Cover photo: Celebrating the opening of the Worship Café (left to right) Jim Leffingwell, Worship Café Working Group; Rev. Catie Scudera, Minister; Gail Hedges, President, Parish Committee & Worship Café Working Group.
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WARRANT FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

From: Katie Edwards, Clerk of First Parish in Needham, Unitarian Universalist

Greetings. In the name of First Parish in Needham, Unitarian Universalist, you are hereby required to notify and warn the legal voters of said First Parish to assemble in the church sanctuary, 23 Dedham Avenue, in Needham, Massachusetts, on SUNDAY, May 20, 2018 at noon then and there to act on the following articles, to wit:

ARTICLE I To hear reports from the president, the Minister, and such others as have reports.

ARTICLE II To elect the following candidates put forward by the Nominating Committee as Officers and Representatives of the Parish for the upcoming church year. For 1-year terms: President, Vice President, Clerk, Treasurer, and Auditor. For 3-year terms: Trustees of Invested Funds, Nominating Committee, and 2 members of Parish Committee. One member of Parish Committee will be elected for a 2-year term to fill the position being vacated by a current member moving to an officer position on Parish Committee. One member of Parish Committee will be elected for a 1-year term to fill a vacancy.

As President—Darren Zinner
As Vice President—Beth Sargent
As Clerk—Tracy Zendzian
As Treasurer—Erik Bailey
As Auditor—Katie Barnett

And to elect the following candidates for the listed positions:

For Trustee of Invested Funds—David Gerber
For Nominating Committee—Laurel Davis
For Parish Committee member [1 year]—Jackie Boni
For Parish Committee member [2 year]—Byron Doerfer
For Parish Committee member—Karla Barbieri
For Parish Committee member—Katherine Calzada

ARTICLE III To authorize the Parish Committee to appoint up to six delegates of First Parish to the UUA General Assembly.

ARTICLE IV To amend the bylaws of First Parish in Needham such that the Trustees of Invested Funds will be known henceforth as the Endowment Trustees.

This is a change recommended by the Legacy Giving Committee as part of their work in meeting the UUA’s Wake Now Our Vision challenge.

ARTICLE V To hear the report of the Treasurer and determine an operating budget for fiscal year 2018-2019.

ARTICLE VI To hear a report from the Social Action Committee to put signage outside the church to inform the community of our activities and values as Unitarian Universalists.

ARTICLE VII To vote on a resolution to confer Minister Emeritus status on Reverend John Buehrens.
RESOLUTION TO CONFER EMERITUS STATUS ON THE REVEREND JOHN BUEHRENS

Whereas:
The Reverend John Buehrens has retired from active ministry after serving the denomination for 44 years, including 8 years as President of the Unitarian Universalist Association and 10 years as minister of First Parish in Needham.

He grew our congregation by 33%.
He created our Lyceum program.
He started our intern program, leading to our proud identity as a teaching congregation.
He shepherded us through a $2.6 million capital campaign.
He supported our designation as a Green Sanctuary in 2010, and we became the first church in Massachusetts to earn EnergyStar certification, and the 6th nationwide.
He wrote or co-wrote 3 books during his time with us, contributing to the national discourse on liberal religion.
He engaged our minds and spirits with his passionate preaching.
His prophetic witness on the issue of same-sex marriage made him a national leader.

Therefore be it resolved:

that First Parish in Needham, Unitarian Universalist confers upon the Reverend John Buehrens the title of Minister Emeritus and grants to him all the rights and privileges thereof.

ARTICLE VIII To conduct such further business as is necessary.

Hereof fail not, and make due return of this warrant, with your doing theron, at the same time of said meeting. Given under our hands this 7th day of May, 2018.

Gail Hedges, President
Tim Brennan, Treasurer
Eliot Jekowsky
Jackie Boni
Tracy Zendzian

Beth Sargent, Vice President
Katie Edwards, Clerk
Joan Mecsas
Alan Robins

By virtue of the warrant I have notified and warned the legal voters of First Parish in Needham, Unitarian Universalist, of the meeting called thereon by posting a copy of said warrant in newsletters and mailings on May 10th, 2017, being at least ten [10] days before holding of the meeting, and causing a notice of the meeting to be mailed to the last known address of every voting member of the Parish.

Attest: Katie Edwards, Clerk
MINUTES OF THE 2016-17 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
SUNDAY, MAY 21, 2017 AT 7:00 PM

The meeting was convened at 7:10 pm. Forty-six members attended, thereby meeting the quorum requirements for 15% of the total membership (279).

Rev. Catie Scudera lit the Chalice and gave opening words.

A motion was made to approve the Minutes of the May 15, 2016 Annual Meeting. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Gail Hedges, President of the Parish Committee, thanked Parish Committee members who were completing their service on the committee and will not be returning to the committee in the fall: Susie Smart, Kristin Neff, Marguerite Robbins, and Erik Bailey. The audience responded with confirming applause.

ARTICLE I: To hear reports from the President, the Minister, and such others as have reports.

For the President’s report, Gail Hedges referred to the four Goals established to support the church’s Vision and Mission statements: Growth, Financial Stability, Social Justice, and Multi-Generational Activities. She then used two questions to frame her comments: “Where do we stand in achieving these goals?” “How have we worked toward them?”

Growth
This first goal included a caveat: “We will have to be flexible about dealing with the size of the Sanctuary which is already often too crowded to be fully welcoming to newcomers.”

The Parish Committee established the Making Room Task Force committee to research and address this issue. The task force explored many options with the congregation’s input and ultimately endorsed (1) refurbishing the balcony, and (2) establishing a trial “Worship Café” in Parish Hall where the Sunday Services will be “piped in” live. The pilot for this trial solution will begin in the fall of 2017.

Financial Stability
Our Stewardship Team has emphasized the importance of thoughtful, generous gifts from all parishioners. Our 2015-2016 pledge drive yielded pledges which enabled us to raise the salaries of our dedicated staff. The UUA’s Legacy Gift Challenge program offered us a process to increase our modest endowment fund by working with Nancy Simpson Banker to support and encourage planned-giving at First Parish.

Social Justice
Sub-goals include: (1) balancing activities of charity with activities focused on systemic change (2) integrating our social action groups, and other participants, in supporting one church-wide social and environmental justice movement, and (3) partnering with social action groups outside First Parish. The Green Congregation Committee and the Racial Justice Task Force have sponsored related speakers and workshops. The Immigration Task Force has led the way in understanding and communicating the very complicated issues of this suddenly more vulnerable population.

Multi-Generational Opportunities
Embracing and integrating the wide range of generations in our congregation has been a long-time goal at First Parish. Yet, an informal survey of committees and interest groups revealed that we still have a way to go on this goal. The Parish Committee and Rev. Catie will be reconvening a Multi-gen Task Force to
explore new ways to encourage and provide more multi-generational opportunities. We’re looking forward to the suggestions it will uncover.

For the Minister’s Report, Rev. Catie Scudera began by recognizing that the past year has been a trying one, caused by the present political situation in the US. Rising rhetoric/incidents of xenophobia, anti-Semitism, sexism, racism, Islamophobia, uncivil partisanship, violence abroad and at home, and classist policies (which support the rich and impoverish the poor) have stimulated fear of their negative impact within our faith community and around the globe. Yet, we ask love – not fear - to guide us “through the dark night” - by choosing to take care of ourselves through spiritual practice and communal encouragement, protecting our vulnerable neighbors, and advocating for social justice.

Many new people have come through our doors recently, and we must make room to allow our membership to grow. With the help of regional UUA consultant Hilary Allen we have been reflecting and having conversations regarding how we can make room for newcomers. A new working group is formulating plans to make a Worship Café in Parish Hall a reality by early Fall. Refurbishing the loft/balcony will also be investigated.

It is important we make sure our congregation is financially stable enough to weather whatever might be coming on the horizon. Thanks to Phil Murray, our financial records are now professionalized. A capable, part-time bookkeeper has been hired. With the assistance of Rev. Laura Randall (UUA), Nancy Simpson-Banker, and a team of lay leaders, a Legacy Giving program will start up this Fall.

Our engagement in the wider community outside our walls is meaningful work. Our social and environmental justice programming has thrived this year. The Social Action Committee has written letters to local mosques and synagogues, responding to renewed human rights concerns. Our Immigrant Ministry team has investigated the new “sanctuary movement.” The Green Congregation Committee has sponsored “Commit2Respond” actions throughout the year: offering people in MetroWest Boston a film-showing of Time to Choose as well as an eco-justice networking event, partnering with our Social Action Committee and climate activist Evan Seitz along with other local UUs to demonstrate against the West Roxbury pipeline. The Welcoming Congregations team has kept us updated about “trans” accommodations, protections, and advocacy. The Racial Justice Task Force sponsored multiple events: a showing of the film 13th, workshops from UU anti-racism leaders Kenny Wiley and Ken Wagner, Lyceums from the UU Urban Ministry and Louis D. Brown Peace Institute, and (along with the Social Action Committee and the Parish Committee as co-sponsors) the weekend-end long Icons of the Civil Rights Movement art exhibition, film-showing, and facilitated reflection sessions. A new anti-human trafficking group, Needham PATH, was started. Members and friends participated in the Women’s March, the March for Science, the Climate March, and the Mother’s Day Walk for Peace.

We have made the least amount of progress on providing more multigenerational fellowship and learning opportunities. The Parish Committee and I hope to bring together a group to reconvene a Multigenerational Task Force after we have launched the Worship Café.

Our religious exploration programming continues and improves despite not having a Continuing Education Committee this year. Rev. MaryHelen Gunn and I have moved forward with beginning a UU campus ministry at Olin College. Continuing the work of Rev. Katie Lee Crane, past Interim Minister, our whole staff has participated in stronger supervision practices this year, including mid-year and final evaluations for all eight of us.
The Safe Congregations Task Force has led an emergency drill and a training session for “emergency marshals” this year. The Parish Committee called a Special Congregational Meeting in February to update and improve our bylaws. We still need to improve how we nominate members and friends to non-elected positions on standing committees.

Rev. Catie closed her presentation to the assembled members of the congregation by thanking all for their time, talents, and treasures which make our congregation a beloved community.

ARTICLE II
To elect the following candidates put forward by the Nominating Committee as Officers and Representatives of the Parish for the upcoming church year. For 1-year terms: President, Vice President, Clerk, Treasurer and Auditor. For 3-year terms: Trustee of Invested Funds, Nominating Committee, and two members of Parish Committee. One member of Parish Committee will be elected for a 1-year term to fill the position being vacated by the resignation of one current member of Parish Committee.

As President – Gail Hedges
As Vice President – Beth Sargent
As Clerk – Katie Edwards
As Treasurer – Tim Brennan
As Auditor – Katie Barnett

And to elect the following candidates for the listed positions:
For Trustee of Invested Funds - John Gallo
For Nominating Committee - Amy Cicala
For Parish Committee member (one year) – Jackie Boni
For Parish Committee member – Alan Robins
For Parish Committee member – Tracy Zendzian

After reviewing the proposed slate, a motion was made to amend the slate in order to add Bob Rands as a second Trustee of Invested Funds. A vote was taken on this amendment, which passed unanimously. The motion to accept the amended slate was approved unanimously.

ARTICLE III
To authorize the Parish Committee to appoint up to six delegates of First Parish to the UUA General Assembly.

A question was asked if Article I is just for the General Assembly in 2017. The answer given was “Yes.” The requested authorization was unanimously approved.

ARTICLE IV
To update First Parish’s Bylaws. These changes were initially proposed at the Special Congregational Meeting on February 12, 2017. Parish Committee has considered the discussions at that meeting in revising the proposed changes.

Trust Income:
Bylaw Article VIII, Section 6: Add “The distribution must be approved or declined, in whole or in part, each year by the Parish Committee prior to the conclusion of the Fiscal Year.” after “Subject to any restrictions applicable to income earned on restricted gifts, legacies, or special purpose funds.” The new
text shall read (changes underlined): “The amount to be distributed will be determined by multiplying the
beginning value by the percentage determined by the Trustees. The distribution must be approved or
declined, in whole or in part, each year by the Parish Committee prior to the conclusion of the Fiscal
Year.”

The Parish Committee voted to endorse this Bylaw change on April 19, 2017.

Phil Murray spoke regarding his reconsiderations since the February meeting: “This is really about
endowment spending rather than trust income.”

Erik Bailey approved of the revised proposed changes, unlike his thoughts for the February proposal.
Updating Bylaw Article VIII, Section 6 was approved as specified in the revised proposed changes.

Committee on Ministry:
Bylaw Article VI, Section 4: Change "one person" to "one or two persons". The new text shall read
(changes underlined): "In June of each year, the Parish Committee shall appoint one or two persons to the
Committee on Ministry in accordance with Article X."

Bylaw Article X, Section 1: Delete the first paragraph ("The Committee on Ministry shall consist of three
members appointed for a three-year term, one member to retire each year. One member, selected from a
list of three names submitted by the Minister, shall be appointed by the Parish Committee in June of each
year. No member of the Committee on Ministry shall serve concurrently on the Parish Committee.”) and
replace with the following:

The Committee on Ministry shall consist of three to six members, each appointed for a three-year term.
The goal is that each year the three-year term for one or two members will expire, and those members
would be replaced.

New members, selected from a list of up to six names submitted by the Minister, shall be appointed by the
Parish Committee in June of each year. No member of the Committee on Ministry shall serve concurrently on the Parish Committee.

If a member of the Committee on Ministry retires before the end of their three-year term, the Minister
may submit two or more names to the Parish Committee, who will appoint the person serving as
replacement.

Bylaw Article X, Section 1: Amend the fourth paragraph by doubling the quantities (one becomes two,
three becomes six, and six becomes twelve). The revised fourth paragraph shall read as follows (changes underlined):

When a new minister is called, the then members of the Committee on Ministry shall resign. A new
committee will be formed by the Parish Committee by selecting up to six names from a list of up to
twelve names submitted by the new Minister. Two of these members will be appointed for a three-year
term, two for a two-year term, and two for a one-year term.

The Parish Committee voted to endorse this Bylaw change on April 19, 2017.

Darren Zinner led the discussion regarding changes for Bylaw Article VI, Section 4 and Bylaw Article X,
Section 1. He commented that the Committee on Ministry needs more than 3 members which is the
current reality.
A vote was taken, approving the proposed Bylaw changes for Article VI, Section 4 and Article X, Section 1.

**ARTICLE V  To hear the report of the Treasurer and determine an operating budget for fiscal year 2017 – 2018.**

*For the Treasurer’s report,* Erik Bailey started by identifying the three topics about which he would speak: a summary of the previous fiscal church year (2015-2016), a summary and projection of this fiscal year (2016-2017), and the budget for our next fiscal year (2017-2018).

In fiscal 2015-2016

- Income was 105% of budget with 100% of pledges at $320.
- Expenses were 96% of budget.
- Overall, $42K was unbudgeted with a net surplus of $52,000.
  (This helped improve our bank account significantly!)
  
  *Therefore:*

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<th>Budget</th>
<th>Actual</th>
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<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>445K</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expense</td>
<td>435K</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net</td>
<td>10K</td>
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In fiscal 2016-2017 YTD

- Quick Books was cleaned up by Phil Murray – amazing!
- A new part-time bookkeeper was hired for approximately 4 months.
- A Worship Café in Parish Hall will be started for the 3rd service in September. Capital purchases for the Café will occur soon ($2,000 from the FY17 budget, $2,500 from a Woburn Grant, $5,000 from a generous member donation).
- Renovation of the Sanctuary floor will occur this summer (2017). It is expected to cost $20K-$25K and be partially funded by $10,000 from an anonymous, generous donor who will make this targeted donation. We are very grateful for this! We can afford to do this project.

In fiscal 2017 – 2018

- The overall projected Income (pledges and other) is 16K over budget.
- The projected Expenses are close to budget (4K over budget including the Sanctuary floor project).
- There is a projected Surplus of $3,000 (including the Sanctuary floor project); and with a planned deficit of $10K, there is a projected Net Surplus of 13K.

Questions, answers and comments from the floor

- **Q** - Are there any plans to do something about the noise in the Parlor when our ballet tenant is holding classes? **A1** – No. **A2** - If we do this work from the Parish Hall ceiling upward, it will probably cost $40,000.
- **Q** – Since the Sanctuary floor repair was not discussed last year, where is this request coming from? **A1** - It came to us from an anonymous, targeted-donation proposal. We can fund it now with this donation…but maybe not next year. So the Parish Committee decided to move forward on it. **A2** – The $20,000 overall estimate came from the Property Committee.
- What is the breakdown of donation and other funding? **A** - The Parish Committee specified no
more than $25,000; so the donation is $10,000 and the church will fund $15,000.

- The town of Needham projects a Capital Expenses List for 5-10 years out in the future. FPN should make a list like that by asking committees to come up with their own prioritized, capital expenses list.

- What will be done with/to the Sanctuary floor? A1 – ¼” plywood will be put down over the linoleum because it has wide gaps in it. Not sure what else. A2 – This project will move forward only if it is doable for $25,000 or less.

- Will the carpeting be saved? A – The carpet will remain.

- FP has two large floors, in the Sanctuary and in Parish Hall. No changes have been contemplated for Parish Hall. The Property Committee and the Parish Committee have had discussions about refinishing Parish Hall, as needed for ballet dancers. No other changes are planned.

- If the Sanctuary floor project had not had an anonymous donor, it would have gone into a back list? A – Not sure. We need to think about how we should go forward to keep requests in a “bucket” to have money available in the future.

Erik then continued his presentation by itemizing things to consider for upcoming years:

1) Improve income forecasting.
2) Increase staff salaries.
4) Continue with the bookkeeper.
5) Plan for and meet operational costs for the Worship Café: AV staffing (a paid staff member), and the internet bandwidth.
6) Make adjustments to the Expense line-items based on actuals.
7) Work on (near) elimination of contingency line-items.
8) Assume a full auction every two years, expecting $20,000 over 2 fiscal years.

Erik also addressed the topic of Staff Compensation for 2017-2018

- The UUA Fair Compensation Guidelines set a minimum, middle, and maximum target for churches with similar attributes.
- We are a Mid-Size II, Geo Index 5 church (250-349 members).
- Last year we adjusted the staff compensations to all being above the minimum. This was well received by the staff.
- For the second consecutive year, we have adjusted all of the salaried staff upward to ½ way between minimum and midpoint (45%).
- $8,000 is the new compensation with benefits.

Questions, answers and comments from the floor

- Is our other staff hourly? A – Yes.
- Is Mark getting closer to where Susanna is? A1 – Yes. A2 – Next year at our Annual Meeting, having an Intern Minister will be considered.
- Why does the RE Administrator get a 25% increase to cover Mark’s sabbatical? (No answer recorded.)
- 45% is a good idea, but we need to move faster than that…be more appreciative of staff. A – 279 members is not quite ready for midpoint on salaries yet. We need to take care of what we are doing.

- What is our member growth? A1 – We are plateauing due to the physical space limitations in the Sanctuary. A2 - We are almost back to the peak which John Buehrens had 10 years ago. A3 – We have 279 active members and not all of them have pledged; some of them may need to come off the list. A4 – When we have space to pass the 300 mark, we can do more.
• Do we have a total for the salaries increase? A – No, but probably 5%.
• We haven’t done any active outreach – mostly because the UUA has done research which shows that an 80% full Sanctuary makes people think the church is too full.
• You have to put priorities first, and taking care of our own is a priority. We attract people partly because of our excellent staff. Organizations get in trouble if they are paying less for staff than they should. People leave.

Then Erik displayed and reviewed in detail the fiscal 2017-2018 budget spreadsheet. He finished his presentation by making a few additional comments and answering two more questions.

• He wants us to keep a balanced budget.
• He wants 3% increases in pledges.
• He expressed gratitude for our current, strong sources of income at FPN:
  — The Homegrown Coffee House (!)
  — The Needham Children’s Center (increasing)
  — The ballet classes (more money than we expected)
• He responded to a question by saying, “In the future we need to look at adjustments for Youth Group Advisors.”
• He spoke about the Capital Campaign Mortgage. Previous renovations amounted to 2 ½ million dollars. The current balance is approximately $400,000. We need to look at refinancing this mortgage.
• Do we need to start a savings plan for a future sabbatical for Rev. Catie? A – YES!

A motion was made to accept the budget, which was duly seconded. The motion passed without dissent.

ARTICLE VI To hear reports from the Social Action Committee on becoming a Sanctuary-Supporting Congregation.

Will Rico spoke eloquently and passionately about FPN choosing to become a Sanctuary-Supporting Congregation in the future. Among his words were these:

  Our US government chose to fund prisons not homes.
  We raised money for a case worker. The case worker is serving 150 families.
  What would it take for FPN to become a Sanctuary-Supporting Congregation?
  Sanctuary is not a one-way street!”

ARTICLE VII To conduct such further business as is necessary.

Presentation of Bell Awards is an important occurrence at First Parish in Needham. It is an opportunity to recognize unsung heroes for their gifts of love and labor to the church, to the congregation, and to others outside First Parish. This year three Bell Awards were presented.

Eliot Jekowsky presented David Mecsas with a Bell Award for David’s outstanding work with the First Parish website, including the website’s architecture, impressive front page, ongoing updating and maintenance, the monthly Bellman, the weekly Bell Notes, and much, much more.

David’s work has positively impacted many members of our congregation as well as countless others well beyond our church walls.

Joan Mecsas spoke about a Bell Award for Mair Lustig (who was currently out of the country). Mair was
selected to receive a Bell Award for her tireless work throughout the church - in Parish Hall, the kitchen, the choir, and many other places where her support was needed and valued. Many, many times without being asked, Mair showed up and got a job done well.

Gail Hedges presented Jim and Beth Sargent with a Bell Award for their amazing track record of successfully running the Homegrown Coffeehouse for many years at First Parish. By providing outstanding guest musicians and warmly welcoming audience attendees from near and far, Jim and Beth have consistently provided significant funding for First Parish in Needham as well as offering their loving legacy work, “rooted in folk music and powered by carrot cake.”

Congratulations and many thanks to all three Bell Awards recipients!

Adjournment

At 9:15 pm, a motion was made, duly seconded, and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting.
RITES OF PASSAGE

NEW MEMBERS

Kevin McCormick  Leslie Ross-Degnan  Peter Panov
Jane McKeon  Marvin Wilkenfeld  Kathryn “Kitty” Bownass
Lucinda “Cindy” Ringer  Joan Smart  Robin Montville
Danielle Butsch  Byron Doerfer

With these new members, we also welcomed children into our religious exploration program.

Total membership as of 4/26/2018: 283

DEATHS

Roberta Haskel Crocker  John Pararas  Beverly Johannesen
Bridget Marie Griffin Sheehan  Lois Welch Ahrens  Rev. Jack Zoerhede
Edwin A. Lane  Adrienne Garrido  John Merchant
Mario Loenel Coentro  Trinity Pooley  Barbara Pederson

This year, we also mourned with many First Parish families at the loss of their close family members and friends.

MARRIAGES

Kendra Smith & Samuel Knowles
Lynn Clancy & Dennis McNamara

BIRTHS AND DEDICATIONS

Everett Johnson Bergmark
Nicholas Tehrani

We celebrate with our many First Parish members and friends who have welcomed grandchildren into their lives this year.
PRESIDENT’S REPORT
by Gail Hedges

As president of First Parish in Needham, I work closely with the Parish Committee and staff to be informed of and to monitor all that happens within and around this busy congregation. We set the budget and monitor financial transactions throughout the year. We stay apprised of the efforts and concerns of our minister and staff through regular written and oral reports. We pay attention to the work of our many committees and interest groups, inviting representatives to join our monthly (and sometimes more frequent) meetings to talk, ask, and answer questions. We question, support, and, when we can, encourage special initiatives. I am proud of several important projects that launched in the past year.

We were beginning to feel crowded during Sunday worship in the Sanctuary. The “Making Room” task force was charged with investigating solutions to this happy problem. As a result of their extensive study and congregational surveys, we launched our Worship Café with a live feed of the service into the Parish Hall. An unexpected grant from the now-closed UU church in Tyngsboro helped us upgrade our technology as did some direct monetary support from First Parish members. Tom Gehman’s technical skills informed those upgrades. The informal seating at tables with movable chairs serves 10 to 20 people each Sunday, freeing enough space in the Sanctuary for us to hold a March, 2018, “Bring a Friend to Church” Sunday—a long-time goal of Reverend Catie.

A small group came together last summer under the leadership of Nancy Simpson Banker and with the help of consultant Mark Ewert to launch a Legacy Giving program. A variety of educational opportunities informed the congregation about long-term financial support for First Parish and allowed First Parish to benefit from the UUA’s “Wake Now Our Vision” program providing a 10% match to any gifts pledged in wills and other documents to First Parish’s endowment funds.

In December, the congregation voted to become a Level 2 Sanctuary. Prior to the vote, the Parish Committee met several times with the Immigration Task Force, learning about the issues and suggesting ways the Task Force might educate and promote First Parish support for immigrants seeking sanctuary in Level 1 host churches. The resounding unanimous vote in favor of Level 2 status reflected the Task Force’s commitment and success.

The Safe Congregations Task Force, led by Susan Camuti, has been meeting for about three years to study safety issues and write policies and procedures that will guide us should an emergency occur. They have organized evacuation drills should the worst occur. This difficult work has been supported and applauded by the Minister, the Director of Lifespan Religious Education, the staff, and the Parish Committee, and has resulted in a corps of trained “marshals”. We have held several evacuation drills intended to ensure the safety of adults and well as our children.

As I complete my term as President of First Parish, I can only tell you that it has been my privilege and pleasure to serve this congregation. Thank you all for the support you have given me and the gift of your confidence in my leadership.

Gail Hedges
MINISTER’S ANNUAL REPORT
by Rev. Catie Scudera

We’ve been disturbed by the instability and uncaring rhetoric and policies of our country’s current political environment this year. We’ve weathered hard losses and tragedies just in Needham, too, with the death of our beloved Ed Lane and the deaths of three beloved young women in our town all in one awful February weekend. (I am very proud of our congregation in hosting meaningful memorial events for Ed and Adrienne Garrido.) And, we have weathered unexpected changes on staff this year, too — Irina’s sudden absence in September and then Mark’s decision to resign announced in February. With all this, we could have “battened down the hatches” and submerged ourselves within the walls of our sanctuary, hiding from the increased suffering and chaos around us and holding off on any changes to our faith community.

I’m proud to say that while our congregation indeed serves as a comforting harbor for our members, friends, and wider community, we have chosen to further activate our values beyond our Meetinghouse and take on big challenges and transformations within, too. The mission of First Parish in Needham is to create a welcoming, diverse, and compassionate religious community that celebrates the sacredness of all living things, nurtures lifelong spiritual and ethical growth, and works for social and environmental justice locally and throughout the world. This is a lofty long-term vision of how we hope our faith community will develop, and I am now gladder than ever that we discerned four thoughtful steps toward that mission to achieve by the year 2020: 1. growing our membership; 2. securing our long-term financial stability; 3. making social and environmental justice more central to our collective identity; and, 4. deepening our multigenerational fellowship and learning opportunities. These goals have acted as a “true north” for our focus and funding, both for our lay leadership and professional staff.

Lay leadership has been key in everything we’ve done toward our 2020 goals. To name even just a few of our great leaders: our Parish Committee officers and members keeping their eyes on the prize and navigating tough situations; Kay Taylor, Tony Cicala, and Laurel Davis steering the Membership Committee’s efforts; the Worship Café Working Group making that innovative dream a reality; Nancy Simpson-Banker and her amazing Legacy Giving team promoting the denomination’s Wake Now Our Vision campaign and a long-term planned giving program at our church; Clark Taylor, Becca Malakoff, Eleanor Rosellini, Marianne McGowan, Becky Siebens, Will Rico, Peter DiMarzio, and so many committee members leading major social and environmental justice efforts within the congregation; and, our lifespan religious exploration committee leaders, facilitators, and teachers ensuring ethically-, emotionally-, and spiritually-enriching programming for First Parishioners of all ages (especially for our children’s programming with a new beta curricular map and teaching team formation) and looking ahead with eager anticipation and commitment toward out interim period next year. I am thankful for Jodi Rooney, Dana Robinson, David Mecsas, our Senior Youth Group (particularly Jeff Barbieri), our Archives team, and our children’s RE program for all contributing to a lovely send-off to Mark on his second-to-last Sunday with us as DLRE. And, I’m thankful for Jodi, Dana, Tony Cicala, Marianne McGowan, and Zoë Bailey for serving on our interim DLRE search team.

I would be quite remiss if I didn’t include a special thanks to Music Committee chair Jessie Bowen and all our volunteer singers and musicians for their dedication and excellence during the bumpy autumn months without Irina — and, I’d be remiss in not expressing my gratitude to our other music staff members, Justin Lundberg and Kate Loftus Campe, for their exemplary service during both Irina’s unexpected immigration-related absence and her planned-for maternity leave. Susanna Whitman, Bruce
Barnett, and friends of the church with immigration law experience also worked quietly “behind the scenes” to ensure we were in full compliance with U.S. law as to not risk Irina’s legal status. We are grateful to Rep. Joe Kennedy’s Senior Constituency Director Lisa Nelson for her guidance and assistance in expediting the process of Irina’s application in November.

Our Worship Café launch has been an enormous success. We typically have about twenty worshippers in the Café each Sunday, and our Worship Café Working Group and new staff “producer” Tom Pugh ensure the worship experience is excellent and engaging for all who choose that alternate space. Special thanks is due to Tom Gehman and his tech team for updating our AV systems (and for running the Café video, sometimes from across the street at the Farmers’ Market!, before Tom Pugh was hired), and to Tom Gehman and Liz Rover Bailey for securing a $1,000 grant from First Parish in Malden, which gave us more “wiggle room” in our tech improvements budget. I’m also delighted that we could use this technology to livestream both Ed Lane’s and Bridie Sheehan’s memorial services to family members abroad. As we look ahead, we can consider if and how to livestream or offer recorded video clips of our worship services, both to keep homebound and moved-away members included in our church and to advertise our faith community to a broader audience. With about twenty extra empty seats in our sanctuary (and about the same amount of room still available in the Worship Café), we certainly have “made room” as we hoped when we chose to embark on the Worship Café experiment last year. Our Membership Committee is excited to explore and test ideas for bringing more Needhamites and neighbors through our door in the fall.

The launch of our Legacy Giving program was expertly stewarded by Nancy Simpson-Banker and a great team of helpers. Through the UUA’s Wake Now Our Vision matching campaign for new planned gift intentions to UU congregations and organizations, our congregation expects to receive a one-time gift to our endowment of at least $30,000 in 2019. (If more folks put First Parish in their estate plans and notify Nancy and the denomination soon, we may receive more than that!) Katie Edwards and Jen Robins put on (for the last time — for now… ☺ ) yet another incredible auction that exceeded our expectation of $20,000; our whole congregation is grateful for their many years of service, and our Nominating Committee has recruited the first two of a new leadership team for the 2018 mini-auction and the 2019 “full” auction. I’m also proud of our Budget Drive team and the congregation at large for another successful annual budget drive. I am overwhelmed with gratitude for our congregation’s pledge generosity and the leadership of our auction organizers, Homegrown leaders, and Trustees for additional, essential funding. Under advisement from our Finance Committee, our Parish Committee is recommending a 2018-2019 budget that fully funds the stipend and professional expenses for our incoming intern, Sally Fritsche; offers a small merit raise to our wonderful cleaner and sexton team, Freddy Soto and Frederick Francis; and (I am especially delighted to announce) completes our three-year project to bring our salaries for Susanna, Irina, and Kate up to the UUA’s recommended levels, while still leaving us a competitive salary and benefits package for recruiting an Interim Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration.

Of course, I note that as we complete compensation adjustments and merit raises for much of the staff, there is one staff member who has deferred any suggestion from the Parish Committee of a raise for herself for the past few years — and would be honored to be offered one after a successful 2019 budget drive…

We’ve taken our 2020 goal about social and environmental justice to the next level in our unanimous vote to become a Level 2 sanctuary-supporting congregation. Our Immigrant Ministry team did excellent work
to educate and inspire the whole congregation to make this courageous and compassionate choice. I’m pleased that our affirmative vote was featured in both our local town papers, the Needham Channel, and a short blurb in the Boston Globe; I hope other local congregations will be inspired to get involved in the immigration justice and anti-deportation movements! At the time of this writing, our Immigrant Ministry team is in the final stages of choosing a Level 1 partner to recommend for the Parish Committee’s approval. I continue to be amazed by the incredible organizing, advocacy, and educational work led by First Parish justice-makers — for example, Green Congregation’s Harvest Vegetarian Potluck and “zero waste” campaign; Needham PATH’s public lectures and trainings; the Racial Justice Task Force’s UU White Supremacy follow-ups sessions, Mothers’ Day Walk for Peace organizing, and hosting of two interracial dialogue dinners; Welcoming Congregation’s MetroWest Trans Day of Remembrance and Resilience (and, soon, the hosting of a Freedom for All Massachusetts Town Hall event about the Massachusetts trans public accommodations/civil rights ballot question); Social Action’s Mitten Tree and organizing First Parish participation in the Boston March for Our Lives; and, thousands of dollars donated to worthy justice organizations through our share-the-plate collections.

Much of my interfaith work and public ministry in Needham had a justice-focus. I co-organized a vigil for DACA young people on the town green, a prayer vigil after the Las Vegas mass shooting, a sanctuary activist panel about immigration non-compliance, clergy witness at Needham High’s Parkland walkout, a reading group of the Globe Spotlight racism series, and a clergy letter to the Needham Times about the racist and homophobic graffiti in the high school bathrooms. I was also a featured panelist at this year’s Needham Diversity Summit. In addition to this interfaith justice work, I participated in ecumenical worship services honoring Blue Christmas, Lent, and Holy Week.

We still have some heavy lifting to do on our 2020 goals of membership growth and multigenerational programming expansion — while not losing momentum on our other two goals and our overall mission and vision. With our incoming interim DLRE, I hope we will reassess our multigenerational programming and take a “balcony view” (as Rev. Katie Lee liked to say) about our whole lifespan religious exploration program. We will give more attention to Continuing Ed next year, especially with Sally coming on board, John potentially making a formal return, and the rebirth of our Continuing Ed Committee. As Membership and Communications begin more active advertisement next year, the whole congregation needs to be ready to welcome visitors, integrate new members, and foster lay leadership development as cornerstones of growing the church. The Committee on Ministry also plans to launch an in-depth congregational survey in the fall — exactly five years after our last survey was performed — which will likely generate more ideas to try and challenges to consider.

Looking to next year, I’m excited for all this and more. I am delighted that we are reviving our teaching congregation ministry after a five-year gap since our last intern, Rev. Christian Schmidt. I’m thrilled that the Intern Committee and I will work with (soon-to-be) Harvard Divinity School graduate and lifelong UU, Sally Fritsche (whose home minister is our own former intern, Rev. Molly Housh Gordon). I’m glad Sally can keep a ministerial eye on the congregation while I take one month of sabbatical leave in India, definitely celebrating the tenth anniversary of the A. Margaret Barr Children’s Village (which I co-founded with the Unitarian Union of Northeast India in 2009) and likely performing some service for the UU Partner Church Council. My spouse will join me for the latter half of that time, as we visit major sacred sites of the three world religions he teaches for his school’s senior level world religions course: Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. At the time of this writing, many of our committees have already begun planning major educational and justice events to host at First Parish in 2018-2019.
I will miss the church community while I am away this summer on study leave and vacation. My time away begins in Kansas City at the annual UUA General Assembly, where I will be honored during the Service of the Living Tradition for having achieved Final Fellowship (with help from the Parish Committee, Committee on Ministry, and my UUA mentor, Rev. Sarah Stewart). Ed Lane’s name and image will also be featured in the service, in remembrance of his and other recently-deceased UU religious professionals’ service to Unitarian Universalism. The Service of the Living Tradition may be livestreamed, if you’re interested in watching online! I will spend my study leave weeks on the East Coast (mostly in Needham and the D.C. Metro area), preparing for next year’s worship services and getting ready to act as an internship supervisor for the very first time. By the summer, I will have just completed a yearlong certificate course in church management from Villanova University, and I plan to finish an online training course in pre-martial counseling. For vacation, my spouse is taking me on my #1 Travel Bucket List Trip — two weeks in Kenya and Tanzania on safari. I will return to the First Parish office on August 20th, and look forward to seeing you all at Ingathering Worship for our water communion and annual picnic on September 9th.

Blessings,

Catie Scudera
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION
by Mark E. LaPointe

As we move toward the end of the church school year, we can see an RE Program that reflects the discernment, planning and implementation of the “Way Cool Sunday School” goals that we’d set into place about 5 years ago. New programs, recommitment to priorities, and a preparedness to grow along with the broader church, have all positioned the RE programs (children, youth, teens and adults) for a new round of discernment and success.

Highlights for the year include:

1. The soft introduction of Spirit Play, a Montessori-like program that engages Preschool through First Graders in guided, yet independent, play and exploration of topics as diverse as the Seven Principles, Family & Friendship, Ethics, and World Religions. Each lesson incorporates a key story with manipulatives (tactile elements) and an opportunity for the children to explore in a variety of ways. (The RE Committee would love some help setting up the story boxes!)

2. The move of Coming of Age to a full year in the 9th grade completes the changed curricular map that also introduced a “big questions” class for middle school students and shifted the world religions class to an older grade. The move also means that 6th-9th grade classes all run a full year and we’ll have no more mid-year curricular shifts. (The new Spirit Play program was a part of this as well). A special thanks to the teacher, youth and mentors who’ve willingly taken part in the pilot year of this new class.

3. Along with the new curriculum, this year was our first using full-year teaching teams of four, rather than two teachers per “semester.” With exception of First Grade OWL and Fifth Grade OWL and Lessons of Loss, all curricula are now yearlong and we have no more transition period. What this means is that teachers can spread their commitment out in a way that better fits their own schedule and we are able to include teachers who were unable to teach in the past because of their own professional calendar. There has been great response to this.

4. We’ve also had the pleasure of welcoming Alexis Capen to the RE team this year serving in both the RE Program Assistant and the Youth Program Coordinator positions. A lifelong UU, Alexis has brought some great personal experience and perspective to our programming, planning the annual service trip, coordinating weekly childcare, covering our non-RE Sundays and helping to bring some of the RE data into a 21st Century format.

5. Other elements that mark this year include the recreation (and re-envisioning of the Continuing Education team), working with the Safe Congregations Team on a major renovation of our safety guidelines, and working to build a stronger new generation PYC for our young families.

This marks my 7th and final year with First Parish in Needham. I’ve decided that I need to move on to new challenges and focus on my own family a bit more. I am proud of the work I’ve done here and I feel blessed to have worked with wonderful colleagues and an amazing congregation. I am finishing up my year by working on a revised “Lessons of Loss” curriculum during a much needed sabbatical and helping the team to prepare for a new, interim DLRE.

With affection,

Mark
MUSIC DIRECTOR’S REPORT
By Irina Georgieva

Song Squad has grown slightly this year as we welcomed two new kindergarten members. We currently have 10 active members. In services, the Song Squad has enjoyed performing Seize the Day, Big Yellow Taxi, I’ll be There, and other traditional pieces. The Song Squad learned 4 different songs for Festivals of Light this winter, and 2 pieces for Easter. Recruitment in upper elementary grades continues.

The UURingers continues to have a strong membership of 8-10 ringers each week. Occasionally, adults in the congregation will assist and ring as well. They have enjoyed ringing from the balcony, and feel comfortable creating beautiful music from that setting. So far this year the group has worked to learn difficult pieces including, Prayer of St. Francis, Praying by Kesha, and Leonard Cohen's Hallelujah for Easter.

From Assistant Music Director Kate Loftus Campe

First Parish Choir has continued to grow this year. Three new members have joined the group since February. The group has grown not only in numbers but also musically; their sound has become more unified, richer, and powerful. The choir continues to provide music from many traditions, including gospel, common-practice repertoire from the Renaissance to the 21st century, hymn arrangements, and popular music arrangements. During the late Easter service the choir performed Vivaldi’s Gloria, which they had been preparing since January.

First Parish Singers are continuing to contribute musically to worship once monthly. Under the strong leadership of Jim Sargent they bring a wide range of styles and a good contrast to the anthems sung by the choir. Jim Sargent frequently collaborates with Assistant Music Director Kate Loftus Campe in performances that include Song Squad and with Dave and Wendy Blom and Eliot Jekowsky.

Dave Blom’s ensemble including Wendy Blom, Eliot Jekowsky, and Ross Donald, is another source of a highly appreciated musical variety in worship. The music they bring to First Parish comes from a multitude of styles including jazz, blue grass, bossa nova, traditional Yiddish genres and rock and roll. Having them perform during worship regularly has been one of this year’s accomplished goals. I hope that they continue to do so in the future.

Assistant Music Director Kate Loftus Campe is continuing to lead her groups UU Ringers and Song Squad with a lot of skill and passion. The young performers have blossomed under her direction. Kate also performs solos, duets, and trios in worship. She was a great help during my leave in the fall semester.

During Advent, a number of highly skilled professional musicians made appearance to First Parish, including Jazz pianist Tim Ray, and a string trio for the late Christmas Eve service. The Early Easter service featured First Parish Singers, First Parish Trio, UU Ringers, and Song Squad. During the late service, the choir performed Vivaldi’s Gloria. Music Sunday will be an extravaganza presenting all our church music groups.

Looking ahead, my goals for the rest of the Church year include finalizing Music Sunday, and introducing a few additional ensembles to worship, including a vocal trio, and a treble sextet. My long-term goals include hiring three professional singers as section leaders and soloists, continuing to maintain the current musical variety by regularly scheduling all church-based ensembles, inviting professional guest musicians, and continuing to grow the choir. Irina Georgieva
ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT
by Susanna Whitman

The Parish Administrator’s goals set last year for 2017 – 2018 were:

- Collaborate with lay members in review and revision of current accessible policy and procedures manual.

  This goal will continue into next year.

- Review procedures for discretionary check disbursements in collaboration with minister and Finance Committee.

  We have a clear and consistent system for disbursing discretionary checks.

- Promote wedding rentals and other special ceremonies/events at First Parish through online advertising, and build relationship with new wedding coordinator to support this endeavor.

  Work began with Tabby Rappolt, Wedding Coordinator this year. Tabby has advocated well for the congregation and is well prepared for this role. Promotion of weddings at First Parish is being addressed at the end of this church year, so this goal will continue into next year.

- Support the Worship Café “Making Room” experiment through cooperation and assistance from sexton, cleaner, and Property Committee.

  I maintained an accounting of all grants and donations for the Worship Café and recorded all expenses against these. I gathered all Worship Café documents developed by volunteers to centralize supplies. I assisted in working out procedures as needed and maintained records to support the work going forward.

- Support restarts of Finance Committee and Rental Board.

  This may prove useful this coming year, and will be listed on the upcoming goals. It did not come into being this past year.

This year went very differently than anticipated as will be seen in this report.

Human Resources work
This year staffing changes took more time than expected and made the achievement of some goals more difficult. A certain amount of time was spent removing Irina Georgieva from our public face, website and publications, and from our various staff benefits, as was necessary under employment law for both the congregation’s and Irina’s sakes. Happily, we were able to bring her back on board for the remainder of her maternity leave and then returning to her usual schedule.

In addition, Kate Loftus Campe from her dual Youth Coordinator and Music roles, resumed her former single role of Assistant Music Director. Alexis Capen began in the combined roles of Youth Program Coordinator and Religious Exploration Program Assistant. Also, we hired Tom Pugh, Worship Service Producer, who is responsible for the transmission of the Worship Café. Lastly, sadly we will shortly say good-bye to Mark LaPointe, Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration, following his sabbatical.

All the necessary adjustments are being made to our benefits and insurances related to all of these staff changes.

Tabby Rappolt is our Wedding Coordinator. She managed a wedding of a couple who are not part of the church. Much was learned from this experience by Tabby and Susanna. Tabby ably set up systems and created forms to organize the work. She is an asset to this function of the church. This role is not a staff position, it is contract work paid by those arranging weddings with us.
Freddy Soto is completing his third year with us as Cleaner. When he arrived we had to adjust to his higher standards of cleanliness. We are fortunate to have him. Freddy continues deep cleaning, also does floor buffing and carpet cleaning saving us considerably over previous contractor costs and their greater frequency.

Frederick Francis, Sexton, will complete two years with us in September. He has been able at making a wide range of building repairs, saving the congregation money. He has also often partnered with various members of the Property Committee on projects benefitting the building. He has shown himself to be a valuable and a valued employee.

Jenny Conley, our contract Bookkeeper continues to do entry and accounts payable, weekly or biweekly.

Office & Communications
Orders of service & Announcements Inserts
These are collated by Gail Lehman, Ginger Shapiro, and Jane McKeon, each takes a month at a time and collates at the end of the week.

Bell Notes Mailings – The end of The Bellman
This past year saw the end of publication of The Bellman. Some members and friends who do not use email receive the Bell Notes and weekly blog by mail, ably collated by our order of service collators.

Giving Statement & Congregational Meeting Warrant Mailings
Gail Hedges and Katie Edwards have collated our thrice-annual mailings. They ensure that each member receives a warrant and that all donors receive their individual or family giving statements.

UUA Record Keeping
Don Leathe continue his ongoing role of insuring that our member list is updated with the UUA. This enables our members to receive the magazine UUWorld. He also provides significant assistance with our annual certification with the UUA, where we provide our member, friends, attendance, and RE enrollment figures, annually. If you serve as an usher it is so important that you count all adults and children present each week so that we can track this and report accurately annually. It throws off the accuracy of our data if we miss weeks.

Computer Maintenance
Phil Lynes continues to maintain our office computer hardware and software. Last year, he set up systems and helped with software selection, and this year he has been instrumental in maintaining them.

Many thanks are due to all of our office volunteers, as without them all of this could not be accomplished.

Building
In August, through a generous anonymous gift, and another smaller generous gift, we were able to lay a new floor and new carpeting in the sanctuary. Francis has done some painting in the upstairs corridor and sanctuary.

Elevator
Through most of the year this functioned well, but in February one of the door’s motors broke and the elevator was out of service for over three months, making it difficult for some members and friends to attend. The Property Committee found a company that could do the work our current company could not.

The Property Committee members together possess a remarkable range of talents and knowledges. We are fortunate to have them all in service to our congregation and its building.
COMMITTEE REPORTS

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Jeanette Anderson
Committee Members: Buffy Duhig, Muriel Gehman, Shirley Pratt, Louise Talbot

Mission Statement: Our mission is to collect, maintain and safely store any materials of continuing historical interest to First Parish. Through periodic exhibits in our collection, we try to interest members in their historic past. Another of our priorities is to help the staff and committees answer questions about past events. The present committee was organized in 1998. We meet twice a month on Tuesday mornings in the Youth Room.

May/June 2017—Three, third-grade classes from the Eliot School visited First Parish, May 25th, May 26th, and June 1, for a tour of the building and hands on demonstration of church artifacts. Needham third graders study Needham history in their social studies curriculum.

September 2017—The Archives Committee participated in the Volunteer Fair, organized by the Program Council.

October 2017—First Parish sponsored the annual Needham Historical Society Walking Tour. Committee member opened the church for interested visitors.

November 2017—On History Sunday, the Archives Committee exhibited old First Parish scrapbooks and albums during coffee hour. Committee members also participated in the Sunday morning service.

January 2018—The Archives Committee made the decision to archive the weekly Bell Notes as the Bellman ceased publication June, 2017. The Archives Committee will also resume archiving Parish Committee minutes; the Office Administrator is assisting us in filling in the gaps.

March 2018—The Archives Committee will archive 8-10 years of sermons by the Rev. John Buehrens, former minister 2002-2012 and former President of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

2018-2019—The Archives Committee is eager to help any committee if they wish to research their history at First Parish. We have annual reports, copies of the Bellman and Orders of Service, plus documents and articles for most committees. The Archives Committee will participate in the fall celebration of the 10th anniversary of the renovation of Parish Hall and the lower level of the church.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

Committee Chair: Lynne Rachlis
Committee Members: Darren Zinner, Tad Staley, Jim Leffingwell, Liza Gerber

Mission Statement: The mission of the Committee on Ministry is to support the work and mission of First Parish by supporting the minister in her mission to serve the First Parish congregation within its walls and within the larger communities of Needham and Metropolitan Boston, to support the ministries of the congregation in achieving their goals and growing their membership, and to support the general health and well-being of the Parish by promoting open communications and building trust between individual parishioners, the larger congregation, and Parish staff.
Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:

Goal #1: Supporting the Minister
The Committee on Ministry meets with the minister monthly. With the completion in September of Rev Catie’s final fellowship, the Committee’s focus has shifted to supporting her professional development goals including coursework in church administration and management, personal and professional time management, intern minister recruitment, staff supervision and program evaluation. The Committee also encouraged Rev Catie’s participation in the 2018 Conference of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) in Nepal and her return to India which has long been a personal source of spiritual and social inspiration.

Goal #2 Monitoring the Spiritual Health of the Congregation
The Committee on Ministry has initiated the Open Communications Project to enhance and expand the lines of communication between and among congregants, staff, and committees. The Committee has monitored and supported the success of the Worship Cafe which offers participating in Sunday Services in Parish Hall to promote the growth of a multi-generational community and to support the individual preferences or disability-related needs of a holistic community. In addition, the Committee surveyed congregants about their interest in becoming a Sanctuary Church prior to a congregational vote, fielding suggestions, comments, and concerns.

Goal #3 Renewing the Commitment to Intern Ministry
The Committee on Ministry discussed renewing the Parish’s longstanding mission of supporting new ministerial candidates, reviewed the steps required to reactivate this program, including administrative paperwork, program goals, candidate qualifications and recruitment, financing considerations, and interviews. The Committee successfully identified a superb candidate and re-established the Intern Minister Committee for September 2018.

Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year

Proposed Goal #1: Fielding the Congregational Survey
It has been five years since the last congregational survey was administered. At that time, we were ramping up our search for our new minister. The Committee on Ministry will evaluate that prior survey, pruning irrelevant questions and adding a few new ones. We will shepherd the administration of the online survey, hoping to get almost every member to participate. We will work with Parish Committee to evaluate the results and share our findings with the congregation.

Proposed Goal #2: Supporting Staff Beyond the Minister
With the resignation of the Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration, the Committee will support the Interim Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration, monitor the search for a new Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration, and continue to assist Rev Catie in her efforts to promote the successful provision of RE programming to the youth at First Parish. In addition, the Committee on Ministry will assist and support Rev Catie in her role as supervisor to the Intern Minister, including her concurrent participation in a course of study on the responsibilities specific to this new role.

Proposed Goal #3: Promoting Open Communication
The Committee on Ministry will maintain and monitor feedback from the congregation via emails, comment box and personal conversations. On a monthly basis, we will host a Social Hour table to encourage parishioners to share their thoughts, concerns, questions, or complaints. Input will be shared
among members of the Committee on Ministry, with Rev Catie, and with other First Parish committee leaders as appropriate. The success of the Open Communication Project will be reviewed regularly and modified to maximize the benefits to all members and staff at First Parish.

**Proposed Goal #4: Expand Congregational Participation on Committees**

The Committee on Ministry wants to help congregants find a path to expanding their participation on committees, enabling committees to attract volunteers whose skills and interests can enhance the committee’s goals, and enabling individuals to enjoy meaningful opportunities for broader social interaction and spiritual fellowship. By helping members of the Parish to “Find Your Fit” in the life of the First Parish, we hope to strengthen everyone’s engagement in the larger community. In addition, with the “retirement” of Tad Staley at the end of his term of services on the Committee on Ministry, we will begin the process of recruiting 1-2 additional Committee members for September 2018.

**Proposed Goals #5 Membership Expansion**

The Committee on Ministry supports the Membership Committee and First Parish generally in its mission to increase and retain membership, and develop leadership within the congregation. We regard the Worship Cafe, the Open Communication Initiative, the Intern Ministry Program, and the Congregational Survey to be vital components of this larger goal by enhancing the visibility of First Parish in the larger Needham community, fostering dialogue among congregants, clarifying and focusing congregational interests and concerns, developing leadership, expanding committee participation, and welcoming newcomers of all backgrounds and abilities.

**Proposed Goal # 6 Supporting the Minister**

Last, but hardly least, the Committee on Ministry will continue to support Rev Catie in her enthusiastic, intelligent, and compassionate ministry to the congregation of First Parish Unitarian Universalist Needham.

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**COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

**Committee Chair:** David Moore  
**Committee Members:** Marianne McGowan, Susanna Whitman  
**Mission Statement:** The mission of the Communications Committee is to ensure that Parish communications meet the needs of our members and friends, staff, and visitors. To fulfill this mission, the committee oversees key print and online publications, facilitates the communications efforts of other committees, works to ensure that our information and communications infrastructure is up to the task, and coordinates special projects as needed.

**Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:**

Goals listed in last year's annual report.

- **Goal:** Recruit new committee members in specific roles such as photo archivist, video producer, et al.

**Progress:** This continues to be a chronic area of concern. With David Mecsas stepping down as chair we are basically relying on two individuals to do the heavy lifting of publishing the weekly Bell Notes and maintaining the website. As opportunities present themselves we will continue our outreach to individuals with the interest and skills we need in this area.
• **Goal:** Continue on-time delivery of 50+ issues of *Bell Notes* and weekly updates of www.uunneedham.org.

**Progress:** Done. David Moore and Marianne McGowan continue to produce the Bell Notes on alternate weeks. David Moore has picked up David Mecsas’s role of maintaining and updating the website. Our hope is to add one more person to work on the *Bell Notes* with Marianne freeing up David to focus on other areas of concern.

• **Goal:** Make any necessary adjustments to *Bell Notes*, the website, and Facebook to compensate for the departure of the Bellman.

**Progress:** From the informal feedback we have received, it would seem that transitioning from the published paper *Bellman* to a digital *Bell Notes* has worked out well. To accommodate the few parishioners who do not have computer access we have changed publication of Bell Notes from Fridays to Thursdays. This allows Susanna Whitman the time needed to print and mail hard copies so they will be received no later than Saturday. With the end of the Bellman, we collaborated with the Archives Committee in establishing a protocol for the archiving of hard copies of the Bell Notes. This ensures the continued maintenance of a record of parish life.

• **Goal:** Continue to improve uunneedham.org, including: - Possibly modifying the home page to display the calendar more prominently - Posting of sermon PDFs - Continue developing a more robust blog, with multiple contributors, with a focus on committee contributions.

**Progress:** This past winter saw a major addition to the content of uunneedham.org with the development of an new section devoted to “Giving” at First Parish consisting of five pages: Donate Now, Giving at First Parish, Annual Budget Drive, Legacy Giving, and Resources. This was accomplished with the hard work of Katie Barnett and Nancy Simpson-Banker of the Legacy Giving Committee who created the content and worked with our web consultant, Bill Taussig, in designing the new pages.

We are continuing to work, time permitting, on the other areas mentioned above.

• **Goal:** Continue to improve our Facebook presence, specifically by maintaining a current listing of events on Facebook and recruiting more “posters”.

**Progress:** a work in progress. We have several leads that we are following up on for people who have expressed an interest in this area.

• **Goal:** Develop policies relating to the website, Facebook and other communications issues.

**Progress:** We have created a policy for contributing to the Parish Blog. It has been submitted to the pastor and awaits approval by various committees.

• **Goal:** Continue to produce and place media notices promoting FP activities and news with local, regional and UU media as appropriate.

**Progress:** Marianne McGowan has generously volunteered to take this on as part of her responsibilities. Thank you Marianne!

• **Goal:** Continue development of an online repository for our photo library.

**Progress:** This is largely still in the pending tray.

**Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year**

• **Goal:** A review of our entire website: updating, editing, etc.

• **Goal:** Recruit new committee members in specific roles such as photo archivist, video producer, et al.
• **Goal:** Continue on-time delivery of 50+ issues of *Bell Notes* and weekly updates of www.uunneedham.org.

• **Goal:** Continue to improve uunneedham.org, including: - Posting of sermon PDFs. - Continue developing a more robust blog, with multiple contributors, with a focus on committee contributions.

• **Goal:** Continue to improve our Facebook presence, specifically by maintaining a current listing of events on Facebook and recruiting more “posters”.

• **Goal:** Continue development of an online repository for our photo library.

**Other goals** that may be considered, resources allowing:

- Produce a high-quality "Welcome to First Parish" video for the website.
- Continue to work with other committees to optimize First Parish’s use of the Realm database.
- Investigate online document-sharing solutions for First Parish.

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**CONTINUING EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**Committee Chairs:** Eleanor Rosellini, Tad Staley

**Committee Members:** Recruiting.

**Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:** This committee is becoming active again, is working on programming, and will submit a report next year.

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**FRIENDS OF SOCIAL HOUR**

**Committee Chairs:** Molly Kerrigan, Muriel Gehman

**Committee Members:** Buffy Duhig, Mair Lustig, Tabby Rappolt, Judy Hadrick

**Mission Statement:** *The mission of the Friends of Social Hour is to provide the infrastructure and organizational support needed to maintain a vibrant weekly Social Hour at First Parish in Needham. Our Social Hour is a multigenerational opportunity for socializing and community building. It is a central part of the Sunday experience for all ages.*

**Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:**

- **Recurring Goal #1 set at beginning of year:** Replicate this year’s schedule for next year as much as possible. Have most slots filled by June.
  - Molly teamed with Eleanor R. in August to fill in Social Hour Helpers.
  - FOSH coordinated (and as need be supported) hosts for 40+ Sundays (4-6 hosts each Sunday). Many of the larger committees, Small Groups, and Neighborhood groups hosted twice -- once in the fall/winter and once in the winter/spring. The adult choir, Youth Group, PYC, and Homegrown Coffeehouse also hosted
  - Filled 8 open sign-up Sundays, including Christmas and Easter Sunday.

- **Goal #2 set in January 2018:** Simplify Social Hour guidelines and distribute to Social Hour Hosts.
• Molly and Muriel met to brainstorm ideas for simplifying Social Hour and thus making it less intimidating for Social Hour Hosts.

• Sent list of ideas to FOSH committee members for input & made recommended changes to guidelines.

• Muriel introduces the new *Simplified Social Hour Guidelines* by email to each Social Hour Host 7-10 days before they host.

**Goal #3 set at beginning of year: Recruit and train several new members &/or Back-up helpers for FOSH and Kitchen Crew.**

• Molly and Muriel attended the Program Council Volunteer Fair in the fall 2017. We recruited 8 new volunteers to help as occasional Back-up FOSH. One person expressed interest in joining FOSH as a full member but was unable to follow through with their original intent.

**Goal #4: Continue to host “light” Social Hours on quiet Sundays, such as Sundays after a Holiday, School vacation Week etc.**

• 4 “light” Social Hours (beverages and cookies were offered), were implemented with success

• This goal is in alignment with the intent to simplify Social Hour whenever possible

**Goal #5 Kitchen Clean Up and Reorganization**

• A thorough cleaning and reorganization of the kitchen occurred March 2018. All team members participated.

• Each month a Kitchen Crew member is responsible for basic cleaning and general upkeep of the kitchen.

• FOSH co-chairs are responsible for maintaining supplies.

**Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year**

• **Goal**: Replicate this year's schedule for next year as much as possible. Have most 2018-2019 slots filled by August 2018.

• **Goal**: Continue to work on making Social Hour less intimidating for Hosts by promoting Simplified Instructions and offering support where needed (ex. making coffee)

• **Goal**: Continue to work toward developing a more host-friendly model for Social Hour by following through with Rev. Catie’s willingness to help explore how other churches run Social Hour

• **Goal**: Continue to work toward engaging more members of First Parish in volunteering for Social Hour

• **Goal**: Hold FOSH/Kitchen Crew Meeting in Fall 2018 to set up monthly Kitchen Crew assignments, etc.

• **Issues**: Involving more members in hosting, rather than having the same people hosting multiple times, continues to be a struggle. Some members who are on multiple committees did more than their fair share, but generally we were able to spread the work more evenly, partly through getting the
Neighborhood Groups involved (the most inclusive groups). The hybrid model of asking committees and groups to host once or twice, and having a few open sign-up Sundays, has made the task of filling all the slots less challenging.

- **Other accomplishments**
  - FOSH members have continued to fill in on Sundays that need extra support, and continue to do an exemplary job taking on a wide variety of behind-the-scenes tasks necessary to keep Social Hour thriving and running smoothly.
  - Muriel Gehman has kept kitchen supplies stocked and has procured church-supplied juice, children's snacks, and coffee cakes.
  - FOSH met to brainstorm thoughts and concerns regarding proposed Worship Café. Muriel wrote up everyone’s contributions and Molly represented them at the Worship Café Committee Meeting 4/27/17.

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**GREEN CONGREGATION**

**Committee Chair:** Eleanor Rosellini, Susan McGarvey  
**Committee Members:** Susan Abbott, Elinor Brady, Linda Davis, Ross Donald, Ellen Fine, Jeff Friedman, Jan and Claire Galkowski, Tom Gehman, Katrina Kipp, Phil Lynes, Susan McGarvey, Deborah Niles, Suzanne Pelton, Ed Quinlan, Eleanor Rosellini, Mary Sprogell, Marvin Wilkenfeld.

**Mission Statement:** Guided by the UU Seventh Principle, “Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part,” the Green Congregation Committee (GCC) will strive to bring about positive environmental changes through congregational activities across all ages, personal lifestyle changes among the congregants, and involvement with the broader community. In so doing, the Committee will achieve and maintain Green Sanctuary certification under the Unitarian Universalist Association.

**Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:**

**Goal #1 set at beginning of year:** Continue our Green Sanctuary mission by planning activities in each of our four action areas: worship, religious education for all ages, sustainability, and environmental justice.

- **Sunday Welcome includes:** "We are a Green Sanctuary committed to care for the Earth and to work for eco-justice as we address the climate crisis."
- Environmental themes are included at least once a month in prayers, readings, story for all ages, or mentioned in the sermon.
- Reverend Catie often includes environmental themes in sermons and arranges for guest ministers who speak about the environment.
- Green Congregation members gave Welcomes with environmental themes on Sept. 24, February 11, March 18, April 22
- April 8: Green Congregation presents RE session on composting
- April 22: Earth Day intergenerational service, with children participating.
Education:

- September 24: Jan Galkowski, Needham Lyceum, "Food and its consistent supply in the context of climate disruption."
- October: Green Congregation publishes *Meatless is More!* a First Parish vegan/vegetarian online cookbook, with 76 recipes.
- November 12: First Parish hosts "Give Light: Spiritual Nurture for Climate Activism" workshop presented by Fred Small. 40 attendees, with 6 houses of worship cosponsoring.
- Feb. 11 Needham Lyceum. Jan Galkowski. Carbon emissions and climate: Where do we stand now, and what can be done if it all goes wrong?
- March 18: Claire Galkowski, Needham Lyceum, From single use to zero waste: What's new with the 3 Rs
- April 22: Alison Cross, Needham Lyceum, *Food Rescue: What is it and Why does it matter?* on MetroWest Food Rescue activities

Sustainability:

- From April 2017 through March, 2018, our solar panels produced 14,324 kilowatt hours of electricity. Since the panels were installed in March of 2013, they have produced 76,950 kWh, avoiding 103,190 pounds of CO2 and saving the church thousands of dollars on its electric bills.
- November: Green Congregation (Galkowski's and Susan McGarvey) begin collecting Social Hour food waste for home composting.
- Action of the Week Reducing/reusing/recycling packaging (Dec. 17); Avoiding paper cups (March 18); Avoiding single use water bottles (April 22).
- February 11: Mary Sprogell Rigid Styrofoam collection (brought to Polyfoam Precision Molded Plastics in Northbridge for recycling).
- March 25 Waste Audit: went through trash and recycling to see where improvements are needed.
- In April, we worked with Youth Group to find ways to encourage people to bring their own containers for Soup Sunday.
- May 20: Annual Roll and Stroll.

Environmental Justice:

- Three Green Congregation members attended the Feb. 14 Lobby Day at the State House, which included advocating for an environmental justice bill about solar energy.
• First Parish continued its support of the Needham Community Farm by donating the plate collection in April (except for Easter Sunday). Last year's donation was $572. This will probably be similar.

• Note that the Commit2Respond program ended in 2017, with First Parish fulfilling its commitments to carbon reductions and environmental justice (as recorded in our Annual Reports)

Goal #2 set at beginning of year: Follow up on our Green Sanctuary obligations by submitting a yearly report to the UUA. Eleanor will check to see if this is still required and where to send it.

Goal #3 set at beginning of year: Make our concern for the environment evident to visitors who come to the building.
  • Still to do: reminder signs to turn off lights, and publicize access to the website which monitors our solar output (include on FP home page).

Goal #4: Encourage all church committees to integrate concern for the environment in their regular committee activities. We continue to work with the Youth Group, Continuing Ed, Property Committee and Social Action (environmental justice) and Racial Justice Task Force, this year especially on waste reduction. This is the goal of Green Sanctuary – that First Parish’s “green” work is done in many ways and through many committees.

Other accomplishments
• Green Congregation raised $150 for the church this year, from donations triggered by Mass Energy Green Power sign-ups.

Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year
• Goals will be similar to last year's, with plans to participate in the community-wide GO GREEN Needham Campaign initiated by Green Needham Collaborative and the Needham League of Women Voters.

Issues:
1. For our events we would like more participation by young families, and we could always use more members (especially younger members) who can commit time and energy. Most of the work is done by a small number of people.

THE HOMEGROWN COFFEEHOUSE

Committee Chairs: Jim & Beth Sargent

Committee Members: No standing members. This 35 year old ad hoc group is made up of FP members willing to volunteer for production assignments. Each show takes approximately 30 volunteer hours to produce, or about 500 hours total each year. Tom & Muriel Gehman, Jim Long, Gray and Eli Brown, Paul and Leo Rooney, Jan Galkowski, and Dee Galacki have been regular contributors this year, and many others have helped out.

Mission Statement: The Homegrown Coffeehouse was launched as a First Parish volunteer activity in 1983, with a mission to bring to Needham a wide variety of the then “folk revival” performers that were just beginning to surge locally and nationally. We opened our 35th season this Fall, a real milestone in our long efforts, presenting nearly every major folk performer, and a lot of lesser-known folk artists, plus jazz artists, and pop performers touring nationally. Our First Parish-based folk club is widely recognized as one of the top venues in New England, with a national reputation for excellence.
Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:

- **Goal #1. set at beginning of year**: Continue to draw in new audience, nearly all from outside the FP community. **Done**

- **Goal #2. set at beginning of year**: Continue to present new artists as well as established acts. When possible, invite artists to stay over for a Sunday morning service. **Done.**

- **Goal #3. set at the beginning of the year**: Be deliberate in planning multiple performances by people representing the diversity of Unitarian Universalism and promote those shows within First Parish as action opportunities for our Social Justice volunteers. We’ve been especially successful this season in presenting top performers from the LGBTQ community. **Done.**

- **Goal #4.** Raise at least $8,000 for the FP general fund. This was the fourth consecutive year of challenging fundraising targets, and we fully expect to make our target. **Anticipated to be met by June 30.**

- **Goal #5.** Involve new people in the fundraising life of FP. **Done**

Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year

- **Goal**: Work on a fundraising target to $8,000 level, recognizing that snow, performer illness, and local competition can have an unpredictable, negative impact. (As has happened each of the last two seasons.)

- **Goal**: Continue to promote the Homegrown Coffeehouse as a premier venue in the Northeast and nationally.

- **Goal**: Continue to use the Coffeehouse as a gateway activity for people looking for an ideal first volunteer activity at FP. We will encourage the children of volunteers to help out -- creating a true multi-gen volunteer opportunity.

- Look to involve more of the performers in Sunday morning services, as their schedules allow.

Look for opportunities to promote performances by people of color and members of the LGBTQ community.

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THE LAURIE ANN GERBER MEMORIAL FUND

Committee Chair: Jeanne Gerber

Committee Members: Joe Gerber, Elizabeth Duhig

Mission Statement: We are looking forward to tweaking a new mission statement for the future.

Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:

- **Goal #1 set at beginning of year**: Continue Alternative Medicine Education

Accomplishments:

- This year the Laurie Ann Gerber Memorial Fund sponsored a talk by cancer survivor, Heidi Smith, from New Hampshire who had a stage 4 cancer. Heidi combined treatment of chemo therapy with a protocol from Dr. Bryzinski of Houston, TX.
• A donation of $2,000 from the fund was sent to the Universalist-Unitarian Urban Ministry to be used for summer employment of youth members of that congregation.
• Continue to offer the use of lending library books and DVDs on healthy living.

**Looking Ahead:** Continue our goal of helping to educate people about the relationship between food and health.

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**LEGACY GIVING COMMITTEE**

**Committee Chair:** Nancy Simpson-Banker

**Committee Members:** Katie Barnett, Jim Leffingwell, Eileen Vincent, Rick Vincent. Ad hoc members: Bob Rands and Bob Smart

**Mission Statement:**

**Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:**

**Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year**

A Legacy Giving Committee was formed in July of 2017 in response to the “Wake Now Our Vision” Challenge Campaign that was promoted by the UUA. To inspire new legacy gift commitments, First Parish in Needham qualified for a cash match of 10% of planned gifts estimated value (up to $10,000 per donor).

**Activities:**

- Mark Ewert was retained to conduct an audit and assist with the establishment of a legacy giving program at First Parish in July 2017.
- Letter was mailed to the congregation announcing the challenge in July 2017.
- Mark Ewert and Nancy Simpson-Banker provided a Legacy Giving overview to Parish Committee on August 24, 2017.
- Committee Meetings held in August, September, October and December of 2017
- Legacy Challenge announcement (from pulpit) by Nancy Simpson-Banker on September 17, 2017 followed by a table at the Volunteer Fair
- Individual outreach was conducted by the committee from August 2017-December 2017.
- Mark Ewert conducted an October 3, 2017 webinar for the following: Parish Committee, Legacy Giving Committee and Trustees of Invested Funds.
- Testimonial (from pulpit) from Bob Rands on October 22, 2017 followed by a Legacy Giving Workshop conducted by Jim Leffingwell and supported by Bob Smart
- Nancy submitted six Bellman notices that were cross posted on the website.

**Deliverables:**

- Mark and Nancy created Legacy Giving Policies which were approved by the Legacy Giving Committee
- Katie and Nancy developed a Stewardship Committee job description
- Katie and Mark developed a new section on “giving” for the website, which featured legacy giving.

**Results:**
Since the Legacy Giving Committee announced the Wake Now Our Vision Challenge campaign in September, 8 couples and 4 individuals have made legacy gift commitments totaling over $300,000 for First Parish in Needham. First Parish will receive approximately $30,000 in challenge funding in 2018-2019. All legacy gift intentions and the challenge funding will be included in First Parish’s Endowment Fund.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Tony Cicala
Committee Members: Kay Taylor, Laurel Davis, Jen Robins, Will Innis, Amy Brown, Gail Lehman, Grace Rising, Chris Pooley, Eliot Jekowsky (Parish Committee Liaison)

Mission Statement: The Membership Committee supports the work and mission of First Parish in Needham by:
1. Attracting and welcoming newcomers to First Parish
2. Introducing newcomers to Unitarian Universalism and First Parish
3. Connecting newcomers with the ministry, programs, religious exploration, outreach, and social programs of First Parish
4. Where appropriate, facilitating and supporting the journey of newcomers from first-time visitors to active members
5. Nurturing the experience of members of First Parish in their continued spiritual growth and ongoing commitment to the goals of First Parish.

Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:

• Growth has slowed down this year. We had an information session in the fall which resulted in about 5 new members. The new members represented an older demographic than in previous years. The spring has only indicated one person who will sign the book. We sponsored a “Bring-a-Friend-to-Church Sunday, which resulted in about 10 visitors. This imitative has yet to bear fruit.

• Our second priority is to nurture the membership of First Parish through a number of different initiatives. We are working with the new neighborhood map, recent visitors and members have been assigned to neighborhood groups, and some Membership Committee members are serving as neighborhood captains. In addition members of the Committee participate in the twice annual process known informally as the “Tending of the Flock”. In this process we look at all visitors, friends and members to determine their involvement in First Parish. We look at, among other things, who needs to be checked up on, who could fill committees’ needs and who might be overcommitted.

• We completed an information/orientation booklet that will bring together information about all the programs of First Parish in one document. This booklet we hand out to prospective members and has been of interest to existing members.

• We, with assistance from the FP admin, published a picture directory for the first time in 4 or 5 years and the first time using the Realm. As part of this process, we improved the accuracy of the data in the Realm. We also made a big push to get individual and family photos in the Realm. Since we only provided digital copies of the directory, the cost was very low. And so, we’d like to publish it on yearly basis. Thus giving us the opportunity to get more photos in the Realm.

Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year
• We will continue to refine our reach-out to potential members, to provide them with information and to help them get connected to the First Parish Community.

• We are looking into assigning “host families”, where appropriate, to assist new members in getting settled in First Parish.

• We will work with the appropriate groups and individuals within First Parish to craft a message of who we are and what we do in order to distinguish us from other faith communities within the greater Needham area.

• We will work closely with the Communications Committee (and whoever else) to determine to whom and how best to deliver that message.

• We will continue to think about ways to reach out to parents whose children have aged out of the RE program and perhaps left home so that they will continue to be involved at First Parish.

• We will work with Parish Committee on goals specifically related to growth.

• Issues:

  o We are concerned about retaining members, particularly those who children and teenagers are no longer active at First Parish.

Of all the many methods we use to communicate with members of First Parish, we still get a lot of “I didn’t know about that” statements. How do we communicate with our congregation?

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**MEMORIAL FUND AND GARDEN COMMITTEE**

**Committee Chair**: Elizabeth Duhig & Kay Taylor

**Committee Members**: Tom Gehman, Lyn Jekowski, Gail Lehman, Mair Lustig, Marylou Manzon, Amy Brown and Lynne Rachlis.

**Mission Statement**: To continue to accept Memorial gifts to First Parish, acknowledge same, and use the fund with guidance of the deceased's family for special needs of the church.

**Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:**

**Goal #1** – To continue to develop and maintain the Memorial Garden and gardens along Lincoln Street entrance through the year.

**Goal #2** – Two panes will be added to the Memorial Window in May which include 14 names.

**Accomplishments:**

  o Continued to maintain and add to gardens around the church and Wayside Pulpit.
  o Memorial gifts were received in memory of Roberta Crocker, Ed Lane and Earl “Jack” Adams.
  o Helped purchase additional grey hymnals “Singing the Living Tradition” and teal hymnals “Singing the Journey”.

**Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year**

  * To replace and replenish perennials as needed throughout the gardens
MUSIC COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Jessie Bowen

Committee Members: Carol Alper, Katherine Calzada, Ross Donald, Jim Sargent, Ginger Shapiro, John Smith; ex officio: Irina Georgieva, Music Director; Katherine Loftus Campe, Assistant Music Director for Youth and Intergenerational Programs.

Mission Statement: The mission of the Music Committee is to actively support the music program at First Parish (including adults, youth and children) in both vision and implementation; encourage participation in music programs; serve as a sounding board for staff, music participants and the congregation around music; support the development of an annual Music budget; and ensure the care and maintenance of the instruments owned by First Parish. The committee is composed of a diverse group of parishioners, who understand the vital role music plays in the life of the congregation, and are committed to implementing a music program consistent with the congregation’s vision.

Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:

• Goal #1 set at beginning of year: The Committee expects to complete the Hymnal Review Project by the end of the church year in June. The goal is to provide a brief description of the musical elements of each hymn (melody, harmony, rhythm, overall difficulty), which would help ministers decide on their hymn choices in the Singing the Living Tradition book.

• Goal #2 set at beginning of year: The Committee is successfully continuing to implement Hymn Leading during the services as a result of the positive feedback from the congregation. We’ve worked with Tom Gehman & Tom Pugh, Worship Café Producer, to make sure the hymn leaders are using the microphones in a way that optimizes the sound both in the sanctuary and the in the worship cafe.

• Other accomplishments
  o The Music Committee hosted our 4th Annual Christmas Carol Sing Along in December. There was a sizeable turnout. It was led by Kate Loftus Campe and Jim Sargent with piano accompaniment provided by Katherine Calzada.

  o Betty’s Singers, an a cappella group, is made up of choir members. They offer Hospice/Healing singing. This group was started in the fall of 2016 in honor of Betty Byers because they were able to sing for her during the last week of her life, which was very meaningful for all involved. Eight members of the group attended the Rowe Conference Center in June to learn about this special kind of singing in the class “On the Breath of Song: Singing for the Dying”. This has helped the group to focus on what is needed for different kinds of singing, whether it is for those who are nearing the end of their life, those who are homebound, or to be able to sing at Memorial Services for members of our church. They are continuing to grow the music selections for various kinds of singing events.

Due to Irina’s absence this fall, there was a significant need for a short-term Music Director to lead the Adult Choir and other planned musical guests. Justin Lundberg, our paid tenor soloist, was willing and able to step into the position and serve. Justin’s transition as a choir director was seamless as he is a consistent presence with the choir. He did a fabulous job making music with the adult choir group, and working with Kate to ensure all services had the necessary musical elements. His addition to the staff, although for a short period of time, was extremely successful.
Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year

Goal: To contact the director of the Roxbury Youth Orchestra, part of Revolution of Hope, a conservatory level after-school program. We would like to invite them to perform during a Sunday Service and then have them provide a concert immediately following the Coffee Hour.

- Goal: To continue to host the Annual Christmas Carol Sing Along in December.

- Goal: To continue to build the music program at the church with diverse music and involvement by many.

Issues: The choir has grown enough that the purchase of a second tier of risers is being considered. The limited space in the corner has to be carefully measured to see which risers will fit properly.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Alan Robins

Committee Members: Amy Brown, Amy Cicala, Katie Edwards, Eliot Jekowsky, Gail Hedges (ex officio)

Mission Statement: The mission of the Nominating Committee is to present a slate of Officers and members of the Parish Committee for the 2018-2019 year to the membership of the church at its annual meeting.

Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:

- To nominate Officers of the Church for the 2018-2019 year: The Nominating Committee hereby nominates officers as follows:

  As President – Darren Zinner; As Vice President – Beth Sargent; As Treasurer – Eric Bailey; As Clerk – Tracy Zendzian; As Auditor – Katie Barnett

- To nominate members for the Nominating Committee, the Trustees of Invested Funds, the Finance Committee and the at-large members of the Parish Committee: The Nominating Committee hereby nominates members of those groups as follows:

  Nominating Committee – Laurel Davis
  Trustee of Invested Funds – David Gerber
  Parish Committee at-large member – Jackie Boni
  Parish Committee at-large member – Karla Barbieri
  Parish Committee at-large member – Byron Doerfer

Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year

Goal: To present a slate of Officers and members of the Parish Committee for the 2019-2020 year to the membership of the church at its annual meeting.
PASTORAL CARE TEAM

Committee Chair: Janet Klein

Committee Members: Rev. Catie Scudera, Amy Cicala, Buffy Duhig, Lynne Franceschi, Judy Hadrick, Lyn Jekowsky, Fred Kresse, Helen Lane, Gail Lehman, Becky Siebens, Rick Vincent

Mission Statement: The mission of the Pastoral Care Team is to nurture a spirit of hope and caring that reaches out to all members and friends of our congregational community.

The Pastoral Care Team works together to:

1. Identify situations that need caring attention and make appropriate assignments to meet those needs;
2. Support and visit those who are unable to attend church regularly;
3. Support families and friends involved in caregiving;
4. Provide mutual support and fellowship for one another while also looking toward our own spiritual growth and enrichment.

Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:

- **Goal #1 Review our Mission at our annual retreat** in November, with a focus on setting reasonable goals: addressing current issues including summer challenges. Regroup, rebalance duties to share more equitably, brainstorm better functioning.

- **Goal #2 Recruit and welcome new members** (Amy Cicala, Lynne Franceschi and Gail Lehman) to replace those who had stepped down (Phil Griffith and Carolyn Lynes). Provide informal orientation, written resource materials, and follow-up guidance to new members.

- **Other accomplishments**
  - Continue to follow and visit with members who have chronic illnesses and acute pastoral problems.
  - Completed the Pastoral Care Lending Library in the Parlor, and again will let the parish know this resource is available via a Welcome in a Sunday service and a Bell Notes blog.
  - Continued the twice monthly Caregivers Support Group led by our member Lyn Jekowsky, a nurse with significant experience.
  - Continued the monthly Grief and Loss Support Group, led by social worker Andrea Goldberg, who specializes in grief counseling.
  - Betty’s Singers, a hospice and healing choir named in honor of Betty Byers, has continued to rehearse, build repertoire, and sing for memorial services and for those who are ill or in nursing homes. We have engaged Kate Campe to give us several classes in ear training and other skills to strengthen our a cappella singing.
  - Rev. Catie held monthly worship services at North Hill.
  - Sent sympathy cards before the December holidays for those who had lost a loved one in the previous year, and on the anniversary date of the loved one’s death.
  - Continued sharing highlights of the Candles of Joy and Concern in the Bell Notes.
  - Presented Doctor of Durability awards to celebrate the 90th birthdays of our members.
  - Planned summer pastoral care coverage for emergencies by a pastoral care associate of the week, with professional backup by Rev. Joanna Lubkin while Rev. Catie is on vacation. Monitored office phone calls during our administrator’s winter holiday and summer vacation.
- Hosted two Social Hours.

**Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year**

- **Goal:** Welcome the incoming intern minister Sally Fritsche to our pastoral care team.
- **Goal:** Coordinate with the newly re-formed Continuing Education Committee to present programs, such as showing the film *Holding Our Own: Embracing the End of Life*.
- **Goal:** Utilize a portion of our monthly meetings to deepen our understanding of our role and build skills in pastoral care.
- **Issues:** We need to continue to emphasize nurturing and refreshing ourselves spiritually so that we can reach out and support our members more effectively, in partnership with Rev. Catie. Equitably sharing our duties helps in that regard.

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**POSITIVELY AGING**

**Committee Members:** Phyllis Beck, Fred Kresse, Helen Lane, Kay Taylor

**Mission Statement:** To provide programs and to build community among the older people in the Parish.

**Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:**

**Goal #1** To bring our seniors together with programs of interest and an opportunity to have discussion and conversation.

- Needing Help - Call Springwell
- What’s New at the Senior Center
- Getting Old Is Time-consuming
- Holiday Potluck and Giving
- Revisiting Agism
- Must We Exercise
- Getting Around the High Cost of Cable
- Being a Midwife
- Brainy Ideas

**GOAL #2** To take stock of what we’ve done and what the group would like to see in the future.

This was accomplished by spending time in one session to glean ideas and feedback on our programs.

**Goal #3: To do some future leadership planning.** We were not able to get anyone to volunteer to be on our committee. This remains a goal

**Goal #4: To get new and younger members.** This remains a goal for the future

**Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year**

Work on Goals #3 and #4. Develop new Programs.
PROGRAM COUNCIL

Committee Chair: Beth Sargent, as Vice President, Parish Committee

Committee Members: chairs or designated representatives of First Parish Committees or Programs are Program Council Members:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Committee</th>
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<tr>
<td>Becca Malakoff</td>
<td>Social Action</td>
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<td>Becky Siebens</td>
<td>Racial Justice Task Force</td>
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<td>Beth Sargent</td>
<td>Program Council; Homegrown Coffeehouse</td>
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<td>Bruce Barnett</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
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<td>Buffy Duhig</td>
<td>Memorial Garden; Pastoral Care: FoSH</td>
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<td>Cathy Livingston</td>
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<td>Clark Taylor</td>
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<td>Dana Robinson</td>
<td>LRE Committee</td>
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<td>Darren Zinner</td>
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<td>Dave Mackey</td>
<td>Stewardship</td>
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<td>David Moore</td>
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<td>Eleanor Rosselini</td>
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<td>Erik Bailey</td>
<td>Finance</td>
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<td>Gail Hedges</td>
<td>Parish Committee</td>
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<td>Geri Sheehan</td>
<td>Welcoming</td>
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<td>Helen Lane</td>
<td>Small Group Facilitators; Positively Aging</td>
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<td>Janet Klein</td>
<td>Pastoral Care, Caring Crew, Caregivers</td>
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<td>Jeanette Anderson</td>
<td>Archives; Worship</td>
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<td>Jessie Bowen</td>
<td>Music</td>
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<td>Jim Sargent</td>
<td>Homegrown Coffeehouse; First Parish Singers</td>
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<td>Jodi Rooney</td>
<td>LRE Committee</td>
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<td>Kay Taylor</td>
<td>Memorial Garden</td>
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<td>Lynne Rachlis</td>
<td>Committee on Ministry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marianne</td>
<td>Youth-Adult; Racial Justice Task Force; Bell</td>
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<tr>
<td>McGowan</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<td>Mary Ann Oldfield</td>
<td>Property; Interior Arrangements</td>
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<td>Molly Kerrigan</td>
<td>Friends of Social Hour (FoSH)</td>
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<td>Muriel Gehman</td>
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<td>Rev. Catie Scudera</td>
<td>Minister</td>
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<td>Susan McGarvey</td>
<td>Green Congregation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tony Cicala</td>
<td>Membership</td>
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Mission Statement: The mission of the Program Council is to help committee chairs coordinate their activities and programs in support of the Church’s mission statement & vision and to serve as a forum to discuss issues and problems, inform each other and the Parish Committee on their activities and to look for support where appropriate. Additionally, the Council serves as a forum where programs can organically be identified and developed.
Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:

- **Goal #1: Provide a vehicle for cross-program communication and support.** We met 3 times over this past church year. All Council members were encouraged to bring their plans and needs to the meetings, and many participated in cross-program communication, offering advice and support to one another, and suggesting opportunities for cross-committee cooperation/joint programming. The Sanctuary Task Force brought information, requests for supportive activities, and opportunities for educating the parish in advance of the Annual Meeting in 2017, followed by a whole church vote during this church year. Representatives of other programs offered to support the task force in educating First Parish, and in providing support from their membership, once we began the role of a Level 2 Sanctuary.

- **Goal #2: Provide increased opportunities for First Parish members and friends to deepen their involvement in our faith community** Council meetings encouraged Program contacts/chairs to reach out to the First Parish community to create opportunities for members and friends to become more deeply involved in the mission and vision of First Parish. Volunteer Sunday was chosen as a proven vehicle for introducing First Parish programs/committees to meet that goal.

- **Volunteer Sunday:** Over the summer of 2017, the Program Council began planning our second Annual Volunteer Sunday, scheduled for the Sunday after Water Communion, September 17, 2017. All committees and programs were invited to participate. Feedback, post-event, was again very positive. Many groups reported an increase in interest in their programs, and several reported signups of new participants. Currently the Program Council plans to sponsor another Volunteer Sunday, on September 16, 2018.

*Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year*

- **Goal #1: Encourage individual program/committee chairs to reach out to the larger church community through**
  - “My Turn” style addresses embedded in Sunday services, typically a 5-minute talk about their program and opportunities to become more involved in that program.
  - Multiple programs could join together to host a more focused information fair during social hour.

- **Goal #2: Establish an annual Volunteer Sunday event on an appropriate Sunday early in the church year.**

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**PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

**Committee Chair:** Mary Ann Oldfield

**Committee Members:** Karl Heinz, Ed Quinlan, Carl Franceschi, George Rappolt, David Mecsas, Phil Pierce, Christy Cocchi, Paul Rooney, Jeff Heller; (ex officio:) Frederick Francis, Susanna Whitman

**Mission Statement:** The mission of the Property Committee is to maintain the facilities of First Parish in optimal condition to better support the activities of the congregation.

**Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:**
• **Goal #1 set at beginning of year**: Reduce our landscaping budget. New Image Landscaping & Joe Sullivan (Snow Removal) were hired August 2017. This change cut our landscaping costs by 1/3 this fiscal year.

• **Goal #2 set at beginning of year**: Replace Sanctuary flooring and carpet. New Sanctuary flooring and carpet (sans chancel) were installed in September 2017.

• **Other accomplishments**
  - Freddy Soto, our cleaner, continues to keep the building looking great; some examples - shiny floors, shampooed rugs, clean surfaces
  - Frederick Francis, our sexton, takes care of all minor issues, including concerns of our renters, in an efficient and timely manner.
  - New Image Landscaping & Joe Sullivan’s Snow Removal are taking care of our grounds with efficiency and care.

Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year

• **Goal**: Prioritizing and reserving funds for capital expenditures over $5000: i.e. Painting and repairing the steeple, Painting the sanctuary, Carpeting the choir loft & chancel

• **Goal**: Identifying a new elevator repair and maintenance company

• **Goal**: Identifying an acceptable floor finish amenable to the ballet

**Issues**: Frequent elevator repair issues. To complicate matters, the elevator parts to our elevator model are no longer manufactured. Plus, the maintenance company is slow to repair. Our elevator is a LULU, Limited Use Limited Application Elevator Lift. It is used beyond our Sunday Services and First Parish events daily by daycare & ballet parents with strollers adding to the wear and tear.

Currently there are limited funds for capital expenditures set aside each year to build a fund for significant and expensive maintenance projects as they come up.

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RACIAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

**Committee Chair**: Marianne McGowan, Becky Siebens

**Committee Members**: Rev. Catie Scudera, Katie Barnett, Wendy Blom, Amy Cicala, Linda Davis, Susan McGarvey, Joan Mecsas, Deborah Niles, Peter Panov, Clark Taylor, Jonathan Tholl, Pat Tholl.

**Mission Statement**: The mission of the Racial Justice Task Force is to live into the UU values of justice, respect, and equality by deepening our understanding of systemic racism in our culture; growing in our self-awareness of our own roles in a racist culture; developing our ability to live authentically in a multicultural world; and taking action toward creating a church, community, society, and culture that are not based on racism.

**Summary of Goals and Accomplishments**:

**Goal #1**: Offer multiple formats for learning about racism in our society, both to the Task Force and to the congregation. Progress toward this “internal” goal:
• Rev. Catie offered an Anti-Racism Teach-In in October as part of a larger effort by the UUA. The Teach-In was a Lyceum and was followed up by two discussions, one in November and another in March. Discussions focused on white supremacy in our culture and how those aspects are reflected in our church. The group discussed conducting an anti-racism audit of the parish during the 2018-19 church year. First Parish also participated in the first in a series of articles in the UU World magazine on racism in Unitarian Universalism.

• Our congregation hosted two Inter-racial Dialogue Potlucks, one in January and the second in May. The Task Force supported this effort, largely organized by Si Si Goneconto and a committee from the Needham community, by handling the serving and clean-up. We worked hard to make the event as environmentally sustainable as possible by eliminating disposable plates, cutlery, and drinking cups. The events were sponsored by the Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries and offered an opportunity for members of the Needham and other communities to come together and talk about issues relating to identity and social justice.

• Racial Justice hosted one of three break-out groups at a “flipped service” on February 25. The focus of the group, led by Becky Siebens, Wendy Blom, and Marianne McGowan, was identity, particularly racial identity. Excerpts from Peggy McIntosh’s White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack were used to focus the discussion, which was well-attended.

• We hosted a discussion of the book White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of our Racial Divide after the service on April 29. Linda Davis facilitated.

**Goal #2: Take specific actions to move toward a more just community in Greater Boston.** Progress toward goal:

• For the second consecutive year, we sponsored a team to participate in the Mother’s Day Walk for Peace in Boston organized by the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute in Dorchester on May 13. The leaders of the institute led a Lyceum and conducted the service on April 29. The institute was founded in 1994 to support victims of gun violence in Boston neighborhoods and to promote healing and peace. We exceeded our fundraising goal between the Walk and donating the plate, contributing ~$2000 to the Peace Institute.

**Goal:** Conduct a thoughtful church-wide discussion and decision-making process about putting up a Black Lives Matter sign, as an opportunity for dialogue. See this as part of a larger conversation to make the church’s values more visible on its exterior, e.g., through values-based banners or signs. Also, coordinate creating an FPN “parade banner” for use in marches/demonstrations. In both cases, act in concert with other FPN social/environmental action groups. Progress toward goal:

• A waterproof parade sign with a chalice was created and has been used by First Parish members during marches in Boston.

• A Banner Task Force was formed consisting of representatives from the four Social Action groups in the Parish: Racial Justice Task Force, Green Congregation, Welcoming Congregation, and Immigrant Ministry. The group is currently in communication with Parish Committee about educating the congregation and gathering input from various committees and groups within the parish to make the signage reflective of a wide variety of parish priorities. The goal is to finalize the specifics of the banners/signs/flags that will be displayed outside the church in fall 2018, with Parish and Property Committees voting on them.

**Goal:** Explore the possibility of deepening relationships with UU Urban Ministry as it takes its new mission in job-readiness preparation, and with Louis D. Brown Peace Institute (including but not limited to participation in the Mother’s Day Walk for Peace).
• Rev. Mary Margaret Earle, UUUM’s senior minister and executive director, preached at First Parish on January 21.
• Becky Siebens participated as a volunteer in their new employment readiness program.
• See above about the Mother’s Day Walk for Peace.

Goal: Re-evaluate our mission and method of operation.

• This year, we focused on sponsoring events rather than holding monthly meetings. We hope to reevaluate again in the fall.

Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year

New Goal: To conduct a parish-wide Anti-Racism Audit, looking closely at our culture, policies, and practices with an eye toward how they might reflect white supremacy. We plan to use materials from the UUA and from other churches who have conducted an audit. The audit will likely take the church year.

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

Committee Chair: Dana Robinson and Jodi Rooney.

Committee Members: Anne Innis, Liza Gerber, Eva Jansiewicz, Hogie Fitzgerald, Mark LaPointe (DLRE), and Alexis Capen (RE Assistant).

Mission Statement: The mission of the Religious Exploration Committee is to ensure that the RE program offered at First Parish in Needham meets the needs of congregation families, and is consistent with UU and First Parish principles.

Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:

The overarching goal of the Religious Exploration Committee, in partnership with the Director of LRE, is to oversee the curriculum, teaching guides, and resources provided and presented to our children.

Specifically, we strive to offer a program that supports our children’s exploration of the values embodied in our covenant with the seven UU principles. These items include:

• What it means to be a Unitarian Universalist
• Love, encouragement, compassion, and community
• Diversity and acceptance
• The search for one’s own spiritual truth
• Social action and service as part of the interdependent web
• The ability to make informed, ethical choices

• Goal #1 set at beginning of year: Recruit and support RE teachers enabling the program to resnet grade-level curriculum in collaboration with FP staff
  o Ensure that all RE families understand that participation is essential. This message is being built into communication from the RE committee and in signup forms for the RE program.
During the 2017-2018, we faced some gaps in recruiting adequate volunteers. This led us to look forward to next year to combine grades where appropriate including Pre-K-1st Spirit Play.

- **Goal #2 set at beginning of year:** Review and revision of the RE curriculum to reflect the evolving needs of our youth and congregation.
  - We chose to adopt the Spirit Play curriculum. The DLRE and a committee member were trained in the curriculum and will be assembling baskets to roll out next year.
  - Each curriculum is reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.

**Other accomplishments**
- Teacher experience—Repeated the “RE Teacher Soiree” to thank teachers and to encourage collaboration among grade-level teachers and throughout the program. The event had a good turnout and was well-received.
- Social action—Continued informal expectations that most grades participate in some social action project during the year.
- Outreach—Participated with the Safe Congregations Task Force and the Program Council.

**Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year**
- **Goal:** Improve teacher recruitment outreach and strategies to avoid gaps.
- **Goal:** Implement Spirit Play fully.
- **Goal:** Assist the new interim DLRE.
- **Goal:** Bring back the Parenting Your Children (PYC) program.
- **Goal:** Expand committee membership.

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**SAFE CONGREGATIONS TASK FORCE**

**Committee Chair:** Susan Camuti

**Committee Members:** Rev. Catie Scudera, DLRE Mark LaPointe, President Gail Hedges, Carl Franceschi, Dana Robinson, Bruce Barnett

**Mission Statement:** The mission of the Safe Congregations Task Force is to write a policy handbook on the safety issues of the congregation. Additionally, we will guide in the formation of a Safe Congregations Response Team toward the end of our work term. This Team will respond to issues regarding interpersonal safety and the safety of the congregation as a whole. We also conduct evacuation/emergency drills once a year and train a team of Marshalls once a year who assist in these emergency drills and any real emergencies.

**Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:**

**Goal #1:** Continue to write and have approved by the Parish Committee policy pieces toward the formation of a policy handbook on safety. We have completed six of the eight policy pieces needed. The seventh is waiting for approval and the eighth will be submitted for approval on April 8th.
**Goal #2:** Conduct a fire drill held at the end of the service. The drill was done, all congregants and staff were out in under four minutes. We will continue to educate the parishioners about the need for silence throughout the drill.

**Goal #3:** Hold a Marshall training for those people willing to assist in emergency drills and actual emergencies. We trained 21 people.

**Other accomplishments:** Three committee members attended a day-long training held by Homeland Security and the FBI on how to handle an active shooter situation as well as other safety issues. This information has informed the policy piece on disruptive and dangerous person situations, will inform the Marshall training in the fall, and will inform our next safety drill. Additionally we are now in touch with the Emergency Management Director in Needham and he has our emergency contact info in case of emergency when the building is unattended.

**Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year**

**Goal:** To complete RE safety policy pieces

**Goal:** To hold a Marshall training in the fall

**Goal:** To hold a safety drill in the fall

**Goal:** To guide the formation of the Safe Congregations Response Team.

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**SMALL GROUP MINISTRY**

**Committee Chair:** Cathy Livingston and Helen Lane

**Committee Members:** Grace Rising, Carol Alper, Rebecca Keller-Scholl, Rev Catie Scudera.

**Mission Statement:** *The mission of the Small Group Ministry Facilitators Group is to organize, promote, and implement the UUA Small Group Ministry Program to further the mission of First Parish.*

**Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:**

**GOAL #1:** To provide information about Small Group Ministry (SGM) to the congregation. The congregation was informed about SGM through “Welcoming” at Worship Services in September and January, a staffed-information table in Parish Hall, postings in the Bell Notes and an invitation to join a mini SGM session.

**Goal #2:** To maintain present groups and to organize new groups as the need arises. New facilitators were trained at a retreat and Grace Rising and Rebecca Keller Scholl facilitated the Thursday morning group and the Thursday evening group respectively. Several new members were incorporated into various groups. We continue to have 4 evening groups and 2 morning groups.

**Goal # 3:** To update information on the Web, in pamphlets and elsewhere. The SGM pamphlet was revised and distributed, and information on the Web was updated.

**Goal#4:** To meet regularly to share and discuss group session material and matters of group facilitation.

The SGM facilitators meet monthly in an effort to support the ongoing benefits of the SGM practice.

**Goal #5:** To recruit and train new facilitators as the need arises.
Four facilitators were recruited and trained and two of them took over Thursday groups. Two others did not form groups.

**Goal #6: To articulate procedures for the process of becoming a SGM participant.** This procedure is in place and is a guide as we welcome new members.

**Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year**

Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, are ongoing goals to be continued in 2018-19.

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**SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE**

**Committee Chair:** Clark Taylor

**Committee Members:** Cassie Bailey, Joan Benzie, Peter DiMarzio, Eva Jansiewicz., Becca Malakoff, Deborah Niles, Logan Packard, Zack Packard, Will Rico, Eleanor Rosselini, Catie Scudera (ex-officio), Becky Siebens, Pat Tholl, Rick Vincent, Tracy Zinner.

The SAC continues to meet at 6:30 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of the month in order that members with small children can get home in time to have their children in bed at an appropriate hour. New members are welcome.

First Parish’s Social Action Committee (SAC) is a hub of a number of different social action programs in the church:

- Racial Justice Task Force,
- Green Congregation Committee,
- PATH (People Against Human Trafficking),
- Generic Ministry, which serves basic needs of the homeless.
- Youth Group, including its yearly mission trip.
- Immigrant Ministry and Sanctuary Committee.

Many of these activities will be represented in other pages of this annual report. There are additional social action activities that members of the church participate in individually. These include the Mitten Tree and the Grow Clinic. In addition, the religious exploration program has a component of social action as a part of its program. Finally, some individuals are involved in programs of the UU Urban Ministry.

The mission statement of the FP Five Year Plan identifies the church as one that “works for social and environmental justice initiatives locally and throughout the world.” The Plan also includes the words “making social and environmental justice more central to our identity.” The SAC aspires to bring life to these statements such that when members are asked about the program of our church they will automatically be moved to say, “Our church is one which features social and environmental justice.” The hope is, as the plan puts it, is “the creating of an environment where all of the SAC initiatives see themselves as part of one integral social and environmental justice program of the church.” That is achieved, in some measure, at least, as the leaders of the various programs meet monthly to report to each other and learn from each other.

Additional programs, while not directly related to the SAC, also express the church’s commitment to social justice. One of those is a series of potluck dinners in which discussions on race relations are held at the tables where six or eight people are seated. The first in the series of these potlucks drew a capacity
crowd of some 120 people. The Parish Hall area was filled to capacity. Another potluck, capped to be somewhat smaller number, will be held soon. It will also focus on a discussion the issues of racial justice.

Another promising program is represented in the decision of the whole First Parish community to become a “sanctuary-supporting congregation.” The vote took place on December 10, 2017 when 90 people voted for it in a unanimous decision at a special congregational meeting. This represents a decision on the part of the whole church to support the interests of immigrant people at a time when they are under attack throughout many parts of our country. Sanctuary, as a national program, exists at two “levels.” Level 1 involves providing housing for an immigrant or immigrant family. Level 2 is a faith community that provides support to a Level 1 unit. Such support can involve accompaniment of the individual or family that is housed in a Level 1 faith community. As a result of our vote we are a Level 2 sanctuary-supporting community.

It is significant to note that the sanctuary vote represented the church’s decision to undertake an action that is not formally legal. This roots in the fact that undocumented immigrants are in the country illegally. The church, in plain language, made a decision that the wellbeing of immigrants—many of them who have lived in the U.S. for many years as law-abiding non-citizens—is a very high priority.

In closing, the primary purpose of the SAC is to stimulate First Parish members to see that social justice action is central to the well-being of our life together and to participate in that action to the greatest extent possible.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Phil Lynes

Committee Members: Jeanette Anderson, Jim Leffingwell, Joan Mecsas, Liz Rover-Bailey, David Berman, Bobby Jorgenson, Rev Catie Scudera (ex officio).

Mission Statement: The Worship Committee is concerned with all aspects of the worship experience. The Worship Committee works with the Minister on the design of weekly and long-term worship experience at First Parish. The Worship Committee oversees the summer component of worship and coordinates worship for Sundays when the Minister is not in attendance. The Committee works with the LRE Minister, the RE Committee, the Music Director, the Children’s Choir Director, the Music Committee, the ushers team, the flower coordinator and other committees to ensure smooth functioning before, during and after each service. It also serves as a resource for the congregation to incorporate their ideas and respond to concerns about the worship experience.

Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:

- Coordinate Worship in the Absence of the Minister: The committee has worked hard to ensure worship is coordinated in days that the minister is not in the pulpit. In the 2017-2018 church year, this meant we organized and assisted with the services involving following guest preachers:
  - Oct 8: Indigenous Peoples Day: Rev Dr. Michelle Walsh
  - Nov. 26: Rev Jim Sherblom
  - Dec 31: Rev Suzanne Skubik Intrilligator
  - Jan 21: Rev Mary Margaret Earl (UU Urban Ministry)
  - Feb 11: Rev Sarah Lammert
• Feb 18: The New Sanctuary Movement: Gabby Chavez & Nestor Pimienta
• March 18: Rev Eva Cameron
• April 29: Louis D. Brown Peace Institute
• (Planned: May 27: Memorial Day: Elisa Permain - Storyteller)

**Support Year-Round Worship:** The committee provides a worship helper each week to insure that the sanctuary facilities are prepared for each service and tidied afterwards. Towards this end we arranged with the Property Committee this year to obtain a few colorful fabric coverings for the chancel table. As of this writing we plan to participate in the preparation of a list of suggested monthly themes for the coming year.

**Organize Parish Hall (Summer) Services:** Phil Lynes has agreed to serve as Summer Services coordinator again. As of this writing we are in the early stages of securing summer services leaders and worship associates.

### Other accomplishments:

- We arranged to have the Braille Hymnal purchased in recent years bound in a multi-volume set with a table of contents by the staff at the Perkins School for the Blind and since then have been making it available to any visually impaired congregant who might wish to use it.
- We arranged for the weekly sayings and quotations which the sexton mounts in the wayside pulpit and which were inventoried last year to be cataloged and sorted according to Rev Catie’s preferred selections so that they align with the monthly themes and the weekly sermon topics.
- We asked the Property Committee to arrange for Wheelchair signs in the locations where we want space to be reserved for those who need it and our request was granted.
- As in previous years we hung Christmas decorations (wreaths and window candles) for the Advent season.

### Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year

1) **Goal A:** To involve and coordinate our worship services planning with the incoming ministerial intern.

2) **Goal B:** Support the continuing expansion of the committee— Having lost Scott last year and Liz this year we are recruiting for new members again. We hope to reduce the logistical demands on any individual committee member—but hope to do so in a way which preserves committee cohesiveness.

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**YOUTH ADULT COMMITTEE (YAC)**

**Committee Chair:** Marianne McGowan

**Committee Members:** Cassie Bailey, Alexis Capen (ex-officio), Molly Kerrigan, Ryan Kerrigan, Mark La Pointe (ex-officio), Zach Packard.

**Mission Statement:** YAC is comprised of Youth Group representatives, adult volunteers, parents, and the Youth Group Advisor. YAC strives to support the mission of the Youth Group. Please see the specific Youth Group goals, as described below:
- To provide youth with a safe and affirming social environment in which they can build strong bonds of friendship, experiment with their own identities, and grow as social beings within the community;
- To give youth a place and the tools to explore religious understandings and spiritual issues – issues of meaning, purpose, ethics, and responsibility;
- To expose our youth to Unitarian Universalism, giving them a greater understanding and ownership of our religious tradition;
- To help our youth grow to be responsible members, contributors, and leaders in the communities they belong to, including, the First Parish community, the Needham and Greater Boston community, the district and continental Unitarian Universalist community, and the world community;
- To help our youth feel connected to the world through direct service and reflection, and to help them explore and think about important social issues;
- To reach out to youth who are searching for community or grappling with religious and spiritual questions.

With this as our mission, the YAC strives to foster and create an inclusive and welcoming community, open to the presence and contributions of all youth.

**Summary of Goals and Accomplishments:**

1. **Goal:** To select a new Youth Program Coordinator to replace Kate Loftus Campe, who served as an interim coordinator for one year.

   **Accomplishments:** At the end of the 2016-17 church year, a committee was formed to search for and hire a new Youth Program Coordinator. Members of that committee were Mark LaPointe, DLRE; Marianne McGowan, YAC chair; Karla Barbieri, parent of a senior youth and a junior youth; Alan Robbins, parent of a senior youth and a junior youth; Cassie Bailey, senior youth; and Zach Packard, senior youth. The committee interviewed four applicants. The position was offered to and accepted by Alexis Capen, who also was hired to be the assistant DLRE. Alexis began serving in both positions in September 2017.

2. **Goal:** To recruit more members for the committee, as we will lose our three senior youth members.

   **Accomplishments:** This is an ongoing goal and one that will require more targeted outreach this coming year. YAC was represented at the annual Volunteer Fair in September, but without anyone coming forward to serve on the committee. Our committee currently has an equal ratio of adults to youth, which is a healthy balance and which reflects the willingness of our youth to serve in the parish.

Previous goals that were carried over:

1. **Goal:** To increase consistent Senior Youth attendance and engagement in the Senior Youth Group, including those on different school calendars, and to increase awareness of the Senior Youth Group with the greater congregation.

   **Accomplishments:** This year, the senior Youth Group welcomed nine freshmen, which boosted the size of the group. Participation of high school students in the parish who attend private school did not increase despite our efforts of the previous year. Efforts were made to integrate the freshmen into the group. This came to fruition during the service trip, which provided more opportunities for the freshmen to connect in meaningful ways with the older teens.

The Youth Group’s presence within the congregation has been greatly enhanced through the Soup Sunday program, which occurs on the first Sunday of every month. In addition to raising money for the service trip, selling delicious, home-made soups creates a feeling of good will among the adults and youth in the church. The youth take the lead role in setting up and selling the soups under the supervision of an adult volunteer.
2. **Goal:** To incorporate spiritual activities that are meaningful to the Senior Youth in the Senior Youth Group meetings.

**Accomplishments:** Alexis started a version of Neighboring Faiths with a talk about Islam by her husband, who is a Kurdish Muslim. Both youth groups participated in the UUA’s White Supremacy Teach-In during their meetings in October. Alexis also introduced discussion topics such as the “Me Too” movement. The groups also engaged in fun activities, such as trip to Boda Borg, two lock-ins at the church, and holiday activities.

3. **Goal:** To participate in meaningful service projects, including but not limited to the annual service trip.

**Accomplishments:** The Youth Group went on their annual service trip in February to New Orleans. This was the 7th biannual trip to New Orleans since Hurricane Katrina struck Louisiana and the Gulf Coast in 2005. We had a large group this year. Fifteen youth and five adults spent a week in New Orleans under the auspices of the Center for Ethical Living and Social Justice Renewal (CELSJR). All five adults were volunteer chaperones. There usually is at least one staff member on the trip, but this year, Alexis got the flu just before the trip and was not allowed to travel. The trip went well and the youth shared their experiences with the congregation at the annual Youth Service on March 25. It is likely that this trip was the last service trip to New Orleans. Our goal is to find another area hard hit by hurricanes, such as Texas or Puerto Rico, when the infrastructure can support service work. We will continue staying more local during the alternate years.

The service trip continues to be an area of growth for the youth, who learn about social justice and expand the limits of their comfort zones doing the work of the trip. They also value the interpersonal relationships fostered by the trip.

4. **Goal:** To continue providing opportunities for the Senior Youth to take on leadership roles, such as participating on First Parish Committees and/or teaching Religious Education.

**Accomplishments:** Some of the youth have embraced this goal and taken on leadership roles at First Parish, including participating on Committees, such as YAC and Social Action, and teaching RE.

5. **Goal:** To improve communication both within the Senior Youth Group, and with the Youth Group leadership and Senior Youth Group parents.

**Accomplishments:** Communication continues to be strong. Alexis is mindful of safe congregation policies regarding electronic communications with youth, and parents continue to be well informed.

**Looking ahead — preliminary goals and issues for next year**

It is likely that many of the goals from this year will be continued in some capacity next year, as these goals are critically important to the success of the Senior Youth Group, and the challenges are always changing. In addition, we will consider the following:

- **Goal:** Covering the leadership of the youth groups during Alexis’ upcoming maternity leave in November and December. Rev. Catie, other staff members, and adult volunteers will work together to ensure a smooth transition.

- **Goal:** To recruit young adults from the congregation to participate in Youth Group activities and serve as chaperones on service trips.
FINANCE COMMITTEE

Treasurer: Tim Brennan / Finance Committee: Erik Bailey

As in past years, this report is organized into the following sections: Report on Last Year (FY17: 2016-2017), Report on Current Year (FY18: 2017-2018), and Report on for Next Year (FY19: 2018-2019). The Last Year and Current Year sections were authored by Tim Brennan (Treasurer); the Next Year section was authored by Erik Bailey (on behalf of the Finance Committee).

Report on Last Year (FY17: 2016–2017)
Due to the timing of our Fiscal Year (July 1 - June 30) and Annual Meeting (late May of each year), it is not possible to report on a complete fiscal year at Annual Meeting. Therefore, a brief summary is presented here of the finances from the previous year, now that they have been closed.

The year ended with a surplus of $16,400 compared to a budgeted loss of $10,000. While pledge income for the year was less than the budget of $346K at $332K, other donations more than made up for this. Total income for the year was $471K, $19K more than the budget. Expenses were managed carefully, with the year-end total under the budget by $7,000.

The current church year (FY18, representing July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018) is progressing well from a financial perspective. The information contained here is based on 8 months of actual data (July 2017 through February 2018), plus projections for the rest of the fiscal year. As is the case each year, final numbers will not be available until September.

The 2017-2018 church year has been successful financially with strong pledge support and good financial management. For this credit goes to Rev. Catie, our administrator Susanna, and our bookkeeper, Jen.

This year’s budget set an ambitious goal of increasing total revenue. It appears that the congregation will achieve this due to two main factors:

- Pledge income is strong and on track to hit the budget of $343K. This assumes that members continue to be diligent about meeting their pledge commitments.
- The Auction was very successful this year, bring in over $23K, well in excess of the budgeted goal of $20K.

Meanwhile, expenses have been well managed and are trending below budget. At this writing we are projecting a modest surplus of about $20K (about $10K more than the planned budget surplus). Since the Auction happens once every two years, we typically plan to spend half of the proceeds in the year of the auction and carry over half to the next year. From and accounting perspective, this shows up as a surplus in one year and a deficit in the next. But it is part of the congregation’s multi-year financial plan and reflects prudent management.

The budget for staff compensation reflects the congregation’s multi-year effort to bring all staff to at or above the UUA’s “Minimum” compensation level for our category of church (Mid-Size II, Geo Index 5). Next year the congregation will face an additional challenge in achieving fair compensation because we have been reclassified into the Geo Index 6 with attendant higher compensation levels.

Included in this year’s expenses is a significant capital expenditure – a new floor for the Sanctuary. This was made possible by two anonymous donations, one for $10,000 and one for $5,000. The balance of the $26K cost was funded from operating budgets.
Finally, this fiscal year has seen the launch of the Worship Café. There is additional expense for this program, primarily the cost of staff to manage the live video feed from the sanctuary to Parish Hall. But this expansion allows us to be more welcoming to newcomers and those who prefer the more relaxed atmosphere of the Café.

The budget process for Fiscal Year 2018-2019 ("FY19") has built on everything that has been done in the past few years, and has refined some of the line items that have been under or over budget recently. In addition, several new line items have been added to reflect our growth as a congregation. Specifically, the following changes have been made compared to last year (FY18):

I. Revised Income Estimates

A. Due to favorable rates of return in our two endowment funds (the Unrestricted Endowment and the John Beuhrens Fund for Youth Ministry), the estimated amount to be received through these funds has increased.

B. The Plate Collection has been going well, and the estimate for the First Parish share can be increased slightly.

C. The rent estimates for NCC and Charles River Ballet Academy have increased – NCC due to the contractual increase tied to CPI, and CRBA due to better alignment of budget versus actual.

II. Staff and Compensation

A. We are pleased to conclude the three-year staff compensation adjustment initiative! The proposed FY19 budget funds all four major staff positions at the UUA Geo Index 5 Midpoint (based on 2017-2018 numbers). This has been a lengthy process, and we are deeply grateful not only to the dedicated staff of First Parish but also to the Congregation as a whole for supporting these increases as a priority.

B. The new compensation amounts and increases are as follows (all new salaries match the Pro-Rated 2017-2018 Geo 5 Midpoints as described in last year’s Annual Report):

1. **DLRE**: $53,250 (full time), increase of $4,235 (8.6%).
2. **Susanna**: $42,429 (6/7 time), increase of $1,340 (3.3%).
3. **Irina**: $28,700 (1/2 time), increase of $2,027 (7.6%).
4. **Kate**: $11,700 (1/4 time), increase of $514 (4.6%).

5. For reference, the UUA’s Salary Recommendations are available at: [http://www.uua.org/careers/compensation/fair/congregational-staff](http://www.uua.org/careers/compensation/fair/congregational-staff)

B. Per the UUA, “We did not increase salaries in the 2017-2018 year. For 2018-2019, all salaries have been increased by 4%, adjusting for wage changes over 2 years.” This increase is not included in the above numbers; it will need to be considered in future First Parish budgets.

C. Additionally, the UUA has actually moved First Parish from Geo Index 5 to Geo Index 6 for this upcoming year, adding additional complexity to the compensation process. The Midpoint numbers for Geo 6 are considerably higher than Geo 5, and it will take some time to achieve these. Other Geo 6 churches in MA are located in Boston, Brookline, Dedham, Dorchester, Foxborough, Franklin, Jamaica Plain, Milton, North Easton, Quincy, Roxbury, Stoughton, West Roxbury, Westwood, and Weymouth; in particular, note that Newton, Wellesley, and Weston are all Geo 5 (not 6).
D. Pro-rated 2018-2019 Midpoint numbers for each position above (which, as described above, are 4% higher than the 2017-2018 Midpoint numbers achieved this year by First Parish) are shown below – *these should be regarded as targets for the upcoming years*:

1. **DLRE**: $55,400 (Geo 5), $58,350 (Geo 6)
2. **Parish Administrator** (Susanna): $44,143 (Geo 5), $46,500 (Geo 6)
3. **Music Director** (Irina): $29,850 (Geo 5), $31,450 (Geo 6)
4. **Choir Director** (Kate): $12,163 (Geo 5), $12,813 (Geo 6)

E. The proposed budget also includes a $1/hr (5%) increase in the hourly wages for the Sexton and Cleaner positions, to $21/hr.

F. The RE Administrator position has been reduced to its normal level, since the additional hours for covering Mark LaPointe’s sabbatical (as discussed in last year’s report) are no longer required.

G. The Bookkeeper role is requiring fewer hours than anticipated, so the budget amount for this has been reduced slightly, based on the current run rate.

H. A new position for Worship Café Audio-Visual Operations has been created for this upcoming year. This has largely been staffed through volunteer hours so far, and now that the Worship Café has stabilized and is successful, it is time to provide paid resources to staff it. This was expected and planned; last year’s report to Annual Meeting noted, “The best estimate is currently $4,000 for the year,” which is what has been budgeted.

I. Finally, a new staff member will be joining us for the 2018-2019 church year: Sally Fritsche as our new Intern Minister! First Parish has been without an Intern Minister since the John Beuhrens era, so it is exciting to bring back this beloved First Parish tradition. The full requested compensation amount ($10,200, plus a $1,000 Professional Expenses allowance) was able to be allocated.

### III. Expense Line Items

A. The mortgage on the building construction was renegotiated this past year, resulting in a $1,200 per year savings, which has been reflected in this budget.

B. The Guest Ministers line has been reduced by over 50%, because Sally will be taking on the bulk of services when Rev. Catie is not present.

C. Several line items have been adjusted to better reflect actual spending amounts.

D. The PYC (“Parenting Your Children”, née “Parents of Younger Children”) budget line item has been removed, as the group no longer exists (perhaps it will be re-formed in the future).

A. The UUA and New England Region dues have been restructured. The old method was a straightforward calculation based on membership ($60 per member to the UUA, and $19 to the NER); the new method uses a calculation of 6.75% of the previous year’s expenditures, adjusted based on Geographic Index. Under this formula, First Parish’s expected contribution has increased by almost $2,000 compared to last year, with a new combined Dues amount of $24,036.

### FY19 Budget

Through the wonderful generosity of the congregation, strongly responding to the challenge to bring in our new Intern Minister, fully fund the Worship Café, and pay our staff fair wages, we project total Pledge income to be approximately **$351,000** for FY19. Coupled with anticipated Donation income of $15,000, this results in a total expected income receipt from Members and Friends of **$366,000** for FY19.
This pledge commitment is a 2.3% increase over FY18 (less than the 3.6% increase last year, but there were a few departures of high-pledge-amount individuals that limited our growth potential). The average pledge was $2,275, and the median was $1,750. Almost half of pledges increased over last year, and 9 families pledged for the very first time!

A Mini-Auction is planned for FY19, which along with other fundraisers is expected to raise approximately $6,000. FY19 will use the second half of the funds from the full Auction last year ($10,000), as planned and previously budgeted.

Additionally, we expect to receive approximately another $110,000 from various sources (building rental being the largest), for a budgeted total income of $481,759.

Our budget has expected expenses of $491,759 (inclusive of a small Contingency) and $10,000 as expected “negative net income” (i.e., a $10,000 deficit, to balance FY18’s equivalent surplus).

The tables on the following pages provide first a high-level view of the budget on the first page (all income lines and a summary of the expense lines), and then complete expense detail per category on subsequent pages. Variance from FY18 budget is shown where there were changes. This budget was approved by the Parish Committee at the April 19, 2018 meeting.

We extend our gratitude to the membership of the congregation for its generosity and commitment to First Parish, enabling us to fund the programming of the church in a way that is as fair and beneficial to all as possible. We look forward to a wonderful 2019-2019 church year!

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<th>FY18 Budget</th>
<th>FY19 Proposed</th>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>FY19 Proposed</td>
<td>Variance</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------</td>
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<td>Minister Discretionary Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guest Ministers</td>
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<td>Youth Music Director Payroll Tax</td>
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<td>Music Accompanists/Singers</td>
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<td>Music Expenses</td>
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<td>Office/Governance Expenses</td>
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<tr>
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<td>FY18 Budget</td>
<td>FY19 Proposed</td>
<td>Variance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
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<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship Café A/V Comp</td>
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<td>Office Equipment &amp; Copier</td>
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<td>Computer Services &amp; Software</td>
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<td>Postage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone/Internet</td>
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<td>Website Expense</td>
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<td>Stewardship</td>
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<td>Total Office/Governance Expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denominational Affairs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dues - UUA and New England Region</td>
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<td>$24,036.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dues - New England Region</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dues - UUA</td>
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<td>General Assembly</td>
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<td>$600.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Denominational Affairs</td>
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<td>Other Expenses</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Capital Purchases</td>
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<td>Contingency</td>
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NOTE: This budget is intentionally not “balanced” – it has a planned $10,000 deficit, due to the 2017-2018 Auction (whose revenue is spread over two fiscal years).
To the Members of First Parish in Needham,

As a member of First Parish, and appointed auditor for this fiscal year, I have reviewed the records and financial reports of First Parish in Needham for this year.

The review included inspection of income and expense reports, monthly reconciliation reports, bank statements, and credit card statements. I also reviewed monthly payroll reports and several transactions including mortgage payments, utilities, and other expenses, noting all are up to date and documented. Insurance documentation for the church and regular renters of the church was examined and current.

While this audit would not necessarily disclose all errors, I found no evidence of significant errors in the records. I have submitted a more detailed report available to the Parish Committee.

My inspection and report are not meant to be construed as an audit and opinion rendered by a Certified Public Accountant.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Barnett
TRUSTEES OF INVESTED FUNDS
2017-2018 Financial Year

Trustees: Bob Rands, John Gallo, Gray Brown

Summary of Endowment - Invested Funds
Prepared April 8, 2018 by the Trustees of Invested Funds

Article VIII, section 6 of the Church bylaws stipulates “The trustees of Invested Funds shall hold all legacies, permanent donations, funds, securities, and endowments heretofore or hereafter transferred to them by the Church, the Meetinghouse Fund, the Memorial Fund, or the Parish Committee.” The section also defines an annual spending policy of endowment funds - “Subject to any restrictions applicable to income earned on restricted gifts, legacies, or special purpose funds, the Trustees shall pay over to the Treasurer annually a percentage of funds equal to the previous year’s Consumer Price Index (CPI) as defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, bounded by a minimum payment equal to two percent of the applicable funds and a maximum payment equal to five percent of the applicable funds. Funds to be defined as the unrestricted funds value at the beginning of the church’s fiscal year. The amount to be distributed will be determined by multiplying the beginning value by the percentage determined by the Trustees.”

Significant Actions of the Trustees this Year

Transferred Trust From UUCEF to Blackrock iShares ETFs:
The investment in the UUCEF was sold as of 4/30/17 and ETFs were purchased as of May 12, 2017.

The following Blackrock iShares ETFs were purchased:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blackrock ETF Ticker and Name</th>
<th>Transferred From</th>
<th>Blackrock ETF Ticker and Name</th>
<th>Transferred To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IVV - iShares S&amp;P 500 Index ETF</td>
<td>ESFU - ISHARES Tr/MSCI USA ESG OPTIMIZED ETF</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IJH - iShares Core S&amp;P Mid Cap ETF</td>
<td>IEFA - ISHARES Tr/CORE MSCI EAFE ETF</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IJR - iShares S&amp;P SmallCap 600 Index ETF</td>
<td>IEMG - ISHARES Inc/CORE MSCI EMERGING MARKETS ETF</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEFA - ISHARES Tr/CORE MSCI EAFE ETF</td>
<td>IEI - iShares Barclays 3-7 Year Treasury Bond Fund ETF</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEMG - ISHARES Inc/CORE MSCI EMERGING MARKETS ETF</td>
<td>IEI - iShares Barclays 3-7 Year Treasury Bond Fund ETF</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEI - iShares Barclays 3-7 Year Treasury Bond Fund ETF</td>
<td>STIP - ISHARES Treasury 0-5 Year TIPS Bond ETF</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LQD - iShares IBoxx $ Investment Grade Corporate Bond Fund ETF</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STIP - ISHARES Treasury 0-5 Year TIPS Bond ETF</td>
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</table>

Invested in ESG ETFs:
In late 2017, the Parish Committee requested the trustees consider investments that incorporate environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria in security screening.

On January 10, 2018, the following transfers were made:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blackrock ETF Ticker and Name</th>
<th>Transferred From</th>
<th>Blackrock ETF Ticker and Name</th>
<th>Transferred To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IVV - iShares S&amp;P 500 Index ETF</td>
<td>ESGU - ISHARES Tr/MSCI USA ESG OPTIMIZED ETF</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEFA - ISHARES Tr/CORE MSCI EAFE ETF</td>
<td>ESGD - ISHARES Tr/MSCI EAFE ESG OPTIMIZED ETF</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEMG - ISHARES Inc/CORE MSCI EMERGING MARKETS ETF</td>
<td>ESGE - ISHARES Inc/CORE MSCI EMERGING MARKETS ETF</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trade details and performance for these ETFs can be accessed through the Trustee’s performance report.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FPC Pledges</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Buchens</th>
<th>Memorial</th>
<th>Music</th>
<th>Ministerial Settlement</th>
<th>Period Perf</th>
<th>Qtr Perf</th>
<th>Ann Perf</th>
<th>3 yr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cumulative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beginning Balance, 3/31/17</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>639,449.93</td>
<td>203,254.71</td>
<td>171,645.44</td>
<td>26,132.81</td>
<td>38,416.97</td>
<td>200,000.00</td>
<td>0.82%</td>
<td>3.47%</td>
<td>6.22%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Additions</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>66,967.90</td>
<td>52,966.90</td>
<td>3,000.00</td>
<td>1,001.00</td>
<td>12,000.00</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Withdrawals</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(7,317.00)</td>
<td>(3,910.00)</td>
<td>(3,300.00)</td>
<td>(107.00)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transfers</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>53,929.96</td>
<td>53,939.96</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income / Investment Change</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>51,157.71</td>
<td>24,999.38</td>
<td>18,200.86</td>
<td>2,865.03</td>
<td>5,692.44</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Current Balance, 3/31/18</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>806,198.50</td>
<td>331,250.95</td>
<td>189,546.30</td>
<td>29,891.84</td>
<td>55,508.41</td>
<td>200,000.00</td>
<td>-0.36%</td>
<td>-0.17%</td>
<td>7.58%</td>
<td>3.27%</td>
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