hiring policies and practices seek to create a more culturally and racially diverse staff.
2. Commit to a budget for, and Parish Committee participation in, a congregational workshop this spring for lay leaders and interested members on cultural competence.
3. Have the Diversity Caucus work with congregational committees to assess their work and what steps are needed to move toward becoming a multi-racial, multi-generational welcoming congregation.

The workshop will be held on May 3 and 4. Following the workshop, the Parish Committee will recommend to the congregation at the May 19 annual meeting a multi-year process for moving forward.

Sustainability - Rev. Jim presented an analysis of the revenue necessary to become sustainable for a twenty-year period of time. It appears that sustainability is possible, provided that the pledge revenue increases at a reasonable rate over the next few years and provided further that some of the major capital expenses are funded by a capital campaign.

The Parish Committee met with the co-chairs of the Canvass Campaign in February to discuss their ideas for the annual pledge drive. Based on preliminary results, the pledge drive appears to have succeeded in raising our pledge revenue sufficient to address the congregational budget goals. The Parish Committee expects to present a budget for approval by the congregation at the annual meeting that adds funds for a part-time second minister, compensates staff within the UUA guidelines and reduces the reliance on draws from the endowment to a sustainable amount.

The Parish Committee expects to recommend to the congregation that it undertake a study to assess the feasibility of conducting a capital campaign. This would be the first step in a capital campaign.

The Parish Committee has determined that it is necessary to use endowment proceeds to pay for work provided by the contractor retained by the Stained Glass Committee to repair the lancets of the Whitman window, which were taken down because of structural concerns. The windows became damaged by mildew while being stored in the church basement, which required prompt cleaning. The Parish Committee will recommend that the congregation approve use of proceeds from the endowment to pay for the repairs to the windows.

As part of its review of the window repair and sustainability, the Parish Committee discussed the sale of silver provided to the church by past members and investment of the sale proceeds in the endowment. The silver has been stored in a vault in the Museum of Fine Arts. It has

been appraised at over \$300,000. It is the sense of the Parish Committee that the silver should be sold with the proceeds to be invested in the endowment and expects to ask the congregation to delegate to the Parish Committee the ability to decide how best to sell the silver.

This has been a challenging but satisfying year. I have been blessed to serve with a Parish Committee that has dealt with all of the tough issues with their best selves and a sense of spirituality. I would also like to thank the co-ministers for serving us well during the predictably chaotic times of transition.

On behalf of the Parish Committee,
Chip DeWitt, chair

CONGREGATIONAL ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Congregational Engagement Committee (CEC) was charged by the Parish Committee to engage the congregation in deep conversation about ministry at First Parish in Brookline over a nine-month period: May 2012 to January 2013. The CEC designed three separate conversations, each with multiple sessions, designed to engage First Parish members actively in reflection, connection and discernment. As we reported after Conversation #1: “*We believe that the wisdom of our congregation’s decision depends on the engaged, sustained presence of all First Parish members. It is important that we connect with others and learn others’ feelings and perspectives through this process, so that – no matter the decision we ultimately make – we will be a stronger, more connected community. That is a critical purpose of the conversations.*”

Conversation #1 was conducted between Memorial Day and July 2012, and focused on eliciting shared values. Participants chose words and phrases from the *UUA Covenant and Statement of Sources* that had the most meaning for them. We captured the results through a “word cloud” (wordle). The word cloud shows the words most often chosen in the largest size font so that it is a way of capturing what First Parish members most value. The four largest words are, in alphabetical order: *compassion, dignity, interdependent, and worth*. We presented the word cloud to the congregation at Opening Sunday, and reported on Conversation #1 to 57 members who joined us after Sunday service on September 16th.

Conversation #2 sought to deepen our understanding of two key questions: 1) how have we experienced “shared ministry” – one to another – at First Parish? And 2) what qualities do we seek in our minister going forward? 70 adults and 16 youth participated in one of the 8 sessions held over 2 weeks in October. 70 members heard us report our findings on October 21st.

The CEC wanted to engage participants in a deep conversation about shared ministry because we saw it as critical that First Parish members see themselves – and their tending to one another – as the foundation of our faith community. A composite picture of shared ministry emerged from the rich examples shared, encompassing six themes: *being, learning, welcoming, supporting, sharing and creating*.

Participants also brainstormed qualities they saw as important in our next minister, and then chose the top one third of their list as most important. An analysis of the lists of qualities developed in all 8 sessions led the CEC to name and identify these 14 as the most often-chosen qualities (in alphabetical order): 1) Authentic/Brings own Story; 2) Challenges Us; 3) Committed to Diversity/Promotes Diversity; 4) Connects Well with All Groups, e.g., youth, families, elders; 5) Empathic; 6) Great Speaker/Communicator; 7) Inspirational; 8) Knows own Limits/Shares Responsibilities; 9) Organization Builder; 10) Passionate/Energetic; 11) Positive/Grounded; 12) Sense of Humor; 13) Spiritual; and 14) Wise.

In late October, 123 people responded to an on-line survey asking them to identify the 5 (of 14) qualities they saw as most important. Our conclusions were:

- 1) All 14 qualities are important to members of First Parish: every one of the 14 qualities was rated as the first or second most important by at least 4 people; every one of the 14 qualities was rated among the top five qualities by at least 30 people.
- 2) Three qualities emerged as the most important to the most participants: 1) Connects Well with All Groups, e.g., youth, families, elders; 2) Great Speaker/Communicator; and, 3) Spiritual

- 3) Four other qualities emerged as very important to the most participants: 1) Challenges Us; 2) Committed to Diversity/Promotes Diversity; 3) Empathic; and, 4) Inspirational.

Conversation #3 drew 70 participants during the first three weeks of November. Participants listened to a description of two opposites on a continuum and then stood in the spot between the poles that best represented their response. CEC facilitators led discussions among participants designed to help participants deepen their understanding of the complexity of the choice before us and the range of members' responses to that choice. The CEC designed 6 separate continuum scenarios – gleaned from the data in conversations #1 and #2 - to help people understand and share their own and others' perceptions about issues important in discerning our faith community's values and the path forward during this ministerial transition: 1) Sunday sermon and Sunday service, 2) Impact of a search, 3) Choosing a person of color for our ministerial team, 4) Sustainability, 5) Pastoral care and shared ministry, and 6) Management of church operations, staff and organization. Because members with children in the RE program had been under-represented in Conversations #2 and #3, the CEC also conducted an on-line survey for RE parents that elicited feedback on scenario #2. The CEC reported in detail on the conversations and survey in its oral and 25-page written report to the Congregation on January 13th. We shared four insights:

- 1) The CEC has learned some things about the will of the Congregation
- 2) The CEC cannot yet predict the outcome of a congregational vote.
- 3) The co-ministry itself is having a significant impact on our congregation's process of discernment, including: a) Grief, b) A "search" that isn't a "search", c) Limited comparison of "candidates", and, d) Aspirations for Diversity;
- 4) An unintended consequence of CEC visibility: an emerging perception of the Parish Committee as "invisible" and/or engaged in top/down" decision-making.

The CEC had shared an early version of its learning with the Parish Committee on December 3rd. The Parish Committee had met several times since then to discern a direction forward, and announced at the conclusion of the CEC's report on January 13th that it had decided to call for a vote of the congregation on March 3rd to determine whether to call Rev. Jim as our senior minister or enter into search for a new senior minister.

Every member of the CEC feels privileged to have been able to serve First Parish in this way. We are honored that so many members extended themselves to participate with such open hearts and minds. We are thrilled to have built such strong bonds among ourselves. And we are more confident than ever of the strength of this congregation. Thank you.

*Karla Baehr (chair), Ethan Brackett, Janet Britcher, Steve Davis (Parish Committee liaison),
Susan Larrabee, Jody Leader, Corey Thomas and Gene Thompson-Grove.*

AFFILIATE MINISTER

I was very fortunate to be able to go on a clergy tour of Israel last August. I had hoped to connect with shelter or animal rights folks there, in order to learn more about how Israel's tough economic and military challenges might affect relationships with animals. I was unable to in the time we had, but I did see a numerous skinny feral cats and semi-homed dogs. In the cities there were a few dogs on leash, and often the leash was a simple ribbon or rope. Our animal companions in this country seem fortunate by comparison. In August, I preached in Lyon Chapel on the extremely complex problems faced by Israelis and Palestinians in that beautiful and historic land.

In January, with Rebecca Keller Scholl, I offered a multi-generational service at FPB on "Lessons From Lizards." Thanks to our wonderful staff and lay people, we shared a lively morning! This past year I preached on the topic of our animal selves at our sister congregations in Waltham, Middleborough, West Roxbury, Arlington, Provincetown, Bridgewater, Marlborough-Hudson, and I also preached several times in Hubbardston. Many of these invitations came as a result of a recent story in the UU World magazine on this work. At several of these churches, I was asked to lead a blessing of the animals, which was a joy; along with many kinds of dogs, cats (in absentia mostly), guinea pigs, and rats, a couple of beetles and a twelve year old motorcycle riding python were blessed.

I continue to serve as chaplain for New England Pet Hospice and Home Care, and I also serve some private clients. Through connections made in my ministry to animal caregivers, I have been asked to officiate at rites of passage for unchurched human beings, both funerals and weddings; I have also been invited into further discussions with some clients as their spiritual director.

An aside: In Provincetown I was invited to give a workshop, "How to Become a Seasoned Soul," to which 16 people came. We shared a rich exploration of how to meet the challenges that lie ahead of us as we grow older.

I am ever grateful to this congregation for supporting my calling and those who are served by it. Your awareness of and dedication to our seventh principle is inspiring to me, and to many others.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Eliza Blanchard

ARCHIVES PROJECT

Project Manager: Elizabeth Cousins

Purpose / Mission Statement: To organize and describe First Parish records.

Accomplishments Past Year: Work began in February 2013. I have pre-processed 10 boxes of records, for which an inventory list has been made. A preliminary series list is below.

Tasks Next Year: Pre-process remaining cartons by separating multiple duplicates, grouping by series & sub-series, and listing in inventory. Advertise for & supervise Simmons College student interns to process and prepare series descriptions for selected records series. Develop policies & procedures. Develop processing plan. Contact key persons/institutions about location of other institutional records.

Thanking: Jessica Steytler, Archivist, Congregational Library and Archives for donation of lightly used archival processing supplies, valued at over \$1000 dollars. Also thanking all those who have donated or rescued the extant records of the Church.

Preliminary series list (draft):

- **Legal Records:** Includes deeds, constitution, bylaws, financial statements, baptisms, marriage, death, Congregational meeting records.
- **Church Administrative Records:** Records of elected and appointed committees including Parish Committee, annual reports, budgets, handbooks, newsletters & publications, scrapbooks and records documenting the management of the institutional records. [May also include records of relations with ecumenical agencies.]
- **Financial Records:** Includes Treasurer records, consists of ledgers, account books, bank statements, committee reports. [Also includes Finance Committee records & annual canvass?]
- **Building & Grounds records** include B&G Committee records, and records documenting the planning and upkeep of the physical building and grounds as well as items within and without: furniture, artifacts, works of art, windows. Includes building and renovation plans.
- **Minister's Records:** Consists of subject files, project files, correspondence, sermons, orders of service, service and event calendars, [pastoral care?], external engagements.
- **RE Committee records:** Includes curricula, documents RE at FP.
- **Events:** Clubs, programs events taking place at the church. Related planning records may be in Committee Records.
- **Committee Records:** Meeting minutes and related records for ad hoc committees, informal or volunteer committees. Includes membership lists & may also include dues records.
- **Membership records:** Published and unpublished directories and parishioner lists (excluding committee membership, filed with committee records. Also includes news clippings and biographical information arranged by name of parishioner.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Report to First Parish in Brookline Annual Meeting May 2013

Buildings and Grounds supports the church with planning and capital projects. Our budget complements the Maintenance budget to allow our physical plant to serve our religious community. We very much appreciate the way our church administrator Sonya Abbott – ably supported by custodians Frank Peace and Will Brown – work together with us.

The year in review

Capital projects since the last Annual Report with the Committee Members who helped supervise them:

- Completed the Sanctuary flooring project (\$8,637 – note this straddled two fiscal years) – Hank
- As indicated in last year's report, we completed upcoming spot pointing of the Sanctuary tower last spring (\$7,760). This work based on an inspection designed to eliminate immediate hazards. During the pointing of the buttress, our structural engineer found structural problems and recommended that we strengthen the northwest buttress, which we did in the Fall (\$30,149). Note that the pointing portion of the buttress would have to have been done as part of the larger tower project. – Clint, Sam, Will
- Rewired and restored the Pierce Hall chandeliers. This was a maintenance project that was driven by safety. (\$4,209) – Sam
- Upgrades to the sound system equipment in the Sanctuary and Lyon Chapel (\$4,889) – Keith & Rebecca
- Restored and repainted the fire escape on the Parish House (\$10,200) – Liz
- Restored and repaired all the broken sash windows in the Parish House (\$2,356 – note that Building Operations picked up an additional amount of this project of \$875) – Clint
- Installed last phase of insulation on our heating pipes – Hank
- Installed a storm window in the Tree Room (in process) – Hank

In fiscal year 2013, B&G the annual funding from the endowment was restored to \$60,000. Note that Buildings and Grounds is funded by a dedicated reserve account. Our spending in any given year may be more or less than our endowment transfer. The account may be supplemented by grants and special donations. We always maintain a minimum amount for unexpected events.

Regarding the Tower, the crack gauges have remained stable. We remain committed to restoring the entire tower as soon as possible to address structural and envelope integrity issues. Funding for this remains an open issue but could be assisted by a capital campaign. In the meantime, we are having our historic masonry contractor, Consigli Construction, continue the buttress restoration project (an additional \$36,000 for the northeast), which should be completed by the Annual Meeting. We have an additional buttress on the northeast that we will probably repair next year.

We renewed our membership with Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light, an advocacy group which also provides us with advice on green projects.

Upcoming

We are guided by a long-term plan and continue to address our deferred maintenance, new safety issues, and accessibility and green projects. The 2014 fiscal year B&G funding will again be reduced to \$40 thousand, but spending is expected to remain the same with past reserves.

As always, we rely on our members and seek additional volunteers for initiating projects. Join us and help achieve our vision of making this place truly welcoming and environmentally sustainable.

Respectfully submitted by the Building and Grounds Committee,
Clint Richmond & Will Spears, Co-Chairs

Ed Ambrose

Tim Dailey

Sam Dennis

Liz Martin

Hank Reisner

BUILDING OPERATIONS **2012 - 2013**

Building Operations, according to the budgeted line items, encompasses overseeing the recurring daily operating expenses incurred throughout the year from insurance to ground maintenance, fuel oil, snow removal, utilities and unplanned repairs that are always a surprise. This will be my fifth year overseeing general building operations.

Now maintaining First Parish as a welcoming, pleasant, friendly and safe building open to not only its members, but the public at large, even though at times is a never ending battle against uncontrollable odds, could not be accomplished without the very hard work of our sexton and the custodians. Frank Peace our sexton, has been with us ten (10) years now and knows where everything is, how it works and will normally come back to work on a moment's notice when there are problems. Frank has been assisted this past year by two other part-time custodians, Juan Miranda and William Brown. It was unfortunate that Juan's schedule and ours didn't work out, but we think with Will that we have a great team in place going forward and can tackle most anything that is thrown at us.

Of course there are so many others that help keep a fresh face at First Parish in particular the Buildings and Grounds Committee which was led this past year by Clint Richmond and Will Spears. This committee meets monthly, reviews financial expenditures under their budgeted line item and recommends/oversees all larger scale capital projects that come up. They try very hard to make this old building, a perfect box, which is not an easy task.

We are a tiny village that quietly works behind the scenes keeping First Parish a welcoming building, vibrantly alive, and I certainly could not accomplish any of the tasks without all of you. Thank you all for your continued assistance and support.

Gratefully submitted,
Sonya A. Abbott
Parish Administrator

CANVASS / STEWARDSHIP REPORT

During preliminary meetings with Rev Jim, Jane Hoey, and Sue Andrews, we discussed how this year's Annual Financial Commitment Campaign would be occurring amidst a transition time and would kick off soon after the congregational vote to determine whether we would call Rev Jim as our senior minister. We decided on a theme of "Joyous Community", and set ourselves the challenge of motivating First Parish members to make their annual financial commitments early. Our hope was that a relatively light touch to this campaign would make the pledging process an easy one, and would not involve the need to ask lots of members to do lots of work.

Early on we were happy to be offered a "match" from a generous household. This set us on the path to an optimistic goal of obtaining at least \$375,000 in pledges for the 2013-14 Fiscal Year. This would be about a 15% increase over last year's total.

The initial "ask" letter advising members and friends of the kick off on Sunday, March 10, and including a pledge form, was mailed on February 28. The congregation was asked to save the date of Saturday, March 16 for a celebration of our community at First Parish, with the price of admission being a completed 2013-14 financial commitment pledge.

On Sundays 3/10,3/17 and 3/24 a Canvass Express table was available in Lyon Chapel, staffed by members of the Stewardship Committee, in order to making pledging as easy as possible.

On Saturday March 16, 25 individuals attended our "Joyous Community" celebratory party.

By April 1, 2013, we had received pledges from 113 of the potential 184 households who are members or friends of First Parish. In 3 weeks we were able to obtain commitments from 56% of our potential givers, and had about 75% of our goal amount. Slightly over \$17,000 was pledged by new members who had not pledged for 2012-13. Names of those who had pledged were posted on our bulletin board (with pledgers' permission).

For the month of April we communicated by phone and/or email with 69 of the remaining households from whom we had not yet received a pledge.

As of May 6, 2013, our numbers are as follows, (table compares with last year's numbers):

# of households contacted	This year =181	Last year=202
Dollars raised	\$357,185	\$348,417
#households pledging	147 (81%)	166 (82%)

29 households pledged \$4,000 or more.

25 households pledged between \$2,000 and \$3,999.

Of these 54 households, some pledged less than last year, and some pledged more.

Considerations for next year:

- 1) Devise a way for households to receive communication and "turn in "their pledge on line.
- 2) Expand use of "Canvass Express "to four Sundays.
- 3) Reach out in a different way to our new members.
- 4) Add members to the Stewardship Team

Special thanks to:

- Sophia Johansson, who gave generously of her time and creativity
- Reverend Jim, for guidance and optimistic attitude
- Ed Loechler and Matt Laurence, and Pam Kristan, who provided lovely background music at our March 16 Pledge Party
- JoEllen Hawkins, who contacted households
- Senofer Mendoza, who staffed Canvass Express

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Andrews and Jane Hoey

CARING MINISTRY TEAM **2012-13**

Mary McCarthy, Co-Chair
Mary Rogers, Co-Chair

Caring Ministry Team: Jean Ashland
Sophia Johansson
Dorothy Richardson
Hank Reisner

Purpose/Mission Statement: To encourage and deepen the culture of care within and beyond First Parish in Brookline

Accomplishments:

- The Care Team made an administrative decision to divide the Team into two parts beginning in the Fall 2013: there will be the Care Team responsible for the concrete aspects of care such as rides and meals, and the Pastoral Associates Team which will consist of individuals specially trained in Lay Pastoral Ministry who will provide the emotional support during times of need.
 - Continued the December Special Service of Celebration and Remembrance
 - Held a Summer Retreat to practice listening skills and to re-new and re-evaluate our mission and goals. Created our Team Charter.
 - Provided continuing service to families in crisis with meals, rides, and a listening ear
 - Received and delivered ‘prayer shawls’ created by knitting ministry for those in need of a gentle hug. Strengthened the connection to the Knitting Circle to ensure that shawls will be regularly available.
 - Lead the bi-weekly Candles of Joy and Concern. Added the healing stones as a physical source of comfort and connection.
 - Created a connection with Rev. Eliza Blanchard to support her Pet Ministry
 - Three members, Rev. Jim, Sophia Johansson, and Jean Ashland attended a UUA Lay Pastoral Training in Northampton
 - Participated in the service on Mystics in February
 - Participated in the Healing Service on April 14
 - Said goodbye to Rev. Martha and thanked her for her gentle help and leadership in creating the Care Team with parishioners and for her continuing participation and encouragement.

Thanks, too, to all those who opened their hearts, and gave time, meals, and support in the past year!

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY (CoM)

The mission of the CoM is to consider, understand, facilitate, and support the evolving ministries of First Parish in Brookline, through monthly meetings with the Ministers. Our agenda is adaptive and flexible, allowing for response to issues as they arise.

The CoM provides feedback to the Ministers, DRE and Parish Committee as they request it. We also take on specific projects throughout the year at the discretion of the committee and under the advisement of the Ministers, DRE, and Parish Committee.

The major foci this year were Reverend Martha's retirement, the dissolution of the co-ministry with Reverend Jim, and the congregation's conversations with the Congregational Engagement Committee as First Parish worked to discern its hopes and aspirations for the ongoing ministerial team. The CoM thoughtfully considered and discussed the potential impact of these events on the ongoing First Parish Ministry and the congregation as a whole. Consideration was given to the thriving momentum within the First Parish Community, the health of the church's finances and right relations during this transitional period. We paid particular attention to supporting Rev. Martha as she said goodbye to First Parish and to her active ministry, and to Rev. Jim as he lead the congregation while waiting for the vote as to whether to call him as our senior minister. We discussed the planning of the retirement party for Martha and the celebration of Rev. Martha and Rev. Jim's co-ministry at First Parish. Subsequent to the vote, we discussed the meaning of the vote for Rev. Jim as he works to move the congregation forward.

Other issues discussed include the continuing growth of First Parish and how to respond to the increasing demands on the minister. We discussed RE and the changing emphasis toward Faith Formation with the result that children will be present more often in worship, and the congregation's response to that. We helped the ministers think about the Neighborhood Potluck Dinners and their impact on fostering community and how to support First Parish's commitment to fostering diversity.

The CoM aspires to practice, promote and model right relationship and to help all members understand and live our safe congregation practices.

2012-2013: *Mary McCarthy, Chair; Jeff Cadow, co-Chair; Sue Andrews; Corey Thomas, Janet Britcher and Jim Womack.* Our members serve for three years on a rotating basis. Mary McCarthy and Jeff Cadow will be leaving the CoM this year.

Submitted by Mary McCarthy for the Committee on Ministry

COMMUNICATION GROUP ANNUAL REPORT

Chair Vacant

Members Ellie Boynton (Technology Chair) and Paul McLean with staff liaison Sonya Abbott

Mission - Support the church's mission by 1) baring witness to our values and expressing our identity, aspirations and offerings, both inside and outside the congregation, with a clear and consistent message, theme, tone, and appearance; 2) helping attract and retain members by providing easy methods for locating desired information; 3) reducing the burden on staff and church committees by providing an easy way to address communication needs, including efforts to create, post, update and manage communication content.

Accomplishments – Ongoing updates to website and purchase of new rainbow banners.

Tasks - The contributions of Communication have diminished through attrition. Communication lacks a chair and membership has shrunk to two members working with the Administrator on select projects. More could and perhaps should be done with more robust participation, beginning with an engaged Chair.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE TEAM

Team Members: Liz Berges, Jane Hoey, Justin Francese (chair), Mark Gianino, Angela Insinger, Linda Smith, Sonya Abbott (administrative liaison)

Our Mission: The mission of the Congregational Life Team is to foster meaningful engagement for a diverse group of members and friends on the path of faith formation and transformation.

Our Vision: The Congregational Life Team envisions a spiritual community where all members are able to express their spiritual gifts through meaningful, joy-filled activities that deepen connections to self, others, and our shared faith.

Our Goals:

- To manage and collect the ideas and energy of members regarding ongoing activities, courses, and special events that help us grow together, experiencing joy, challenge and commitment in this community and beyond.
- To ensure a good balance of program offerings (i.e. serving different audiences, spreading events throughout the year, and aligning events with the church calendar).
- To promote intentional partnerships and synergies among distinct groups within the church community.
- To communicate information about programs and activities in a variety of formats and to collect feedback about successes and areas for improvement.

Accomplishments:

- Published “Creating Community” on the First Parish website, a listing of program offerings at FPB.
- Attempted to understand the likes and needs of the congregation through a survey, and followed up with any ideas submitted through the survey.
- Created a Resource Packet to help planners and leaders of events and programs.
- Attempted to contact and debrief leaders of events and programs to determine successes and areas for improvement, and to let them know that their work is appreciated.
- Provided support for people with program ideas.

Special Thanks:

- To Gene Thompson-Grove for her enthusiastic and inspired facilitation of our September retreat.

BOOK CLUB 2013

The First Parish Book Club has wrapped up another successful year. We nominated, selected, and discussed selections -- new and old works; fiction and non-fiction -- covering a broad range of topics and ideas:

- *The Hunger Games* - Suzanne Collins's popular YA novel
- *Train Go Sorry* - Leah Hager Cohen's discussion of the changing culture and education of the deaf
- *Absalom, Absalom* - William Faulkner's masterpiece
- *An Alchemy of Mind: The Marvel and Mystery of the Human Mind* - Diane Ackerman
- *WAR* - Sebastian Junger's personal observations as a journalist embedded with US troops in Afghanistan
- *Lost in Shangri-La* - Mitchell Zuckoff's award-winning book about a daring WWII rescue mission in the Pacific
- *A Prayer for Owen Meany* - John Irving's classic novel
- *The United States of Arugula: the Sun-dried, Cold-pressed, Extra Virgin Story of the American Food Revolution* - David Kamp
- *Absurdistan* - Gary Shteyngart's wickedly funny political satire
- *Rules of Civility* - Amor Towles's critically acclaimed first novel portraying New York City society in the 1930s

As we've done for the past two years, we are sponsoring a community-wide book discussion along with the Diversity Caucus and Social Action Committee. We'll be reading and discussing on June 2 at 7:30pm - *The New Jim Crow; Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, by Michelle Alexander. Books are available from First Parish, Amazon and other booksellers, and libraries.

Book club attendance varies from month to month, averaging six to eight people. There's no commitment involved, and we always have an enjoyable time (we sometimes have snacks, too!!). If you've read or want to read a selection and share your thoughts with others, please consider joining us. We also welcome your suggestions!

FIRST PARISH KNITTERS

First Parish Knitters gather monthly to work on a variety of projects. This year we have contributed caring shawls for distribution by the First Parish Care Committee. We have also contributed hand knitted children's hats, scarves, sweaters and mittens to the Grow Clinic at the Boston Medical Center. Knitters also work on their own projects at our meetings.

We welcome all those who are interested in joining us.

Regular Contributors: Liz Scully, Val Gunning, Mary Rogers, Madeline Fine, Molly Wiellette, Elizabeth Cousins, Cathy Ambrose and Katrina Regan

MEDITATION SANGHA

The FP Meditation Sangha has continued to serve our First Parish Community with different offerings this year.

- The Sunday morning sitting group continues to meet weekly before the service, to practice and to support each other. Practice leaders: Almas Dossa, Ron Wilkinson, Tim Dailey, Jean Ashland, Hank Reisner, Paul Matthew, and Landon Rose provide guidance each sitting on a rotating basis. The location changed this year from the balcony area to the men's lounge.
- Sangha members, Hank Reisner and Jean Ashland, offered and led an all-day winter retreat day in early December 2012 at First Parish.
- Jean and Hank also facilitated two meditation classes at FP on Thursday evenings. One class was 4 sessions in late Fall 2012 that had 12 attendees, the second class began in February 2013 had 8 sessions that had 10 attendees.

POETRY CIRCLE

Our meetings, which usually are on Monday afternoons at 4:30 in the Dana Room, have been exciting and insightful this year. At each meeting we've had 3 to 5 participants who have brought their current favorite poem from a specific poet for discussion.

Our poets have included:

Selections from the UUA book "Encounters", Sharon Olds, William Carlos Williams, Gwendolyn Brooks, Robert Blanco (the inauguration poet), Lucille Clifton, Langston Hughes, and Wallace Stevens.

We originally met on Sundays after church, but moved to Monday afternoon due to space needs. There just too much to do at First Parish!

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Andrews, Poetry Circle

DIVERSITY CAUCUS ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Co-Chairs: Michele David and Martha Leader

Current committee: Carol Spitzer, Ginger Melton, Ronald Wilkinson, Almas Dossa, Ann Gilmore, Nora Collins, Hilary Allen, Jody Leader

The **mission** of the Diversity Caucus is to embrace and nurture the growing diversity of First Parish by fostering our Beloved Community's multicultural awareness, skills, and progressive actions through self-reflection, heart-felt dialogue, inquisitive study, and impassioned action. We are committed to encouraging communication, understanding and respect among all people, and broadening and celebrating our expression of cultural differences. We hope to lead First Parish on its journey to become a truly equitable, multicultural, multiracial, and antiracist community.

This year the Diversity Caucus has focused on raising our own awareness and understanding of racial history and how it plays out in our community, and improving our dialogue skills on the topic of race. Additionally, we have created multiple occasions to invite the whole congregation to join us on these conversations. We invite the participation of all members, from those who have looked deeply at these issues to those who are interested in learning more in community.

Past, ongoing, and future events for the First Parish community in 2012-2013 are as follows:

- Fall 2012 workshop with Paula Cole Jones, *Racial Justice, Inclusion, and Multicultural/Multigenerational Community* attended by approximately 30 members of FP
- Summer 2012 Seminar series: *Building Our Anti-racist and Multicultural World*
- Film series followed by group discussion:
 - a) *Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible*
 - b) *The Color of Fear*
 - c) *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North* (discussion led by James DeWolfe Perry)
 - d) *We Still Live Here: Comeback of the Wampanoag Indian Language*
(co-sponsored by Social Action Committee).
- Multicultural worship services followed by community conversation
 - a) January, 2013: Guest preacher Rev. Maria-Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa, Co-President of DRUUMM – Radical Hospitality
 - b) April, 2013: Guest preacher Rev. Clyde Grubbs, past President of DRUUMM- *Discovering America Again – The Doctrine of Discovery*
- Creation of the Diversity Listserve and Bulletin Board to inform the FP community of current events that focus on upcoming multicultural and anti-racist events, activities, and social action
- May, 2013 Cultural Competence workshop facilitated by Crossroads
- Book club reading in June: *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, by Michelle Alexander (co-sponsored by the Book club and Social Action Committee).
- In addition, the Diversity Caucus continued to improve its own knowledge and skills through the following activities:
 - Reading and discussing *Becoming an Anti-Racist Church* by Joseph Barndt
 - Attending the April 2013 workshop *Navigating Difference in the Beloved Community* with the Mass Bay and Clara Barton Districts
 - Attending a lecture by Mark Morrison-Reed, an African American UU minister who wrote *In-Between: Memoir of an Integration Baby*
 - Attending the May 2013 Northeast Regional Multicultural Summit

FINANCE COUNCIL

Annual Report from July 2012 through April 2013

The Finance Council (FC) is organized by bringing together the chairs of committees that have significant involvement with the finances of the congregation. This year the Finance Council included: Chip DeWitt, Parish Committee; Ryan Kim, Treasurer; Bill Dwyer, Senior Deacon; Clint Richmond and Will Spears, Buildings and Grounds; Sue Andrews and Jane Hoey, Canvass; Reverend Jim Sherblom; Sonya Abbott, Church Administrator. And Midge Wilcke, Chair.

The six guiding principles of the Finance Council are:

- 1) Work to reduce and then sustain the draw on our endowment to 4.5% of capital.
- 2) Use excess rental income to increase our building fund reserves.
- 3) Use increases in pledge income above budget to lower endowment draw.
- 4) Maintain building fund reserves as a separate segregated bank account.
- 5) Develop a 20 year plan to repair and maintain our facilities.
- 6) Continue to be a UU *Fair Compensation* for our staff and a *Fair Share* congregation in our commitments to the Mass Bay District of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

The FC gathered four times this year meeting in August, November, March and May. At our meetings we reviewed the monthly statements of our accounts and received updates on our investments. In addition, the FC routinely discussed financial sustainability and our progress towards that objective. With the baseline agreed upon last year for the B&G reserve fund, B&G spoke about their ongoing projects and about sustainability for our facilities. There was discussion about the potential capital campaign, which was set aside as we awaited the Ministerial Vote.

There was extensive discussion regarding funding for the outstanding expenses for the Whitman window lancets. Sheila Hussey, chair of the Stained Glass Committee, attended our meetings during these discussions and provided valuable information to educate the group about the history of this project. This discussion came to include conversation regarding our legacy assets. At the direction of the Parish Committee Sheila Hussey solicited auction estimates from reputable sources for various items including the Church silver. Following our March meeting a recommendation was made to the Parish Committee that the silver be de-acquisitioned and if necessary the Parish Committee might seek additional advice regarding one-time or gradual sale. The proceeds would pass into the endowment. The Finance Council also recommended that we fulfill our commitment to Serpentino Stained Glass Studios for the lancets.

The Finance Council is pleased with the overall financial standing of the church. Since FY 2011 our annual draw on our endowment has been lowered from 8% to 5.2%. Our hope is to continue to reduce that over time to 4.5%. Over the past eight years dependence on our endowment has been reduced from 65% to 22% for our operating budget.

On behalf of the Finance Council we are grateful for the trust given to us by the congregation to manage its finances. It is an honor and a pleasure to work together. We pledge to move forward in a prudent, ethical, and forthright manner always keeping the congregation's needs, both short and long term, at the center of our work.

Midge Wilcke, Chair

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

2012-2013

As of March 31, 2013 the value of our endowment invested with the Unitarian Universalist Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF) stood at \$2,554,804. The one year total return for the UUCEF was 7.7% net of fees. Although there are no perfect overall comparables for our fund given its composition (domestic and international equities, fixed income, hedge funds, cash, community investments and commodities), it is, nevertheless, estimated that the fund performed slightly below the composite indices used by the UUCEF. Also, by comparison, an unmanaged fund composed of two benchmarks (weighted 60% MSCI U.S. Broad Market Index and 40% Barclays Capital U.S. Aggregate Float Adjusted Index) returned 10.27% for the same time period. However, it should be noted that our fund provides significantly more diversification than that of this unmanaged comparison. This diversification is structured so as to have the benefit of mitigating risk during periods of market turbulence, but that also means that it has the potential to reduce market returns during a period when one component of the portfolio performs strongly (e.g., domestic equities). Also, we should keep in mind that the fund has historically outperformed these benchmarks when measured over a longer time period. (For more detailed information on UUCEF performance data, market reports, holdings and Socially Responsible Investing, please log in to www.uua.org/uucef/index)

Meanwhile, the First Parish in Brookline budget for fiscal year 2012-2013 includes withdrawals from the endowment of \$150,000 -- \$90,000 for operations and \$60,000 for capital expenditures. At this time, it appears that our withdrawal for the operations portion of our budget will be less than anticipated by fiscal year-end, another indication that we are gradually becoming less reliant on our endowment for our everyday financial needs.

To repeat the observation from last year's Investment Committee Report, much of what makes possible the First Parish in Brookline that we know and love today is built upon the financial foundation provided by the generosity of the many members and friends who have gone before us. It is hoped that today's members and friends will keep this in mind and consider, if possible, making a provision for our endowment in their estate plans for the years ahead.

Respectfully submitted,
William Dwyer
Chair, Investment Committee

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Committee Members: Liz Scully (chair), Elena Garofoli (co-chair), Jeff Cadow, Melinda Maryniuk, Nick Peterson, Martin Thomson

Mission: To identify and connect individuals with leadership opportunities at First Parish, to develop leadership skills in the First Parish community, and to offer support and consultation to leadership and committees. This will be done with an eye toward helping to make leadership a spiritual practice that contributes to the ongoing health and sustainability of First Parish in Brookline.

Accomplishments: The committee provided nominations for the Parish Committee and Leadership Development Committee and consulted on Religious Exploration Committee nominations as needed.

LDC reached out to committee chairs to see how committee work was going and if LDC could help with any issues.

LDC in conjunction with the Welcoming Team created a Gifts Workshop.

MUSIC DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

Music Director: Keith Kirchoff, 2010-present

The Choirs: We had a very busy musical year this year, with exciting music nearly every Sunday! The year began with five musical ensembles: Cherub Choir (K-3), Youth Singers (8-12), Chancel Choir (all inclusive), Chamber Choir (selected individuals), and the First Parish Band.

- ❖ Cherub Choir – Many thanks to Jon Hazilla for leading the Cherubs in two rousing performances this year! The Cherubs sang in October and in December, the latter as a part of our Christmas Pageant. The choir was retired after the New Year due to lack of interest and very small attendance numbers.
- ❖ Youth Singers – Many thanks to Ed Loechler for again leading the Youth Singers this year! The Youth Singers sang three times: once in October, once in November, and once in December. The Youth Singers took an indefinite leave-of-absence after the New Year due to the very busy schedules of the Youth.
- ❖ Chancel Choir – The Chancel Choir consists of roughly 12-25 singers. All are volunteers with the exception of four paid section leaders. All singers are welcome to join, and no prior experience is required. The choir, led by myself, Keith Kirchoff, continued to sing a varied repertoire of gospel, spirituals, ancient classical, modern classical, rock, folk, pop, Indian, African, Czech, and plainchant among other styles.
- ❖ Chamber Choir – The only audition-only choir at First Parish, the Chamber Choir consists of a rotating roster of eight singers. Often singing difficult and challenging repertoire, these singers must be strong sightreaders. The Chamber Choir sang on average once a month.
- ❖ First Parish Band – The First Parish Band consists of Landon Rose, Matthew Lawrence, and Djems Domerson. The band is a rock oriented ensemble that played versions of new and classic rock songs, as well as funky arrangements of traditional hymns. This ensemble was always joined by the choir, and performed on most Multi-Generation Sundays.

Section Leaders: The choir pays four section leaders. At the beginning of the year, we invited all of last year's section leaders to return. All four accepted, and so we welcomed back soprano Elizabeth Eyerer, alto Oriana Dunlop, tenor Adrian Jones, and baritone Ross Brown.

Substitute Section Leaders: We have a roster of substitute section leaders for when our primary leaders have unavoidable scheduling conflicts. This year, our substitutes included Riley Vogel, Sarah Morrow, Joe Smith, Matthew Wight, Amanda Villegas, Heather Finch, Rob Orzalli, and Erica Brookhyser.

Assistants: Adrian Jones and/or Ross Brown would lead choir rehearsals in my absence, and we welcomed three different piano accompanists to fill in on Sunday mornings: Ellie Boynton, Pamela Kristan, and Elaine Rombola.

Guest Musicians: Accepting Easter and Christmas (see below), all of our guest musicians have been drawn from the congregation. In addition to the members of The First Parish Band, these volunteers have included Ed Loechler, Martha Leader, Jon Hazilla, and Sue Kalt.

Christmas: At Christmas, the choir welcomed the Brian Friedland Trio to help us celebrate a Jazz Christmas.

Easter: At Easter, the First Parish Band led the congregation in a celebration of rock and gospel music. For the service, we welcomed guest drummer William J Kilgoe Jr.

Sound System: We began to slowly upgrade our sound system this year, buying a new mixer and several new microphones. We are looking to install some additional speakers this year. With the enhanced sound system, Ross Brown volunteered his time to act as the assistant Sound Technician.

PARISH ADMINISTRATION

2012-2013

Transition ... my eighth year with First Parish has certainly been a year of transition on so many levels, with the saddest transition being, having to say good bye to Rev Martha Niebanck. Her support, wisdom and genuine caring nature will always be much appreciated and dearly missed.

Yet while there has been a lot of transition on one hand, there are some things that never seem to change. Days are seldom quiet and never boring and it remains an interesting juggling act to deal with the many requests and sometimes demands that come in from all sorts of individuals (or the building) during the course of a day, throughout the year. Rentals can be demanding, old buildings can be problematic and calendars are never in sync, no matter how hard one attempts to make them so. Space ... if only we can have more space in particular on Sunday mornings. Lights, doors and windows truly seem to have a mind of their own and are consistently found to be left open or unlocked. Naturally we hold the resident ghost responsible and he's been very active this past year. The office attempts to implement new systems or at least is willing to trying it "another way". More importantly we've welcomed new employees and new members, and compassionately try to care for all who walk through the door. All of this definitely keeps me and Nancy on our toes, for we truly never know what our day will bring.

Now all of this juggling wouldn't be possible if I didn't have help from so many, but in particular one very special assistant:

- **Nancy Natowitz** – she's an angel from heaven and even though we increased her hours a little this past year, it's never enough. You should know that Nancy assists not only me with special detail projects and when I'm overloaded, but she also assists our DRE Rebecca, our Membership Coordinator Marissa, our entire staff with Order of Service preparation. Like me, most folks wouldn't get to meet her, because we are not here on Sundays, but should you be in the area on a Monday, Thursday or Friday morning, please do stop by and say hello to her.

All staff members I have almost daily email connection with (even on weekends when there are serious issues) and interact face to face with them at staff meetings a few times a month. Besides staff though there are so many others who help make the workload lighter, actually it is an endless list for there are many that help out all the time, very quietly and unknown - even to me, and I do so very much appreciate all that everyone does. Forgive me for not mentioning any names this year, I know I'd forget someone if I started, but thank you one and all, it takes a village to make this parish function effectively.

Looking forward to another year together and sincerely thank everyone for your continued presence, kindness, assistance and wonderful creative spirits, you've all made it a year full of blessings.

Respectfully submitted,
Sonya A. Abbott, Parish Administrator

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION COMMITTEE - 2012-2013

Members: Ann Dinsmoor, Co-chair, Gene Thompson-Grove, Co-chair, Dave Demerjian, Bijan Etemad-Gilbertson, Sarah Griffen, Rob Guillemin, Alice Mark, Julie Palmer, Clare Reilly, Scott Ullrich, Bob Williamson

We enrolled one hundred twenty-five children and youth who were taught by forty-four volunteer teachers, two paid teachers (in nursery and preschool), and two youth assistants. Average Sunday class attendance was 55% (not including Challenge, which has a different level of commitment). Classes/curriculum included: Nursery; *We are Many, We are One* (preschool); *Spirit Play; Moral Tales; Toolbox of Faith; Compass Points; Challenge* (part of the three year Coming of Age program); and Senior Youth Group.

RE Committee Goals

- Intentionally support child-child and child-adult relationships so that each child and youth is known by name, knows others by name, and knows at least a few others well.
- Teach children and their families about UU Religion (including heritage, theology, and the 7 principles and 6 sources).
- Engage other members of congregation in understanding and participating in the faith formation of our children and youth.
- Provide a welcoming and safe environment that fosters for children and youth a sense of this being their church home.

RE Committee Covenant

- We covenant to grow in right relationship.
- We covenant to infuse joy into the process and content of our work.
- We covenant to create and adhere to practices that support reaching our program and personal goals.
- We covenant to acknowledge our humanity, and offer forgiveness to each other and ourselves.

Accomplishments

1. Written descriptions of the role of RE Class Liaison, RE Teacher Ministry description, RE Teacher Covenant
2. Well designed and facilitated monthly meetings, with agendas posted ahead of time, and rotating roles (someone who begins the meeting with a CENTERING reading or exercise, a NOTETAKER, and a PROCESS OBSERVER/TIMEKEEPER)
3. An annual RE Calendar, which lays out the tasks of the RE Committee month by month
4. A Teacher recruitment calendar, plan, process and supporting documents
5. An RE Sunday service to acquaint the congregation with the RE program and to recruit teachers
6. Launch of a new Preschool Classroom with a paid teacher who is there every week, providing consistency for the children
7. Launch of the role of Engagement Specialists (one early childhood and one upper elementary) who are available to observe classes and assist teachers in planning for diverse learners
8. Pilot of an online RE class registration process – revisions in place for the 2013-2014 church year

9. Recommendation to the Parish Committee for a revision of the Safe Congregation Policy
10. Completion of a service project – a collaboration between the Toolbox of Faith class and the Building and Grounds Committee
11. Establishment of Sunday Morning Greeters – a collaboration between the RE Committee and the Welcoming Committee
12. Reignited the Senior Youth Group
13. Developed an outline for an RE website that includes ways for REC members, teachers and parents to communicate internally, as well as with each other.
14. Developed a survey asking families for feedback about their experiences with the RE program; plan to administer it before the church year ends.

Challenges

1. The introduction of ten Multi-generational Sundays by the Ministerial Team and Worship Committee without adequate preparation of the congregation – the unintended consequence was that an inordinate amount of RE meeting time was taken up by this issue from October-through January because (a) while these services were not the responsibility of the RE Committee, they had everything to do with engaging children and youth, and parents naturally turned to us when they didn't work for their children, and (b) with the combination of holidays, low attendance Sundays and multi-gen Sundays, there were fewer RE classes in the fall and they met inconsistently, which meant that teachers and children did not readily form community.
2. Assumptions in the congregation about the use of space on Sunday mornings meant that we began the year with the Compass Points (grades 7-8), Challenge (grade 9) and Senior Youth (grades 10-12) groups meeting on Sunday afternoons – with a WOW program of shared worship (with discussion following the service) on alternate Sundays for grades 7-12. The Compass Points class and Senior Youth groups dwindled to none, until we re-negotiated space and re-instated those groups on Sunday mornings. The WOW shared worship had a few good sessions, but never gained traction.
3. As we moved from being a small congregation to a mid-sized congregation, the roles and responsibilities of the REC and the DRE shifted, and the lack of clarity about this, as well as about decision-making processes, continued to hinder the smooth workings of the committee.
4. The time spent on the multi-gen Sundays, and the need to re-work of grades 7-12, meant that other plans were never implemented (specifically, First Friday Potlucks for families, Parent RE Program Orientation sessions, and development of a parent class coordinator role).
5. We began the year with incomplete teaching teams, and were still scrambling to assemble teams in early September. As a result, the RE teacher orientation was not attended by all teachers, and teachers did not have a chance to plan together before classes began, or to establish themselves as a team early on in the year.
6. As the diversity of our congregations grows, so does the diversity of learners in our classes. As the 2012-2013 church year ends, we find ourselves as a committee needing to educate ourselves – and our RE teachers – about “universal designs for learning” which include multiple modalities, so all children can access the curriculum. This will mean a careful examination of the UU curricula we choose, with an eye toward the kinds of demands each curriculum places on children (i.e. language, attention, social

cognition, working memory, etc.), and development of ways to adapt the UU curriculum we choose so all children are safe and feel comfortable in our classes.

7. Attendance at RE classes on any given Sunday ranges from 45-70%; with the average Sunday attendance (of total registered children and youth) is 55%. So, as we add back RE classes for the next church year, we worry about this erratic attendance for two reasons: (1) it is dispiriting for teachers to plan, and then to have three or four children in the class (because of our safe congregation policy, this means we sometimes have two teachers in the class with three or four children or youth, or fewer), and (2) it is difficult – and takes longer – to build a community in the classroom when children and youth come sporadically. We don't have many good ideas about how to proceed in terms of managing this dilemma, but we know we have to focus on it during the next church year.

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

Annual Report May 2013

This year of transition was both tumultuous and provided wonderful openings for growth and transformation. The start of the church year was difficult with two beloved Religious Exploration Committee members needing to step down for personal reasons in August. Beginning the year down two members, with plans for several new initiatives and the preparations for Rev. Martha's leave taking, coping with the loss and anxiety that ministerial transition brings, and the horrific events of Newtown School shooting and Hurricane Sandy, all had a large impact on RE. One of the many blessings of children is that, in the midst of this turmoil, they seemed blissfully unaware and happy to just be at church and with their friends and community. There were several new initiatives implemented this year with varying degrees of success, but all with great learning and opportunities to better understand the congregation.

Classes:

- Nursery - at the end of the year we will say goodbye to Emma Wellbaum, our beloved teacher. It has been a fun year for our littlest ones
- Pre-school- we established a pre-school class and hired Sara Ann Romain to our staff. The startup kinks of determining the appropriate ages for the class, as well as the timing and number of Sundays the class would meet, along with communication glitches have all been resolved and the group is happy and enjoying their time together.
- Spirit Play- This continues to be a large and dynamic class with great energy and enthusiasm. We have found times when we needed three teachers in the classroom due to the size of the group, and we were fortunate enough to have a wonderful group of dedicated teachers.
- Moral Tales-this 2-3 grade class enjoyed the wonderful stories and activities of this diverse curriculum. The space constraints of the room proved difficult at times, particularly given the high energy of this large group.
- Toolbox of Faith - our 4-6 graders explored concepts of Unitarian Universalism using tools that represent aspects of our faith. They are currently in the process of building a gift for the church with these tools. The class engaged the children and the teachers alike.
- Compass Points - this 7th grade class was held after church and struggled with low attendance. We moved the class back to church time after the winter holidays and it helped a great deal. The class has deeply explored the history and heritage of UU and conducted an interesting survey of the congregation.
- Challenge - our 9th grade group met after church and had 4 overnight retreats. There was some difficulty with youth trying to figure out how to remain in covenant with the group and this created some difficult interactions and loss, and also a great deal of learning.
- Senior High Youth - once the youth returned to meeting during the church time they started to come together in a lovely way. They are currently working on their Youth Service for Sunday June 2.

Worship:

- Increased from 6 to 10 Multigenerational Worship services
- Exploration of more multisensory worship
- Introduction of Family Worship Order of Service programs with Take Home activities
- More children and youth participated in leadership roles in worship
- Brought back the Youth Worship Service
- Increased from 1 to 2 Challenge Sunday Worship Services

Administrative:

- Introduced online RE registration
- Created a Parent/Guardian Handbook
- Organized all of the supplies and included online listings
- Child care protocols were created

Around the Church:

- Installation of youth funded bike racks
- Moved into the old DRE Office/Meditation Room
- Lap top was stolen
- Childcare was made available for every event requested

Professional Development:

- Several workshops at General Assembly
- RE week at Star Island
- Renaissance Module on Curriculum
- Worship that Works Workshop
- Faith Formation Workshop
- Served as Vice President of the North Atlantic Regional Liberal Religious Educators Association
- Served as a credentialing chaplain

I felt fortunate to serve as the staff liaison and participate in two meaningful events:

- 1 The Pride Parade activities including a movie night, tie dying and MAD Sunday, and of course the Parade itself with 80 congregants from First Parish.
- 2 Attended Justice GA with five congregants and two youth from First Parish as we stood on the side of love working for immigration reform

In the same way that it takes a village to raise a child it takes many dedicated volunteers and staff to provide our Religious Exploration program. I want to acknowledge the work of all the teachers who consistently provide loving support and engaging activities for the children and youth of this congregation. The leadership, legwork and learning of the RE Committee and Co-chairs has been phenomenal, with members bringing their gifts and talents to deepen and enrich the program. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with such amazing children and their wonderful parents, guardians and larger congregation. Working with the entire Worship and Staff team at First Parish is a blessing I hold dear. I wish to express my appreciation for the amazing administrative staff support that I am fortunate to receive from Sonya Abbott and Nancy Natowitz, without whom these initiatives could not have happened.

Faithfully submitted,
Rebecca Keller Scholl

SOCIAL ACTION ANNUAL REPORT

Co-Chairs: Clint Richmond and Jami Jordan

Our Mission: To provide inspiration, leadership and support for social action at First Parish in Brookline.

Our Actions: We are first inspired by the Seven Principles of our faith. In the face of so much need, we reaffirmed our focus into four thematic initiatives. We also strive to build upon and integrate with the efforts of the Unitarian Universalist Association, UUMassAction Network, Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and the Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry. Our initiatives are **Standing on the Side of Love, Economic Justice, Environment Initiative, Food Initiative.**

This year, over 100 adults and youth participated in some kind of Social Action activity. And over \$21,000 was given to help the work of others. We also incorporate our action into four Sunday services during the year. This usually includes testimony from members who participated in social action and a special collection.

Standing on the Side of Love:

- **We fought HIV and AIDS** at the Harbor to the Bay bike ride from Boston to Provincetown. Team First Parish, 6 riders and 12 pit crew of all ages, raised \$10,000 in this all-volunteer, grass-roots fundraiser. We rode, we made snacks, and we ran a pit stop, all under the fearless leadership of Linda Smith and Gail Schoenbrunn. The next ride is September 21.
- **We continued on commitment to immigration reform.** The Immigration Committee continued to make strides on this important and very timely issue. First Parish affirmed the decision to join Boston New Sanctuary at our 2011 Annual Meeting, which has included attending monthly gatherings, and vigils at the Suffolk County Detention Center. In addition, 6 adult and youth members attended the UU General Assembly in Phoenix last June called Justice GA, where the spotlight was on immigration. First Parish is also serving as fiscal agent for a UUA grant to hire an organizer to support the Boston immigration coalition. We also organized a petition drive for the Trust Act at hospitality. Special thanks to Linda and Jack Smith for organizing our immigration efforts this year.
- **We walked in witness and support.** In May, we are expanding our presence at the Mother's Day Walk for Peace and against gun violence. In June, we look forward to the Boston Aids Walk on the 1st, and with continuing the energy from RE and the Youth, for Boston Pride Parade on the 9th. Pride is the largest event for the congregation! Thanks to Linda Smith and Bijan Etemad-Gilbertson for organizing our Pride participation.
- **We partnered with our Diversity Caucus** for their new Friday-night film series.

Environment Initiative:

- **First Parish members protested against the Keystone Pipeline** at a regional rally in Portland, Maine and the national rally in Washington D.C.
- **We developed a public forum on the fossil fuel divestment initiative** by 350.org in partnership with other congregations. Thanks to Barbara Simonetti and Charles Sandmel for leading this timely discussion.
- **We dedicated our Environment Initiative Special Collection to 350.org and ACE.** We split the collection of over \$1000 in half to support the work one global organization (350.org) and one local organization, Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE) in Roxbury.

Food Initiative:

- **We incorporated our food mindfulness to our community-wide Thanksgiving feast.** Bringing the congregation together for a mindful and spiritual feast that included chemical-free turkeys from a small local farm locally and organically grown apples and vegetables in addition to the foods brought by all. Some of these vegetables were also donated to the UUUM. We thank Sophia Johansson for her passionate leadership on this.
- **We helped organize the end-of-year picnic** with an eye to mindful foods, local farming and healthy choices for our bodies and our planet.

Economic Justice:

- **We prepared and served lunch to the homeless** at St. Francis House working shoulder-to-shoulder with their wonderful kitchen staff on scheduled Saturdays. 16 individuals have volunteered over 5 visits. New this year was a successful clothing drive by First Parish members. Many thanks to Jami Jordan for organizing all these efforts.
- **We continued our commitment to the UU Urban Ministry in Roxbury.** We end the year with special appreciation to Val Gunning who volunteers at Renewal House, the UUUM Domestic Violence Shelter. Robin MacLroy and Clint Richmond also participated in an evening mentoring youth for college. We also dedicated our special collection in January to Restorative Justice through another program of Renewal House at the UUUM. Chip DeWitt also serves on the Board of the UUUM.
- **We deepened our relationship with Jericho Road Roxbury,** in partnership with the UUUM, First Parish in Milton and First Church in Boston. We more than honored our founding financial support of \$7,000 primarily through a separate fundraising drive. The program was launched last Fall and a 3/4 time Program Director was hired. We heard more about the program at our Fall Social Action service and dedicated the special offering to it as part of our financial commitment. Specialized volunteers for Roxbury non-profits are now being recruited and the first matches are being made. Thanks to Jami Jordan and Gail Schoenbrunn for representing us on the initial JRR leadership team. Gail and Karla Baehr are now serving on its new Steering Committee.
- **We partner with Common Hope,** which provides social service and educational support to low-income families in Guatemala. Our congregation has been financing the education through high school of Dulce Maria Llanos Garcia, who is now 11. Jack and Linda Smith, Jim Womack and Anne Copeland volunteer business management services to Common Hope. We are planning a third congregational service trip to Guatemala for next April 20-27 to be led by Barbara Simonetti and Charles Sandmel.
- **We donated non-perishable foods** to the Brookline Food Pantry all year long. Thanks to Ed Loechler and Leslie Spaneas for delivering our donations once a month.
- **We strengthened our ties with UU Social Action.** We continue to be congregational members of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and UU Mass Action. In co-sponsorship with our Diversity Caucus, we are reading this year's UUA Common Read book, *A New Jim Crow*, on June 2 with the First Parish Book Club. Sheila Hussey represented us at UU Mass Action Advocacy Day lobbying for more gun control.

Our Vision: Our vision is for our congregation to live out our principles inside the church and in the wider community. And, in following our vision, that First Parish is seen as an active in the community and a place to learn about and respond to the moral imperatives that derive from our faith. We know this from the survey we took this winter, which we are using to help guide our efforts. We look forward to continuing to tap the passion of our ever-evolving community and to see everyone at First Parish in Brookline come together in making a better world.

STAINED GLASS COMMITTEE

Committee Members: Susan Andrews, Jeff Cadow, Chip DeWitt, Sally Dwyer, Frank Hutchins, Skye Kramer, Sheila Hussey, Chair. Ministerial support: Reverend Jim Sherblom.

Mission Statement: The mission of the First Parish Stained Glass Committee is to educate our congregation, and the wider community, about the origin and historic and cultural significance of our unique collection of stained glass windows and raise the funds to repair, restore and safeguard them for future generations.

Year's Activities: When our Challenge grant application for funds from the Cabot Family Charitable Trust to restore the Lowell/Whitman Window was rejected their grant administrator kindly gave us the reasons for the rejection. The reasons were that we did not have a major donor, and we did not have enough financial support from our congregation. Their criteria include needing to see that more than 60 to 70% of the needed money for a project is in hand. Their goal is to fund successful projects. At this time we have turned to the Finance Council and The Parish Committee for counsel in obtaining the funds necessary to pay for the almost completed restoration of the Lowell Window lancets.

Tasks: We will work with the Serpentino Stained Glass studio to develop a plan to install the restored Lowell window lancets. We will work with the Parish Committee to evaluate the role of our committee.

Thank you: We are grateful for the support of all who have contributed financially and with kind words and thoughtful comments as we struggle with the challenges of maintaining our beautiful legacy.

Respectfully submitted,
Sheila Hussey.

TEACHING PARISH COMMITTEE

Committee Members: Jane Hoey, Chair, Sheila Hussey, Stacey Raczek, Jack Smith, and Bob Williamson.

Mission: Our mission is to provide support and feedback to Sarah Napoline during her two-year ministerial internship at First Parish.

Year's Activities: This is year 1 of Sarah's 2-year ministerial internship. Monthly meetings with Sarah provide an opportunity for discussion and feedback for her experiences at First Parish. We discuss progress toward Learning Agreement goals, and challenges that may have arisen in her work. Members of the committee have attended all worship services that Sarah has led, and these services are reviewed at the monthly meetings.

We established a Covenant at our first meeting and use the covenant principles to guide the process of our time together. We look forward to keeping company with Sarah as she strives to grow into becoming a minister in her second year with us.

Thank you: We thank all who have once again welcomed a ministerial intern into our congregation. Our commitment to being a teaching parish matters to our denomination.

Respectfully submitted,
The TPC

MINISTERIAL INTERN

Dear Ones,

During my first year of seminary I began looking for an internship congregation that would journey with me during two years of my education and aid in my ministerial formation, and you have readily stepped up into that role. This community is vibrant, loving, enthusiastic, and genuine. I have been welcomed with open arms and kind words, and as I began this journey of transformation, you have supported me wholeheartedly. This first year has been a time of transformation as I get my ‘sea legs’ under me in the choppy waves that ministry has to offer. Thank you all for your support this year; I feel truly blessed to have this community as my life preserver.

This past year this congregation has been through enormous transformation, and it has been a privilege to walk with you on this journey. The year to come is filled with the unknown; an interim minister will assist us as we hire a second minister to help Rev. Jim, and we are exploring our growing community and all the joys and challenges that come with growth. I feel honored to be a consistent presence on your ministry team during this time of instability.

The Year Now Past - Over the last nine months, I have focused my attention on guiding the high school youth group, providing support for weekly worship, and helping the community through transition. After a tumultuous autumn, the high school youth group decided to return youth group meetings to Sunday mornings during worship. The small but dedicated group of youth reframed their commitment to both youth group and traditional worship, planned a retreat, and continue to help prepare a June worship and support the Pride Parade. I continue to help gather the adult advisors and cheer on the youth in their efforts; they are an awesome group of high school kids, and I'm proud to work with them.

I have also been taking part in weekly worship services and slowly becoming more visible and present among the congregation. I have worked to improve my preaching and worship skills, writing sermons and prayers, speaking with children, and planning liturgies. I thank you for your patience as I grow and improve, and always welcome feedback on my participation in worship, and certainly any thoughts on sermons. I have recently helped lead the Cakes for the Queen of Heaven course with Mary Rogers, and I continue to learn about leadership, partnership, and community learning.

The Year to Come - As my internship enters its second year, my goals shift from getting my feet wet to sharing my knowledge and skills with First Parish in Brookline. I will continue my work guiding the youth group, and will encourage the adult advisors to build a strong foundation for the group. I will also continue to participate in Sunday worship, and will help support the ministry team. I hope to continue my experiences leading faith formation for both adults and children. Finally, I will be serving the community in a pastoral capacity, helping to guide and support those in need of care.

The next year holds much in store for my ministerial formation. I will be studying to prepare for the Ministerial Fellowship Committee interview, whom I hope to see in 2014. I also will be completing my coursework for the Masters of Divinity program, my first advanced degree. I hope that as the year progresses, you will be able to see in me the transformation that this community is fostering; thank you for your patience and support along this two-year journey with my ministerial formation.

There are so many people who have made this first year at Brookline unforgettable; I cannot name each and every one of you, but special thanks go to my Teaching Parish Committee (Jane Hoey, chair; Sheila Hussey, Gerry Leader, Stacey Raczek, Jack Smith, Emily Walton, and Bob Williamson), to the staff at church, to the worship team, and especially to Rev. Jim. *Thank you for helping us do together that which we cannot do alone.*

Blessings,
Sarah Napoline

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

2012-2013 Annual Report

Chair: Ellie Boynton

Members: Sonya Abbott and Rev. Jim Sherblom

Mission Statement: To help the parish's staff and members make the best use of technology while performing their duties and missions on behalf of the church, considering users' abilities, reliability and complexity of systems, and financial constraints.

Major accomplishments for 2012-2013:

- Replaced DRE laptop after it was stolen
- Upgraded wireless network to reach most of the building.
- Kept website updated with progress on congregational vote and the ultimate decision.

Additional work included:

- Updating existing listserv subscription lists and adding new ones when requested.
- Renewing the web hosting service and anti-virus subscription.

Goals for 2012-2013:

- Continued support of church staff and consideration of equipment upgrades/replacement.
- Look into further improvements to wireless network.
- Continued development and updating of website to meet congregation's needs, including addition of audio recordings and/or live streaming of sermons or entire services, new content including online forms and payment options for religious exploration, and enhanced interactivity.
- Consider adding registration for members and creating password-protected area(s) of website.

Thanks to...

- Paul McLean and Sonya Abbott, for continually updating content on the website and for support and advice.
- Jeff Cadow, for always being ready and willing to help.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ellie Boynton

TREASURER'S REPORT

As a “Policy Governance” church, First Parish’s staff has responsibility for the budgeting, implementation and monitoring of our finances. Specifically, Sonya Abbott, Parish Administrator, and Rev. Jim Sherblom are tasked with developing our budget, producing financial statements, managing expenditures to stay within the budget, and drawing on the endowment as needed to cover our funding needs. They do so with active input and oversight from our Finance Council (led capably by Midge Wilcke) and the Treasurer.

In Fiscal Year 2013, our current estimate is that First Parish will generate a deficit of roughly \$40,000, based on the 9 months ended March 31, 2013. While overall operating expenses have generally tracked to our budget, income is running well below budget due to a) the lack of a fall auction or other fundraising events, b) lower than normal facility rental income, and c) lower post-canvas pledges and Sunday contributions than were originally budgeted. Many of these issues were related to the substantial distractions of the past year, including Reverend Martha’s retirement, the vote on the Ministerial Transition and vacancies in key lay leadership positions related to fundraising. Currently the expectation is that in FY13 we will draw 6.2% of the endowment balance at the start of the year.

The proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2014 (July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014) is included in the following pages and shows an increase in both income and expenses over the current estimate for FY2013. On the cost side, the Budget assumes the hiring of an half-time Interim Minister by July 1, as well as nominal salary increases for staff. The budgeted Pledges income amount of \$377,600 includes \$13,000 of additional pledges expected to be received during the fiscal year, which historically has been difficult to predict accurately. The budget further assumes that Sunday collections, facility rentals and fund raising events grow materially from recent history, closer to pre-recession levels. As such, there is some risk that actual revenue will be lower than projected, and that the forecasted 5.2% draw on the endowment will need to be increased during the year. It is important to note that Fiscal Year 2015 will require continued increases in Pledge income (including matches) in order to be able to attract a talented 2nd Minister operating at 75% of full-time.

Our biggest financial challenges remain the reduction of the annual draw on our endowment fund, and deferred capital projects for our church building. The reduction of the annual draw on our endowment fund to a sustainable 4.5% will likely continue to be out of reach in the near term. In our meetings, we did discuss taking a more conservative approach to our fixed costs until we had greater visibility into our pledge income during a less eventful fiscal year, the viability of a capital campaign, and the cost of additional ministerial resources, with the goal of avoiding unsustainable increases in salaries or costs, but optimism coming out of this year’s canvas and a desire to continue to meet UU *Fair Compensation* guidelines for our staff prevailed. Regarding the deferred capital needs, work is being done to quantify specific funding needs in different areas, which will be important inputs as we consider the need for a potential capital campaign. The FY14 budget includes the cost of a consultant to assess the feasibility of such a campaign in the coming years.

Respectfully submitted,
Ryan Kim

FIRST PARISH IN BROOKLINE
Proposed Budget FY14

	FY 12 Budget	FY 12 Actual	FY 13 Budget	Estimated Actual	FY 14 BUDGET
CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT					
Pledges	347,248	336,979	355,000	350,000	377,600
Sunday Offering	17,000	12,627	17,000	12,000	17,000
Other Donations	3,000	10,356	5,000	5,000	3,000
Total Support	367,248	359,962	377,000	367,000	397,600
OTHER INCOME					
Fund Raising Events	20,000	21,078	25,000	0	25,000
Building Use	17,000	79,815	20,000	15,000	17,000
Activity Fees	2,000	3,140	3,000	3,700	3,000
Interest	50	83	50	40	50
Total Other Income	39,050	104,116	48,050	18,740	45,050
Grants and Designated Income		14,349		8,000	
Endowment Transfer - Operating	93,752	78,843	90,000	90,000	89,000
Endowment Transfer - Capital	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	40,000
Total Transfers	153,752	153,192	150,000	150,000	129,000
TOTAL Support/Income/Transfers	560,050	617,270	575,050	535,740	571,650
EXPENSES					
Payroll Related Expenses					
Salary expense	253,992	266,540	263,567	260,000	265,445
Fringe expense	81,231	61,189	83,466	80,000	89,621
Total Payroll Expenses	335,223	327,729	347,033	340,000	355,066
Functional Expenses:					
Sunday Services - Music	8,415	9,615	8,995	8,500	6,500
Religious Exploration	4,370	5,745	5,300	5,300	6,900
Denominational	21,050	20,328	22,000	21,750	23,000
Administration & Office	22,500	36,333	23,000	26,400	24,000
Building Operations	80,100	87,976	80,500	93,403	84,000
B&G Capital Projects	60,000	70,007	60,000	60,000	40,000
Committee Funding	28,160	26,237	28,000	21,873	31,950
Total Functional Expenses	224,595	256,240	227,795	237,226	216,350
TOTAL EXPENSES	559,818	583,969	574,828	577,226	571,416
Operating Surplus (Deficit)	232	33,301	222	(41,486)	234

FIRST PARISH IN BROOKLINE
Proposed Budget FY14

	FY 12 Budge	FY 12 Actual	FY 13 Budget	Estimated Actual	FY 14 Budget
BUILDING OPERATIONS					
Insurance	17,350	14,310	17,500	19,000	17,500
Fuel Oil	25,000	32,401	25,000	38,000	30,000
Utilities	6,500	7,439	6,500	7,500	7,500
Municipal Fees	1,500	2,250	1,500	2,250	1,500
Parish Furnishings	1,000	3,934	1,000	1,000	1,000
Cleaning and Maintenance Supplies	4,000	3,008	4,000	3,500	4,000
Snow / Ice Removal	6,000	1,050	6,000	4,153	4,000
General Maintenance/Grounds/Small Projects	8,750	9,830	9,000	8,000	8,500
Unscheduled Repairs	10,000	13,754	10,000	10,000	10,000
Total Building Operations	80,100	87,976	80,500	93,403	84,000
ADMINISTRATION & OFFICE					
Professional Memberships	-	301	-	-	-
Outside Printing	1,000	933	1,000	1,000	1,000
Hospitality	2,000	4,144	2,000	4,500	3,000
Office Assistance	4,000	1,177	4,000	4,000	4,000
Telephone	4,000	3,967	4,000	4,000	4,000
Finance Related	4,000	3,456	4,000	4,000	4,000
General Supplies	9,500	9,724	10,000	9,000	10,000
Prof consultants, Event exp, Minister's Discre etc	12,610			1,900	
Total Administration and Office	22,500	36,333	23,000	26,400	24,000
COMMITTEE FUNDING					
Auction / Fund Raising Events	-	-	250	200	250
Canvas/Stewardship	1,000	300	1,000	800	1,000
Capital Campaign	-	-	-	-	2,500
Care Ministry	600	339	600	600	600
Communications	1,500	1,203	2,500	1,500	2,000
Community on Ministry	-	-	1,000	1,020	-
Congregational Life	250	250	700	50	250
Diversity Caucus	-	-	1,700	1,700	500
Flowers	500	676	500	553	500
Historic Archives	200	-	200	200	200
Leadership Development	-	-	500	-	500
Parish Committee	2,500	1,889	2,500	1,000	3,000
Photo Directory	-	-	600	650	700
Social Action	1,500	1,649	1,500	1,500	1,500
Stained Glass Committee	250	266	250	-	250
Teaching Parish	12,000	12,437	6,000	6,000	9,000
Technology	4,200	4,027	4,000	4,000	4,000
Welcoming Team	2,360	2,405	3,000	1,500	3,000
Worship	1,300	797	1,200	600	2,200
TOTALS	28,160	26,237	28,000	21,873	31,950

First Parish in Brookline
FY 14 Time and Salary Recommendations

POSITION	Percent Fulltime	Approved	Revised	UUA		DRAFT
		Budget	Budget	2013	Minimum	
		FY 12	FY 12	FY 13		
Co-Minister - Martha	50% 6mos	15,950.00	15,950.00	7,975.00	-	
		27,600.00	27,600.00	13,800.00		
Co-Minister - Jim	75% 12 mos.	15,950.00	15,950.00	23,925.00	70,600.00	65,128.00
		27,600.00	27,600.00	41,400.00		
Interim Minister	50% 12 mos.	-	-	-	45,400.00	22,700.00
Director of Religious Ed	75%	40,575.00	36,150.00	37,275.00	49,100.00	37,930.00
Music Director	50%	20,758.00	21,300.00	24,000.00	49,100.00	24,550.00
Section Leaders	10%	13,600.00	13,600.00	13,600.00	N/A	16,000.00
Accompanists				3,000.00	N/A	
Parish Administrator	100%	41,300.00	41,300.00	42,500.00	41,500.00	42,750.00
Controller	25%	9,775.00	2,412.51	-	-	
Membership Coordinator	25%	9,300.00	9,300.00	9,300.00	35,000.00	9,300.00
Admin Assistant	45%		9,300.00	15,600.00	28,400.00	15,719.00
Sexton	45%	18,000.00	18,000.00	18,200.00	29,000.00	13,728.00
Custodian	50%	9,984.00	8,775.00	8,892.00	29,000.00	14,040.00
Nursery	6%	3,600.00	3,600.00	4,100.00	NA	3,600.00
Total Staff Wages		253,992.00	250,837.51	263,567.00	377,100.00	265,445.00
Benefits		47,502.00	47,502.00	47,080.00		52,939.00
FICA (inc Other) & Workers Comp		22,020.00	21,000.00	22,782.00		23,000.00
Professional Expenses		11,710.00	12,325.00	13,604.00		13,682.00
Total Compensation and Expenses		335,224.00	331,664.51	347,033.00		355,066.00

UUA Compensation Guideline Insert (2 pages)

UUA Compensation Guideline Insert (2 pages)

WELCOMING COMMITTEE 2012-2013 ANNUAL REPORT

Welcoming Committee Co-chairs: Gerry Leader and Jack Smith

Welcoming Committee Members: Susan Caplan, Nora Collins, Kathryn Kirshner, Kristen McIntire, Hank Reisner, Marissa Gutierrez-Vicario, and the Rev. Dr. James Sherblom. Also including recently recruited members: Laura Hatfield and Branch Mood

Welcoming Committee Purpose / Mission Statement

Mission: To attract, invite, inspire, retain, and support newcomers; to encourage membership and foster a congregation-wide pro-newcomer spirit in support of a healthy and growing church community; and to facilitate participative and joyful connections between newcomers and members.

Vision: We create a welcoming atmosphere to facilitate the spiritual development of newcomers and their connection to the congregation. Welcoming, from first contact and continuing throughout membership, becomes a part of our culture at First Parish and is recognized in the wider community.

2012-2013 Duties and Goals

General Duties

- ❖ To create a spirit of welcome and community which begins before the service, carries through it, and extends throughout the hospitality hour.
- ❖ Be responsible for providing greeters and ushers for each Sunday worship service.
- ❖ Facilitate, sponsor and promote Unitarian Universalist orientation sessions.
- ❖ Work in collaboration with the Membership Coordinator to operate a robust visitor follow-up system, which includes, but is not limited to, asking newcomers to fill out Welcoming Cards, as they feel comfortable doing so.
- ❖ Help the Membership Coordinator collect membership information and trends, and will examine it on a regular basis to spark new ideas for welcoming.
- ❖ Review these trends on a regular basis to spark creative new ideas for welcoming.
- ❖ Lead, by example, the welcoming of visitors to Sunday services by taking a genuine interest in the people we haven't yet met, by being aware that as a Welcoming Committee we may be their foothold in such a large and lively place.

Annual Goals and Progress to Date

The following WC goals were confirmed at the December 2012 meeting and progress to date is noted after each goal.

Help new members connect deeply to First Parish consistent with their interest and joy.

- ❖ First and foremost, Welcoming Committee members have expressed that it is a love of welcoming that they feel binds them together, filled with vibrant, energetic conversations and a desire to make First Parish in Brookline an even more genuinely warm community.
- ❖ The Welcoming Committee has been particularly alert to welcoming 105 first-time visitors at each Sunday's service and identifying their email addresses. Each visitor was emailed a follow-up greeting following their visit and subsequently, a personal U.S. Mail welcoming card was sent from a Welcoming Team member.
- ❖ The Welcoming Committee hosted four welcoming breakfasts and/or luncheons on October 14, 2012; December 2, 2012; February 10, 2013; and April 7, 2013; each of which were attended by at least three Welcoming Committee members. At these orientations, newcomers, following the example of WC members, described their faith journey and Rev. Jim described the history

of FPB in the context of UU's history; each session was warmly received by the participants and on two occasions new members "signed the book" for Rev. Jim. Around 50 newcomers are estimated to have attended at least one of these orientations, and on several occasions, some newcomers attended multiple ones.

- ❖ Jack Smith, co-chair of WC and Liz Scully of the Leadership Development Committee, jointly planned and advertised a November 10th workshop on "Exploring Your Gifts" for participants to identify what gifts they have to offer at First Parish, what brings them joy and how personal transformation can occur in joyful sharing of these gifts with the FPB community. Unfortunately, only three potential participants signed up and the workshop was cancelled. We will plan on offering this workshop again in the next church year.

Develop a list of potential new greeters and Welcoming Committee members that includes more diversity including younger people.

- ❖ New Greeters, who joined WC members regularly welcoming on Sunday mornings are: Teresa Cooley, Alan Niebanck, Val Gunning, Sheila Hussey and Laura Hatfield.
- ❖ Two new members were invited and joined the Welcoming Committee for 2013/14: Laura Hatfield and Branch Moody, bringing age and gender diversity to the committee.

Track number of visitors and new members and discuss at each meeting, with a target of 50 visitors documented and 20 new members between January and June of 2013.

- ❖ A report on visitors and new members was developed and regularly discussed by the team and Membership Coordinator. By May 31, 2013, the number of individuals signing the Membership Book will surpass that of any other church year, which will be 46 new memberships, out of 105 documented first-time visitors since September 2012.

Expand the welcoming team activities to include the entire congregation and encourage a congregation wide welcoming spirit.

- ❖ With the assistance of Rev. Jim, starting next fall, the WC will experiment with an expanded engagement of the congregation in welcoming and coaching new members. A skit evoking this spirit is planned for the opening service in September 2013. Besides WC members, other members of the congregation could be solicited to volunteer to be "Congregation Navigators" for new members. They would coach new members on engagement opportunities at First Parish.

Appreciation and Recognition

The Welcoming Committee gives special appreciation and recognition to the superb performance of Marissa Gutierrez-Vicario, Membership Coordinator, in assisting our committee. Marissa went well beyond her position responsibilities to create a welcoming climate and follow-through for First Parish newcomers.

Additionally, the Welcoming Committee gives a special thank you to Rev. Jim who has given counsel and guidance to us this year. We are particularly grateful that Rev. Jim's extensive recruiting efforts resulted in hiring Shane Montoya to be next year's Membership Coordinator. Shane's background credentials and employment interview suggest he will bring high spirit and standards to First Parish's welcoming.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013

Committee members: Lisa Underhill (co-chair), Karen Kepler (co-chair), Coleman Mark, Melinda Maryniuk, Jamie Redgrave, Scott Ullrich, Mina Willett. The ministerial team (Rev. Martha until her retirement in December, Rev. Jim and Sarah Napoline, intern) attend most meetings.

Meeting Schedule: The Committee holds regular monthly meetings, usually at 1:00 on the 3rd Sunday of the month. Special meetings are held as needed. The Committee held a special meeting/retreat on September 16, 2012.

The Worship Committee continued the work it began last year to move its primary focus away from First Parish worship events occurring outside of Sunday morning and to re-establish its presence in and support of Sunday morning worship activities. These efforts included assisting the worship team on Sunday mornings by having Committee members present the greeting and announcements on a rotating basis, serve as readers during services and perform in multi-generational service skits. In addition, the Committee incorporated a feedback session on Sunday services with the ministerial team as a regular component of the Committee's monthly meetings. The Committee hopes to build on these efforts in the coming church year.

The Committee supported efforts of RE and the ministerial team to incorporate and improve multi-generational worship experiences. Scott Ullrich, liaison to the RE Committee, kept the Worship Committee informed of RE activities and goals for these services, including WOW Sundays for older RE youth.

With respect to the worship celebrations that occur outside of Sunday morning worship (historically these have been Samhain, Winter Solstice, Seder, Tennebrae and Summer Solstice) the Committee's goal is to develop and encourage their production by lay-leadership where appropriate and/or to assist the ministerial team in the services that they produce. Therefore, while the Worship Committee is no longer solely responsible for organizing and producing these events, the committee actively discussed them at its meetings, and supported those events that were held. Results of these discussions are:

- This year there was not sufficient support of the Samhain service by the Religion Education Committee or the congregation and it was not held. The Committee intends to explore ways to re-invigorate this event for the fall of 2013.
- The Winter Solstice was combined with the caroling event on Boston Common lead by Music Director, Keith Kirchoff. The Committee has discussed alternatives to this format for next year, most likely involving the ministerial team.
- Tennebrae was primarily organized by the ministerial intern, Sarah Napoline, with support and participation by members of the committee. This structure worked well and will be continued next year.
- With respect to Seder, the Committee determined that we should return to the traditional, larger structure of an 'at church' event instead of the multiple smaller 'circle supper' model that was tried last year. Sarah Napoline was prepared to lead the Seder, with support of the Committee, however, there were very few sign-ups and the event was canceled. The proposed date, the Saturday evening before Easter, might have influenced this in part. The Committee intends to

develop more community support for leadership and attendance of the Seder next year.

- The Committee needs to receive expression of interest from the congregation in a summer solstice service order to go forward with this.

The other major activity of the Committee is producing the Summer Services. The Worship Committee organized and served as Worship Assistants for these services for the 2012 summer and is in the process of organizing them for summer 2013. The Committee's goals for 2013 are to continue to offer both lay-led and ministerial-led services, and to develop a better support system for members of the congregation that are interested in leading a summer service.