



STONE TEMPLE NEWS

March 2016

From the Minister's Study

Rev. Rebecca Froom

Most of us have heard the phrase, "March winds bring April showers bring May flowers." Here at United First Parish Church, the winds of early spring will challenge us to reflect on our shared vision as a congregation.

Throughout the fall and winter we have worked together to craft the following congregational mission statement:

United First Parish Church
Unitarian Universalist
1306 Hancock Street
Quincy, MA 02169
617-773-1290,
office@ufpc.org
www.ufpc.org

United First Parish Church, Unitarian Universalist, is a welcoming and inclusive spiritual community in the heart of Quincy. As the Church of the Presidents, we are inspired by our democratic heritage.

United by our covenant and drawing meaning from many sources, our community of all ages promotes spiritual growth, creative expression and freedom of thought.

Grounded in love and guided by compassion, we are called to raise our voices and take action for truth and justice, equity and peace.



In this windy springtime season we will build upon the work put into this mission statement and craft a vision statement. Our congregation will meet on Sunday, March 6th after church for a workshop where we will imagine what our congregation will be like seven years from now. In the year 2023 how will we be embodying our congregation's covenant and mission and our Unitarian Universalist principles?

Crafting a vision requires our imaginations. Bringing that shared dream to life will require commitment. This March as we feel ourselves being inspired by visionary winds, we will also be embarking on our annual financial commitment appeal. As a democratic community we have the freedom to define our own vision *and* the responsibility to dedicate our resources of time, talent and treasure to making our dreams a reality. Our generosity will lay the foundation for the future. Our generosity of spirit will allow us to craft a shared vision. And our financial generosity will enable us to actualize this vision. May these March winds open our senses to our broadest vision and boldest dreams. May these March winds challenge and inspires us to dedicate our resources to achieving our shared dreams.

Reflections: Role Models

Ali Jablonsky

I love the month of March. It is my birthday month, but as I've gotten older, I've found more and more reasons to love this month. March brings Read Across America Day and Women's History Month. All of these March

events come together for me in culminating an incredible amount of reflection on my role models.

I love celebrating birthdays. For me, these days allow an excuse for us to remind those we love how much they matter, and they give us the opportunity to experience this flowing of love and care on our own days. On my birthday, I hear from mentors and teachers, colleagues and classmates. All people I admire, people who serve as my role models.

The best birthday gift I ever received was for my 23rd birthday, on March 13th, 2014. I was rushing to get from the high school where I was student teaching to an evening class. I scolded myself for not thinking to get gas in the morning and sped to the gas station. While waiting, I checked my email and there it was: "Admissions Decision from Harvard Divinity School." I took a deep breath and opened the decision that would shape my life—I had gotten into HDS. It is impossible for me to think of this moment without awareness of the month that focuses on authors and on women.

So many authors had inspired, supported, encouraged, and comforted me along my journey. Marie Howe, Ian Morgan Cron, Tara Brach, Maya Angelou, Lucy Maud Montgomery, Mary Oliver—all of these authors are my role models. Their words have sometimes been my most intimate companions.

My life has been held by far too many women to list. I've been inspired by the service of Mother Theresa, the work of Hannah Adams, the determination of Oprah Winfrey. I do not stand on a few shoulders—I stand on an incredible mountain of female ancestors that have shaped our world. And then there are the hands I hold more closely. Sr. Kathleen pushed me to embrace and challenge my creativity. Cheri made sure I had physical and emotional nourishment, Michelle gave me a space to break safely, Barb gave me a place to belong, and my Grandma believed in all of the dreams I could and couldn't see. My Birthday gift two years ago from HDS—that was a gift from these women and so many others.

The world is terrifying in so many ways, and it is especially terrifying for our children, because of the problems that we can't solve. We cannot immediately rid the world of poverty or violence or prejudice. But in the midst of all that terrifies us, I believe it is so important to give our children role models. We can be role models to those children in our congregation, but we can also open the world to them by introducing them to so many other role models. March gives us an excuse to expose our children to authors and women, but that is only the start. What about our religious ancestors? Or our politicians, artists, advocates, and scholars who have shaped our world for the better?

If we could be both role models and bridges to role models for our children, we can showcase the good, the safe, the hope, and the promise of our world. This month, I am thinking about the role models I know and I know of and I'm excited to teach our kids a little more about these people. I wonder who you might introduce us to.

UFPC Board Highlights From the February 9 Meeting

- Mission Statement is nearing a final draft and the first Vision workshop will be held on 3/6/16.
- Restoration of windows is progressing. Next major building project will be fixing plaster in the parlor.
- Our new childcare worker is doing well and can be utilized for big events upon request. A back-up person is being interviewed.
- The Board of Governors has supported Religious Education Director, Alison Jablonsky's, request for congregational sponsorship.

- On 1/31/16, John Yazwinski, Executive Director of Father Bills and Mainspring, spoke to several church members and members of the Outreach Committee regarding homelessness in Quincy and how our church can help. The next Outreach Committee meeting will be held at noon on Sunday, 2/21/16.
- A long term financial planning brainstorming meeting will be held on 2/28/16 at Marcia Smith's home with a small group of church leaders/parishioners.

Pulse of the Congregation

The Mission Statement is done and we want to congratulate the Mission and Vision Task Force for successfully completing this daunting task and making sure that we all had ample opportunity to offer our opinions. Of course, the Mission Statement is only half their job, and we get to work with them again in the coming months to formulate our collective UFPC Vision. The COM is focusing our attention on learning your opinions about UFPC's involvement in denominational activities, such as the Unitarian Universalist Association. Do you like our involvement in UUA district events and interfaith activities? Would you like to see more or less involvement? Please let us know! We are: Beth Cook, Donna Wise and Mahmooda Qureshi.

Vision Statement Workshops – Save the Dates!

Recently, the congregation together created a mission statement. Now it is time to focus on a vision for our church. Once again the Mission and Vision Task Force asks you to participate in 2 workshops to share your thoughts and ideas. The workshops will be held on:

Sunday March 6, 12:15 – 2:30 pm

Sunday April 3, 12:15 – 2:30 pm

Both workshops will be held in the Parish Hall, and a delicious lunch will be provided before the workshops start. Child care will also be provided.

A vision statement is a defined picture of where the congregation wants to be in seven years. It is the dream of what we want to become, setting mission-grounded goals. Our vision will make our mission come alive. This is the time for you to think big and share your dreams for UFPC.

After the workshops, the Mission and Vision Task Force will roll up our sleeves and craft a first draft of a vision statement. We aim to present the draft to the congregation on April 10, and then hold a series of feedback sessions:

After Services in the Parish Hall:

April 10

April 17

April 24

Weekday Daytime

We will hold a small group meeting in the daytime during the week, time and location TBD.

We will incorporate feedback into a revised draft, and will hold additional feedback sessions for the revised draft on May 1 and May 8. We will have a final draft ready by mid-May, and both the mission and vision statements will go to a vote at the Annual Meeting on May 22.

This is an exciting time in the congregation. Please join us on March 6 and April 3 to share your vision!

With gratitude,
Erwin, Louise, Rev. Rebecca, Jamie and Sarah

Take Action: End Gender Identity Discrimination in MA

Grounded in love and guided by compassion, we are called to raise our voices and take action for truth and justice, equity and peace. ~ UFPC Mission Statement

On February 11, the Outreach Committee co-sponsored a community meeting with [Freedom Massachusetts](#) to learn more about Freedom Massachusetts and current legislation affecting our transgender neighbors. There is an immediate need for advocacy around [SB 735 An Act relative to transgender anti-discrimination](#), which will be voted on by the state legislature this spring.

- In 2011, the Massachusetts Transgender Equal Rights Coalition successfully advocated for a bill that would provide legal protections to transgender and gender non-conforming people in the areas of credit, housing, employment and public education. **However, the legislation excluded protections in public accommodations, or spaces open to the public.**
- [An Act Relative to Transgender Anti-Discrimination](#) would add “gender identity” to existing Massachusetts civil rights law for public accommodations, which currently prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, religion and marital status.

The Outreach Committee urges you pick up a Freedom MA postcard from the Parish Hall and send it in to show your support for extending protections to transgender people in places of public accommodation. To learn more, visit www.freedommassachusetts.org.

Sunday Sermons Now Available Online

UFPC is now recording our sermons each week, so that those of you who may not be able to attend in person can still hear our services! These will be recorded weekly, and then moved online to the website, <http://www.ufpc.org/weeklysermons.html>.

We will do our best to make sure that the sermons are online as quickly as possible following the service! Please feel free to email web@ufpc.org if you have any questions about this new service!

–Wiley Cox, Communications Director, UFPC

Announcements

Book Group

Tuesday, March 1, 7:00 pm

On March 1st, the book group will meet to discuss "America's Bitter Pill" by Steven Brill. We will meet from 7:00 to 8:30 in the Parish Hall. This deep look at health care in the US is especially timely as the election cycle proceeds and debate about the effectiveness of the Affordable Health Care Act continues.

A New York Times Bestseller and NYT Notable Book, America's Bitter Pill is Steven Brill's acclaimed book on how the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare, was written, how it is being implemented, and, most important, how it is changing—and failing to change—the rampant abuses in the healthcare industry. It's a fly-on-the-wall account of the titanic fight to pass a 961-page law aimed at fixing America's largest, most dysfunctional industry. It's a penetrating chronicle of how the profiteering that Brill first identified in his trailblazing Time magazine cover story continues, despite Obamacare. And it is the first complete, inside account of how President Obama persevered to push through the law, but then failed to deal with the staff incompetence and turf wars that crippled its implementation.

But by chance America's Bitter Pill ends up being much more—because as Brill was completing this book, he had to undergo urgent open-heart surgery. Thus, this also becomes the story of how one patient who thinks he knows everything about healthcare “policy” rethinks it from a hospital gurney—and combines that insight with his brilliant reporting. The result: a surprising new vision of how we can fix American healthcare so that it stops draining the bank accounts of our families and our businesses, and the federal treasury.

David Roth and Johnsmith to Perform at Stone Temple Coffeehouse

Saturday, March 5, 8:00 pm

For those of you looking for something deep and soulful for entertainment, Stone Temple Coffeehouse, Quincy's own official Boston Area Coffee House, is presenting a unique local folk concert with nationally known and recognized singer-songwriters, David Roth, and Johnsmith. David has a pure, smooth voice, unsurpassed instrumental ability, incredible humor, and heart-piercing, intelligent lyrics; and Johnsmith, who is making a rare New England appearance, is a talented singer songwriter who has a gift for writing deceptively simple songs, with his heart on his sleeve and his voice in control, that spring from a deep place in the soul. The duo will be performing on Saturday evening, March 5 at 8:00 pm (doors open at 7:30 pm). Refreshments will be available. Admission is \$20. For reserved tickets and more information call Eileen Baker at 617-821-4073. Hope you will join us for this wonderful evening and support the efforts of our coffeehouse. For More Information about David Roth: www.davidrothmusic.com. For more Info about Johnsmith: www.johnsmithmusic.com

Articulating Our Congregation's Vision, Part I

Sunday, March 6, 12:15–2:30 pm

What will our congregation look like in seven years? In this first of two congregational workshops designed for us to articulate a congregational vision statement, we think about how our congregation will embody our covenant and mission in the years to come. How will we use our building and other resources? What programs will we have? How will we be in relationship to the needs and opportunities in our wider community? Social hour will include lunch and childcare will be provided during the workshop. Please RSVP to Office@UFPC.org or by signing up during coffee hour in the parish hall.

Easter Lilies Orders Due by March 7th

Easter (March 27th) will be early this year; therefore our order date with Quint's Flowers will be early too. This year we have two price points \$15 and \$20. In the past, the \$20 plants were plenty big. We are hoping that friends and members with smaller living spaces will want to participate this year. All donors may take their plants home with them after our Easter Celebration. Contact me at artclaire@conmcast.net, (617) 729-0220 or during Coffee Hour. Thank you for your support and for helping our Pulpit to be dressed in a traditional fashion.

– Claire Fitzmaurice, Flower Committee

Kindred Souls: A Discussion Group for Seniors

Wednesday, March 9, 10:00 am, Brookdale Quincy Bay

Seniors (age 60+) are invited to join Rev. Rebecca and other UFPC members and friends for a monthly discussion group about current events and social issues. Grounded in our shared Unitarian Universalist values and principles these discussions offer an opportunity for us to deepen our understanding of the world around us. The group will convene at 10:00 AM on either the second or third Wednesday of the month, and will be held at Brookdale Quincy Bay (99 Brackett Street, formerly River Bay club). The next meetings are on March 9th and April 20. Please contact Rev. Rebecca at [Rev. Rebecca.Froom@gmail.com](mailto:Rev.Rebecca.Froom@gmail.com) or 617.803.1159 if you are interested in participating.

Outreach Committee

Sunday, March 13, 12:00 pm–1:00 pm

The Outreach Committee will meet on Sunday, March 13 at 12:00 pm in the large classroom downstairs. This is an open meeting, and we welcome you to join us as we put the UU principles in action and shape the congregation's social justice efforts. If you are interested in the committee's work but cannot attend the meeting, please contact Ann Marie Willer.

Writing Group

Sunday, March 13, 12:00 pm

The Writing Group will meet in the parlor of the parish hall on Sunday, March 13 at noon. The group meets for roughly one hour. All are welcome to participate! For any questions, feel free to contact Jim Petosa at jimjamespeto@aol.com.

Stewardship Invites You to Volunteer at the Prison Book Program

Thursday, March 17, 6:30 pm

I would like to invite UFPC members and friends to join me on Thursday evening, March 17th at 6:30 pm to volunteer at the Prison Book Program in our church dining room downstairs. (Use the entrance on Temple Street). For me, this has become an opportunity to meet a few new friends and welcome them to our historic church with a tour.

OUR ANNUAL PLEDGE DRIVE THIS YEAR WILL BEGIN SUNDAY, MARCH 13TH AND CONCLUDE ON SUNDAY, APRIL 10TH.

Contact Marie-Louise at 857-526-2579 or mariejm1961@yahoo.com

Introduction to Unitarian Universalism

Thursdays, March 17, 24, and 31, 7:00–9:00 pm

Unitarian Universalists come from all faith backgrounds and many were not raised UU. Are you new to UFPC or are you still feeling new to UUism? If so, this three session adult religious education workshop is for you! Participants will examine their own personal stories in light of our Unitarian Universalist tradition and heritage. These participatory workshops address the topics of UU theology, worship, history, governance, religious education, and social justice practices and philosophy. Contact Rev. Rebecca for more information or to sign up for the workshop series.

General Assembly
Thursday, June 22–Sunday, June 26, Columbus, Ohio

Every year thousands of Unitarian Universalists gather in late June for the annual General Assembly (GA) of the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). GA includes outstanding workshops covering a wide range of topics, dynamic worship services, and “general sessions” where delegates from UU congregations make decisions about the direction of the UUA. The theme of this year’s GA is “Heartland: Where Faiths Connect.”

If you are thinking of attending GA or serving as a GA delegate this year, please be in touch with Rev. Rebecca. To find out more about this year’s GA go to <http://www.uua.org/ga> Conference registration and hotel reservations open March 1st.

Visitor Program Vignette
Bill Westland

In the February Newsletter Reverend Rebecca commented that our 1828 Stone Temple was a “large, stunning, historic building.” I would carry this a step further and say that it is one of the finest examples of Greek Revival architecture, if not the finest in the whole United States. It has three defining features, the massive, granite Doric columns out front, the domed, plaster, Pantheonic ceiling inside the sanctuary, and the high, mahogany pulpit in the front of the sanctuary. Most significant, architectural landmarks only have one defining feature. Our Stone Temple would be a National Historic Landmark even without the presidential crypts. The architect, Alexander Parris, and the church building committee did a remarkable job, and just think, the project came in 10% under budget.

The building committee endorsed the concept of John Adams of a stone temple, and decided to have the columns in the front of the church be cut in one piece not in sections. This required finding a quarry deep enough from which four 25 foot 25 ton granite columns could be cut. The committee insisted on only one quarry being used so that the stone in each of the columns would be a perfect match. Mr. Torrey agreed to provide the columns plus the capitols for \$1000 each. This amounted to about 10% of the total cost of the building. The committee went to Rattlesnake Quarry to inspect the stone and then agreed to hire Mr. Torrey. Eventually Mr. Torrey tried to convince the committee that he needed more money to do the capitols, but the committee was comprised of flinty, no nonsense Yankees and he was not allowed to amend his agreement. A huge special cart was built to transport the columns from the quarry to the church. It took 80 oxen to pull this cart, and it took three days to get the columns to the building site. Once there, under the supervision of Mr. Holmes, three columns were erected in one day and the fourth the next day. Mr. Holmes apologized that it got dark and they couldn’t erect the fourth column the same day. It was an amazing accomplishment.

Architect Parris convinced the committee to have a coffered domed ceiling in the sanctuary that would measure 130 feet in diameter. It would be in the style of the Pantheon in Rome, but would have lotus blossoms with a passion flower surrounded by a Greek key design in the center. Everything would be done in plaster. Both the lotus blossom and passion flower have religious meanings but the Greek key is strictly decorative. This was a design perfected in the 16th century by Philbert Delorme, a French engineer and architect. Parris had used it before in his Quincy Market, Faneuil Hall and the ether dome at Massachusetts General Hospital. Of course, these were much smaller ceilings. The ceiling was supported by vertically set laminated ribs which distributed the weight of the ceiling to the walls of the church. Mr. Edson was paid \$825 to construct the ceiling. When we had it restored it cost over \$200,000.

The original plan for the pulpit was to carve it out of curled maple. For some reason Parris decided to use Santo Domingo mahogany, perhaps because mahogany was easier to carve or perhaps it was more available. Notice the magnificent workmanship, especially the replica Doric columns carved on each side, and the carved surface of the pulpit itself. It is difficult to imagine that the pulpit only cost \$400. Can you imagine what it would cost to duplicate today? There was a special old forest type of mahogany found in the Dominican Republic, Cuba and Haiti which was completely used up between 1800 and 1850. Our pulpit fits into this time period. A copy of a Chippendale desk, not even an original, made from this valuable wood sold for 3.3 million dollars back in 2007. What if our pulpit was carved out of this old forest mahogany? For insurance purposes it is probably better not to know. At the same time the pulpit was carved Mr. Briggs was paid \$178 for the sofa located behind the pulpit, the two high backed chairs and the communion table in front of the pulpit.

Upcoming Worship Services

“Partners in Creation”

Joe Jenks, guest preacher
Sunday, March 6, 10:30 am

The Hebrew phrase, Tikkun Olam means to repair the world or heal the world. The mystical ideas behind these words suggest that we are partners in creation and that God left the work unfinished and imperfect that we might rise to the occasion and help make a world more in the image of divine love. UU troubadour and international touring Folksinger, Joe Jencks will lead a service on the value of community and how we partner together in covenant to heal what is broken within and without. Through spoken word and song, Joe will help us ponder how we hold these ideals as we envision how to manifest these them in our lives, families, and communities.

With nearly two decades under his belt on the international Folk music circuit, **Joe Jencks** has become a favorite singer, performer, and songwriter of music fans throughout North America. From concert venues including Carnegie Hall to churches, festivals, and coffee houses, Joe endeavors to open hearts and minds through performances of musical beauty, social conscience, and spiritual exploration. In addition, Joe performs and preaches in dozens of UU congregations annually. Jencks is also the co-founder of the harmony trio *Brother Sun*, has won numerous songwriting awards, and has released a dozen CDs in the last 15 years. Inspiring audiences with his lyric voice and compassionate soul, Joe has shared the stage with numerous Folk luminaries including Pete Seeger, Holly Near, Utah Phillips and John McCutcheon. Joe’s recordings will be available after the services. For more information visit www.joejencks.com.

“Castles in the Air”

Rev. Rebecca Froom
Sunday, March 13, 10:30 am

Henry David Thoreau once wrote, “If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put foundations under them.” As we begin our annual financial commitment appeal we spend time reflecting on the achievements of our past, our vision for the future, and our ability to build and sustain the foundations that will support our dreams.

“A Great Teacher”

Rev. Rebecca Froom
Sunday, March 20, 10:30 am

This Palm Sunday service celebrates the life and teachings of Jesus. What was so resonant about Jesus’ teach-

ings 2,000 years ago? And what of his teachings are still relevant now? The service will include The Radiators performing music from the show Godspell.

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

Rev. Rebecca Froom
Friday, March 25, 7:00 pm

Tenebrae means “darkness” or “shadows.” On this evening we reflect on the final days and the death of Jesus Christ, as we enter the shadows and darkness of the crucifixion story. First, we will tell the story of Jesus’ final night with his disciples and celebrate a communion service. We will also tell the story of Jesus’ crucifixion as we create a contemplative space in which to remember the suffering of Jesus and his community, as well as the suffering of oppressed communities in our present era.

“All the Earth Shall Be Made New”

Rev. Rebecca Froom
Sunday, March 27, 10:30 am

The Easter story invites us to reflect on the rhythm of life, death and resurrection that is at the center of the Christian tradition. In the northern hemisphere the Easter season also invites us to reflect on the rhythms of life, death, and rebirth that are evident with the arrival of spring. On this Easter morning we will reflect on these rhythms of death and resurrection in the body of God, the body of the earth, and the body of society. What life giving hope can we find in the wake of suffering? How can we practice resurrection?

March Calendar

- Tuesday, March 1, 7:00 pm – Book Group
 - Tuesday, March 1, 7:00 pm – Committee on Ministry Meeting
 - Thursday, March 3, 7:00 pm – Book Discussion: Between the World and Me
 - Saturday, March 5, 10:00 am – Treasury Team Meeting
 - Saturday, March 5, 8:00 pm – Stone Temple Coffeehouse Concert
 - Sunday, March 6, 12:15 pm – Vision Statement Workshop
 - Wednesday, March 9, 12:00 pm – Kindred Souls: A Discussion Group for Seniors [offsite]
 - Sunday, March 13, 12:00 pm – Outreach Committee Meeting
 - Sunday, March 13, 12:00 pm – Writing Group
 - Tuesday, March 15, 6:15 pm – Management Team Meeting
 - Tuesday, March 15, 7:45 pm – Board of Governors Meeting
 - Thursday, March 17, 6:30 pm – Stewardship Invitation to Volunteer
 - Thursday, March 17, 7:00 pm – Introduction to Unitarian Universalism
 - Saturday, March 19, 10:00 am – Prison Book Program
 - Tuesday, March 22, 7:00 pm – Worship Committee Meeting [offsite]
 - Thursday, March 24, 7:00 pm – Introduction to Unitarian Universalism
 - Friday, March 25, 7:00 pm – Good Friday Tenebrae Service
 - Saturday, March 26, 10:00 am – Prison Book Program
 - Thursday, March 31, 7:00 pm - Introduction to Unitarian Universalism
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- Sundays, 9:00 am – Meditation Group
 - Sundays, 9:15 am – Choir Rehearsal
 - Sundays, 10:30 am – Worship Service
 - Mondays, 11:00 am – Staff Meeting

- Tuesdays, 6:30 pm – Prison Book Program
- Thursdays, 6:30 pm – Prison Book Program

Church Staff and Lay Leaders

Staff:

Rev. Rebecca Froom (Minister), Rev. Sheldon Bennett (Minister Emeritus), David Bousquin (Office Administrator and Property Manager), Norman Corey (Music Director), Alison Jablonsky (Director of Religious Education)

Board of Governors:

Brenda Reed (President), Jim Petosa (Vice-President), Marcia Smith (Clerk), Florence Grose (Treasurer), Erwin Schaareman (Assistant Treasurer), Marie-Louise Jackson-Miller (Stewardship), Kate Hurley and Jo Morris (Religious Education), Wiley Cox (Communications), Lynne Courtney (Congregational Life), Ann Marie Willer (Outreach)

Committee on Ministry: Beth Cook (Chair), Donna Wise, Mahmooda Qureshi

Nominating Committee: Kim Dangora (Chair), David Downs, Maryalice Sutherland, Eileen Williston, Tim Rogers