

Parish Committee Minutes

First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Arlington

December 11, 2018

Present: Steve McMullin (Chair), Marie Meter (Vice Chair), Lori Kenschaft (Clerk), David Klingsberg (Treasurer), Maggie Carey (Parish Committee Member), Tom Estabrook (Parish Committee Member), Sara Galantowicz (Parish Committee Member), Julius Pereli (Parish Committee Member), Jeff Roberts (Parish Committee Member), Marta Flanagan (Minister), Tina Schultz (Director of Religious Education), Sara DeLong (Executive Assistant to the Minister), David Dreyfus (Finance Committee Chair), Anne Quaadgras (Stewardship Committee Member)

(1) Consent agenda. *The members of the Parish Committee voted 9-0-0* to accept the consent agenda, which consists of the November 13 minutes, Minister's Report (Appendix A), DRE's Report (Appendix B), and financial documents.

(2) State of the Church. Marta described the state of the church as extraordinary. This month the second minister start-up fund exceeded its goal and the chancel mosaic was installed and dedicated – both of which will shape the future of First Parish – while we also had a successful Harvest Moon Fair, Youth Group Prom, and beginning of the holidays. Tina added that last Sunday there were 8 babies in the nursery.

Marta also noted that this is the lowest-key kickoff to a sabbatical she has ever experienced, due to so much else happening. She shared a handout on sabbaticals (Appendix C) and urged us to see Jeanne and Olav Nieuwejaar as “resident consultants.” Whatever we do, ask them how this issue is handled in other congregations and what strikes them about how we handle it.

(3) Ministerial Intern. Marta reported that we had 4 applicants for the ministerial intern position, of whom 3 were interviewed and 2 had second interviews. The Ministerial Intern Search Committee will meet soon to discuss results and decisions.

Marta described the Ministerial Intern Search Committee as excellent. Its members are Sanjay Newton, Mara Prentiss, John Shriver, Tina Silberman, and Cindy Tavilla.

(4) Stewardship. Anne Quaadgras reported that the Stewardship Committee is small this year and has four new members. Sue Sheffler and David Desjardins are Co-chairs, Anne is in charge of data, and the other members are Jamie Aronson, Kathy Greene, and Marc Jacobson.

The theme this year will be related to bringing us together, with reference to the new chancel mosaic and an emphasis on participation. With the increasing importance of stewardship, the committee is currently planning food-related parties for four subgroups of the congregation: lead donors, newish members, parents from pre-K to grade 6, and parents of grade 7 through Youth Group. The current pledge goal is \$680K.

ParCom members could help by staffing tables during coffee hour (all Sundays in February and the

first two Sundays in March) and helping follow up with people who haven't pledged in a timely way.

Marta asked whether one-on-ones with new members could be included in the plans, as that is the time when people typically set expectations about how much they will pledge, and they rarely do large increases later. ParCom members might also be able to help with these one-on-ones.

We discussed that might be helpful to use a somewhat different message with people who use auto-pay. They may or may not realize that they need to re-pledge. We could explain that re-pledging is important for budgeting purposes while asking them to increase their weekly/monthly payment by a certain amount. Perhaps an email would work better than a written letter for people who use auto-pay.

We want to be up-front that First Parish costs about \$2000 per household, on average. We could talk with Olav and Jeanne about how to become more comfortable with talking about money.

(5) Budget Priorities. David Dreyfus presented an overview of the current state of budget calculations for next year (Appendix D).

We agreed that we are already committed to covering salary and benefits for a ministerial intern. That might be as much as \$38,000 per year. We will know the actual expense only after we know the cost of health insurance for a particular individual.

The Religious Education Committee requested \$500 for walkie-talkies (security communications), \$1,000 for improving acoustics in classrooms, and \$2,000 for improved storage – a total of \$3,500. The RE Committee currently has \$3,421 in a reserve fund. We agreed to encourage the RE Committee to use its reserve fund for these purposes.

We voted on the following budget priorities:

COLA increases for all staff (\$13,482)	40 out of 40 possible points
Bring all staff to mid-point fair comp (\$3,370)	32 points
Increase hours for Youth Group Trip Coordinator to better reflect reality (\$900)	24 points
Provide professional development funds for the Director of Religious Education position (\$6,400)	21 points
Increase the Music Director hours	9 points

We noted that providing professional development funds for the DRE position could be done incrementally – perhaps starting with \$2,000 or something like that this year.

(6) Second Minister Process. As of December 11, 139 households with 217 individuals had pledged a total of \$217,858 to the second minister start-up fund (well above our goal of \$200,000). [The final numbers were 140 households with 218 individuals pledged \$217,958.]

First Parish's membership is currently 445, and 218 people is about 49% of members. Not everyone who pledged is a member, however. Indeed, Anne Quaadgras pointed out that 7 of them had never made a pledge or non-cash gift to First Parish in the past. So something like 46% of First Parish members pledged to the start-up fund.

The members of the Parish Committee voted 9-0-0 to approve \$400 from the Parish Committee line item for a children's activity during the congregational meeting on January 6th.

The purpose of this activity is to encourage parents to attend the meeting. Tina will follow through on organizing a program.

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Draft minutes submitted by Lori Kenschaft, Clerk
Approved by the Parish Committee January 8, 2019

Upcoming hosts: January 8 Marie, February 12 Jeff, March 12 Sara, March 26 David, April 9 Steve, April 23 Julius, May 14 Maggie, June 11 Tom

Appendix A

Ministers' Report for the Parish Committee

First Parish Unitarian Universalist in Arlington, Massachusetts

Rev. Marta Morris Flanagan

November 8- December 7, 2018

Wow! What a month as we began the slide into the holiday!

- We made the pledge goal or the second minister start up fund! The members and friends of First Parish have pledged more than \$200,000 toward this effort.
- We installed and dedicated our new chancel mosaic!
- The Harvest Moon Fair was a great success!
- The Youth Group Prom went off without an apparent hitch.

Meanwhile behind the scenes, we continue to search for a keyboardist and a bookkeeper. The Ministerial Intern Committee received and reviewed 4 applications and interviewed two. We are now conducting second interviews with the two finalists.

Revs. Jeanne and Jeanne and Olav Nieuwejaar attended worship and a lunch at my home for lay leaders. They brought humor and reassurance to the sabbatical planning for everyone! How blessed we are to have these "resident consultants" among us! May you invite their counsel about the ways we do things here at First Parish. Their presence is an opportunity to reflect on the many things we do so well and what we might do smarter and wiser. I am looking forward to your learnings from the sabbatical.

On a personal note, these last three months have meant a significant increase in my workload. Instead of preaching half the Sundays I preached 10 out of 15 – and that while devoting several writing days Saturdays for lay ministry training, worship associate training, New UU, a wedding and more. I also added the Intern Committee to my regular list of meetings, as well as the weekly Citizen's Police Academy. And, did I mention, sabbatical planning? ☐ Frankly, a load of this size is not something I can maintain without affecting my performance and my health. The sabbatical comes at an opportune time for rest and reflection. I am so very grateful for both the good work and the upcoming time of sabbath.

In wonder and astonishment at the bounty of First

Parish!

Marta

A detailed listing of my activities this month follows this report.

Worship

Meeting with Sabbatical co-minister Jeanne and Olav Nieuwejaar 11/12

Lunch with ParCom, Committee on Ministry and Olav and Jeanne at my home 11/18

Individual weekly meeting with DRE Tina Schultz, Office Manager Joan Dyer,
and Executive Assistant Sara Haugland

Biweekly weekly meetings with Music Director Jonathan Brennand

Biweekly Program Staff Meetings (DRE, Office Manager, Music Director, Minister)

Education and Community Building

Lectio Divina: weekly

Social Justice / Turning Outward

Attended UU Urban Ministry Board meeting 11/8

Professional Development and Continuing Education

Monthly Video 2-hour Conference Call with ministers from the Pilot UUA Clergy
Wellness Deepening Program 11/20

Completed the 8-week program at Police station: "Citizens Police Academy,"
11/8, 11/15

attended Follen Women, UU Ministers Group 11/15

Appendix B

DRE Report to Parish Committee December 2018

Hi Folks,

It's a very busy time in our church year! I've highlighted some of the activities, events, successes and challenges happening in our program during the months of November and early December.

Morning Program

We have had very irregular attendance this month. Higher numbers in grades 5 and 6 and lower in grades 1 and 2. No obvious pattern from what previous years or anecdotally from families.

Grade 7 studying Neighboring Faiths has had wonderful and interesting field trips to Cambridge AME, St Johns Episcopal and High Rock churches. Our kids have lots to compare and contrast with First Parish.

Classroom space is okay enough for our current attendance, although the Kindergarten room is very small, especially with the way Mariposa sets it up in preparation for our usage.

Elliot Trilling has been recruited to help set up and take down our furniture. It still takes Elliot, Meredith and me one hour to set up and break down the furniture weekly.

We have teen teachers and helpers who have volunteered to stay with children with special needs from fall to winter term.

Our teachers are offering very interesting lessons including a special lesson in Grade 2 on gut microbes/fermentation/making pickles, piloting new lessons in grade 4 about Hebrew Bible heroes and heroines, discussing the ethical dilemma of eating meat and the treatment of animals, making prayer beads and worry dolls (lots of stress with our kids!) and modern day beatitudes

Evening programs

Meredith Jeremiah and Aisha Ansano attended New England Regional UU Youth Ministry workshop

I Recruited 4th COA mentor. Our compliment of volunteers now include Paul Franzosa, Robbie Rinearson, Carolyn Hodges and Sara Whitford, all veteran mentors. There may be 21 youth in this program. Parent orientation will be held by the mentors and me on Dec 16.

OWL notification for the next class, beginning in March, has been publicized. A second set of teachers is lined up – Wendy Fields and Alex Aminoff join Stephanie Franzosa and Dave Deakin. The current headcount is 19 but 5 others have expressed interest. Parent orientation has been scheduled for early March.

Service Trip Planning meetings have begun with Gabriella Hakim leading.

Fund raisers for service trip – Prom (December 8) , Trivia night (March) and Not Your Average Joes (Sundays in January)

WORSHIP

Prep has begun for the All Age service on 12/23 and Christmas Eve - stories found and props getting ready. Started the hunt for Christmas eve readers

Time for All Ages through mid January have been lined up.

Other:

The staff meets regularly to review worship service plans, pastoral needs and plan for Marta's sabbatical. I meet weekly with Marta, Aisha, Meredith and Jan Penny.

Our monthly RE meeting took place on Thursday. Our subgroups are dealing with curriculum, teacher training and support, supporting membership/welcoming on Sunday mornings, One Room Sunday School programs and more.

I am collaborating with the stewardship committee for parenting events in January

I will attend a meeting with Marta and others to review family giving potential for the stewardship drive

I joined DRE colleagues for a meeting in Bedford. Topics of discussion included safety evacuation plans, mental health issues and stress reducers for children and teens and holiday preparations.

This is the season when seniors ask for references for colleges and I have helped with 3. I also help with national honor references, gathering volunteer hours for our youth and complete a mid-term evaluation for Harvard Divinity School for Meredith Jeremiah

In preparation for Marta's sabbatical the RE chairs and I have set up a date for my annual evaluation in May.

Marta, the worship associates and I are collaborating on the All Ages service on December 23. I will also help with the Christmas Eve services.

We will be offering a One Room Sunday School program on December 30 and the topic is community.

Our teachers will be appreciated in classes with small gifts on December 16th.

New teacher orientation for 4 winter teachers will take place on January 5th. Great to have newcomers join our teaching team!

As always, thank you for your support of the children and youth in our community.

Appendix C

On Sabbaticals

Prepared for ParCom, December 11, 2018

Sabbaticals come from the root word “sabbath. In the Bible it is a time for letting fields lie fallow in preparation for future plantings, as well as a day for reflection and spiritual rejuvenation.

The purpose of a ministerial sabbatical is rest and refreshment. Refreshment can take the form of

- enrichment activities (art, music, nature)
- continuing education (classes, lectures, workshops, and travel that invites a change in perspective).

This is the second sabbatical I have taken since coming to First Parish, the first was for 4 months. This is for 3.5 months so I am back in time for Easter services. The sabbatical begins January 1.

Jeanne and Olav Nieuwejaar will serve as sabbatical co-ministers. I encourage you to think of them as **resident consultants**. Rely on them for ministry but also ask and learn from them about the ways of doing church: **what are their thoughts about how we do things? How have they seen it done elsewhere?**

As for me, I have three trips planned.

- In January I will spend ten days in Washington DC immersing myself in museums. I am thinking of myself as being a kid in a candy store, taking in art and history, and collecting material for sermons.
- In February I will spend two weeks in South Africa, following the trail of apartheid.
- In March I will spend a week in Alabama and Mississippi following the trail of segregation and the civil right movement.

When not travelling I hope to read, rest and reflect – things I desperately need to do for replenishment.

I am so grateful for the unbelievable gift to step away from the daily demands of ministry for several months. Thank you!

Marta

from the Letter of Agreement between Minsiter and Parish Committee

16. Sabbatical Leave

The Minister shall be entitled to take a sabbatical leave for purposes of study, education, writing, meditation, and other forms of professional and religious growth. Sabbatical leave accrues at the rate of one month per year of completed full-time service. The first sabbatical leave is not to be taken before the completion of five years of service. No more than six months of sabbatical leave may be used within any twelve month period. A sabbatical leave cannot be less than two months in duration. Additional sabbaticals are not to be taken before four years of service after previous sabbatical unless otherwise negotiated with the Parish Committee.

Maximum accumulated sabbatical leave shall not exceed eight months. A sabbatical leave must be taken as one continuous period of time. The dates of, and plan for, the sabbatical must be approved by the Parish Committee at least one year in advance of proposed sabbatical start date.

The Congregation will continue full salary, housing allowance, and benefits during sabbatical leave. Professional expenses may be adjusted.

In the event of the Minister's resignation, termination, or retirement, unused sabbatical leave is not compensable.

The Minister agrees not to resign from full-time service to the Congregation for a minimum of one year after completing a sabbatical leave.

The Ten Commandments of Sabbatical
from David Pohl, UUA Director of Ministry in the “Handbook on Sabbatical Leaves, 1992

For Ministers

1. Thou shalt not take a sabbatical when there are “problems in River City” (i.e. budget deficit, conflict with the Board,).
2. Thou shalt consult early and often with thy leadership about the nature and timing of a sabbatical. Thou shalt not “wing it” with a half-baked proposal not impose a timetable without regard for the needs and wishes of the congregation.
3. Thou shalt not confuse thy sabbatical with vacation or study leave but make full use of the opportunity it presents for distance, reflection, new experiences and growth. Nor shalt thou forget the learnings of thy sabbatical, remembering to be intentional about integrating and nurturing the insights and changes that came to thee.
4. Thou shalt not use (or rather misuse) the sabbatical to seek another position but will instead acknowledge the congregation’s interest in benefiting from it upon thy return.
5. Thou shalt be respectful of thy family’s needs in planning thy sabbatical, both its nature and timing, and seek their counsel in planning experiences that broaden thy love for one another.

for Congregations

6. Thou shalt be generous rather than grudging in negotiating with thy minister concerning a sabbatical. Thou shalt affirm it as an opportunity rather than an imposition.
7. Thou shalt not exploit thy minister’s absence to organize opposition; call a meeting to dismiss the minister; nor make significant changes with consulting the minister.
8. Thou shalt give special care to those staff and committee persons who hold the fort in the minister’s absence, carrying more than the usual load. Thou shalt acknowledge and reward their contributions, and not take them for granted.
9. Thou shalt not expect thy minister to return from sabbatical in over-drive but will understand thy ministers’ need to shift gears gradually upon reentry.
10. Thou shalt not let thy minister’s departure and return go unnoticed, but shalt provide a send-off and warm welcome back, some expression of delight that thy relationship is renewed and strengthened.

A Words about Vacuums

Whenever a leader is absent, vacuums are exposed – be they in practices or policies. Usually the leader fills them naturally, unconsciously. When the leader is gone, they are exposed. Vacuums can be an invitation for conflict, creativity, and cultivating new leadership. Don’t be surprised. Don’t worry. Welcome them when you see them. Work with them.

Appendix D

FIRST PARISH UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ARLINGTON, MA			
PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FY2020			
Level service budget (only required changes have been made)			
EXPENSES			
Compensation	\$580,869		
General and Office Expenses	\$45,450		
Property	\$106,029		
Religious Education	\$9,500		
Music	\$13,500		
Other Committees	\$23,050		
Dues and Outreach	\$63,459		
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$841,857		
INCOME			
Pledge income (current and prior)	\$666,000		
Plate	\$38,000		
Other income (Trustees, Fundraisers, Rental)	\$153,646		
TOTAL INCOME	\$857,646		
Income available for discretionary expenses	\$15,789		
Suspend contribution to sabbatical fund under 2nd minister assumption.	\$8,976		
Suspend ministerial support from prior year	\$26,000		
New Net Income	\$50,765		
DISCRETIONARY EXPENSES (Proposed)		Balance	
Cost of living increases	\$13,482	\$37,283	Vote
Fair compensation increases	\$3,370	\$33,913	Vote
Ministerial Intern	\$38,000	-\$4,087	Vote
Add to the "set aside for Youth Group Trip Coordinator." The position requires many, many hours, and we would like to offer more fair compensation	\$900	-\$4,987	
Increase hours for Music Director from 23 to 28 hours, plus additional benefit	\$8,150	-	

expenses.		\$13,137	
Increase DRE professional expense budget	\$6,400	\$19,537	-
TOTAL DISCRETIONARY EXPENSES	\$70,302		
Other notes of importance			
Amounts transferred to committees from FY18 to FY19			
Racial Justice Committee	\$940		
RE	\$3,421		
<i>RE designated funds are sufficient for RE one-off wish list items</i>			Vote
<i>We are effectively suggesting to spend reserves on RE one-off expenses</i>			
ParCom budget reduced from \$25,000 to \$10,000			Vote
NB: Space identification, cleanup, furnishing for intern/second minister to be paid from 2nd minister fund			