



FIRST RELIGIOUS  
SOCIETY,  
UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST

Newburyport,  
Massachusetts

# ANNUAL REPORT

Church Year 2021-2022

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# WARRANT AND MATERIALS TO SUPPORT THE ANNUAL MEETING

## Warrant

The Proprietors of the Pleasant Street Church and the members of the First Religious Society, Unitarian Universalist in Newburyport, MA are hereby notified to convene for a meeting in person and via Zoom on Sunday, June 12, 2022, at 12:15 pm, it being in the bylaws as amended, there and then, to act upon the following articles.

- Article 1:** To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee to amend the bylaws to allow for remote electronic forms of meeting participation, thereby permitting virtual attendance at today's and any future meetings.
- Article 2:** To act upon the minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting.
- Article 3:** To act upon the reports of the officers and committees.
- Article 4:** To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee and Parish Board to update the Bylaws Article IV, Section 1, to allow flexibility in the Annual Meeting date.
- Article 5:** To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee, Finance Committee, and Parish Board that the Society update its bylaws to create a formal Stewardship Committee and Chair. The Chair will be an elected officer to the Parish Board.
- Article 6:** To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee and Parish Board to amend the Bylaws Article VI, Section 3, to account for varying numbers of open Parish Board seats each year.
- Article 7:** To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee for the election of officers and chairpersons.
- Article 8:** To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee to clearly specify authorized document signers in the Bylaws Article VIII, Section 3.
- Article 9:** To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee and Parish Board to amend the bylaws to replace references to he/she, him/her, and his/hers with gender inclusive language using they, them, and their/theirs.
- Article 10:** To approve an allocation from the Bailey Fund of \$27,000 toward the cost of replacing bricks in the front area of the church.
- Article 11:** To act upon the Fiscal Year 2022-23 budget recommended by the Parish Board.

We the undersigned hereby certify that we have notified the Pleasant Street Church and the members of the First Religious Society, Unitarian Universalist in Newburyport, MA to meet at the time and place, and for the purpose set forth in the Warrant by posting the same in the church eight (8) days (including two Sundays) before the day of the meeting.

Juliana Beauvais  
Tina Benik  
Holly Cashman  
Kathy Desilets

Micah Donahue  
Vern Ellis  
Minnie Flanagan  
Tim Fountain

Michelle Kimball  
Lucy Litwin  
Annie Maurer  
Jim Supple

Renée Wolf Foster

A copy of the Warrant attest



Kathleen Desilets, Parish Clerk

## **Motions & Additional Information on the Articles**

**Article 1: To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee to amend the bylaws to allow for remote electronic forms of meeting participation, thereby permitting virtual attendance at today's and any future meeting.**

**Motion:** *I move that a new section 6 of Article IV be added to the Bylaws to give the Society authority to conduct meetings by means of remote technology.*

### **Explanation:**

Robert's Rules of Order define meetings as physically in-person, unless otherwise specified. The past two years of virtual only meeting participation due to the COVID-19 pandemic were permitted under the MA exemption allowing virtual meetings issued by Gov. Baker, which expired in December 2021. For virtual attendees to vote and count towards establishing quorum, the members must amend the bylaws to specifically allow it. This will allow maximum participation as all interested members will have the opportunity to participate in the meeting whether in person or remotely. Moving forward, the Governance Committee will help the congregation prepare subsequent policies surrounding meetings.

### **Proposed Article IV, Section 6 (new section)**

The Society may conduct meetings by means of remote technology, such as video or audio teleconference, if all the participants are capable of simultaneous communication. Remote member participants shall be considered present for purposes of establishing a quorum. Unless the Society has implemented electronic means to calculate votes by secret ballot, a remote participant may not vote if a matter is determined by secret ballot. The Parish Board may adopt rules detailing procedures to implement remote technology participation. Such rules may include, but not be limited to, procedures relating to notice of the availability of remote participation and limits on rights of remote participants in the event of technical or equipment failure. The Parish Board is authorized to provide additional details relating to electronic participants as needed.

**Article 2: To act upon the minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting.**

**Motion:** *I move that the minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting be accepted.*

**Article 3: To act upon the reports of the officers and committees.**

**Motion:** *I move that reports of officers, ministers, lay leaders, staff, committees, teams, and other groups as printed in the Annual Report 2021-2022 be received and entered in the record.*

### **Explanation (Articles 2 & 3):**

The minutes of the previous full meeting of the congregation and the reports of the officers and committees are included in the Annual Report. These documents offer important context indicating where we are as we begin discussion at this meeting.

**Article 4: To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee and Parish Board to update the Bylaws Article IV, Section 1 to allow flexibility in the Annual Meeting date.**

**Motion:** *I move that in the bylaws, Section 1 of Article IV be amended to read "The Annual Meeting of the Society shall be held in May or June."*

### **Explanation:**

The past two years, the Parish Board has voted to make an exception to the written bylaws and allow FRS to hold its annual meetings in early June, instead of May. With the church moving to year-round services

and operations, this change allows more flexibility in setting a convenient meeting date in any given year and validates this meeting today.

**Article 5: To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee, Finance Committee, and Parish Board that the Society update its bylaws to create a formal Stewardship Committee and Chair, who will be an elected officer to the Parish Board.**

**Motion:** *I move that the Society creates a Stewardship Committee and an elected Chair of the Stewardship who serves on the Parish Board by amending the Bylaws Article VI, Section 2; Article VII, Section 3; Article IX, Section 7; and creating Article IX, Sections 10 and 11.*

**Explanation:**

For three years now, FRS has voted that “the Bylaws, Article IX, Section 7, be suspended for one year.” The church was running a trial period of moving certain responsibilities to a new Stewardship Team to pilot a stewardship model for the future. The Stewardship Team was tasked with overseeing all fundraising activities, coordinating with the Finance Committee to spearhead the annual canvass, developing a stewardship culture, creating planned giving programs, and reporting regular updates to the Parish Board. The stewardship efforts as of late have been a success under this new model. The changes to the bylaws itemized here will achieve the purposes of creating a new standing committee and a new elected officer of the Parish Board and will differentiate the roles of the Stewardship and Finance committees. The following summarizes the specific bylaw changes needed and explains the specific reason for each change.

**Article VI, Section 2 – Officers**

**Current Language:** At each annual meeting there shall be elected a Moderator; a Clerk; a Finance Treasurer and an Endowment Treasurer each of whom shall be bonded; an Auditor; a Chair of the Governance Committee; and a Chair of the Finance Committee.

**Proposed Amendment:** At each annual meeting there shall be elected a Moderator, a Clerk, an Auditor, a Chair of the Governance Committee, a Chair of the Finance Committee, and a Chair of the Stewardship Committee. In addition, there shall be elected at the annual meeting a Finance Treasurer and an Endowment Treasurer, each of whom shall be bonded.

**Explanation:** Update the list of officers elected annually to add a Chair of the Stewardship Committee. For clarity, recommend moving the treasurers to their own sentence to denote they are bonded, whereas the other officers are not.

**Article VII, Section 3 – Parish Board**

**Current Language:** The Parish Board shall be composed of 13 voting members, including the Clerk, the Treasurer, the Chair of the Governance Committee, and the Chair of the Finance Committee. The remaining nine voting members shall be elected by the Society to three-year terms, as set forth in ARTICLE VI.

**Proposed Amendment:** The Parish Board shall be composed of 13 voting members, including the Clerk, the Finance Treasurer, the Chair of the Governance Committee, the Chair of the Finance Committee, and the Chair of the Stewardship Committee. The remaining eight voting members shall be elected by the Society to three-year terms, as set forth in ARTICLE VI.

**Explanation:** Update board composition to add the Chair of the Stewardship as Parish Board member while keeping 13 total board members. Thus, one of the nine non-officer roles essentially becomes the Stewardship Chair elected officer and there are eight other voting members.

### **Article IX, Section 7 – Standing Committees**

**Current Language:** The Finance Committee shall be responsible for raising all the funds necessary for the maintenance of the Church and the conduct of its affairs; for conducting the annual canvass; for oversight of a planned giving program, and for assisting the staff in the preparation of the annual budget for approval by the Parish Board before its presentation at the annual meeting.

**Proposed Amendment:** The Finance Committee shall be responsible for the fiscal management of the Society's business operations and assisting the staff in the preparation of the annual budget for approval by the Parish Board before its presentation at the Annual Meeting.

**Explanation:** Removes the fundraising, annual canvass, and planned giving responsibilities from the Finance Committee section and adds these to a new Stewardship Committee section (see below). In addition, the Finance Committee is increasingly in charge of other activities impacting our financial situation, such as cell tower leases, alternative income, or building rent. Fiscal management refers to the process of planning, directing, and controlling financial resources.

### **Article IX, Sections 10 and 11 – Standing Committees**

#### **Proposed Additions:**

Section 10. The Stewardship Committee shall be responsible for raising all the funds necessary for the maintenance of the Church and the conduct of its affairs; for conducting the annual canvass; and for oversight of planned giving programs.

Section 11. The Stewardship Committee shall be led by the Stewardship Committee Chair, who will serve as a member of the Parish Board.

**Explanation:** Removes the fundraising, annual canvass, and planned giving responsibilities from the Finance Committee section and adds these to a new Stewardship Committee section (see below). In addition, the Finance Committee is increasingly in charge of other activities impacting our financial situation, such as cell tower leases, alternative income, or building rent. Fiscal management refers to the process of planning, directing, and controlling financial resources.

### **Article 6: To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee and Parish Board to amend the Bylaws Article VI, Section 3, to account for varying numbers of open Parish Board seats each year.**

**Motion:** *I move that the Society elect the necessary number of members to fill all vacant Parish Board seats in given year by amending the Bylaws Article VI, Section 3.*

#### **Explanation:**

In reality, the number of elected board members already varies from year to year when Parish Board members are unable to serve their full three-year terms. Further, with the creation of a Stewardship Chair, there will be eight non-officer Parish Board members instead of nine. FRS also aims to elect a one-year youth member. All told, some years there may be two, three, or four open board seats. This change gives the Society the ability to elect members to fill open positions, regardless of the number of vacancies. This is the specific change in language.

**Current Language:** There shall also be elected at each annual meeting one Trustee and three members of the Parish Board who shall serve for three years or until their successors have been elected.

**Proposed Amendment:** There shall be elected at each annual meeting one Trustee. There shall also be elected at each annual meeting the number of members necessary to fill all open Parish Board seats and each shall serve for three years or until their successors have been elected.

**Article 7: To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee for the election of officers and chairpersons.**

**Motion:** *I move that the slate of officers and chairpersons as presented in the Annual Report be elected.*

**Explanation:** An annotated slate of nominees is included in supplementary materials to the warrant provided to members in advance of this meeting.

**Article 8: To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee to clearly specify authorized document signers in the Bylaws Article VIII, Section 3.**

**Motion:** *I move that the Bylaws Article VIII, Section 3 be amended to clarify authorized document signers on behalf of the Trustees of the Endowment.*

**Explanation:** The language was not changed when the bylaws were updated to create the two Treasurer roles. It is necessary to clarify the respective role of each treasurer in signing documents and to have backup signers in the event one person is traveling or otherwise indisposed. Here is the specific change in the language.

**Current Language:** The Treasurer shall have the authority to sign necessary documents for the Trustees of the Endowment and in his or her absence, the Chairperson of the Trustees of the Endowment may sign for the Trustees.

**Proposed Amendment:** The Endowment Treasurer shall have the authority to sign necessary documents for the Trustees of the Endowment. If the Endowment Treasurer is absent, the Finance Treasurer may sign for the Trustees. If neither Treasurer is available, then the Chairperson of the Trustees of the Endowment may sign for the Trustees.

**Article 9: To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee and Parish Board to amend the bylaws to replace references to he/she, him/her, and his/hers with gender inclusive language using they, them, and their/theirs.**

**Motion:** *I move that the proposed bylaw amendments to Article IV, Section 4; Article V, Section 1, Section 2, Section 3b, and Section 3e; and Article XII, Section 4 be made to replace the pronouns "his or her" with the pronoun "their" and replace "he or she" with "they."*

**Explanation:**

The proposed gender inclusive language bylaws change was put forth by the 2017-2018 Parish Board which at the time consisted of a representation of the congregation including a number of longtime members. The change has been brought before each Parish Board since then and voted to be put on the Warrant but for various reasons last year (2021) was the first year it was brought in front of the congregation at the Annual Meeting. The change responds to both a call from the UUA and commitments made by our congregation. In 1996, FRS UU voted to become a Welcoming Congregation. Taking steps toward using inclusive language is among the ten things a congregation can do to become more inclusive, according to the UUA. The proposed changes include the use of the singular "they/them/their" pronoun to refer to an unknown or unspecified person. This use of singular "they" is inclusive of everyone across the gender spectrum regardless of what personal pronouns they may use. The following shows specific changes in language.

#### **Article IV, Section 4**

**Current Language:** The quorum necessary to call a minister or terminate his or her tenure shall be thirty-three (33%) of the membership.

**Proposed Amendment:** The quorum necessary to call a minister or terminate their tenure shall be thirty-three (33%) of the membership.

#### **Article V, Section 1**

**Current Language:** The Minister shall have freedom of the pulpit as well as freedom to express his or her opinion outside the pulpit. The Minister shall have his or her ministerial credentials with the Unitarian Universalist Association thus ensuring his or her commitment to professional ethics as indicated by the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association Code of Ethical Practices.

**Proposed Amendment:** The Minister shall have freedom of the pulpit as well as freedom to express their opinions outside the pulpit. The Minister shall have their ministerial credentials with the Unitarian Universalist Association thus ensuring a commitment to professional ethics as indicated by the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association Code of Ethical Practices.

#### **Article V, Section 2**

**Current Language:** The Minister shall be a nonvoting, ex-officio member of all boards and committees of the church; except for the Governance Committee of the Parish Board, on which he or she shall not serve. It shall be the duty of the Minister to bring to the attention of the Parish Board any matters which seem to him to her pertinent to the present welfare of the church, and to make such recommendations as seem to him to her proper.

**Proposed Amendment:** The Minister shall be a nonvoting, ex-officio member of all boards and committees of the church; except for the Governance Committee of the Parish Board, on which they shall not serve. It shall be the duty of the Minister to bring to the attention of the Parish Board any matters which seem pertinent to the present welfare of the church, and to make such recommendations as appropriate.

#### **Article V, Section 3b**

**Current Language:** The quorum necessary to call a Minister or terminate his or her tenure shall be thirty-three percent of the membership (as per ARTICLE IV, Section 4).

**Proposed Amendment:** The quorum necessary to call a minister or terminate their tenure shall be thirty-three (33%) of the membership (as per ARTICLE IV, Section 4).

#### **Article V, Section 3e**

**Current Language:** The Minister may resign at any time giving at least three months' notice to the Parish Board, or upon any period of notice mutually agreeable between the Minister and the Parish Board. In the event the Church terminates the Minister's tenure, he or she will be given at least three months' notice.

**Proposed Amendment:** The Minister may resign at any time giving at least three months' notice to the Parish Board, or upon any period of notice mutually agreeable between the Minister and the Parish Board. In the event the Church terminates the Minister's tenure, they will be given at least three months' notice.

#### **Article XII, Section 4**

**Current Language:** The Minister or his or her designee shall serve as Chairperson of the Leadership Council.

**Proposed Amendment:** The Minister or their designee shall serve as Chairperson of the Leadership Council.

**Article 10: To approve an allocation from the Bailey Fund of \$27,000 toward the cost of replacing bricks in the front area of the church.**

**Motion:** *I move the approval of an allocation from the Bailey Fund of \$27,000 toward the cost of replacing bricks in the front area of the church.*

**Explanation:**

As part of our commitment to being a welcoming place for all who wish to attend, FRS is working to increase accessibility and safety of our facilities. The brick walkway at the front of the church represents a considerable safety concern. Working with the Finance Committee's new "Facilities Team," this would replace bricks at least up to the city sidewalk...possibly coordinating with the City to include the sidewalk bricks, possible curb releveling, and handicap curb cut. The amount requested is a prudent amount based on what is currently available from the Bailey fund under its rules of operation. Further fundraising will be required to reach an estimated total cost between \$66-\$110K, including a possible memorial brick inscription/ fundraising opportunity. Other improvements to be made as funding allows include installing an automatic push-button accessible/handicap door opener to the church vestibule door at an estimated cost of \$6,000 (double if another opener is possible at the LMH office door).

**Detail of Brickwork Estimated Total: \$66-110,000 (based on three contractor estimates thus far)**

\$44,000	Total cost to replace FRS section of the bricks - 1,500 SF @ \$25/SF @ \$3-4/brick
3,000	Added cost for herringbone design
35,000	Added cost for city sidewalk section @ 1,260 SF
20,000	Added cost for curb releveling
8,000	Added cost for handicap curb cut

*A memorial brick inscription fundraising campaign is proposed to offset as much of the expense as possible.*

**Article 11: To act upon the Fiscal Year 2023 budget recommended by the Parish Board.**

**Motion:** *I move that the Fiscal Year 2023 expenditure budget as presented in the Annual Report be approved.*

**Explanation:**

The budget documents are included in the Annual Report and were sent to members in advance of the meeting.

**Note:** The Governance Committee recommends that the following items be postponed until the next meeting of the congregation in consideration of the length of the meeting.

- Structure Governance Similar to Other Committees, ARTICLE IX, Section 4 (Section 9 in the proposed bylaw changes). Recommend tabling until next year, following governance and policy review.
- To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee that the language in the Bylaws Article VII, Section 3 be updated to reference the ex-officio Parish Board staff member using a role responsibility instead of a job title (Section 7 in the proposed bylaw changes).

## Nominations for the Parish Board, Officers, and Trustees of the Endowment

Nominees for the Parish Board, Officers, and Trustees of the Endowment for the 2022-2023 Church Year are highlighted in gray below. Parish Board members are typically elected to three-year terms. Officers, which include the Finance Chair, Governance Chair, Stewardship Chair (pending bylaw amendment vote at meeting), Endowment Treasurer, Finance Treasurer, Parish Clerk, Moderator, and Auditor are elected to one-year terms. Trustees of the Endowment are typically elected to three-year terms. Delegates are elected to represent the congregation at the UUA General Assembly.

Position	Name	Nominee or Incumbent (1)	Term Length (Years)	Entering What Year of Term?
Parish Board	Tom Stites	N	3	1
Parish Board	Minnie Flanagan	I	3	1
Parish Board	Tina Benik	I	3	2
Parish Board	Jim Supple	I	3	2
Parish Board	Annie Maurer	I	3	2
Parish Board	Michelle Kimball	I	3	3
Parish Board	Holly Cashman (2)	I	3	3
Parish Board	Marissa Dewey (3)	N	3	3
Trustee	Susan Ricker	I	3	3
Trustee	Bill Clary (4)	I	3	2
Trustee	Tim Fountain	N	3	1
Position	Name	Nominee or Incumbent	Term Length (Years)	Entering What Year of Term?
Parish Clerk	Kathy Desilets	I	1	2
Governance Chair	Tom Himmel	N	1	1
Stewardship Chair	Vern Ellis (5)	N	1	1
Finance Chair	Renée Wolf Foster	N	1	1
Finance Treasurer	Laurie Evans-Daly	N	1	1
Endowment Treasurer	Kim Kenly	I	1	2
Moderator	Lea Pearson	I	1	5
Auditor	Joe Brouillet	N	1	1
Delegates to UUA Annual meeting				
Delegate 1	TBD			
Delegate 2	TBD			
Delegate 3	TBD			
Delegate 4	TBD			
Delegate 5	TBD			
Delegate 6	TBD			
(1) Incumbents served on the board the previous consecutive year, even if in a different elected role. Nominees are new to the Parish Board this year but may have served previous terms.				
(2) Holly Cashman, who served on the Parish Board as Parish Clerk for June 2020-2021 and Parish Board Chair for 2021-2022, is nominated for a one-year term, beginning in July 2022.				
(3) Marissa Dewey, serving for a one-year term, beginning in July 2022.				
(4) Bill Clary served a two-year term and is being nominated to serve one more year.				
(5) Vern Ellis served on the Parish Board for three years and this is the first year the Stewardship Chair existed.				

## **Nominee Profiles**

### **Tom Stites** [Parish Board]

Tom Stites, a 22-year member of the First Religious Society, has served as a worship associate and as a member of the Teaching Church Committee, the Communications and Marketing team, and the choir. He has preached 15 FRS Sunday services, mostly on jazz themes. Previously Tom was a parish board member of First Unitarian Church of Chicago and All Souls UU Church in Kansas City, where he was also board chair. He has also served on two nonprofit civic boards. Tom is an editor whose career, largely in major newspapers, was capped by a decade on the senior staff of the Unitarian Universalist Association in the dual role of the editor of UU World magazine and director of denominational publishing. During a UUA sabbatical he was a resident fellow at Harvard Divinity School. Tom is married to FRS member Alexandra Mezey and has two grown children Hannah and Bill.

### **Marissa Dewey** [Parish Board]

Marissa Dewey started attending FRSUU in 2009 and has been a part of the community ever since. She joined Young Church in preschool and continued into middle school. She fondly remembers participating in neighboring faiths, the intergenerational pen pal program, and the youth-led service each spring. In 2018 Marissa moved with her family to Warsaw, Poland for three years, from the 8th to 10th grades. She attended the American School of Warsaw and enjoyed going on school trips to other countries for different activities. She returned this past summer and now lives with her parents Amy and Steve, her sister Morgan, and her dog Sadie in West Newbury. Marissa has also joined the youth group and enjoys being part of it. She is finishing up her junior year at Pentucket Regional High School where she participates in cross country and the ski team and plays tuba in the band. Marissa also enjoys reading, baking, and playing with her dog in her free time. Marissa is excited to become a part of the Parish Board and have a more active role in the FRSUU community.

### **Tim Fountain** [Trustee]

Tim has been involved at FRS for 15 years, having arrived here after “church shopping” with his wife Sarah Spalding and their young children. (There wasn’t much shopping as this church was the first stop and clearly no others needed consideration). He has been a longstanding member and twice chair of the Finance Committee, as well as co-chairing the annual stewardship campaign with Sarah. By day he is a software services consultant; by night he enjoys singing sea-shanties as a member of The Portermen.

### **Tom Himmel** [Governance Chair]

Tom, who grew up in New York and Pennsylvania, came to Massachusetts for graduate school and lived for many years in Georgetown and Topsfield where he and his wife Ann raised their two children. Tom was raised in Protestant denominations and explored several other churches before he began visiting UU churches occasionally some years ago, including FRS. After a couple years participating in FRS activities initially with the Book Group and “Lunch with the Minister” (now the Short Story Group), he decided FRS was the place for him and joined in 2017. He became active in the Mission/Vision project, then chaired the Finance Committee and served on the Board. He served for almost a year as Interim Director of Finance when that position was vacated. Tom and Ann moved to Salisbury in 2016 and he retired after working for many years in the IT/business field. He now is enjoying completing his education by reading widely in history and many other subject areas. He enjoys both classical and jazz music and has resumed an interest in photography and birdwatching. Tom and Ann recently had a fourth grandchild added to the family. He is overjoyed that his children and grandchildren live nearby and that he can be a part of their lives - along with his FRS family.

**Vern Ellis** [Stewardship Chair]

Vernon Ellis was raised as a Unitarian Universalist in Bedford, MA. His parents were very active in the church, and he has followed in their footsteps starting with LRY in the early 70s. He raised his children in Newton, MA, and continued his UU activity at the First Unitarian Universalist Society in Newton. Vern and his partner, Susan Stone, were married at FRS in 2015 and joined in 2016. At FRS, Vern has been involved in several committees and teams. His latest endeavor is chair of the Stewardship Committee.

**Renée Wolf Foster** [Finance Chair]

Renée Wolf Foster joined FRS in November 2018. She read Rev. Rebecca's 9/1/18 "In the Spirit" column in *The Daily News* and was deeply moved by her statement that "I believe we are a people who are called by love and that we will be guided by love." She and her husband attended Rev. Rebecca's first service on 9/8/18 and felt like they'd come home. In April 2019, Renée volunteered for the Mission/Vision task force, drawn by the opportunity to work with other FRS Members to help structure the earliest phases of the Mission-Vision initiative. She has been a member of the VME Core Team ever since. She joined the Parish Board and the Governance Committee in 2020. Renée grew up in northeastern MA and lives in Amesbury with her husband Stephen and four much-loved cats. She began her career as an RN, earned an MBA in 1989, and has held management positions in both not-for-profit and privately-owned organizations ever since. She has a passion for organizational development and finding ways to take care of people wherever she's worked. Renée gained great respect for the Parish Board members and the FRS staff through the Mission-Vision work and is deeply grateful for the opportunity to further support FRS as the chair of the Finance Committee.

**Laurie Evans-Daly** [Finance Treasurer]

Laurie Evans-Daly was raised in the Waltham Unitarian Church from ages 10 to 17. She attended the Amherst Unitarian church as a student at UMass Amherst. She converted to Judaism when she married her first husband. She later joined the First Parish UU in Framingham where she was actively involved as Board Chair and then co-founder of "Pies on the Common," a successful fundraising event which has continued for more than 27 years. Laurie coauthored *Images of America, Framingham*. She joined FRSUU in 2004 when she moved to Newburyport where she was Vice President of the Custom Maritime Museum for three years. She is coauthor of *The ABCs of Newburyport Maritime History*. One of Laurie's grandchildren was in FRSUU Sunday school from kindergarten through high school and her daughter and son-in-law are members. Laurie's second husband was a UU all his life and served as auditor at FRSUU.

**Joe Brouillet** [Auditor]

Joseph (Joe) Brouillet joined FRS in 2005. Over the years Joe has been a member of the Community Human Service Committee, participated in Chalice Circles, attended Meditation, and served as Auditor in FY 2000-2001. Currently, he is a member of the FRS Men's Group and the Finance Committee since 2008. Born in Concord, NH, Joe graduated from St. John's High School in 1960. He was elected president of his senior class and participated in all sports. After graduation, he attended Bentley School of Accounting & Finance, Boston, MA. Professionally, Joe served as Director of Finance and was then elected president of Wilcom Products, a manufacturer of telecommunications test equipment located in Laconia, NH. He then joined Russound/FMP, a manufacturer of residential audio/video systems, located in Newmarket, NH. He was hired as the Director of Sales and subsequently promoted to president serving until retirement in 2011. Joe enjoys reading, playing bridge, chess, cribbage, golfing, traveling, sports events, and especially spending time with family. He and wife Barbara Garnis have lived in Newburyport since 2004. The FRS community has been and continues to be a very important part of Joe's life.

## **Annual Congregational Meeting – May 23, 2021**

Via Zoom

Present: Justin Murphy-Mancini – Zoom host and tech engineer for the meeting; Lea Pearson – moderator; with 136 participants (97 members needed for a quorum)

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:36am

Lea Pearson introduced Rev. Rebecca to light the chalice and share opening words to invite all into the worship space that is our annual meeting.

Rev. Rebecca led the participants in the unison reading of the Affirmation of Faith and she shared a land acknowledgement.

Rev. Rebecca thanked everyone for attending and for nurturing their continued connection with FRS. She thanked the outgoing Parish Board chair Rebecca Brodish and outgoing Parish Board members. She welcomed the new Parish Board members, as well as new members of FRS.

Rev. Rebecca thanked the staff team, noted saying farewell to Kristen Miller and Sharon Broll and welcoming new staff members Cynthia Walsh and Andrew Bakhit. She acknowledged that the staff worked exceptionally hard this year and shared special thanks to Diane Carroll, who stepped in and carried so many things. She also thanked Tom Himmel who stepped in as DFO, and Rob Close who managed audio needs for worship.

Rev. Rebecca led a moment of silence to all those who lost their lives to COVID-19 and read aloud the names of FRS members who have died this year, including Beth Cawley, James (Jim) Dyer, Pat Ouellette, Ruth Rankin, Erika Marquardt, and Minister Emeritus Rev. Bertrand Steeves.

Rev. Rebecca reminded everyone of the ordination of Sophia Lyons to be held in the afternoon, she acknowledged the outpouring of support from the community about the Black Lives Matter banner, which has been lovingly repaired and will be re-hung on Tuesday at 5pm, and she invited everyone to participate in the raffle fundraiser.

Rev. Rebecca turned the meeting over to John Mercer, who summarized the work of the Values, Mission, and Ends team over the course of the year and described the goals that have been developed with examples of activities in each of the five areas: Diversity, Intergenerational Growth, Justice, History, and Stewardship.

John Mercer turned the meeting over to Vern Ellis, who summarized the work this year of the Anti-Racism team, which has created self-assessment surveys, a series of workshops and trainings on the Richmond Pledge, among other work, done with the goal of discerning whether to vote to become an anti-racist congregation.

Moderator Lea Pearson welcomed everyone to stay here, to stay present, and to be patient as we proceed through the virtual format of the meeting. She reminded everyone of some “Zoom etiquette” and technical details around voting.

Each article was then presented in turn. Following is a summary of the action on each.

[prior to Article 1, there are 150 participants in the Zoom meeting]

**Article 1: To act upon the reports of the officers and committees.**

The following motion was made by Holly Cashman and seconded by Sadie Fountain:

**Motion:** *I move that all reports of officers, ministers, lay leaders, staff, committees, teams, and other groups as printed in the Annual Report 2020-2021 be accepted.*

**Discussion:** Betsy Hazen shared that the report from the Pastoral Care Associates was inadvertently omitted. They have completed and turned in a report, which has been sent in and received.

**Vote:** The motion carried with 1 nay vote and 0 abstentions.

[prior to Article 2, there are 147 participants in the Zoom meeting]

**Article 2: To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee for the election of officers and chairpersons.**

The following motion was made by Micah Donahue and seconded by Renée Wolf Foster.

**Motion:** *I move that the slate of officers and chairpersons as presented in the Annual Report be elected.*

**Discussion:** Art Henshaw asked if the auditor role was still vacant. Micah Donahue confirmed that it was. Art asked for someone to please consider taking on that position which is very important. Micah confirmed that they would like to see the position filled as well, and that they have a backup plan if that does not happen.

**Vote:** The motion carried with 1 nay vote and 0 abstentions.

**Article 3: To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee and Parish Board to update the language for removal of members from the church roll, Article III Section 2.**

Maureen Adams gave a brief explanation of the article.

The following motion was made by Juliana Beauvais and seconded by Vern Ellis.

**Motion:** *I move the Bylaws, Section 3 be added to Article III to allow for routine updating of the membership roll.*

**Discussion:**

- Bill Clary expressed agreement with the spirit of the motion but questioned whether it was too onerous a task for the busy Parish Board.
- (Maureen Adams shared that this was considered by Governance and the Parish Board, but neither body feels it will be too much work for the Parish Board.)
- Sue Creed weighed in that this issue has bothered some folks for decades, especially the idea that people would be expunged from the membership rolls; Sue thanked the board for this.
- KC Swallow added that she remembers this being an issue in the past as well, and that membership impacts the dues that FRS owes to the UUA annually.
- Rev. Rebecca clarified that this has actually changed; the UUA now calculates the “dues” by a percentage of the budget, not by membership.
- Julie Menin added that the category of the church size depends on the number of members and the salary goals for raises of staff, etc. depend on the size of the church.
- Betsy Latham pointed out that not purging the rolls also makes annual meeting difficult because we need a quorum for annual meetings.
- Ray Wilson asked for a listing of the criteria for removal of people from the rolls.

- Maureen Adams shared the text that is in the proposal – not participating in the life of the church for two years and not responding to outreach from the staff.

**Vote:** The motion carried with 0 nay votes and 3 abstentions.

**Article 4: To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee and Parish Board to update the bylaw language he/him/his/her/hers/she made gender neutral using the language they/them/their/theirs.**

An explanation was given by Maureen Adams.

The following motion was made by Michelle Kimball and seconded by Rich Johnson.

**Motion:** *I move the proposed bylaw amendment to Article IV, Section 4, Article V, Section 1, Section 2, Section 3b, Section 3e, Article VIII, Section 3, Article XII, Section 4 to replace he/him/his and she/her/hers with they/them/their/theirs.*

**Discussion:**

- Jean Lambert expressed concern with the use of “they/them/their” from a grammatical point of view, while not being opposed to the intent of the motion.
- Merryl Maleska Wilbur shared that as an editor and daughter of a crossword puzzle editor, she has struggled with singular they but it is growing in acceptance.
- Erin Hutchinson-Himmel shared that as the parent of a non-binary child, this motion is thrilling because it shows the acceptance level of the church.
- Sue Creed as a language teacher and critic expressed that “singular they” has been accepted by authorities and noted that language changes. Sue said the motion is a welcoming gesture that demonstrates our humanity.
- Stephen Swallow expressed agreement with Jean Lambert.
- John Mercer spoke to those who are not comfortable with this option, being someone who works with language. John noted that language doesn’t change by fiat, it changes by usage. He assured people who may be concerned about the change that language will find a way – the change will not cause confusion.
- Ray Wilson added that grammar should not be prescriptive but descriptive.
- Jean Lambert restated agreement with the spirit but is concerned about causing confusion.
- Anne Mulvey added that there is a long history of changing language, such as going from sexist language to inclusive language. Anne added that language that suggests a gender spectrum is a really good idea.
- Kathy Desilets asked whether “they” is being added to “he/she” or is it replacing “he/she.” (Maureen Adams clarified that “they” is replacing “he/she.”) In light of the clarification, Kathy suggested that “he/she/they” might be a better option because it is inclusive while also acknowledging the continued existence of people who identify as “he” and “she.”
- Justin Murphy-Mancini asked a clarifying question from the chat. Could Maureen Adams read an example sentence from the bylaws? Maureen read an example sentence from the bylaws.
- Justin Murphy-Mancini added from comments in the chat that the singular “they” dates back to Shakespeare times and that other neopronouns have been added to the language.
- Leslie Lawrence asked what the thinking was behind replacing “he/she” with “they” rather than adding it (“he/she/they”). Maureen Adams responded that the UUA recommendation is to replace “he/she” with “they.”
- KC Swallow made a point of order that we should not cut off discussion.

The following amendment was made by KC Swallow. Jean Lambert seconded.

**Amendment:** *To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee and Parish Board to update the bylaw language he/him/his/her/hers/she to gender neutral using the language he/she/they, him/her/them, his/her/their or theirs.*

**Discussion of the amendment:**

- Rebecca Brodish suggested that wordsmithing in a meeting of this size is not a good idea. We should either respect the work of the Governance Committee and the recommendation of the UUA.
- Juliana Beauvais suggested that “he/she/they” does not express the same intent of the original motion. She opposes the amendment.
- KC Swallow spoke against the idea that members in the annual meeting should just rubber stamp the work of the governance committee.
- Merryl Maleska Wilbur stated that if the gender identity of someone is known that referring them by their pronouns is appropriate.
- Jean Lambert added this is not wordsmithing; it goes to the heart of the matter.
- Christine Doherty shared that Merriam-Webster notes that gender neutral language to refer to all people when the gender of the person is not known. The AP and Chicago Style books also endorse “singular they” for cases where the gender of the individual is not known. The example from the bylaws demonstrates that we are not talking about using “they” for individuals whose gender is known but using “they” for individuals whose gender is not known.

**Vote on amendment:** The vote on the amendment started, but there was confusion as to what was being voted on and the vote was halted.

KC Swallow moved to table the discussion (with the amendment pending). Michael Fosburg seconded.

**Vote on motion to table:** The motion to table was carried with 7 nay votes and 1 abstention.

**Article 5: To act upon the recommendation of the Parish Board that the First Religious Society Unitarian Universalist of Newburyport make a formal commitment to continuing to serve as a ministerial internship teaching site.**

Rev. Rebecca shared an explanation of the motion.

The following motion was made by Vern Ellis and seconded by Holly Cashman.

**Motion:** *I move that we, the First Religious Society Unitarian Universalist of Newburyport, confirm our formal commitment to continuing to serve as a ministerial internship teaching site.*

**Discussion:** No discussion.

**Vote:** The motion carried with 0 nay votes and 3 abstentions.

**Article 6: To act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee to suspend certain assignments of responsibility to the Finance Committee, by the Bylaws, Article IX, Section 7.**

An explanation of the motion was given by Vern Ellis.

The following motion was made by Renée Wolf Foster and seconded by Micah Donahue.

**Motion:** *I move that the Bylaws, Article IX, Section 7, be suspended for one year until June 30, 2022.*

**Discussion:** No discussion.

**Vote:** The motion carried unanimously.

**Article 7: To act upon the recommendations of the Trustees of the Endowment to restrict investments in, or where necessary, divest existing investments, in two additional classes of companies: Civilian Firearms and Controversial Weapons.**

An explanation of the motion was provided by Jim Supple.

The following motion was made by Rich Johnson and seconded by Tom Himmel.

**Motion:** *I move that we, the First Religious Society, act upon the recommendations of the Trustees of the Endowment to restrict investments in, or where necessary, divest existing investments, in two additional classes of companies: Civilian Firearms and Controversial Weapons.*

**Discussion:**

- KC Swallow expressed that it is unwise to include “Civilian Firearms” and “Controversial Weapons” in the same motion.
- Jessica Brown spoke in favor of the motion and shared about similar moves being taken in the non-profit and philanthropic sector.
- Jim Supple clarified that the FRS currently has no investments in “Civilian Firearms.”
- Ann Haaser pointed out that this is not a vote on the Second Amendment and emphasized concern about the irresponsibility of the gun industry which consistently works to oppose common-sense gun laws to reduce the number of gun deaths.

**Vote:** The motion carried with 3 nay votes and 1 abstention.

**Article 8: To act upon a request from the Business Administrator and the Finance Committee for approval of expenses to be drawn from the Bailey Fund not to exceed \$12,000 for furnace repairs to be performed (via contractor to be determined), along with \$5,450 to cover the costs of the roof replacement performed earlier this year, and any extraordinary facilities expenses of up to \$3,000 in conjunction with the reopening of FRS buildings.**

An explanation was given by Tom Himmel.

The following motion was made by Sadie Fountain and seconded by Maureen Adams.

**Motion:** *I move that the request to draw on the Bailey Fund to cover the cited expenses for furnace repairs, roof repair and extraordinary expenses in conjunction with re-opening FRS buildings be approved.*

**Discussion:**

- Stan Barrett asked what the Bailey Fund is.
- Tom Himmel explained that the Bailey Fund is part of the church’s endowment that is a reserve for major capital improvements or repairs to the church building. He explained that there is currently room within the fund.
- Jim Supple added that the fund’s use is restricted and only drawn on for uses consistent with those restrictions.

**Vote:** The motion carried unanimously.

**Article 9: To act upon the Fiscal Year 2022 budget recommended by the Parish Board.**

An explanation of the budget was given by Tom Himmel.

The following motion was made by Michelle Kimball and seconded by Juliana Beauvais.

**Motion:** *I move that the Fiscal Year 2022 expenditure budget as presented in the Annual Report be approved.*

**Discussion:** No discussion.

**Vote:** The motion carried with 0 nay votes and 2 abstentions.

### **Closing Words**

Holly Cashman was asked to share closing words as next year's Parish Board chair. She shared that she was a bit heartbroken over today's meeting but humbled and honored to be asked to serve as chair of the Parish Board. She thanked Rebecca Brodish for her work as chair of the Parish Board and invited anyone to reach out to her with any questions or concerns in the upcoming year.

Rebecca Brodish welcomed Holly Cashman as Parish Board chair. She apologized for not having realized the groundwork needed for the discussion and vote on inclusive language. She confirmed her support of the work of the Governance Committee.

Rev. Rebecca asked us to hold in our hearts the people who were harmed by the discussion in today's meeting. She reminded members of the difference between intention and impact and how harm can be done even if it is not intended.

Rev. Rebecca shared closing words.

### **Motion to Adjourn**

Rebecca Brodish moved to adjourn.

The motion was seconded by Sue Creed.

The motion was passed unanimously.

### **Adjournment**

Lea Pearson adjourned the meeting at 1:10pm.

*Minutes submitted by Holly Cashman, Parish Clerk*

*June 30, 2021*

# REPORTS FROM THE PARISH BOARD, STANDING COMMITTEES, AND TRUSTEES OF THE ENDOWMENT

## Parish Board

### Mission or purpose statement:

The Parish Board is the governing board of the First Religious Society. It is charged with maintaining the wellbeing of the FRS church community, its buildings and grounds, and its resources. Its purpose is to lead the Church towards fulfillment of the congregation's stated mission (from the Parish Board Manual).

### Names of people involved:

In alphabetical order: Juliana Beauvais (Governance Chair); Tina Benik (Vice Chair); Holly Cashman (Chair) Kathy Desilets (Parish Clerk); Micah Donahue (Finance Treasurer); Vern Ellis (Stewardship); Minnie Flanagan; Tim Fountain (Finance Chair); Michelle Kimball; Annie Maurer; Jim Supple (Human Resources Committee co-chair); Renée Wolf Foster

### Values that were advanced or supported:

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

### Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

### Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:

- Held an annual retreat in August where we set goals for the year, including moving the Values, Mission & Ends work forward, exploring intentional growth, supporting stewardship, and caring for the wellbeing of individuals in/and the congregations.
- Welcomed five new Board members and met monthly (both online only and in person), extending our meeting time from 90 minutes to two hours to accommodate greater discussion.
- Worked with consultants Laura Park and CB Beal on the meaning and practice of covenant and on promoting gender justice.
- Approved paying off the mortgage on the Lower Meetinghouse.
- Approved the use of the Parish Hall as temporary housing for Afghan refugees.

### Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:

- The hybrid meeting format was challenging, but it enabled us to meet despite constraints on occupancy in the Lower Meetinghouse.
- Vacancies in key positions were a challenge, although Tom Himmel's service as interim staff member, Tim Fountain stepping in to fill the Finance Committee chair vacancy left by Tom, and the hiring of Rob Authier as Director of Church Operations resolved this.
- Improving communication with the congregation and opening up better channels of communication despite (at times) the lack of in-person worship.
- Finding enough time for discussion and balancing priorities.
- Planning for a hybrid annual meeting for June 2022.

### Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:

- Continue to move the Values, Mission & Ends work forward in all areas of the ends, including fostering community, welcoming people in all their diversity, and advancing social justice.
- Continue to explore intentional growth of FRS including the possibility of a second minister position.
- Caring for staff, resources, and ministries of FRS.

- Deepening connection and engagement among members and friends and improving communication with the congregation.
- Beginning work around planning for the commemoration of FRSUU's 300th anniversary in 2025.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Study how the governance structure is and is not working at FRS and make recommendations for any necessary structural changes.
- Continue to commit ourselves to being a teaching congregation.
- Support the renewal of our Welcoming Congregation designation.
- Take a congregational vote at the 2023 Annual Meeting to become an Anti-Racist Congregation.
- Continue to support the use of Parish Hall as temporary housing while pursuing long-term solutions for housing Afghan refugee families.
- Support stewardship work including approving a new gift acceptance policy.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- Active participation and deep engagement of Board members.
- Strong leadership from incoming chair and vice chair.
- Willingness of members to serve FRS on the Board, on committees, and in other groups that carry out all the work of FRS.
- Good communication with FRS staff with staff feeling supported and appreciated.
- Improved lines of communication between the Board and members of the congregation.
- Successful annual campaign to fund the FRS budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Cashman, Parish Board Chair, [cashman.holly@gmail.com](mailto:cashman.holly@gmail.com)

## Values Mission Ends (VME): Here's where we started two years ago

### OUR VALUES

Authentic connection  
Courageous action  
Love  
Spirituality  
Wonder

### OUR MISSION

Come as You Are.  
Journey Together in Love.  
Act with Courage.  
Transform Our World.

### OUR ENDS

With the potential and power of our shared vision and commitment, together we, across the lifespan, commit to the following Ends:

- Connect to spirituality, joy, and wonder in diverse worship and music experiences that develop lives of courage, meaning, hope, and love.
- Articulate our individual and congregational Unitarian Universalist identity, deepen our understanding of it, teach it to our children, and live it in the world.
- Foster an authentic intergenerational church community.
- Welcome people in all their diversity and create belonging for one another.
- Support one another in the joys, sorrows, and transitions of our life journeys.
- Work in partnership, as individuals and as a congregation, to advance justice and put courageous love in service to our community and our world.
- Honor our FRS and UU heritage as we journey together.

VME: Then there were discussions among Parish Board members, the Staff, and the members of the VME team, discussions that led to five categories of Ends: Diversity, Intergenerational Growth, Justice, History, and Stewardship.

After some time, the working Ends gained more definition:

1. Diversity: Serve and nourish a diverse congregation whose members are sustained by transformative and diverse worship and music, who care for one another, and who in their differences find strength.
2. Intergenerational Growth: Foster a growing, vibrant church of all ages deeply engaged in the communities and the world around us.

3. Justice: Engage in partnership with people beyond the congregation who are committed to working toward environmental justice, racial justice, and other forms of justice in line with UU principles and values.
4. History: Create a year-long 300th anniversary celebration.
5. Stewardship: In harmony with the FRS's climate-justice policy, renovate the Parish Hall into an asset of our congregation and the community at large.

Each of the five Ends came with what we called “examples,” but could also be seen as goals. Here is the Justice category with some of its examples identified:

**Justice:**

**Engage in partnership with people beyond the congregation who are committed to working toward environmental justice, racial justice, and other forms of justice in line with UU principles and values.**

**Examples:**

- a. Work as allies in solidarity and deference with others seeking justice.
- b. Commit to this justice work through congregational votes followed by alignment of programming, budget, and staffing and then by parishioner and ministerial action.
- c. Work with Indigenous Peoples Day MA and local partners to change "Columbus Day" to "Indigenous Peoples Day" in Newburyport and beyond.
- d. Join with a racially diverse church in an authentic relationship that may be expressed in shared worship, intergenerational activity, and a mutual commitment to justice work.
- e. Continue and expand our support of those incarcerated or detained by offering pastoral outreach, facilitating the Alternatives to Violence program, and educating our community.
- f. Continue and deepen the FRS's congregational commitment to environmental justice through existing and additional climate-action initiatives.
- g. Fulfill the Board's commitment for the FRS to become an Anti-racist Congregation, through congregational dialog, discernment, and adoption.

During the 2021-2022 church year, the VME team sought and received guidance from the members of the Program Council on what examples or goals they found to be already in their work, their interest, or both.

Further, VME sent out to all what was then a final version of this list making, but then we understood that nothing about this work could be considered final. Every list we thought we had completed seemed to whisper, “Not done yet.” But what was really whispering was a whole other category of work: taking action. And this led us into discussion of what our future role in the VME process might be.

Along this road, we began to notice how frequently ongoing work of the church fit well within our structure of Ends. This is not to say that the VME team wanted to take over this work, but that we wanted to name and stay aware of this work within a larger structure of FRS aims and purposes. An example of this might be the building work in Salisbury, carried out by the FRS Habitat Team, the work of which seems as if it would fit well in the Justice End listed above. And then there are the tasks that need to be rebooted or rethought, one example being the keeping of our history as so competently done earlier in earlier years by Anne White, Lindsay Cavanaugh, and Coddie Fraser and now waiting to be carried on. This work should certainly be named and focused on in the History category.

So ultimately, the VME Team sees its future in alignment with the Program Council, keeping track of the past, present, and future tasks of the church, making sure that needed work is addressed and connected to our Values, Missions, and Ends and that completed work is described and acclaimed.

Rev. Rebecca Bryan  
Tina Benik  
Renée Wolf Foster  
Michelle Kimball  
John Mercer  
Forrest Speck

Respectfully submitted,

John Mercer, [jsmercer@gmail.com](mailto:jsmercer@gmail.com)

## Values Mission Ends (VME) Progress Report, March 2022

The congregation has been busy! After congregational and staff discussion in the spring of 2021, the Board and staff agreed on the following goals and associated tasks. They were presented to the congregation at the annual meeting June 2021.

The following is a midyear progress report to highlight what has been accomplished and what remains to be done.

The five goals:

1. Work toward a more diverse congregation
2. Expand intergenerational and community outreach
3. Do Justice work
4. Celebrate the FRS's 300th Anniversary
5. Program the renovation of the Parish Hall

### **Goal #1 - Create a diverse congregation that is centered around transformative and diverse worship and music, cares for one and another, and is strengthened by our differences.**

#### 1.1. Work toward becoming an AIM-certified UU congregation. (Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry)

This is underway under the leadership of Rev. Helen Murgida. In the longer term, it requires additional funding.

#### 1.2. Have intergenerational music, drumming circle, or handbell choir

Music has been adaptive and constrained due to COVID. Question: is this task something we want to pursue and, if so, how? (Decision to be made by Sept. 2022)

#### 1.3. Create and nurture a welcoming church that is accessible both in person and online.

This is an area of great success. We have restructured staffing and allocated staff and budget for the online presence of worship. That professional is now part of the staff team and not a consultant, a role that kept him at a distance feeling "temporary." We recognize this dual approach will be a part of church life for worship, church business, and programming into the foreseeable future.

Next steps: Create Zoom recording and streaming room in Lower Meetinghouse. (To be completed by 6/30/22 Justin and Rob C.)

Rev. Rebecca and others start podcasting. Justin has set us up with the computer program. It's a natural next step to continue the outreach. (Starting in April 2022, Rev. Rebecca and Communications Team create a new team.)

Cynthia and others will clarify the meaning of virtual membership. What are their needs? Create membership for folks who live a distance away. How do we serve them with things like pastoral care? (Important to have this clear by end of next church year – Cynthia, new member team, and others.)

#### 1.4 Have a beautiful, green "Chapel by the Sea"

Although this task is intriguing, nothing has been formally done to investigate or explore it. It would be good to assess how interested folks are in this and see how it can integrate with the Parish Hall plans. Do we abandon? Put on hold? Revise? (Immediately explore what people want and see how it unfolds.)

#### 1.5 Invite guest speakers and ministers who offer rich and varied perspectives, racially, theologically, and culturally, and those who have strong UU connections and knowledge of our history.

This is happening and folks are responding positively. It has included Revs. Mark Harris and Andrea Greenwood speaking about UU History, Eddie Carson, and CB Beal, most recently. There are others scheduled to come in April and May as well.

#### 1.6 Offer congregational conversations where people come together to practice how we talk with one another, especially when we have differing opinions.

These conversations will happen in Spring 2022. They are a response to the challenges of last year's Annual Meeting and will also help us prepare for additional decisions as we live into our VME. The format of these discussions was created by a task force which worked with Laura Park from Unity Consulting. There will be more than twelve conversations offered, with each group having up to fifteen members. Conversations will be facilitated by FRS members. The goal is to have 150 members participate.

#### 1.7 Welcoming Committee and Gender Sexual Alliance (GSA)

The Welcoming Committee has been reconvened to engage the congregation in preparing to update our credentials as a welcoming congregation to LGBTQ+. The members of the committee have been working with the Parish Board and CB Beal, who preached in February 2022. Two educational workshops will be offered to the congregation in March and April 2022, in advance of the 2022 Annual Meeting. The GSA is an intergenerational group formed and led by two of our youth. Their mission is to provide education and help FRS be a welcoming congregation.

### **Goal #2 - Create a vibrant, growing intergenerational congregation deeply engaged in the communities and world around us. This includes expanding the children's and youth programming and the intergenerational ministries and programs.**

#### 2.1 Intergenerational work (support youth and elders)

This has had modest success, though we can do better. Success is the Gender Sexual Alliance (GSA) and movement to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day. We can do better with Afghan Resettlement, Climate Action Day in April, and worship – now that children will be returning to worship.

#### 2.2 Intergenerational weekend retreat at Ferry Beach

Delayed for COVID, will happen Oct. 2022

### 2.3 Intergenerational music programming

Delayed for COVID, needs to be priority for Immediate through next church year. There is no paid staff for this. How is it done? Do we find volunteers or renew budget? What do our families, children, and youth want? Can we partner with others in community?

### 2.4 Intergenerational 300th Anniversary-programming

Nothing done yet. Overall, the 300<sup>th</sup> will need to be one of the priorities for next church year. This year put together the team and committees.

### 2.5 Intergenerational service trip

Nothing scheduled. COVID delayed. Julie is considering for spring 2023 or fall 2023. Ideally integrate this with one of our justice commitments – racial justice, climate justice, or gender justice .

### 2.6 Expand OWL (Our Whole Loves) age groups and open to community (K - seniors are options)

Nothing to date. Just restarting OWL right now, due to COVID. The new OWL is a collaboration with the Haverhill, Exeter, and FRS congregations. Is expanding OWL still a priority? (Decide NOW, Rev. Rebecca to talk with religious education staff)

### 2.7 Continue and strengthen our connections with other UU congregations for programming, etc.

We are collaborating with Haverhill and Exeter in OWL and also with Central Congregational with Youth Group.

### 2.8 Earth Day Rally

An intergenerational, city-wide event will be held on April 22, 2022. The idea came from our Young Church. The event is being planned in partnership with CAP (Climate Action Project) and other community organizations including Theater in the Open and the Newburyport High School.

NOTE: Overall, the redesign of RE needs to be a priority for next year, but we need to begin to put things in motion this church year. How to do this is a meaningful way?

## **Goal #3 - Engage in justice work within our congregation and in partnership with others beyond the congregation who are directly affected by one, two, or all of these three lenses: climate justice, racial justice, and gender justice.**

### 3.1 Consider new ways to engage that go beyond giving money or food. Thinking bigger about the way we are charitable in our community and thinking about the ways we show up. Solidarity not charity.

Wow! This is an area to celebrate! We have the Afghan Resettlement Partnership as a big example. Also racial justice with Living the Pledge and the Indigenous Peoples Day (IPD) movement. Activities are planned for IPD for March, and we will have a flag raising of the Cowasuck tribal flag as well at that time.

### 3.2 Form a congregational commitment to buy-in on a three-pronged approach to justice including climate justice, racial justice, and gender justice. This includes congregational commitment via vote for all three (already have climate justice), and alignment of programming, budget, staffing, parishioner, and ministerial engagement with work in these areas, ideally that overlaps at least two of the areas, if not three.

Progress is being made on several fronts, including with the Living the Pledge workshops, the Anti-Racism Core Team, the Afghan Resettlement Working Group, Indigenous Peoples Day Initiative, and

CAP with Young Church. JAM (Justice Action Ministry) is undergoing discussion about how they will be structured moving forward.

3.3 Work with Indigenous People Day Massachusetts, partners in Newburyport, and FRSers to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day in Newburyport.

Done! And continues with other work and in other communities.

3.4 Form an authentic relationship with a Black Church and work on shared commitment together

This has not happened, but we are partnering in other ways, including discussions about working with others on creating a resource center for the history of Black people in Newburyport. These discussions are at the early stages and will continue.

3.5 Addressing pollution overflow in Merrimack River. This would also then have intergenerational and worship integrated into the relationship.

Is this a priority or interest for the congregation? Can CAP help us access? There are interest and engagement in helping the Afghan families in Newburyport farm vegetables this summer, working with Nourishing the North Shore and Greenbelt.

3.6 Continue and expand prison work

The prison system has pulled way back from outside engagement with COVID. This is on hold and will be reassessed over the next six months to a year.

#### **Goal #4 - Create a 300th Anniversary celebration that advances all of our ends.**

**Overall, this goal has had no formal movement. It will be a priority over the next three years through the Anniversary. The goal is to have by the end of this church year a general sense of how we will plan this and who will be engaged. We need to be cognizant of the added workload on staff and how we adjust for that. Or perhaps we could budget to retain additional paid support for this – designers, party planner? Historian?**

4.1 Create timeline comparing events in FRS history to U.S. and New England history

4.2 Follow and honor specifically intergenerational events, our own long-term members, and development of Unitarian and UU thinking

4.3 Create several FRS history church services from the results above

4.4 Write an interim third volume of history – “FRS at Age 300”

4.5 Remember and name elements of FRS history that appear today to be us at our best and consider what led to these actions

4.6 Remember and name elements of FRS history that appear today to be us not at our best and consider actual or symbolic amends - for example, a sign on a pew, "Slaves sat here" or a history written from today's point of view the one-year ministry of the young Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

**Goal #5 - Renovation of Parish Hall into an asset of our congregation and the community at large. It is a community center that furthers all of our ministries and programs, pulls people into the campus, and increases vitality to downtown Newburyport. Built in accordance with climate justice policy.**

Overall: The Afghan Project has given us just a glimpse of what can happen there. What is our timeline for planning on this project? How does the timeline intersect with our Anniversary and with Rev. Rebecca's sabbatical? How do we budget for this, and again, what impact will it have on staff? Can the PH be an additional, much needed source of revenue too?

5.1 Whatever and however this space is used, it should be in relationship to the community at large. The space could be a community space and a space that advances all of our ends.

5.2 We see work on this

- Imagining happening as an outgrowth of our work the first 2 years, (FY21-22, FY22-23)
- Formally happening in the third year (FY23-24)
- Capital campaign in year four or five (FY 24-25 or FY25-26) This places campaign fundraising during our 300th Anniversary
- Building starting in year six (FY26-27)

## **Annual Giving Campaign**

### **Mission or purpose statement:**

The Annual Giving Campaign, through congregants' pledges to contribute money over the next fiscal year, secures the operating funds necessary to run myriad church programs and services that we all expect, rely on, and enjoy during the course of each year.

### **Names of people involved:**

**Captains:** John Mercer, Juliana Beauvais, John Gibson, Lark Madden, Forrest Speck, Ray Wilson

**Stewards:** Bart Bracken, Holly Cashman, Eileen Costello, Stephen Costello, Nancy Crochiere, Kathy Desilets, Michael Fosburg, Tim Fountain, Ann Haaser, Cecilia Healy, Art Henshaw, Leslie Lawrence, Patrice Litwin, Julie Menin, Florence Mercer, Mackenzie Rafeldt, Susan Ricker, Mary Sortal, Jim Supple

**Advisory Group:** Rob Authier, Rev. Rebecca, Diane Carroll, Vern Ellis, Tom Himmel, John Mercer, Susan Ricker, Forrest Speck, Cynthia Walsh

### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

As of this submission, the AGC has raised more than \$507,000 out of our \$530,000 goal. This represents participation from about 65% of our members and supporters. In addition to raising money through pledges, the Annual Giving Campaign connected to spirituality, joy, and wonder in many ways including through the personal testimonials and stories of those who shared during March Giving Sunday Services. Through the fruits of the Campaign, FRS is able to help us support one another in the joys, sorrows, and transitions of our life journeys through church programs such as Parish Friends, and Pastoral Care Associates. FRS is also able to support and advance gender, climate, racial, and ability justice through CAP, AIM, our Anti-Racism Initiative, and GSA. These works are embodiments of courageous love.

### **Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

Like any campaign whose goal is to raise funds, our challenges included being able to reach and communicate to all our congregants about the necessity and importance of the campaign pledges in

supporting our church programs. These programs enable us to work towards achieving our Mission, Values and Ends, which enable us to care for one another and our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Benik, 2022-2023 Annual Giving Campaign Co-Chair, [tiben1989@gmail.com](mailto:tiben1989@gmail.com)

## **Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee will report on past results and estimated results for the year ending June 30, 2022. Generally speaking, we are in a solid and manageable financial position, with a considerable budget surplus at the end of this year.

### **FY 2021**

Due to numerous transitions (more on that below), we had a delay in getting a clear and final picture for our FY21 results. The Finance Committee reported to the Parish Board in February that 2021 had ended essentially balanced, with only a \$33 deficit. This left us on good footing for a successful FY22.

### **Estimated FY 2022 Results**

At last year's Annual Meeting the congregation approved the Fiscal 2022 budget which called for total operating revenues of \$744,742 and total operating expenses of \$743,626 yielding a small surplus of \$1,116.

Through the end of April 2022, we are running an operating surplus of \$2,800. While it's good to be in the black, there is still risk of finishing in deficit if pledges are not fulfilled. Assuming our pledged amounts are fulfilled, we are projecting an FY22 operating surplus of \$13,581. In past years we have applied any surplus toward our operating cash reserves. However, this year we will apply any surplus toward the FY23 budget.

### **Fiscal Year 2023 Budget**

Thus far we have received pledges over \$507,000 for the upcoming year and expect to reach \$515,000. Two-thirds of our operating budget comes from the generosity of our members and supporters and having eclipsed \$500,000 last year we again raise the bar in support of the people and programs we cherish.

We continue to absorb the loss of the Verizon steeple lease; most recently this has been offset by federal COVID payroll protection plan funds which will not be available going forward. Promising discussions are underway to secure another cell tower tenant. Even if successful we don't expect revenue from that lease until FY24.

Regarding expenses we have tried to keep most things level from last year. One significant addition is \$6,000 to support a ministerial intern which will provide increased support to our minister and affiliates and fulfill our desire to be a teaching congregation.

The Parish Board and this congregation supports fair compensation for our staff according to UUA guidance. The budget calls for a cost-of-living increase for all staff and keeps us at the midpoint of UUA guidelines for a church of our size and location.

The 2023 budget also includes small allotments toward the Capital Reserve fund and newly established Operating Cash Reserve fund. While not nearly enough to address the needs in those areas, it serves as a reminder that prudent financial practice would have us paying forward toward inevitable capital expenditures and reserving cash for our already-promised obligations.

## **Afghan Project**

In January 2022 the church welcomed a family from Afghanistan into the Parish Hall in conjunction with the International Institute of New England. This project required some significant work to address deferred maintenance and turn the Hall into a comfortable living space.

Donations toward this project thus far are \$48,290.76, with expenses at \$20,481.60 for a net of \$27,809.16. We have been diligent in assigning expenses to the church we would have incurred regardless of the resettlement project (e.g., furnace repair), and separating out expenses specific to the project itself (e.g., utility usage increases).

There have been contributions too numerous to mention, and hundreds of volunteers that made this a success. We would like to give special recognition to the Plumbers Union who donated over \$31,000 in labor costs to help with re-fitting the Parish Hall for residential use.

## **Transitions**

The financial realm of the FRS has seen many transitions over this past year. Tom Himmel ably stepped in (again) to fill the role of Interim Director of Church Operations until we were able to fill the position. Robert Authier joined the church staff in October as our new DCO. We also added the contract services of a bookkeeper in Michele Doucette. These changes led to a re-evaluation of our accounting and reporting practices, and we continue to move toward more efficiency in this area.

## **Thanks**

The finance committee would like to thank the tireless efforts of Tom Himmel, who started the year as finance chair, became the interim DCO, and finished as budget wrangler. All while helping onboard our new DCO and bookkeeper.

Our work would literally be impossible without the efforts of all the staff, but most importantly Rob Authier as DCO. Rob was hired then immediately thrust into the Afghan project as construction manager, accountant, and overall coordinator. He did this in addition to the “day job” of DCO and getting up to speed on the FRS in general.

The members of the Finance Committee also deserve thanks for their faithful commitment to the financial well-being of the church: Joe Brouillet, Kim Kenly, Micah Donahue, Lark Madden, Susan Ricker, Art Henshaw, and Vern Ellis. Betsy Latham joined us mid-year and her energy and expertise were well appreciated.

This year’s Annual Campaign was led with great success by Tina and Greg Benik, who accepted a very lofty goal and along with the captains and stewards returned a fantastic result. Thank you.

And thanks to Reverend Rebecca for her continued involvement with the committee. As ever, she reminded us that even the financial side of church work is spiritual, and we are in service to a greater community.

Finally, we thank the members and friends of the congregation for their enormous generosity. Whether the Afghan Project, the Annual Campaign, or simply volunteering your time, you have made this loving institution possible for all of us.

Respectfully submitted for the Finance Committee,

Tim Fountain, Chair, [tsfountain@gmail.com](mailto:tsfountain@gmail.com)

## Finance Treasurer

### **Mission or purpose statement:**

The primary function of the Finance Treasurer continues to be the review of expenditures and disbursements and the signing of checks prepared by the bookkeeper.

### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Courageous Action, Spirituality

### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Journey together in love.

### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Coordinated this church year signers for all accounts, including cleaning up old names on the lists.
- Attended Parish Board and Finance Committee meetings.
- Reviewed expenses and signed checks roughly weekly, including disbursements to the Swasey Orphan Fund and for the comfort/benefit of our Afghan Refugee guests.

### **Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

When one of the two check signers wasn't available, checks requiring two signatures could be challenging to finalize for mailing. We've helped solve this in 2022 by adding the PB Chair (Holly Cashman currently) to the list of authorized signers. We also intend to create the role of Treasurer Emeritus to provide an additional backup signer.

### **Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

To support greater financial transparency.

### **Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Create the Treasurer Emeritus position (see Challenges).
- Allow Swasey Fund to help more people in need by expanding its definition of "Orphan."

### **What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- Utilizing autopay on pre-approved bills when possible.
- Coordination with the new FT to "change the guard" on signing authority.

Respectfully submitted,

Micah Donahue, Finance Treasurer, [micahdonahue@gmail.com](mailto:micahdonahue@gmail.com)

## Governance Committee

### **Mission or purpose statement:**

The Governance Committee (GC) is responsible for ongoing review and recommendations to enhance excellence in governance and congregational leadership. It does this by overseeing the nominations process for the Parish Board and Officers, acting as a resource to the Parish Board on Parish Board effectiveness and leadership development, and supporting the Parish Board to implement policy-based governance through the development of Board policies.

### **Names of people involved:**

Juliana Beauvais, Renée Wolf Foster (Parish Board Member), Maureen Adams, Lori Rittman Clark

### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Courageous Action, Love

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Journey together in love. Act with courage.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Led Parish Board new member orientation.
- Drafted, compiled, reviewed, and communicated multiple proposed Bylaw changes related to creating a formal Stewardship Committee, more flexibility and clarity in operating, and gender-inclusive pronouns.
- Held fall and spring listening sessions with the congregation regarding proposed Bylaw changes
- Advised a working group preparing a new policy on planned giving, which is planned for Parish Board discussions in fall 2022.
- Continued updating a running list of governance issues raised during the course of operating the church for future consideration; Identified nominees for open elected officer positions.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

As the policy governance model evolves at FRS, it is challenging to define the boundaries of the Governance Committee's role, especially when the members of the congregation disagree or are in conflict. This year, the GC extended its responsibilities to communicate, explain, and collect feedback on proposed Bylaw changes before the congregation is asked to vote at the Annual Meeting. The GC hopes it created re-usable frameworks for handling future Bylaw changes. We are committed to helping FRS adhere to its governing processes, further our spiritual connections, deepen our right relations, and foster respectful resolution.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Engage the congregation in an ongoing conversation about the importance of diverse, inclusive lay leadership at FRS that welcomes contributions from all members, including youth and young adults, and identifies ways to prepare and support all lay leaders to be successful.
- Help convey the importance of lay leadership and help generate enthusiasm for more members to be involved in the governance process in varying ways.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Support the process for creating a formal planned giving policy and help the church address governance-related items raised by the congregation and staff.
- Continue to nominate a Youth Board member each year and identify nominees for open elected roles.
- Update the Bylaw document following the outcomes of the motions put forth at the 2022 Annual Meeting.
- Update the Parish Board Manual for the 2022 - 2023 church year and hold new board member orientation.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

For the Governance Committee to be successful, we need more and different members, supporters, and friends to raise their hands to give the gift of time and expertise, as well as take a risk and try something new. The congregation has such a rich fabric of talents, skills, experiences, and willingness to learn new things. The more the congregation depends on a few people to serve in lay leadership roles, the greater the risk of insular decision making. When a wide variety of people rotate through elected and volunteer roles, then decisions are made with more input, transparency, and visibility across the membership.

Respectfully submitted,

Juliana Beauvais, Chair, [jbeauvais99@gmail.com](mailto:jbeauvais99@gmail.com)

## Human Resources Subcommittee

### **Mission or purpose statement:**

The HR Subcommittee is appointed by the Parish Board annually. It acts in an advisory capacity to Parish Board and FRS staff on issues related to FRS personnel and employee benefits. In this role, subcommittee members annually review the salary and benefit packages for staff positions to ensure that these meet the UUA's fair compensation guidelines. The HRS presents its recommendations on staff compensation for the next church year to the Parish Board in December/January to inform the development of the canvass budget. From time to time, the Parish Board charges the HRS with additional projects such as recommendations regarding employee benefits, updating the Employee Manual, and drafting language for the Governance policies related to the care of staff.

### **Names of people involved:**

Leslie Lawrence, Hugh Martinez, Julie Forney Menin, Jim Supple

### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Conducted annual salary review in light of current inflation data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and UUA's annual fair compensation guidance.
- Based on this analysis, presented recommendations to the Parish Board on staff salaries for the next church year.
- Updated FRSUU's Employee Handbook to reflect current policies and practices.
- In its role supporting lay leaders and staff in their daily efforts carrying out FRS's work, the HRS assists the church in implementing its VME.

### **Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Continue to act in an advisory capacity to Parish Board and FRS staff on issues related to FRS personnel and employee benefits.

### **What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- Input from the Parish Board, Reverend Rebecca, key staff, and lay leaders regarding challenges they face in meeting their goals and the ways in which the HRS can assist and support them.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Lawrence, [leslie.lawrence55@gmail.com](mailto:leslie.lawrence55@gmail.com)

## Stewardship Team

### **Mission or purpose statement:**

To invite and inspire members of the congregation to join in fellowship to generously invest gifts of time, talents, and treasure within our congregation and the UU faith.

### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Love, Spirituality

### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Journey together in love.

### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

Stewardship tangentially touches on all the Ends through the creation of fellowship.

- We introduced the FRS Legacy Circle, which was created to promote lifetime gift planning for FRS members and friends.
- We have been working on creating a gift acceptance policy to present to the board to establish as policy.
- We worked with the FES ad-hoc group representing Finance, (trustees of the) Endowment, and Stewardship to help institute policy and better communications between all the committees.
- We were involved in the Fall Festival in conjunction with Cynthia Walsh and the Hospitality Committee; the Annual Campaign, which was co-chaired by Tina and Greg Benik; and the Spring Gala and Auction co-chaired by Michelle Kimball and Reneé Wolf Foster.

### **Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

COVID was the biggest challenge.

### **Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Create more fellowship and stewardship opportunities, especially with the approaching 300th anniversary.
- Develop more diverse fundraising/fellowship events to draw in more involvement of the members and friends of the congregation.
- Work with FES to create a more robust Legacy Circle and present various endowment funds for people to consider for their planned giving.
- Develop the policies needed to support the planned giving.
- Continue creating policy for fellowship needs, such as an alcohol consumption policy for either FRS or building rental events.

### **Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

The previously listed objectives will all be moving at their own speed; some will become short-term and others long-term.

### **What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

More people to join in fellowship to generously invest their gifts of time, talents, and treasure.

Respectfully submitted,

Vernon Ellis, [vellis@ellisdesign.net](mailto:vellis@ellisdesign.net)

## **Trustees of the Endowment**

### **Mission or purpose statement:**

The Trustees of the Endowment are called by the congregation to be the fiduciary manager of all permanent funds now held or hereafter acquired by the Society, and such other funds as may be turned over to them by a vote of the Parish Board or Society. In this role the trustees will act to secure the financial wellbeing of the Society both in the present and the future. They will report directly to the Society; however, they will be available as needed to the Parish Board for strategic guidance in assisting the Board in their charge of the conduct of the Society's business affairs. As fiduciary managers they shall make decisions that are consistent with the requirements of the statutes and case law of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that govern trusts.

The trustees shall have the duty to manage all funds and securities coming into their hands as such Trustees, with power to invest, re-invest and do all things necessary to the proper management of said funds, including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the power to make assignments and transfers without specific vote of the Society.

**Names of people involved:**

Holly Cashman, Co-Chair; Kim Kenly, Treasurer; Susan Ricker; Cecilia Healy

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Disbursed funds to the general operating account, the ministers discretionary account, the Alliance account and the Swasey Orphan account in accordance with policy.
- Drafted five policies.
- Met with Ad Hoc group including Finance, Stewardship, and Church Operations to coordinate activities.
- Held monthly meetings and reported minutes to Parish Board.
- Held quarterly meetings with financial advisor Pathstone Financial.
- Supported lawsuit to expand definition of possible beneficiaries from Swasey Orphan Fund.
- Added restrictions to remove investments from Russia and large military equipment companies.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Policy creation is a difficult process and poorly understood.
- Endowment fund growth has been hampered by declining stock valuations, COVID, supply chain issues, and energy prices.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Reduce contributions from 4.5% to 4.00% of the 13-quarter average of the Endowment.
- Work with Stewardship to add funds to the Endowment to provide more income for the operating budget and capital funds.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Start quarterly performance reporting to the congregation of the Endowment.
- Reduce contributions from 4.5% to 4.25% of the 13-quarter average of the Endowment.
- Work with Stewardship to add funds to the Endowment to provide more income for the operating budget and capital funds.
- Complete policies that were started.
- Move files gathered for historical record from personal account to church account.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- Assistance from the Governance Committee and the Parish Board to complete policies.
- Replace retiring Trustee.

Respectfully submitted,

William Clary, [williamclary860@gmail.com](mailto:williamclary860@gmail.com)

# REPORTS FROM THE MINISTER, MINISTERIAL INTERN, AND AFFILIATED MINISTERS

## Minister's Report

May 2022

Dear members,

We have been dealing with the realities of the COVID pandemic since March 2020. This second year of the pandemic has been different from the first. Each year had hardships and gifts. Each offered us opportunities for growth, creative thinking, and a need to try new things.

We laughed, we cried, we loved. We adapted, we pivoted, we created.

We returned, we masked, we distanced.

We lost, we broke down, we mourned.

We treasured, appreciated, and embraced all that was beautiful and all that was true.

What didn't break us made us stronger, though we will never be the same as "before."

Through it all, we thrived because we had each other.

It has become natural that Sunday worship services take place in a hybrid model, in person and online. We no longer assume a committee or program meeting is happening in person. The question "On Zoom or in person?" has become standard.

We embraced these changes; some were easier to accept than others. For every gain, there is a loss. Our traditional flower communion service in September, the return to Candlelight and Christmas Eve services in person in December, and our first annual Service of Remembrance held in April were spiritual and sacred, each precious in its own right.

We remember thirteen members who died this year and count them in our church legacy and the Unitarian Hall of Saints:

Richard Daly (5/29/2021)  
Charles "Chuck" Carroll (6/12/2021)  
Peter Chatman (8/6/2021)  
Blake Hughes (8/14/2021)  
Benjamin Labaree (8/30/2021)  
Patricia Bashford (11/22/2021)  
Elizabeth "Betty" Swanson (12/21/2021)  
Stephen Dudley (12/23/2021)  
Anne Sandt (12/30/2021)  
Charles "Charlie" Carroll (1/15/2022)  
Nancy Herbison-Evans (1/18/2022)  
Stanley Kilty (2/9/2022)  
Russell Meade (2/13/2022)

We welcomed the following eleven new members this year:

Rachel Anderson  
Janet DelMare

Susan Gately  
Kevin Ghozati  
Maryalice Groves  
Michael Kent Mulligan  
Mike Marden  
Kathy Mulligan Lord  
Julia O'Leary  
Joy Sawyer-Mulligan  
Megan Turchetti

Things were busy on the programmatic and operational fronts, as they also were in the areas of worship and pastoral care.

We converted our Parish Hall into temporary housing for an Afghan family of refugees in December 2021. The Mirzayee family arrived on January 12, 2022, with their nine children, ages three to nineteen. They are joining a growing community of Afghan refugees in Newburyport, five families and thirty-five people combined enriching our communities. The family has been welcomed wholeheartedly by the congregation, of whom more than a hundred gave them support through tutoring, driving them places, and offering financial contributions.

The church is doing amazingly well financially, raising more than \$500,000 in our Annual Campaign both of the last two years. We welcomed Rob Authier as our new Director of Church Operations last fall and have been uplifted by his talents and enthusiasm. The staff have continued to be exceptional team players, caring for and loving the congregation in a multitude of ways.

Our ministry theme this year was “unity,” which has been an essential aspect of the collective journey through these times. Next year’s ministry theme is “peace.” May it be so, in your hearts, in our shared lives, and in the world.

With deep faith and abiding love,

Reverend Rebecca, [RevRebecca.Bryan@frsuu.org](mailto:RevRebecca.Bryan@frsuu.org)

## Afghan Working Group

There are multiple groups working together to provide resources and support to the Afghan families in Newburyport. Reverend Rebecca serves as a member of the larger working group including clergy, settlement organizations, the schools, tutors, social workers, the Mayor, and the office of Congressman Seth Moulton. She also serves as a member of the housing task force and the FRS working group, supporting the many volunteers engaged in this ministry.

## City of Newburyport DEI

Reverend Rebecca serves as a founding member of the city’s Diversity Equity and Inclusion Task Force. The DEI meets monthly and coordinates a multitude of initiatives including community discussions on race, the Juneteenth celebration, and partnering with others on ensuring that Newburyport is welcoming and inclusive to all people. The DEI has spoken in support of LGBTQ+ topics and spoken out in response to racist occurrences and other hateful speech and situations.

## Sea Coast Interfaith Clergy Association

Reverend Rebecca served as the Chair this year of SICA, our interfaith clergy association. The association meets monthly to offer collegial support, share information, and plan joint programming. The group has responded to several community situations collectively around things such as gun violence and Afghan resettlement efforts. The group does not agree on all topics and works to live into a covenant of working to understand our differences and growing in relationship across such difference.

### **Ministerial Intern**

#### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Love, Spirituality

#### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love.

#### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Trained a ministerial aspirant in arts of ministry.
- Provided a new voice and perspective for Sunday liturgies.
- Joined, formed, and led small group ministries.
- Offered outreach and connection to parishioners.

#### **Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Continue our growth as a teaching congregation.
- Search for a new ministerial intern that will be a great fit for our congregation.

#### **Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

Continue our mission as a teaching congregation by supporting a new intern on their spiritual and professional path.

#### **What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

A continued intention to be a teaching congregation dedicated to training and nurturing future ministers, regardless as to whether we find another intern in 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

David Livingstone, Ministerial Intern, [david.livingstone@frsuu.org](mailto:david.livingstone@frsuu.org)

### **Community Minister Affiliated**

#### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

#### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

#### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Led worship on February 27, 2022, focusing on spiritual experience.
- Provided pastoral coverage for one week during Rev. Rebecca's vacation.
- Provided pastoral care for church members.

#### **Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Continue to support the ministry of FRS within the congregation and in the larger community.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Lead (and help plan) one worship service.
- Provide support in other worship services and in pastoral care as requested by Rev. Rebecca.

Respectfully submitted,

Stanton H. Barrett III, [stan.barrett1@verizon.net](mailto:stan.barrett1@verizon.net)

**Community Minister Affiliated**

It is an honor to serve as Community Minister-Affiliated at the First Religious Society, Unitarian Universalist under the leadership of Rev. Rebecca Bryan. I was ordained as an Interfaith Minister through the Chaplaincy Institute of Maine or ChIME in 2008. I continue to work as a consultant for the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in the Office of Approved Special Education Schools. This work is the culmination of my life-long work as teacher and administrator in programs that serve students with significant disabilities including physical impairment, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, intellectual impairment mental illness, and various types of chronic disease.

My focus this year at FRS has been to build on our Mission to “Come as you are, Journey together in love, Act with courage, Transform our world.” In November 2021, I offered a sermon “AIM to be Inclusive.” At some points in our lives, we, our family, and loved ones all go in and out of disability.

This year our Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM) has identified a core group of members, organized and met regularly, identified specific needs, brought suggestions for accessibility improvement for all aspects of church life, and worked on identifying short term and long-term needs. Rev. Rebecca has welcomed our input.

We will continue to meet, share articles, podcasts, books, personal experiences and expand our group of volunteers.

In its broadest definition, Accessibility is the practice of making information, activities, and/or environments sensible, meaningful, and usable for as many people as possible. Inclusion moves us beyond access – Inclusion is a deeper shift to welcoming and valuing people exactly as they are, that everyone regardless of their mental or physical abilities is understood, appreciated, and able to participate meaningfully.

I continue to serve as a Pastoral Care Associate, offer coverage for Rev. Rebecca when she is not on duty, and am available to officiate at Memorial Services at FRS for people who are not members of FRS. I also remain on the governing board of the Interfaith Ministers of New England and serve as chaplain for grieving families who memorialize their deceased loved ones at funeral homes and at graveside services.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Helen M. Murgida, Ed.D., [murgida@comcast.net](mailto:murgida@comcast.net)

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### **Audio/Visual Technology**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

To support the work of the church through the use of technology, especially through the use of the livestream setup in the Sanctuary.

**Names of People Involved:**

Rob Close

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Refined technology further for more control and reliability during worship.
- Improved outdoor streaming quality.
- Made more content available on the church YouTube page.
- Offered streaming of memorial services for family who are out of town.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

Explore more ways to use technology to connect and engage within and beyond the congregation.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

Provide more technological support for a wider variety of church events and meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin Murphy-Mancini, Director of Church Music, [justin.murphy-mancini@frsuu.org](mailto:justin.murphy-mancini@frsuu.org)

### **Director of Children's Ministry (Young Church)**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

"UU religious education is goal-oriented in one way: We seek an outcome of respectful, responsible, life-loving kids who know they are valued for all of who they are and are ready to show others the same deep acceptance." – UUA Young Church builds joyful and meaningful connection with all ages, our faith, and our community. Our children's programming fosters respect for ourselves and others, a deepening awareness of our interconnectedness, and social justice engagement as an expression of our faith and love.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

This year Young Church was hybrid, with both in-person and online programming. We created intergenerational community, shared in ritual, stories, art and games, and continued learning about and working for justice in ourselves, our community, and our world:

- We organized and led multigenerational worship services (the Christmas Pageant on Zoom and Young Church Sunday in-person, as well as several “Time for All Ages” in the spring.
- Families and congregants donated books for our Little Free Diverse Library, supporting our mission to circulate books in our community that amplify and empower diverse voices, including books written about/by black, Indigenous, people of color, immigrants, and LGBTQ+ authors.
- We learned about Indigenous Peoples Day, made a banner for Newburyport’s first ever Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration, several Young Church families participated as speakers and organizers.
- We collaborated again with FRS Community and Human Resources to run a successful food drive in support of the First Parish Newbury Food Pantry.
- We trained two new facilitators and ran the Our Whole Lives sexuality education program for 8th and 9th graders in collaboration with the Haverhill and Exeter UU churches.
- We collaborated with the FRS Climate Action Project to organize an all-ages community-wide Climate Justice Rally on the Newburyport Waterfront on Earth Day, April 22, 2022, in partnership with local arts, educational, and environmental organizations. Two Young Church members were among our speakers at this event and many families were in attendance.
- We welcomed seven newly registered Young Church Families to the fold, for a total of 38 registered children.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- In Spring 2021, we packed up my office and the former nursery (now an office) and moved everything that didn’t get thrown out over to Parish Hall.
- In Fall 2021, there was still no vaccine for children, so we decided to have Young Church outdoors. (Theater in the Open lent us a beautiful tent, until we had to take it down due to heavy winds.) Later that fall, with the announcement of a children’s vaccine forthcoming and thinking we would be moving indoors in the colder weather, I worked with Donny Rogers, Becky Dill, and a team of volunteers to do a massive clean-out of Parish Hall.
- In December, the latest COVID variant caused us to shut down a second time. Young Church went back online, and our OWL program had to be postponed.
- In preparation for welcoming the Mirzayee family, we packed up all Young Church and Nursery supplies and stored them.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Continue to grow our Young Church community and programming in alignment with our Values, Mission and Ends.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Hold a Young Church Visioning Retreat in early fall 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Mara Flynn, Director of Children’s Ministry, [mara.flynn@frsuu.org](mailto:mara.flynn@frsuu.org)

**Director of Church Music**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

To oversee the musical life of the church, including leading the Adult Choir, directing the Candlelight Chorale, encouraging lay musicianship of all kinds, and stewarding the church’s musical instruments.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Choir performed music by an increasing number of diverse voices and styles.
- Welcomed guest musicians to perform in service and a special concert led by FRS member Markus Belanger.
- Produced a special Candlelight Service with in-person attendance.
- Led a Music Sunday celebrating the many musicians of FRS.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

The pandemic remained a challenge that the choir had to overcome in many creative ways.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Continue to expand the repertoire of church ensembles.
- Engage more congregation and community musicians.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin Murphy-Mancini, [justin.murphy-mancini@frsuu.org](mailto:justin.murphy-mancini@frsuu.org)

## Director of Church Operations

**Mission or purpose statement:**

To oversee all church operations, church office administration, and administrative activities supporting all church programs.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:****Afghan Family Housing:**

- Coordinated all operational details to prepare Parish Hall to house family of 11 Afghan refugees, including primary interface with trade professionals, city departments, retail providers, FRS volunteers and the family itself.
- With support from substantial Plumbers Union grant, hundreds of individual congregant donations, and thousands of volunteer and staff hours, added new bathroom/shower facilities; upgraded safety, appliance, and heating systems; and managed all family emergency needs.

**Church Operations:**

- New Director of Church Operations developed this new staff position, while advancing new initiatives and managing operational challenges in both buildings.
- Troubleshooting of wide variety of needs/repairs in both church buildings.
- Managed broad variety of ongoing staff support activities while supporting such groups as Finance, Parish Board, Annual Pledge Campaign, AIM, Endowment Trustees, Stewardship, Steeple lease, and other groups.

- Managed migration to new payroll and retirement systems.
- Substantial time spent assisting volunteer team and bookkeeper in segmenting FRS chart of accounts to Operating vs. Non-Operating accounts.
- Assisted volunteer in converting important FRS paper Schematics and Documents to online records.
- Developed growing set of written system checklists for FRS institutional memory.

**COVID:** Continuing to adjust building usage and operations around COVID challenges.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

**Afghan Family Housing:**

- Successfully managed several substantial “deferred maintenance” issues at Parish Hall.
- Managed relationships with various city/community agencies.
- Coordinated array of trade, staff, and volunteer workers...and substantial financial challenges.

**Systems:**

- The church building itself also required special attention, including furnace repair.
- Staff adjusted to new payroll-related software for both payroll and benefits.
- Supported effort to convert elements of financial reporting.
- Several computer and tech systems have required special immediate attention.

**DCO:**

- New person adjusting to new DCO position, while coordinating key new initiatives and managing a myriad of ongoing and emergency challenges.
- Many admin systems relied on key staff or volunteer memory rather than written process checklists
- Two key payroll/benefits vendors are entirely changing their software.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

**Reporting/Budgeting:**

- If time allows, we hope to migrate FRS financial reporting and budgeting from line-item to program-based format.
- Further develop system improvements with bookkeeper and other assistance, within budget limitations.

**Gift Acceptance Policy:**

- Support Stewardship and FES ad hoc group in developing/refining FRS memorial, bequest, legacy gift opportunities including formal “gift acceptance policy.”

**300th Anniversary:**

- Provide building/operations staff support for 300th Anniversary plans.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- “Ops Squad”: Recruit a special set of volunteers to assist with a variety of operations/admin related needs. The group will have “Front Desk” credentials, under direct supervision of the Director of Church Operations.
- “Facilities Team”: Working as a subgroup of the Finance Committee, this group will assist the DCO in planning and overseeing all aspects of current and future building needs and operations. All building/facilities proposals from any group or individual would flow through this team to the appropriate committee.
- Steeple: Secure second Steeple lease ASAP and refine elements of current lease and any remaining infrastructure issues.

### **What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

Extensive, costly, and sometime unexpected building/operations/admin needs, measured against a relatively small church staff and limited financial resources, requires strong volunteer assistance and cost-effective leadership decisions. We hope that adding “teams” mentioned above will be helpful to all VME goals. We appreciate the continuing commitment of church leadership and members to be mindful of staff and resource needs in proposing, evaluating, and approving programs.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert N. Authier, Director of Church Operations, [robert.authier@frsuu.org](mailto:robert.authier@frsuu.org)

## **Director of Congregational Engagement & Community Outreach**

### **Mission or purpose statement:**

To support parishioners in their journey of engagement at FRS, support overall growth in membership and fellowship, and build community-wide partnerships within the Merrimack Valley area that supports the church's Values, Mission and Ends.

### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Wonder

### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Built partnerships in the greater community to support Indigenous People's initiatives, including relationships with local indigenous communities.
- Engaged in partnership with the Rotary Club through initiatives such as Flag Day and Child Abuse Prevention Month.
- Supported social justice initiatives and timely response to local and global human rights concerns as demonstrated through FRS's Vigil for Ukraine and national bell tolling for awareness around COVID.
- Supported opportunities to build fellowship as demonstrated through Sunday socials following worship and the FRS Fall Festival and worked closely with the FRS Meet & Greet Team to host social events for newcomers and members who wish to build more connections with people.
- Supported the organization and purpose of FRS ministry teams such as Program Council, Communications Team, Stewardship/Fellowship initiatives, Annual Pledge Campaign, and other groups.
- Supported Afghan Resettlement Working Group by coordinating volunteer clearance process.
- Grew and engaged membership at FRS. In the 2021 church year, we welcomed 11 new members.
- Supported weekly communications as developer of the weekly *Steeple* and via updates on the FRS website.
- Supported the Welcoming Space Project by organizing the purchase of the LGBTQ welcome chairs, supported language for the plaque designating FRS's Welcome Space, and supported outreach and engagement in the greater community to support publicity/awareness of this Welcome Space.
- Supported FRS event space rental/catering, memorial services, and other functions.
- Supported FRS membership outreach initiatives such as fall phone banking to all members and supporters.
- Completed data project for accurate FRS membership reporting.
- Support timely communication asks.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- The pandemic provided challenges to hosting in-person events that build fellowship and engagement.
- The FRS website structure is challenging to work with. Having expertise on how to navigate the structural design of the website has been challenging although we have been working with Jasper Ellis as a consultant and this has been helpful.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Update data and ensure that FRS website is up to date.
- Increase membership and engagement.
- Strengthen community partnerships.
- Build upon and improve communication strategy.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Increase FRS membership and parishioner engagement.
- Focus engagement and leadership cultivation with young adults.
- Support building intergenerational ministry opportunities.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- Continued support from the congregation and opportunities to engage people in supporting FRS's VME.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Walsh, Director of Congregational Engagement & Community Outreach, [cynthia.walsh@frsuu.org](mailto:cynthia.walsh@frsuu.org)

## **Director of Faith Formation & Spiritual Exploration**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

The Director of Faith Formation and Spiritual Exploration works with the Minister, other staff, and lay leaders to provide a rich and varied ministry of faith formation, growth, and learning, for adults and teenagers in the church community.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Initiated new programs: UU Film Forum, Forest Walk and Meditation, Your Journey of Faith, *How to Save a Planet* discussion, Spirit Groups.
- Offered continuing programs: Foundations of UU, *Seeing White*, Tuesday Morning Spiritual Practice.
- Supported the work of the Anti-Racism Initiative Core Team (including the Living the Pledge workshop series), Welcoming Committee, Gender Sexuality Alliance, Climate Action Project (CAP), Exploring Elderhood Together, Chalice Circles Steering Committee, and Pastoral Care Associates.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Trying to discern how to best offer youth ministry when the number of youth connected to the church has decreased due to attrition and COVID.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- To increase participation in faith formation programs--reaching a broader "audience."
- To recruit and support other leaders of faith formation programs.
- To increase outreach to youth in the community.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Run the UU Wellspring spiritual development program.
- Run a year-long youth learning program culminating in a justice trip in June 2023 (partnering with other churches).
- Provide more faith formation opportunities relating to climate change, in partnership with CAP.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

Effective communication to, with, and from the congregation.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Parker Amery, Director of Faith Formation and Spiritual Exploration, [julie.amery@frsuu.org](mailto:julie.amery@frsuu.org)

**Office Administrator****Mission or purpose statement:**

To be a point-of-contact for congregants and the greater Newburyport community; support church operations, programming, and VME; support congregants and staff; maintain front office.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:****Afghan Family:**

- Managed relocating recovery groups from Parish Hall to Sanctuary and Hayward Room.
- Fielded phone calls, emails, and in-person visits from those offering help/items to the family.
- Collaborated with Afghan team members and congregants in support of the family.

**Annual Campaign:**

- Reviewed/suggested edits for campaign brochure.
- Managed campaign data and provided weekly or as-requested status updates to team.
- Maintained Online Pledge Form and processed pledge forms from congregants.
- Met weekly with Annual Campaign Advisory Group.

**Annual Report:**

- Compiled/reviewed Annual Report submissions from staff and congregants.
- Produced Warrant document and Annual Report.
- Mailed Warrant document and Annual Report to 11 members without online access.
- Managed member check-in at Annual Meeting.

**Bookkeeping:**

- Processed/managed pledge payments and donations and prepared weekly bank deposits.
- Supported congregants setting up recurring online pledge payments.
- Maintained Online Giving Form and list of donation funds.

- Generated pledge statements and calendar year giving statements.
- Managed Sunday Shared Collection analysis and distributions.
- Assisted with vendor payments.
- Supported onboarding of contract bookkeeper.

**Communications:**

- Reviewed/edited weekly *Steeple* newsletter and other communications.
- Produced Between Us emails, Sunday Service reminders, and other communications as needed.
- Produced weekly notice for *The Daily News* Friday religion page; produced wayside pulpit posters.

**Memorial Services:**

- Met with families as requested to produce Orders of Service.
- Coordinated service-related tasks such as flowers, seating, reserved parking.
- Produced invoices for memorial service fees.
- Created Zoom meetings for services.

**Music Ministry:**

- Produced programs for Candlelight and Wilson Music Series.
- Created Eventbrite events for ticket sales.

**Office Administration:**

- Supported onboarding of new Director of Church Operations.
- Added/updated contact information in FRS Connect/Realm.
- Maintained main FRS Zoom account.
- Maintained FRS email distribution lists.
- Managed daily emails, phone calls, and visits from congregants and area residents.
- Coordinated distribution of Market Basket gift cards to area residents in need.

**Rentals/Room Reservations/Church Calendar:**

- Processed reservations/meetings and maintained online Room Reservation Form.
- Processed rental contracts for external renters.

**Reopening Team:** participated in team meetings as available.

**Website:**

- Updated Parish Board webpage with meeting minutes for 2020-21 and 2021-22.
- Posted sermon transcriptions and links to printable sermons, Orders of Service, and hymns.
- Updated staff webpage and other content as needed.

**Worship:**

- Produced weekly Orders of Service and other related materials.
- Coordinated Sunday flower arrangements and steeple lighting sponsorships.
- Produced printable sermons.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- The impact of the pandemic on operational continuity.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Streamline and improve efficiency of office processes and procedures.

**Objectives (specific) for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Provide cross-training on pledge payment and bank deposit processes for bookkeeper.
- Continue documenting office administrator and general office processes and procedures.
- Collaborate with Rob Authier to establish “Ops Squad” of volunteers to support office operations.

- Training on the latest versions of Microsoft Office applications.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- Volunteer “Ops Squad” and continuing congregational support of church operations.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Carroll, Office Administrator, [diane.carroll@frsuu.org](mailto:diane.carroll@frsuu.org)

## **Sexton**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

To maintain the buildings and grounds and provide support to staff and congregants.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Gardens.
- Helping Afghan family.
- Keeping grounds clean.
- Helping get the Parish Hall ready for the Afghan family.
- Making people feel good about the beauty of the building.
- Trying to save the church money in decisions.
- Repairing ceiling in Parish Hall.
- Painting bathrooms in Parish Hall.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Getting COVID twice.
- Upkeep of an old building.
- Winter ice.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Painting vestibule.
- Continued gardening.
- Continued upkeep of building.
- Making sure Afghan family is taken care of.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Cooperation with staff and church members.
- Continue helping Rob Authier with building issues.
- Making people happy.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Rogers, Sexton, [donny.rogers@frsuu.org](mailto:donny.rogers@frsuu.org)

## **CARE MINISTRY**

### **Addictions Ministry**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

The Addictions Ministry team is made up of parishioners who have personal experience with a variety of addictions and approaches to recovery. Formed in the fall of 2018, we offer support to parishioners and their loved ones who are struggling with addiction by connecting them with community resources and sharing personal experiences. We are a confidential group who cares deeply, have struggled ourselves and found recovery!

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

Responded to outreach calls from parishioners and supported them in finding help and the path forward. Addictions were on the rise during COVID as people struggled with isolation, anxiety, and depression. We were happy to be there for those who reached out.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Create a welcoming community for all.
- Care for one another.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Attract new members to our team who are committed to addiction recovery and want to help others.
- Create and lead a worship service focused on addiction and recovery.
- Increase our visibility in the congregation and community.

Respectfully submitted,

Reverend Rebecca, [RevRebecca.Bryan@frsuu.org](mailto:RevRebecca.Bryan@frsuu.org)

### **Memorial Services Team**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

To support grieving families and provide a friendly and caring connection to the church as they plan and hold memorial services for loved ones. Different team members help with service and reception planning, serve as liaisons to the families, provide office and technical support, serve as ushers at services, and participate in services.

**Names of People Involved:**

Rev. Rebecca, Linda Buddenhagen, Diane Carroll, Rob Close, Sherry Evans, Barbara Garnis, Monique Greulich, Florence Mercer, John Mercer, Justin Murphy-Mancini, Helen Murgida, Bettina Turner, Cynthia Walsh.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Love, Spirituality

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Journey together in love.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Eight memorial services were held in the sanctuary, with three more planned for June.
- A Service of Remembrance honoring members and friends who have died since 2020 was held in the sanctuary in April.
- Zoom livestreaming of memorial services was made available to families.
- Limited-attendance receptions were held in the Parish Hall and Lower Meetinghouse (when COVID data permitted).

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- The impact of the ongoing pandemic on receptions.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Continue to provide support in planning memorial services.
- Explore ways that FRS can support families in their reception planning.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Create a keepsake cover to be given to family members as a memory of the service.
- Collaborate with fundraising efforts for memorial bricks by helping reach out to those who have lost loved ones.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

Continued involvement and availability of congregants to provide this important ministry for church families and area residents.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Carroll, Office Administrator, [diane.carroll@frsuu.org](mailto:diane.carroll@frsuu.org)

## **Parish Friends**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

To support our church community members and friends in times of challenge, crises, transition, and special needs. We traditionally deliver meals, provide rides to church functions and medical appointments, write cards to parishioners, perform local errands, visit parishioners, provide emergency childcare, and assist with light chores, including occasional pet care. See FRS Connect for full list of the 70+ members.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Our connections included:
  - Picking up prescriptions.
  - Assisting with grocery shopping and other errands.
  - Providing meals following a medical event or family loss.
  - Light gardening.
  - Shoveling.

- Trash removal.
- Rides to church functions and medical appointments.
- Our card writing team of nearly 40 was active throughout the year.
- We actively supported church-wide initiatives, including:
  - Delivering care packages to stewards for the annual campaign.
  - Hosting the reception following the Service of Remembrance.
  - Participating in the Passion Action Fair.
  - Delivering baked goods during their Holiday Pie Project.
  - Volunteering for the Calling Every Member project.

Many heartfelt thanks to all who have remained ready to connect and serve.

Thank you to those who were open to the support offered by Parish Friends, including those who do not typically find themselves relying on “help.” This is a partnership that exists between parishioners, and both parts of that partnership are strengthened.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

COVID restrictions and individual precautions did limit some of our activities. We resumed rides and meal deliveries as restrictions eased. Restrictions on gathering in person curtailed our meeting in person, as did some limitations on available meeting space. Zoom was a substitute, but not a favored approach. We did, none-the-less, hold two in-person meetings mid-year.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Meet more often, especially for each functional service area.
- Expand offered services, including emergency gardening and snow removal.
- Create connections with Young Church families.
- Improve communication with the church community.
- Recruit more members.
- Offer curbside assistance for entering the church.
- Organize a “guest at your table” for the holiday season.

We welcome new Parish Friends team members at any time.

We remain available over the summer months and can be reached through the church office or at [ParishFriendsFRS@gmail.com](mailto:ParishFriendsFRS@gmail.com). The list of Parish Friends team members is current within FRS Connect.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Ricker, [smricker@aol.com](mailto:smricker@aol.com)

**Pastoral Care Associates**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

To provide a caring and listening presence to members and friends of our beloved community. This includes visits to one's home, hospital, nursing homes or assisted living facilities; support to those going through transition or crisis; maintaining contact with those unable to attend church; and support to family caregivers.

**Names of people involved:**

Julie Parker Amery, Barbara Garnis, Betsy Hazen, Tom Himmel, Nancy Kidd, Helen Murgida, Susan Ricker, Bettina Turner

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Love, Spirituality

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

The work of the PCA team is primarily focused on "Support one another in the joys, sorrows, and transitions of our life journeys." Our accomplishments for the 2021-2022 church year include:

- Provided pastoral care to 50 members of our beloved community.
- Facilitated a 5-week support group, "Losses as We Age."
- Facilitated a discussion group following a sermon on Accessibility & Inclusion Ministry (AIM).
- Assisted in planning and participated in "Service of Remembrance."
- Lit candles for "Joys and Sorrows" at Sunday Worship Service.
- Provided summer coverage during the Minister's vacation.
- To increase visibility and understanding of the PCA, presented at Worship Service, "Light on Community."
- Recruited two new members to join the Pastoral Care Associates Team.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

Acceptance by members of our beloved community that asking for help is a strength and a gift to oneself is an ongoing challenge.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

Goals and objectives will be established at the retreat scheduled for June 4, 2022.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

To increase the number of congregants receiving services, strategies must be developed at the retreat that create an environment where members feel comfortable contacting a Pastoral Care Associate.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Garnis, [barbaragarnis@comcast.net](mailto:barbaragarnis@comcast.net)

## **CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS & OPERATIONS SUPPORT MINISTRY**

### **Communications Team**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

To support authentic connection from congregation to leadership and leadership to congregation, within the congregation, and from congregation to the Greater Newburyport community and beyond via the weekly *Steeple* newsletter, FRS website, social media handles, church signage, email burst, and the use of local press and radio outlets.

**Names of people involved:**

Tom Stites, Lynn Kettleson, Bob Higgins, Sandra Thaxter, Ed Meagher, Vern Ellis, Cynthia Walsh, guest writers/contributors.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Established a 2021-2022 Editorial Calendar for the *Steeple*.
- Supported discussion/design of FRS website.
- Featured unique and interesting people-centered stories from our congregation.
- Transitioned congregation to a smaller weekly newsletter and a once-a-month lengthy newsletter featuring stories from the congregation and church program updates.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Getting timely support for story lines (need more writers).
- Ongoing website structure issues.
- Church database does not serve as a good communication tool.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Continue to make progress with *Steeple* and website.
- Explore physical structures on church grounds that could better support communications.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Support vestibule project from a communications lens by building intentional spaces that will make information more accessible/readable in the vestibule.
- Engage between one to two new congregants to join the Communications Team.
- Build intergenerational bridges for better communications by integrating more of Young Church work in FRS overall communications.
- Identify better communication tools for young adults (25-35 age group).

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

Consistent meetings and recruitment of additional writers.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Walsh, Director of Congregational Engagement & Community Outreach, [cynthia.walsh@frsuu.org](mailto:cynthia.walsh@frsuu.org)

**Program Council****Mission or purpose statement:**

To provide a venue for all church groups and committees to share activities, projects, and opportunities within our church community, as well as provide detailed updates on initiatives impacting the entire church community, such as the Annual Giving Campaign. A representative from each committee is encouraged to attend Program Council meetings to provide updates, engage with other committee representatives, and identify opportunities. Meetings are generally held on the last Tuesday of every other month.

**Names of People Involved:**

Annie Maurer, Mary Sortal

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Discussed impact of COVID on church engagement.
- Shared how committees/groups were managing, including attendance, use of Zoom.
- Shared ideas on reopening.
- Agreed that Zoom, in-person, and hybrid options should remain available to encourage participation.
- Discussed ideas to get people back to church after reopening, including mentoring program for new members, coffee dates, database of interests and skills, and casual potluck/movie nights.
- Supported church projects such as auction, annual giving campaign, parish friends, by asking committee chairs to share with their members.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Occasional challenge with attendance.
- Need to improve communication to increase engagement

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Increase participation and engagement among committees.
- As stated previously, coordinate initiatives to encourage people to return to church.
- Support and coordinate initiatives to welcome new members.
- Improve communications on the website through FRS Connect/Realm and the *Steeple*
- Create and use FRS ambassadors.
- Offer congregational engagement with issues of social justice.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Assist with improving website to make it more interactive.
- Continue to improve *Steeple* so it's easier to find information.
- Assign jobs to people on Sundays to increase engagement (usher, coffee hour, choir).
- Highlight groups during worship service to increase involvement in the service and educate others on various groups that may interest them.
- 30-day spirituality challenge.
- Encourage people to use social media to post FRS activities.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- Continue conducting meetings on a regular basis.
- Have a clear agenda for every meeting.
- Encourage committees to do Spotlight segment of meeting, focusing on one topic/project.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary A. Sortal, [masortal@aol.com](mailto:masortal@aol.com)

**Reopening Team**

The Reopening Team is comprised of Rev. Rebecca Bryan, Jeff Bard, Susan Cooper, Michelle Kimball, John Mercer, Merryll Maleska Wilbur, and Meg Wiley. We met every other week, except for a very few times when there was nothing new to discuss. At each meeting, we have relied heavily on Meg Wiley, a Board Member at Anna Jaques Hospital and a retired Clinical Research and Customer Service Director at Agamatrix, Inc. She delivered updates on the pandemic as it was in Newburyport – most important, how many new cases there were and the effect of these cases on the number of people at the hospital. We have

also been much informed by Director of Church Music Justin Murphy-Mancini, who has been able to keep music playing in church services: from recorded music to piano and organ music, to recorded FRS choir music, to live masked FRS choir music, to masked congregation music, to a few weeks when it seemed hard to see any masks at all.

During the year, Sunday services have gone from (1) streaming only (no live attendance) to (2) streaming or all distanced live attendance with masks to (3) streaming or some distanced live attendance with masks and non-distanced areas with no masks required.

The movement from (2) to (3) above was signaled with this notification to the congregation:

At its meeting on February 23, the Reopening Committee put the church on a set of steps leading toward full reopening. The first four steps are these:

- February 27 - The FRS Choir returns to sing live music, both choir pieces and hymns. They will be at the front of the church on the chancel facing the congregation. Choir members will be masked. The congregation will not sing at this service.
- March 6 - Those in the congregation who wish to sing hymns or the doxology may do so masked.
- March 13 - Masks will no longer be required, though those who feel it safer to wear masks should feel free to do so.
- March 20 - Social distancing will no longer be required so members of the congregation may sit where they wish. Further, the large numbers of ushers will no longer be needed. There will be designated areas where distancing will be required: both left and right gallery seating and the front right aisle seating of the main floor as well. There will be ushers in these places to aid in the distanced seating.

At its next scheduled meeting, the Reopening Team will consider further steps. The recent several weeks formed a very positive trend, both in number of cases and numbers of people hospitalized.

We are fully aware that we may need to take some backward steps if the situation changes. In fact, we should probably assume that there will be occasional reversals over the long term.

In our present situation, with new variants of COVID popping up frequently, we are beginning to understand how the pattern of what is happening today may be with us for a long time. We may need to see what is happening today as our normal lives and try unceasingly to have fulfilling lives even when accompanied by a pandemic.

As a team, we are committed to following the science and repeatedly seeking new approaches to being together in pursuing our religious practices and goals.

Respectfully submitted,

Meg Wiley, [rumpel3@aol.com](mailto:rumpel3@aol.com)

## **FAITH AND SPIRITUAL SUPPORT MINISTRY**

### **Chalice Circles Steering Committee**

#### **Mission or purpose statement:**

CCSC coordinates Chalice Circles (CC) as a way to help people think about their lives spiritually and to build community through the process of sharing with others their thoughts and experiences. CC also provides a foundation of practice in using a covenant (including confidentiality), and deep listening in the context of small group ministry.

#### **Names of people involved:**

Ted Stedman, Howard Mandeville, Diane Forman, Annalee Johnson, Linda Tulley

#### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

#### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

#### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

We did not give up on Chalice Circles during a pandemic!

#### **Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- The pandemic.
- People's comfort level with leading with Zoom vs. just attending.
- "Zoom Fatigue."

#### **Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Offer in-person CC and one Zoom CC.
- Emphasis on encouraging newcomers to participate.

#### **Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

Offer in-person CC and one Zoom CC.

#### **What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- No more pandemic!
- \$100.
- Some continuing PR support from staff.
- Julie Parker Amery to continue as liaison.
- Room reservations.
- Zoom links.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Munro, [defineyoursuccess@gmail.com](mailto:defineyoursuccess@gmail.com)

## **Monday Night Meditations**

#### **Mission or purpose statement:**

Monday Night Meditations has been occurring since 2010. Our school is part of the International Kwan Um school of Zen. We focus on increasing compassion forgiveness and decreasing anger, greed, and ignorance. We focus on helping relieve all sentient beings from suffering as exemplified by the Bodhisattva of Compassion, called Kwan Seum Bosal in Korean. We have 100 centers and groups in 30 countries including

Israel, Russia, Poland, China, France, and Australia. Our founding Zen Master fought the Japanese colonization of Korea, advocated for democracy in Korea, and later joined the Allies as part of the South Korean Army. After three years of silent retreat, when his mind became clearer and clearer, he determined he would spend the rest of his life bringing Zen meditation to the world. Zen Master Seung Sahn often said that all the chaos in the world is simply the chaos in human beings' minds manifesting itself everywhere.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

Consistent offerings of Monday Night Meditations with growing engagement.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

Online/offline due to COVID.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Haydock, [joycehaydock@outlook.com](mailto:joycehaydock@outlook.com)

## **Soul Sisters Spiritual Gatherings**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

To build and explore spiritual connections. We meet monthly and we pick a theme for each meeting, we read a poem and pose 2-3 questions for individuals to respond/share, and we end with a visualization that returns us to the theme.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

We have continued to grow and hold consistent gatherings.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

To continue to host meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Cooper, [susanc0805@gmail.com](mailto:susanc0805@gmail.com)

## **Wednesday Guided Relaxation**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

To reflect, connect, and relax.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Journey together in love.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

Every Wednesday for 30 minutes we meet to engage in a guided mediation and/or visualization. People reflect on their mediation and share back their experiences.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

To continue and grow engagement.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Cooper, [susanc0805@gmail.com](mailto:susanc0805@gmail.com)

## **Worship Associates**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

To support the minister in planning for, assisting in, and evaluating worship services.

**Names of people involved:**

Jenny Booth, Jessica Brown, Nancy Crochiere, Vern Ellis, Stephen-Wolf Foster, Dawn Pelletier, Alan Seale, Ray Wilson

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

In our role as Worship Associates, we are responsible for helping create the diverse worship and music experiences that connect us to spirituality, joy, and wonder. In the services we plan and take part in, we honor and teach about our UU heritage, include intergenerational content, explore topics that reflect the diversity of our congregation and world, support the congregation's joys and sorrows, and create worship experiences that inspire social action as well as highlight church groups or congregants involved in social justice. Worship associates occasionally help facilitate post-service discussions and special services. A subgroup creates summer worship experiences for continuity throughout the year.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

The pandemic continued to provide challenges to in-person worship, but worship associates were able to participate in services by testing, and, when necessary, wearing masks.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Crochiere, [ncrochiere@comcast.net](mailto:ncrochiere@comcast.net)

## **FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY**

### **Alliance**

The Alliance's last meeting was in March of 2020. My second year as president of the Alliance ended on June 30, 2020. I had accepted leadership with the understanding that I would give it two years, and I did.

When a small group met after the end of the 2019 – 2020 fiscal year and discussed leadership, none volunteered for anything. And several within the Alliance said that they would not be involved with Zoom meetings.

So, the Alliance as a group of people that meets no longer exists.

But there is another measure of life, money. The portion of the endowment related to the Alliance has continued to send quarterly checks to Carol Kilty, the Alliance's Treasurer. She continues to put these funds to the usual uses, most toward the annual fundraising of the church and a much smaller portion to the Wilson Series concert series.

There needs to be a decision of how to disperse Alliance Funds hereafter.

Respectfully submitted,

John Mercer, President of the Alliance 2018-2022, [jsmercerc@gmail.com](mailto:jsmercerc@gmail.com)

### **Exploring Elderhood Together**

#### **Mission or purpose statement:**

Exploring Elderhood Together provides FRSErs, age 60 and older, with an opportunity to explore what it means to age in the 2020s. Our mission is to reflect on and discuss topics of interest, and through sharing from our own lived experience, to build a greater sense of belonging within our community.

#### **Names of people involved:**

Barbara Garnis, Howard Mandeville, Alex Mezey, Julie Parker Amery (staff liaison).

#### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

#### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

#### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Monthly programs covering a variety of topics of interest to people over 60.
- Meetings successfully held via zoom from October to June, averaging 26 attendees monthly.

#### **Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Changes in our steering committee size.

#### **Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Enlarge our steering committee.
- Continue to identify interesting topic presenters.
- Explore ways to further engage participants and build community.
- Continue to publicize EET programs including a web page presence.

**Short Term Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- May 2022 meeting goal is to engage EET participants, both old and new, to together brainstorm and generate ideas and interests for the coming church year.
- New ideas and interests that will affect program topics and structure.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- Julie Parker Amery's continued support and technology knowhow.
- Ways for publicizing EET's existence, i.e., webpage.

Respectfully submitted,

Alex Mezey, [alexandrmezey@gmail.com](mailto:alexandrmezey@gmail.com)

**Friday Book Group****Mission or purpose statement:**

Friday Book Group is a welcoming and valuable FRSUU resource in providing opportunity for both personal growth and relationship building. We turn to fiction and nonfiction to stretch our intellect, challenge our belief systems, and increase our compassion for differing perspectives.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Love, Spirituality

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Met weekly (via Zoom).
- Read multiple works of both non-fiction and fiction for group discussion.
- Continued democratic (group decides!) process for choosing each new work.
- Instituted a facilitator for online meetings to ensure equal opportunity to speak and be heard.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Continued to meet via Zoom even after church reopened (some participants out of area or preferred this).
- Discussion of some readings required effort to hear other opinions or points of view - facilitating meetings helped support this.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Broaden participation.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Begin hybrid meetings to satisfy those who want to meet in person.
- Do hybrid in a manner that works for those who must or prefer to connect online.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- Successful hybrid meeting technology and process.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Himmel, [thimmel43@mac.com](mailto:thimmel43@mac.com)

## **FRS Creative Collective**

### **Mission or purpose statement:**

To inspire creativity in FRS parishioners and friends, facilitate creative endeavors, and promote creativity as a spiritual path.

### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

As a new initiative, we spent time discerning our exact mission. Our most tangible accomplishment was the "Where Do We Come From? Where Are We Going?" community art project, which featured works by over 20 FRS friends and parishioners and was exhibited this spring in the Tiny Gallery and enjoyed by many.

### **Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

Discerning our purpose and mission was a challenge, but a fun one--we had meaningful and inspiring conversations in the process.

### **Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

We have not yet determined this.

### **Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Utilizing the church space (building and grounds) as inspiration for creative projects.
- Organizing more community art projects.

### **What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

Lots of participation from many, including people who do not think of themselves as artists or creatives.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Parker Amery, [julie.amery@frsuu.org](mailto:julie.amery@frsuu.org)

## **Hospitality**

### **Mission or purpose statement:**

The Hospitality Committee has traditionally sponsored social events to encourage and support fellowship in our church community including Sunday Coffee Hour, May Breakfast, Soup Sunday, and annual picnic. Due to closing during COVID, the committee has not met or hosted any functions. However, services have been offered to the Reopening Committee as we transition back to in-person services, meetings, and events.

### **Names of People Involved:**

Julie Menin, Florence Mercer, Mary Sortal

### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Love

### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love.

### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

The Hospitality Committee did not sponsor or host any events this past year.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

The committee will no longer be stand-alone but will become part of the Welcoming and Social Committees.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

To be more effective in providing opportunities for social engagement by coordinating with broader based committees.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary A. Sortal, [masortal@aol.com](mailto:masortal@aol.com)

**Meet & Greet Team****Mission or purpose statement:**

To welcome newcomers to the community while providing social and informational opportunities for ease of connection to all FRS has to offer.

**Names of people involved:**

Susan Cooper, Michelle Kimball, Cynthia Walsh

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Love

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Newcomers' Tea
- Meet & Greet Luncheons

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- COVID-19

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Buddy matching
- More events to promote connections

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- A few more members.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Kimball, [mkimball@sparhawkschool.com](mailto:mkimball@sparhawkschool.com)

**Retired Old Men Eating Out (ROMEIO)**

Retired Old Men Eating Out (ROMEIO) is not a club. There are no dues, no membership requirements, and no officers. Les Ferlazzo is the acting clerk. The group meets at noon on the second Tuesday of each month, twelve months of the year. A volunteer chooses a restaurant and makes a reservation every month. There are no restrictions on location. The check is divided equally among those present.

Email invitations are sent to those who have asked for them about two weeks in advance of meetings. We average about a dozen in attendance.

Our gatherings were of course interrupted by COVID. There were no meetings from July through September of 2020. From October of 2020 through March of 2021, we met by Zoom. (Some people ate lunch on those occasions. Some people just talked because they were so happy to have people to talk to.) We resumed in person in April of 2021, and for the balance of the fiscal year assembled at Loretta on the appointed day.

Respectfully submitted,

Les Ferlazzo, [sealore@live.com](mailto:sealore@live.com)

## **Short Story Group**

### **Mission or purpose statement:**

The FRS Short Story Group is a group that meets twice per month for the purpose of reading and discussing short stories.

### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Love, Spirituality

### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love.

### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Connect those with a love of reading and discussing.
- Welcome diversity: mix of people with backgrounds in literature and those who simply like to read.
- Share what given reading means to each of us and learn from each other.

### **Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- A diminished attendance compared to pre-pandemic.
- Resumed meeting in person (initially on Patio) in August and then moved indoors.
- Not able to include people via Zoom although we attempted to do so.

### **Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Encourage broader participation.

### **Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Begin offering hybrid meetings to include those who prefer in-person or Zoom.

### **What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- Ability to do hybrid meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Himmel, [thimmel43@mac.com](mailto:thimmel43@mac.com)

## **Wednesday Night Fellowship**

Due to the pandemic this group did not meet during the 2021-2022 church year.

## **Wizards and Sages**

Due to the pandemic this group did not meet during the 2021-2022 church year.

## **INCLUSION MINISTRY**

### **Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM)**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

To identify accessibility and inclusion needs within our FRS community so that we may guide our congregation to better welcome, embrace, integrate, and support people with disabilities. AIM at FRS began after discussions emerged following the 2/16/20 "Neurodiversity and Self-Care" sermon and the 11/7/21 "AIM to be Inclusive" sermon.

**Names of people involved:**

Rev. Helen Murgida, Howard Mandeville, Bill LaPorte-Bryan, Julia O'Leary, meeting participants

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- We now have a mailing list of 30 people who receive invitations to our monthly Zoom meetings.
- We viewed the movie *Crip Camp*, discussed the books *Sitting Pretty* and *Demystifying Disability*, and have seen accessibility to large print, hearing loops being explained and greater utilized, reformatting text and colors in *The Steeple* and on the website, reminders for refraining from strong scents, strong suggestions to use masks, and increased training on microphone use.
- We are in process of assessing brick repair/replacement needs, installing 2 automatic door openers, and more handicapped parking. Lea Pearson was available for comments and action plan discussions that emerged from her recent article in *The Steeple* about her Covid aftermath insights.
- Using checklists developed by the UUA, we are also in process of assessing our status regarding grounds, lighting, ramps, signage, interior movement, lift/elevator, outdoor walkways, hearing, and visual needs, and website. Upon completion, we will share the checklists with the community.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Solidify identifying 20-30 volunteers in our community to form focus groups around a disability such as: sight, mobility, hearing, education and learning issues, mental health, touch sensitivity, odor sensitivity, and chronic pain and illness.
- More outreach to people with "hidden disabilities" such as autism spectrum disorders, depression, diabetes, learning and thinking differences such as ADHD and dyslexia, chronic pain, fatigue, and dizziness.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Helen Murgida, Affiliate Minister, [helenmurgida@gmail.com](mailto:helenmurgida@gmail.com)

### **FRS All-Ages GSA (Gender Sexuality Alliance)**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

To create an intergenerational safe space and build a community around support, education, and advocacy regarding LGBTQ+ issues.

**Names of people involved:**

Alice Mead, Phi Himmel, Julie Parker Amery, GSA members

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Covered a variety of LGBTQ+ curriculum including identities, lived experiences, how to be an ally, history, culture, important figures, intersectionality, and more.
- Created a safe space and a community of curious, engaged, and educated people.
- Brought elements of our learning to Young Church.
- Organized a group of our members going to a local pride event in partnership with the Welcoming Committee.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

To maintain an intergenerational safe space and a community built around support, education, and advocacy regarding LGBTQ+ issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Mead, [alicemead13@gmail.com](mailto:alicemead13@gmail.com)

## Welcoming Committee

**Mission or purpose statement:**

The Welcoming Committee assists the parish in upholding its pledge to be a part the UUA Welcoming Congregations Program, an effort whereby congregations seek to understand current issues, needs, and areas of concern of the LGBTQ+ community so that LGBTQ+ people feel fully welcomed, centered, and embraced in UU congregations. The Welcoming Committee offers robust opportunities for learning, growth, and inclusion while fulfilling the UUA's Five Practices of Welcome Renewal, required to maintain a Welcoming Congregation designation.

**Names of people involved:**

Maureen Adams, Holly Cashman, Susan Cooper, Christine Doherty, Erin Hutchinson-Himmel, Julie Parker Amery

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

The Welcoming Committee was reconvened in 2021 after a hiatus from active work. During the church year the committee:

- Researched current criteria for Welcoming Congregations.
- Assisted the Parish Board in renewing the congregation's welcoming work and in selecting key education and worship programming for the year.
- Assisted in developing worship services in October in celebration of National Coming Out Day.
- Attended UUA national training webinars for Welcoming Congregations.
- Increased community awareness of LGBTQ+ Days of Observance and calls to action.

- Coordinated involvement in Pride programming.
- Began compilation of an LGBTQ+ resource directory.
- Identified goals for 2022 church year programming.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Integrate the mission and spirit of the Welcoming Congregations Program to congregational life at FRS, creating a welcoming community for current and prospective members.
- Create opportunities for learning and action in order to undo prejudice against LGBTQ+ people in our congregation and our community.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Ensuring Welcoming Worship Services occur in the liturgical schedule that uplift themes of LGBTQ+ inclusion.
- Communicating and celebrating LGBTQ+ Days of Observance.
- Providing educational programs which raise awareness about the issues and needs of the LGBTQ+ community.
- Supporting an LGBTQ+ organization or project at least once annually.
- Publishing and maintaining a resource guide.
- Collaborating with the Intergenerational GSA.
- Supporting a climate of inclusion in the congregation.
- Submitting a renewal report annually to UUA in order to retain our Welcoming Congregation designation.
- Adopting other objectives as needed.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

To increase opportunities for individual and congregation-wide learning, growth, and engagement as it relates to LGBTQ+ issues, needs and concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Doherty, [christine.doherty@comcast.net](mailto:christine.doherty@comcast.net)

## **MUSIC MINISTRY**

### **Jazz Vespers**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

Jazz Vespers is an alternative worship service held on the first Wednesday of the month. Music from the broad tradition of jazz, along with readings and a time for meditation offer a relaxed and contemplative space for worship.

**Names of People Involved:**

Lark Madden

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

Jazz Vespers continues to connect with people both in Newburyport and beyond through the use of our streaming platform. Guest musicians included the Cuppa Joe Trio and Danny Harrington, along with the FRS House Band.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

Return to a more regular Jazz Vespers schedule and welcome new guest musicians.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin Murphy-Mancini, [justin.murphy-mancini@frsuu.org](mailto:justin.murphy-mancini@frsuu.org)

**The Wilson Music Series**

**January 9, 2022 – The Del Sol Quartet, scheduled to play Huang Rue’s “Dust in Time”** – The concert was postponed because the quartet was unable to fly from San Francisco to Boston safely during the pandemic. Del Sol will return in July 2022.

**January 16, 2022 – Nicole Keller, organ** – Ms. Keller impressed audiences at an August 2021 concert in Methuen. At the Wilson Series, she played music of Bach, Sweelinck, Mendelssohn, and others. It was an excellent demonstration of the church’s splendid 1834 Joseph Alley organ.

**January 23, 2022, 4:00 p.m. – Danny Harrington Quartet with special guest Jeff Stout** – Yes! Jazz entered the big room in the best possible way. This concert found him in a teaching mood, taking a longer look at Jazz from Swing to Bebop to Modal to Fusion. As ever with Danny, the saxophone was smoking and the other instruments were right in time.

**February 13, 2022, 4:00 p.m. – Carduus** – This Boston-based group, with a hand from FRS Director of Church Music Justin Murphy-Mancini, presented a program of early music for voices featuring the *Missa fortuna desperata* by Josquin des Pres. They performed Josquin’s extraordinary work alongside Gregorian chants and related motets.

Respectfully submitted,

John Mercer, [jsmercerc@gmail.com](mailto:jsmercerc@gmail.com)

**SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY****Afghan Resettlement Working Group****Mission or purpose statement:**

To support the Mirzayee family, who had to flee Afghanistan, as they make a new home in America.

**Names of people involved:**

Ann Haaser, Annie Maurer, Lee McLaughlin, Yvonne McQuilkin, Mary Sortal, Bettina Turner

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Created a list of volunteers and donors.
- Coordinated preparing Parish Hall for family by cleaning it out and furnishing.

- Organized clothing donations and drive.
- Provided ESL for all members of family.
- Registered family with doctors and dentists, made and provided rides to appointments.
- Helped family learn about and navigate grocery shopping and public transportation.
- Provided rides to religious services, appointments, and social gatherings.
- Worked with congregation to provide family with things they needed.
- Coordinated with other churches in the area to collaborate and support each other.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

Communication with family due to language issues.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- To continue to help the family assimilate into their new community
- To support efforts by the clergy and city to find housing and employment for family members.
- To continue to work with churches and other community groups to the benefit of all the Afghan families in town.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

The continued generous support of the FRS community to help us care for and support this family until they are settled and able to be independent.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Maurer, [anniemaurer174@gmail.com](mailto:anniemaurer174@gmail.com)

**Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP)**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

The Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) is a volunteer-run conflict transformation program. Teams of trained AVP facilitators conduct experiential workshops to develop participants' abilities to resolve conflicts without resorting to manipulation, coercion, or violence. Typically, each workshop lasts 18–20 hours over a two or three-day period. The workshop events place a strong emphasis on the experiences of the participants, building confidence that everyone contributes something of value to violence prevention. AVP groups and facilitators are active worldwide.

**Names of People Involved:**

Kathy Desilets, Minnie Flanagan, Sandra Thaxter

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

Church members who are AVP Facilitators conducted workshops at Middleton House of Corrections and Lawrence Pre-release Center during the '21 Church year and held a table at the Spring '21 Passion Action Fair.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- We've been unsuccessful in our attempts to offer a mini workshop at church due to insufficient enrollment.

- Our offerings at jail were thwarted by shutdowns there due to COVID.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- To maintain our program at Essex County jails.
- To introduce congregants to the excellent opportunity AVP offers us to live out our Mission, Values and Ends.
- To recruit facilitators into the program.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

We are seeking folks who might be interested in exploring opportunities to become AVP Facilitators and to join us in working in Essex County jails. If there is enough interest, we will offer a mini workshop at FRS to familiarize potential facilitators with the program.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

Attract congregants to explore AVP via a mini workshop at FRS and/or joining a workshop in jail and, hopefully, to become AVP Facilitators.

Respectfully submitted,

Minnie Flanagan, [mgflan@gmail.com](mailto:mgflan@gmail.com)

**Climate Action Project (CAP)**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

We have a climate policy that was approved by the Parish Board. CAP seeks to promote the climate policy and to promote climate justice broadly.

**Names of People Involved:**

David Chatfield, William Clary, Vernon Ellis, Steven-Wolf Foster, Art Henshaw, Lance Hidy, Sam Kimball, Doug Latham, Annie Madden, Yvonne McQuilkin, Ed Meagher, Pat Skibbee, Sandra Thaxter, Joe Vecchione.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Earth Day Service.
- Improved CAP presence on the website.
- Earth Day celebration with youth.
- Information sharing about environmental efforts.
- Preparatory efforts to learn about solar and heat pumps for the church including a field trip to the Bedford Church.
- Monitoring the energy use over time which has gone down substantially in part due to energy saving measures put in place with the building energy audit.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- We would like to continue to consider how to implement the environmental policy.
- Not meeting in person was a limitation; in the past CAP has had potluck talks but those have been on hold for two years.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

We are working on goal setting now.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

We are working on goal setting now.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- It is helpful to have some staff support which Cynthia and Julie provide.
- To move forward with solar/heat pump installation there may be a need to consult with a building committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Kulhthau, [karenkuhlthau@gmail.com](mailto:karenkuhlthau@gmail.com)

**Community Human Services****Mission or purpose statement:**

To direct and manage a wide range of programs for local people who are struggling and in need of assistance. Thanks to all who have supported our initiatives. Your donations and volunteer efforts made the below programs possible. We look forward to your continued support and participation next year.

**Names of People Involved:**

Jeff Bard, Linda Buddenhagen, Nancy Crochiere, Barbara Garnis, Monique Greilich, Ann Haaser, Mary McDonald, Ann Power.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

**2021-2-22 Sunday Shared Collection:** After gathering suggestions from the congregation, we selected the following for our monthly shared collection distributions:

- September: Jeanne Geiger Center - \$1,000 FRS sponsorship; FRS walkers contributed through their participation in the Geiger Center's annual Walk Against Violence
- October: Greater Newbury Elder Pet Fund
- November: Essex County Habitat for Humanity
- December: Fuel Assistance
- January: Community Service Camperships
- February: MA Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence
- March: UTEC
- April: Merrimack Valley Black and Brown Voices
- May: Emmaus
- June: LGBT Asylum Task Force

**Swasey Orphan Endowment Fund:** There was one distribution of \$2,095.00 this year. We sent a petition to the Essex County Probate Court seeking a broader definition of qualified recipients for distributions from this fund. This was finally approved and now we will be able to offer assistance to so many more children.

These would be children in need and:

- Having at least one deceased parent, or
- Living in a single parent household, or
- Under legal guardianship, or
- In foster care, and
- Residents of Newburyport

**Joy of Giving Program:** From the scores of new/unused gifts donated by FRS members as part of this annual program, over 30 children from Kelleher Gardens were able to select and wrap presents for their parents and caretakers. This is a program that the children, ages 3-18, greatly look forward to each year.

**Newbury Food Pantry Food Drives:** FRS food drive supplied two carloads of food and \$425 in cash to deserving members of our community. CHS and Young Church conducted a second food drive and collected a truck load of food and \$200.

**Market Basket Gift Card Drive:** CHS conducted this gift card drive to support the Afghan family living in the Parish Hall and collected \$1,935 in gift cards along with \$890 in cash.

We will rotate the chairperson role on a meeting-by-meeting basis during 2022-2023 and Jeff Bard will serve as secretary. Anyone interested in learning more about our group can contact Jeff Bard at 978.270.3293 or [jeffbard@hotmail.com](mailto:jeffbard@hotmail.com).

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Bard, Secretary

## **FRS Anti-Racism Initiative (FRS ARI)**

### **Mission or purpose statement:**

The FRS ARI seeks to eliminate individual, congregational, and community racism.

### **Names of people involved:**

Core Group more directly involved in our Anti-Racism Within, Among, and Beyond Work: Vern Ellis, Susan Stone, Ann Haaser, Sue Fasoli, Jane Tuohy, Mary Sortal, Eileen Costello, Julie Menin, Sandra Thaxter, Lea Pearson, Julie Parker Amery, Jim Supple, Tina Benik, Joe Vecchione. There are approximately 50 people on the FRS Anti-Racism Initiative mailing list who have asked to be kept abreast of anti-racism initiatives and news from the church and community.

### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

The FRS Anti-Racism Initiative ("FRS-ARI") work in 2021-2022 was initially organized around the focal areas of Within (Individual), Among (Congregational), and Beyond (the larger Community):

- The Within Group developed and launched a personal self-reflection tool to help us each individually examine our own experiences, thoughts, and feelings around racism, and the *Seeing White* sessions continued under Julie Parker Amery's extremely able leadership.
- The Among Group conducted extensive research and determined to launch, and then launched, the "Living the Pledge" training at FRS as the foundational learning for the congregation to consider and hopefully choose to become an anti-racist congregation.
- The Beyond Group supported various community efforts such as walking in, and donating to, the Louis D. Brown Mother's Day Walk for Peace, and joined in the community conversation around the flying of the Thin Blue Line flag on municipal property.

Once the "Living the Pledge" training was chosen as the FRS ARI's offering to the congregation, the ARI determined to consolidate much of its efforts to rolling out that training. Eight facilitators were trained and

they in turn then offered a pilot program to further hone the program. After the pilot program, three LTP training sessions have been run thus far with a total of 15 participants. The vision of the FRS ARI is to take the steps necessary to have the congregation consider and vote, at FRS's 2022-2023 Annual Meeting, to become an Anti-Racist Congregation. Our work in the upcoming year is to provide opportunities for all of us to learn, discuss, and understand what it means to be an Anti-Racist congregation.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- Communicating to the congregation in an efficient way about our programs and efforts.
- Engaging a critical mass of participants in the discussion and the work.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- To have the congregation consider and approve becoming an anti-racist congregation in 2023.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Continuing to offer the LTP training sessions.
- Increasing communications to the congregation about the FRS ARI efforts and opportunities.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

- Continued support and commitment from the Parish Board and Reverend Rebecca.
- Interest and commitment from the congregation.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Benik, [tiben1989@gmail.com](mailto:tiben1989@gmail.com)

## **FRS Habitat for Humanity**

**Mission or purpose statement:**

FRS Habitat volunteers represent FRS in support of the Habitat mission to create affordable housing and strong, inclusive communities.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

Volunteers participated in the building of affordable homes or served on the Family Selection Committee. Both activities are evidence of FRS Habitat's commitment in line with the FRS mission statement.

**Challenges experienced in the 2021-2022 church year:**

The COVID pandemic put volunteer home construction on hold for more than a year and delayed the work of matching Habitat families with affordable homes. The number of returning home building volunteers dropped off significantly.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

Compile a list of affordable housing resources that could be available to homeowners to prepare for home ownership, including short term supportive services available to families from the point of family selection to the point of closing and occupying a Habitat home.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

Partner with other affordable housing advocates to reduce housing insecurity for low-income households.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

The most immediate need is to increase the number of volunteers participating in FRS Habitat activities. The number of experienced volunteers is significantly reduced and outreach to potential new volunteers has not been very successful.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Mandeville, [howard.mandeville@gmail.com](mailto:howard.mandeville@gmail.com)

**Indigenous Peoples Day Initiative****Mission or purpose statement:**

To support local advocacy initiatives calling for the city of Newburyport to rename Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day.

**Names of people involved:**

Linda Lu Burciaga, Mara Flynn, Betsy Hazen, Erin Hutchinson-Himmel, Cynthia Walsh, community partners.

**Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Spirituality

**Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Journey together in love. Transform our world.

**Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- City of Newburyport renamed Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day.
- Built connections with local Indigenous leaders.
- Built community-wide partnerships.
- Congregant members developed advocacy skills and confidence.
- Hosted City of Newburyport's first Indigenous Peoples Day Observance (more than 200 people attended this intergenerational event).
- Public recognition of UU's role in Indian Residential Schools.

**Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

Serve as an ally to local Indigenous people and support land recognition in the spaces we occupy so that our congregation builds authentic connections.

**Objectives for the 2022-2023 church year:**

- Host public education events to build awareness of local indigenous history to present day.
- Demonstrate awareness to public land recognition on the land that our physical church occupies.
- Strengthen community partnerships.
- Build authentic connections to local indigenous community members.
- Support efforts of neighboring towns/cities to rename Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day.

**What is needed to be successful in the 2023 church year?**

Grow engagement among parishioners to support the goals/objectives of the Indigenous Peoples Day Initiative.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Walsh, Director of Congregational Engagement & Community Outreach, [cynthia.walsh@frsuu.org](mailto:cynthia.walsh@frsuu.org)

## **Mother's Day Walk for Peace**

### **Mission or purpose statement:**

To walk in community with the people of Roxbury and Dorchester, to honor the families and loved ones lost to murder, and to raise funds for the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute which provides training, advocacy, and support.

### **Names of people involved:**

Over 20 walkers and over 25 supporters

### **Values that were advanced or supported:**

Authentic Connection, Love

### **Parts of our Mission that were advanced or supported:**

Journey together in love. Transform our world.

### **Accomplishments (or Ends) in the 2021-2022 church year:**

- We walked in community as the FRS Team.
- We supported the communities where violence is far too common.
- We raised over \$2,500 for the Peace Institute.

### **Goals for the 2022-2023 church year:**

We plan to walk again in 2023!

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Madden, [madden.anne.b@gmail.com](mailto:madden.anne.b@gmail.com)

**FY23 BUDGET WORKSHEET**

FIRST RELIGIOUS SOCIETY  
 FY23 Budget Worksheet

	FY22 Budget	FY22 Projected	FY23 Proposed	Notes
Ordinary Income/Expense		(as of 5/16/22)		
Income				
4100 · Contributions				
4111 - Pledge Matching	18,000	18,000	0	
4103 - Processing Fees Donated	0	2,000	1,800	
4101 · Pledged	503,000	503,000	515,000	Pledge Goal
4102 · Prior Year Pledges	6,000	20,710	10,000	
4106 · Non Pledge Contributions	15,000	7,000	15,000	Includes pledges of new members over the year
4107 · Shared Collection	25,000	25,000	25,000	
4109 · Reserve for Unpaid Pledges	(15,090)	(15,000)	(10,300)	2% of pledged total
4125 · Steeple Lighting	2,000	2,950	2,500	Steeple lighting plus \$500 for candle sponsorship
<b>Total 4100 · Contributions</b>	<b>553,910</b>	<b>563,660</b>	<b>559,000</b>	
4135 · Steeple Rentals				
4145 · Verizon	0	0	0	
4155 · AT&T	60,796	60,796	63,900	Standard increase
<b>Total 4135 · Steeple Rentals</b>	<b>60,796</b>	<b>60,796</b>	<b>63,900</b>	
4200 · Fees for Services				
4205 · Child Dedication	1,000		0	
4206 · Weddings	3,000		1,250	
4207 · Memorial Services	1,000		1,250	
4208 · Building Rental	7,750	10,108	10,000	
<b>Total 4200 · Fees for Services</b>	<b>12,750</b>	<b>10,108</b>	<b>12,500</b>	
4300 · Fundraising Income				
Misc Fundraisers TBD			4,000	
Seed Money (subacct)			(4,000)	
4318 - Daily Muse Booklets		2,475	4,500	
4317 - Hate Has No Port		75		
4315 - Steeple Mug Fundraising		90		
4305 · May Breakfast	0	0	300	
4306 · Book Sale	0	810	1,000	
4307 · Major Fund Raising - Raffle & Auction	33,750	12,500	25,000	
4308 · Candlelight Service	2,300	2,121	3,000	
Christmas Eve Service		962	1,200	Linked to partner church support

4311 · Yankee Homecoming Fundraising	0	0	500	
<b>Total 4300 · Fundraising Income</b>	<b>36,050</b>	<b>19,033</b>	<b>35,500</b>	
4400 · Income from Committees				
4402 · Hospitality	500			Soup Sunday, Equal Exchange
<b>Total 4400 · Income from Committees</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
4500 · Miscellaneous Income				
4500.2 - PPP Grant Income				
4500.5 · Prior Year Surplus	0		13,581	
4500 · Miscellaneous Income - Other	30,000	0	9,806	Unspent Federal COVID funds (PPP)
<b>Total 4500 · Miscellaneous Income</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23,387</b>	
4508 - Bailey Fund Reimbursement	12,000	19,666		
4550 - Income from Endowment	48,044	48,044	47,449	Reduced per Trustees
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>754,050</b>	<b>721,307</b>	<b>741,736</b>	
Expense				
7200 · Salaries & related expenses				
7220 · Salaries & wages - other				
7222 - Regular (Hourly)		15,613		Hourly employees now included in Salaries and Wages
7221 - Salary		302,131		
7250 · Payroll taxes	31,475	19,853	23,992	
7255 - SS Allowance		8,689	9,211	
7265 · Housing Allowance	64,896	64,896	75,000	A portion of the minister's salary related to tax law
7220 · Salaries & wages - oth	346,537	0	359,027	
<b>Total 7220 · Salaries &amp; wages - other</b>	<b>442,908</b>	<b>411,182</b>	<b>467,230</b>	
7240 · Employee benefits				
7230 · Retirement contributi	42,774	40,123	48,813	
7240.01 · Health Insurance	27,166	22,338	24,375	
7240.02 · Life Insurance	3,456	3,264	3,646	
7240.03 · Dental Insurance	1,104	1,216	936	
7240.05 · Workers Comp	3,053	3,154	3,222	
7260 · Professional Developpr	16,484	16,484	17,165	
<b>Total 7240 · Employee benefits</b>	<b>94,036</b>	<b>86,579</b>	<b>98,157</b>	
Affiliate Minister Stipend			1,000	
Ministerial Intern		1,500	6,000	
7275 · Sabbatical Leave	4,553	4,553	5,017	
<b>Total 7200 · Salaries &amp; related expenses</b>	<b>541,497</b>	<b>503,814</b>	<b>577,404</b>	
7500 · Outside Services				
7525 - Bookkeeping		10,000	9,000	
7515 - Consultant		5,080	0	Cell lease consulting/offset
7520 · Accounting fees	1,560	1,476	1,500	Clergy Financial (payroll)

7530 · Legal fees	5,846	5,846	6,000	AT&T cell lease
7540 · Professional fees - other	5,750	1,500	4,000	Computer consulting moved from computer expense
7550 · Temporary help - contract	5,050	7,500	1,000	Moved to salaries and wages
<b>Total 7500 · Outside Services</b>	<b>18,206</b>	<b>31,402</b>	<b>21,500</b>	
<b>8100 · Supplies, Comm &amp; Equipment</b>				
8110 · Supplies & Materials	10,000	8,000	8,000	
8130 · Telephone & telecommunications	6,500	5,140	5,500	
8140 · Postage, shipping, delivery	2,000	1,800	1,800	
8160 · Equip rental & maintenance	8,000	6,100	6,500	
8165 · Computer Expense	5,000	9,000	3,000	Computer consulting moved to professional fees
8170 · Outside Printing & Copying	1,500	3,949	2,900	
8180 · Books, Curricula & Subscriptions	500	1,563	0	
<b>Total 8100 · Supplies, Comm &amp; Equipment</b>	<b>33,500</b>	<b>35,552</b>	<b>27,700</b>	
<b>8200 - Facilities Expenses</b>				
8210 · Rent, parking, other occupancy	4,760	4,760	4,760	
8217 · Repairs and Maintenance				
8217.01 · Major Clean-up		0	0	
8217.02 · Furnace	13,000	13,000	3,000	
8217.03 · Fire Detection	2,000	2,700	2,000	
8217.05 · Landscape Renewa	1,500	1,500	1,000	
8217.06 - Painting		282		
8217.07 · Roof		350		
8217.08 · Lift Maintenance	1,500	1,771	1,500	
8217 · Repairs and Maintena	8,000	8,000	6,000	
<b>Total 8217 - Repairs and Maintenance</b>	<b>26,000</b>	<b>27,603</b>	<b>13,500</b>	
8220 · Utilities				Parish Hall utilities for refugees are covered by private fundraising and reimbursement from resettlement organization
8216 · Fuel Oil/Natural Gas	10,100	10,100	9,000	Weather dependent
8220.01 · Electricity	8,560	9,000	8,560	
8220.02 · Water & Sewer	2,000	1,300	1,200	
8220.03 · Propane Gas				
<b>Total 8220 - Utilities</b>	<b>20,660</b>	<b>20,400</b>	<b>18,760</b>	
<b>Mortgage Principal</b>	<b>9,308</b>			
8250 - Mortgage interest	6,006	2,053	0	LMH mortgage paid off 9-Nov-2021
8520 - Building & Liability Insurance	14,807	14,807	15,000	Umbrella and multi-peril policy, 10% increase
8200 - Facility Expenses -Other		738		
<b>Total 8200 - Facilities Expenses</b>	<b>81,541</b>	<b>70,361</b>	<b>52,020</b>	
<b>8300 - Travel &amp; meetings expenses</b>				

8320 - Conference, Meeting and Retreat	500	400	500	Board retreat
<b>Total 8300 - Travel &amp; meetings expenses</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>500</b>	
<b>8500 - Misc expenses</b>				
8586 - Commissions & Fees		332		
8505 - Dues and Subscriptions	30,000	30,000	30,000	UUA Contribution
8517 - Flowers and Altar		1,700	0	Covered by donations
8530 - Membership dues - organization		1,000	0	
8570 - Advertising expenses	1,000	1,500	1,000	
8575 - Safe Deposit Box		200	200	
8580 - Contingency provisions	1,000	2,000	1,500	
8583 - Capital Reserve provision	5,000	3,000	1,000	
Operating Cash Reserve			1,000	
8582 - Food & Refreshment	600	600	600	
8585 - Bank Service Charges	3,200	4,500	4,500	Credit card fees (online pledging)
8590 - Other expenses				
8590.10 - Organ Maintenanc	3,520	1,760	3,500	
8590.9 - Social Action	720	200		
8590.8 - Parish Board	1,300	200	1,000	
8590.7 - Raffle	8,750	0	0	
8590.6 - Worship	2,200	2,200	2,000	Includes guest preachers
8590.5 - Membership	2,500	50		
8590.4 - Hospitality	1,200	350	500	
8590.3 - Partner Church Coll	1,500		1,200	From Christmas Eve collection
8590.2 - GA attend support	2,700	0	1,500	
8590.1 - Shared Collection d	12,500	12,500	12,500	50% of loose plate collection
<b>Total 8590 - Other expenses</b>	<b>36,890</b>	<b>17,260</b>	<b>22,200</b>	
8591 - COVID-Related Expenses		4,105		
<b>Total 8500 - Misc expenses</b>	<b>77,690</b>	<b>66,197</b>	<b>62,000</b>	
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>752,934</b>	<b>707,726</b>	<b>741,124</b>	
	<b>1,116</b>	<b>13,581</b>	<b>612</b>	