



FIRST
RELIGIOUS
SOCIETY,
UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST

Newburyport,
Massachusetts

ANNUAL REPORT

Church Year 2023-2024

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WARRANT AND MATERIALS TO SUPPORT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF FRSUU TO BE HELD JUNE 9, 2024

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 in the Sanctuary and via Zoom on Sunday, June 9, 2024, at 10:30am. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the Sunday Worship Service and, as indicated in the bylaws as amended, the congregation will there and then act upon the following articles.

- Article 1:** To act on the minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting, the Special Congregational Meeting held on March 10, 2024, and the Special Congregational Meeting held on December 4, 2022.
- Article 2:** To act on the reports of the Staff, Officers, Committees, and Workgroups included in the Annual Report.
- Article 3:** To act on the recommendation of the Board to make an exception to the bylaws provision that Board Members must take a year off after serving three (3) full years, to allow Tina Benik to serve an additional year and to serve as Board Chair.
- Article 4:** To act on the recommendation of the Governance Committee for the election of Officers, Chairpersons, and Trustees of the Endowment.
- Article 5:** To act on the recommendation of the Anti-Racism Team and the Board to adopt the proposed 8th Principle of Unitarian Universalism. The 8th Principle states:
- "We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."*
- Article 6:** To act on the FY2025 budget as recommended by the Parish Board.
- Article 7:** To note and acknowledge that the year ahead will be the 300th Anniversary of the establishment of this congregation, to be celebrated during the calendar year January 1-December 31, 2025.

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.

Tina Benik
Lori Clark
Caitlin Creps
Kathy Desilets

Vern Ellis
Laurie Evans-Daly
Minnie Flanagan
Bob Higgins

Tom Himmel
Liss Larsen
Annie Maurer
Jim Supple

Renee Wolf Foster

A copy of the warrant attest:



Kathleen Desilets, Parish Clerk

Motions & Additional Information on the Articles

Article 1: To act on the minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting, the Special Congregational Meeting held on March 10, 2024, and the Special Congregational Meeting held on December 4, 2022.

Motion: *I move that the congregation approve the notes of the 2023 Annual Meeting of FRSUU, the Special Congregational Meeting held on March 10, 2024, and the Special Congregational Meeting held on December 4, 2022.*

Explanation: Meeting notes are approved by the group that held the meeting in which actions are taken to affirm that the actions were properly recorded. Usually, each year, the minutes of the previous Annual Meeting are approved at the Annual Meeting. This year, a special meeting of the congregation was held on March 10 to approve funding for repairs to the Meetinghouse roof, so these notes also need action at this year's meeting. Finally, the notes of the Special Congregational Meeting held on December 4, 2022 (at which the congregation voted to extend the stay of the Mirzayee Family in Parish Hall) were included in the 2023 Annual Report but were not brought forward for action. These notes were not brought forward for approval at last year's Annual Meeting, so they are presented now to officially affirm their contents. The notes of all these meetings are included in the Annual Report.

Article 2: To act on the reports of the Staff, Officers, Committees, and Workgroups included in the Annual Report.

Motion: *I move that the reports of Staff, Officers, Committees, and Workgroups, as presented in the Annual Report 2023-2024, be received and entered into the record.*

Explanation: These documents are included in the Annual Report and describe actions taken this year and initial plans for the coming year. Taken together the reports present a robust picture of the current operations, actions, and status of the church.

Article 3: To act on the recommendation of the Board to make an exception to the bylaw provision that Board Members must take a year off after serving three (3) full years to allow Tina Benik to serve an additional year and to serve as Board Chair.

Motion: *I move that Article VI: Section 3 of the bylaws be suspended for one year.*

Explanation:

This year and next year represent a time of change and dramatic action in the church. In addition to the celebration of the 300th Anniversary of the church, significant changes in staff, actions being taken to resolve long term issues of building preservation and maintenance, and the ongoing work of the 4th Century Workgroup to define future directions for the church, call for consistent and steady leadership. Tina Benik has been an active member of the Executive Committee over the past three years. Her skills, demonstrated in her prior term as Board Chair, are well suited to allow her to provide this leadership and she is willing to do so.

Article 4: To act on the recommendation of the Governance Committee for the election of Officers, Chairpersons, and Trustees of the Endowment.

Motion: *I move that the congregation elect the slate of Officers, Chairpersons, and Trustees of the Endowment presented in the Annual Report.*

Explanation: An annotated copy of the slate, as recommended, is included in the Annual Report, and was sent to members in advance of the meeting.

Article 5: To act on the recommendation of the Anti-Racism Team and the Board to adopt the proposed 8th Principle of Unitarian Universalism.

Motion: *I move that the congregation adopt the proposed 8th Principle of Unitarian Universalism as recommended by the Anti-Racism Initiative Team and the Board.*

Explanation: The 8th Principle, which has been adopted by 283 UUA congregations in the United States, aims to complement our seven well-known Principles by explicitly addressing racism and other oppressions experienced by individuals, communities, and society as a whole. The 8th Principle states:

“We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.”

At the June 2023 Annual Meeting, the congregation voted unanimously to support continued exploration and discussion about ways in which adoption of the 8th Principle could impact FRS. We believe that the 8th Principle closely aligns with our Vision, Mission & Ends by helping us to better articulate our individual and congregational UU identity: to welcome people in all their diversity, create belonging for one another, and to work in partnership as individuals and as a congregation to advance justice as we work to build a more diverse, Beloved Community.

We understand that systemic racism—which is not specifically addressed by the existing 7 Principles—intersects with other oppressions and justice issues, such as classism and poverty, LGBTQ+ rights, ableism, and environmental justice. The 8th Principle, should we adopt it, will be incorporated into our existing 7 principles to help guide our actions and live in covenant with one another. These 8 principles will inform our decision-making and will help to carry out the mission and business of the church while upholding these principles—whether it’s through our practices in worship and Young Church, programs for spiritual development and education, our partnerships with other organizations committed to dismantling racism, or through hiring practices and vendor relationships.

It’s important to note that adopting the 8th Principle is upholding love and justice. UUs of color—through Black Lives of UU (BLUU) and Diverse, Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM)—have asked us to adopt it. Doing so is an act of solidarity and respect. Adopting the 8 Principle will help us to grow spiritually towards wholeness both individually and collectively. We recognize that FRS adoption of the 8th Principle is really just the *beginning* of action, rather than the ultimate goal. Please join us in making our *actions* match our *values*.

Article 6: To act on the FY2025 budget as recommended by the Parish Board.

Motion: *I move that the congregation approve the Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025) expenditure budget as presented in the Annual Report.*

Explanation: The budget documents, as approved, are included in the Annual Report and were sent to members in advance of the meeting.

Article 7: To note and acknowledge that the year ahead will be the 300th Anniversary of the establishment of this congregation, to be celebrated during the calendar year January 1-December 31, 2025.

Motion: *I move that we, the membership of the First Religious Society Unitarian Universalist, formally recognize the coming church year as the beginning of the 300th Anniversary of the establishing of this congregation, to be celebrated January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025.*

Explanation: The purpose of this motion is to make formal recognition that we are about to embark on our 300th year since the establishment of this church in 1725 as “the Third Parish in Newbury” and will recognize and celebrate the anniversary during calendar year 2025.

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

Nominees for the Parish Board, Officers, and Trustees of the Endowment for the 2024-2025 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, 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	Tina Benik	I	3	4
Parish Board	Bob Higgins	I	3	1
Parish Board	Sarina Khan Reddy	N	3	1
Parish Board	Lori Clark	I	3	2
Parish Board	Minnie Flanagan	I	3	3
Parish Board	Laurie Evans-Daly	I	3	3
Parish Board	Vern Ellis	I	1	1
Parish Board	Liss Larsen	I	3	2
Trustee	Barbara Garnis (3)	N	2	1
Trustee	Tim Fountain	I	3	2
Trustee	Natalie Hildt Treat	N	3	1
Position	Name	Nominee or Incumbent	Term Length (Years) (4)	Entering What Year of Term?
Parish Clerk	Kathy Desilets	I	1	4
Governance Chair	Tom Himmel	I	1	3
Stewardship Chair	Renee Wolf Foster	I	1	1
Finance Chair	Jim Supple	I	1	1
Finance Treasurer	Andy Lobb	N	1	1
Endowment Treasurer	Kim Kenly	I	1	4
Moderator	Lea Pearson	I	1	7
Auditor	Joe Brouillet	I	1	3
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) Vern Ellis is nominated to serve a one-year term, beginning in July 2024. This was previously the youth member slot.				
(3) Barbara Garnis is filling two years of a three-year term.				

Nominee Profiles

Sarina Khan Reddy [Parish Board]

Sarina Khan Reddy is a resident of Amesbury, MA. She is on the board of The Resettlement Partnership recently started because of the local Afghan families that arrived. She is a first-generation American woman of Islamic Indian descent and an interdisciplinary artist whose work explores the intersection of technology and the economic system reflected in all social formations. In 2003 she graduated from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University with an MFA; prior to that she received a BS and MS in engineering. Currently she is a media specialist at the Davis Museum, Wellesley College where she also serves on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. Earlier, she worked for more than a decade for Eastman Kodak in R&D and taught multimedia and video at Tufts University and Berklee School of Music. She has had the privilege to work very closely with the resettlement of one of the Afghan families here in Newburyport, assisting with jobs, driver's licenses, taxes, visas, DTA, English, school, and extracurriculars. She is a lifelong seeker, growing up with an Islamic father and a Protestant mother, who took their family to the Unitarian church in Portsmouth, NH. She has been a resident of the Newburyport community since 1998. Her two children, Kathya and Kabir, grew up attending FRS occasionally as she wanted to make sure they were exposed to many types of religions.

Andy Lobb [Finance Treasurer]

After a 13-year absence that included stops in Toronto and St. Louis, Andy and his wife, Rebecca (Public Health Researcher at Boston University), have returned to the Newbury area to be closer to their family. Their daughter, Erin, her partner, Pat, and beautiful 6-year-old granddaughter, Ruby, now live within walking distance. Andy was inspired to join the FRSUU community after learning of the congregation's selfless act of housing and caring for the Mirzayee family. He served as a military officer, holds advanced degrees in management and informatics, and recently retired after a 37-year career in healthcare management. Andy recently rejoined the working world to be a seasonal kayak guide at Crane Beach in Ipswich. He enjoys playing with Ruby, history, boating, biking, and walking Houdini, a beagle.

Barbara Garnis [Trustee]

Barbara moved from Boston to Newburyport with her husband Joe in 2004. She found her spiritual home and community at FRS in 2011. Shortly after becoming a member, she joined the Community Human Service Committee, now Community Outreach (CO), and continues as a member of this committee. CO oversees the Swasey Children's Fund of which Barbara is one of three administrators that review and approve applications and distribute funds. Also, as member of CO, representing FRS, she served on the Kelleher Garden Advisory Group. So began the journey to build the playground at Kelleher Gardens. Barbara served as Parish Board Chair for two years and over the years has participated in many committees at FRS. Most recently, Barbara chaired the Congregational Insight Team. Professionally, Barbara received her master's degree in counseling psychology and worked in MA Community Mental Health as a Director of Consultation, Education and Prevention. Barbara also worked as a community organizer for the State of Maine to develop a model for community substance abuse teams. In retirement Barbara enjoys traveling with Joe, playing bridge, theatre, walking on the beach in Maine, volunteering at FRS, and cherishes her time with family.

Natalie Hildt Treat [Trustee]

Natalie has been an active member of FRS since joining with her husband Tom and daughter Julia in 2018, when Julia was three. She has served as an usher and helped lead the mission-vision work in 2019. Natalie is pleased to begin her three-year term as Trustee of Endowment in June 2024. Professionally, Natalie has spent her career at the nexus of policy and communications in the energy sector and is the director of public policy at the Northeast Clean Energy Council. For five years, Natalie was the executive director of C-10 Research and Education Foundation, a nonprofit focused on public health and safety for the communities surrounding the Seabrook Station nuclear plant. The Treat family lives in Salisbury in a net-zero energy home that they commissioned in 2014.

Minutes of FRS Annual Congregational Meeting, June 11, 2023

Hybrid Meeting – In Person and Zoom

Present: Lea Pearson, Meeting Moderator; Rev. Rebecca Bryan, Minister, Spiritual Leader, and CEO; Justin Murphy-Mancini, Online facilitator, in charge of online check-in and management of participation; Rob Authier, Parliamentarian; Diane Carroll, in charge of onsite check-in; Tom Himmel, Governance Chair; Tina Benik, Board Chair; Kathy Straubel, Yvonne McQuilkin, and Bruce McEldowney in various roles to assist participants.

Call to Order

Lea Pearson welcomed all, announced that Diane and Justin had counted a quorum present in person or online, and called the meeting to order at 12:27pm. She turned the meeting over to Rev. Rebecca who welcomed all, thanked us for our attendance, invited board members to light the chalice, and offered opening words.

Rev. Rebecca also read the names of those congregants who died this church year:

Gillian Chatfield (4/4/2023)
Howard Fairweather (1/6/2023)
Michael Fosburg (3/17/2023)
John Fox (11/27/2022)
William LaPorte-Bryan (5/15/2023)
Berenice McLaughlin (10/19/2022)
Mary Rizzo (3/22/2023)
Barbara “Barby” Spalding (5/20/2023)
Frances “Fran” Sullivan (5/13/2023)
Merryl Maleska Wilbur (2/19/2023)

Lea then reminded the congregation of our mission and ends—to come together in peace, journey together in love, welcome people in all their diversity, and create belonging for each other, and invited us to enter the meeting with her in a spirit of kindness, inclusion, and love.

Lea then explained the process of the meeting, which is being run under Robert’s Rules, including provisions for including the comments and votes of those participating online, and initiated the consideration of the warrant.

Article 1: To act upon the minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting.

Explanation: Lea reminded the congregation that these minutes are included in the Annual Report and offer important context as we begin this year’s meeting.

ACTION: Minnie Flanagan moved that the minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting be approved. Kathy Desilets seconded, and the motion was approved without objection.

Article 2: To act upon the reports of the officers and committees.

Explanation: Lea reminded the congregation that these notes are included in the Annual Report and provide context on planning and action during the past year.

ACTION: Tom Himmel moved that the reports of officers, ministers, lay leaders, staff, committees, teams, and other groups as printed in the Annual Report 2023-2024 be received and entered into the record. Laurie Evans-Daly seconded, and the motion was approved without objection.

Article 3: To act on the recommendation of the Governance Committee for the election of officers and chairpersons.

Explanation: The Slate of officers was sent to the congregation with the Warrant.

ACTION: Bob Higgins moved that the slate of officers and chairpersons as presented in the Annual Report be elected. Michelle Kimball seconded, and the motion approved without objection.

Article 4: To approve naming The Reverend Jane Tuohy as an Affiliate Minister of the First Religious Society, Unitarian Universalist.

Explanation: Reverend Rebecca supported the naming of Rev. Jane Tuohy as an Affiliate Minister and explained that Rev. Jane was recently ordained as an interfaith minister and has been actively involved in activities and planning for worship.

ACTION: Tom Himmel moved that The Reverend Jane Tuohy be named as an Affiliate Minister of the First Religious Society, Unitarian Universalist. Tina Benik seconded, and the motion passed without opposition.

Article 5: To act upon the recommendation by the Anti-Racism Initiative Team to continue exploring how the 8th Principle may deepen our pursuit of the Values, Mission and Ends in preparation for a future congregational vote.

Explanation: Susan Fasoli explained the content and intent of the principle which is in the process of being adopted by UU Congregations across the country. We have been in a process of study and understanding of the history of racial discrimination, and adoption of this motion would endorse further study and prepare us to join other UU Congregations to bring the issue of acting to end racism and other discrimination into our principles.

ACTION: Tina Benik moved that the congregation act upon the recommendation by the Antiracism Initiative Team to continue to explore how the 8th Principle may deepen our pursuit of the Vision, Mission, and Ends in preparation for a future congregational vote. Holly Cashman seconded the motion, and it was passed without objection.

Article 6: To approve a disbursement from the Bailey Fund of \$11,700 for extraordinary facilities-related repairs already made during this past year to the steeple, roofs, Parish Hall heating system, and Meetinghouse vestibule.

Explanation: Tom Himmel explained that we have encountered needs for maintenance and repairs to our facilities that had not been anticipated in the annual budget. These needs are detailed in the Explanatory notes for the warrant distributed to the congregation prior to the meeting.

ACTION: Michelle Kimball moved congregational approval of a disbursement from the Bailey Fund of \$11,700 for extraordinary facilities-related repairs made during this past year to the steeple, roofs, Parish Hall heating system, and Meetinghouse vestibule. Minnie Flanagan seconded, and the motion passed without objection.

Article 7: To approve the disbursement from the Bailey Fund of up to \$10,000 for extraordinary facilities repairs and upgrades anticipated during the coming fiscal year 2024, with the oversight of the Facilities Team and approval by the Parish Board.

Explanation: Renee Wolf Foster explained the rationale for this motion as outlined in explanatory material distributed to the congregation prior to the meeting.

ACTION: Annie Maurer moved the approval of a disbursement from the Bailey Fund of up to \$10,000 for facility repairs and upgrades during the coming fiscal year as overseen by the Facilities Team and with approval of the Parish Board. Bob Higgins seconded, and the motion passed without opposition.

Article 8: To approve lifting the restriction on the use of the remainder of the Edith Stern bequest.

Explanation: Tom Himmel described the rationale for this motion as laid out in the explanatory materials for the warrant distributed to the congregation prior to the meeting.

ACTION: Jim Supple moved to approve the lifting of the restriction on the use of the remainder of the Edith Stern bequest. Tom Himmel seconded, and the motion passed without objection.

Article 9: To act upon the Fiscal year 2023-24 budget recommended by the Parish Board.

Explanation: Budget documents were distributed with the warrant in advance of the meeting. Renee Wolf Foster expressed her gratitude for the dedication of the Finance Committee, the Annual Campaign workers, and to Rob Authier, Betsy Latham, and all those who worked over the past year to assure that the budget and regular budget reports are clear and accurate and show the actual fiscal situation.

ACTION: Renee Wolf Foster moved the Fiscal Year 2024 expenditure budget as presented in the Annual Report be approved, Jim Supple seconded, and the motion passed without objection.

Lea thanked all those who had participated in the Annual Meeting and asked Rev. Rebecca to give a blessing. Rev. Rebecca delivered a blessing and thanked the congregation for their commitment to the church and its endeavors.

At 1:21pm a motion to adjourn was made and seconded and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Kathleen Desilets, Parish Clerk

Notes of FRS Special Congregational Meeting, March 10, 2024

Held in the Sanctuary in person and on Zoom

Purpose: To vote on repair/replacement of Meetinghouse roof and related structural work.

Present: Lea Pearson, Moderator; Justin Murphy-Mancini, online communications; Diane Carroll, check-in; Rev. Rebecca Bryan, Spiritual Leader; Jim Supple, Board Chair; Stephen-Wolf Foster, Jay and Nancy McCarthy, Ushers; Kathy Desilets, Parish Clerk; and a quorum of voting members of the congregation as required for this meeting (129).

Lea called the meeting to order at 11:50am having been notified by Diane and Justin that the quorum requirement had been exceeded. She then turned the meeting over to Rev. Rebecca.

Reverend Rebecca thanked all those who had made the meeting possible and invited the Facilities Team members to light the chalice.

Lea thanked Rev. Rebecca for her leadership and then announced that this meeting was for one purpose only, to vote on allocating funds for repair and replacement of our roof. Lea explained that this is a hybrid meeting and that all those participating online or in person have the same rights of participation. She then explained the process for the meeting as follows:

“First, I will read the article, Then the article will be moved and seconded. (Parish members have been assigned these roles in advance.)

After the motion is seconded, Doug Latham, from the Facilities Committee, will offer a brief explanation of why this motion is being put to you.

After the explanation, I will ask for questions or clarifications on the article itself only.” (Lea also explained the process to assure that all are recognized in order and that people speaking will be televised.)

“After the comments I will call the question and then we will vote. Voting today will be by voice vote, and if there is doubt about the outcome we will go to a show of hands.”

Lea read the Warrant text, and Renee Wolf Foster moved as follows:

“I move that we authorize the Parish Board to enter such contracts and to expend such funds as are necessary for the replacement of the Meetinghouse roof and any ancillary repairs to ensure that the new roof is effectively supported and secured to the building. Total funds shall not exceed \$90,000.” Minnie Flanagan seconded the motion.

Doug Latham began by reminding us that we are a church family, and we are healthier, happier, and more secure with a home with a secure roof. He explained that the roof was last replaced in 1997 and that we have spent \$6,000 for required repairs due to leaking over the past 18 months. He pointed out some water stains and added that allowing the leaks to continue can create a risk of further danger.

The cost for the repairs is \$55,000 and we have added a 20% contingency in case of unexpected repair needs. We have also added funds for structural work that has been determined to be needed.

The following questions were asked:

What is the roof for the purpose of this vote? It is the main Sanctuary roof. The vestibule roof was recently repaired.

Who is the contractor? Olympic was chosen for this work from four bidders. This contractor did the vestibule roof and has worked on other municipal and church buildings in town.

Are there any grant opportunities to help cover the cost? How will we pay for the work? The Grants Committee is working on this and has made an application to the Newburyport Historical Trust. Other grant opportunities are being actively sought and pursued. In the meantime, funds from the endowment can be used to pay for work with the endowment being reimbursed when grant funds become available. Other donors have an interest in this project. The vote here is required to enter into a contract to begin the work as soon as possible.

Comments: Peter Erickson stated that water will penetrate anything and thanked those who brought this Warrant forward for their extensive work.

There being no further comments, Lea read the motion again and called the question which was carried by acclamation.

Reverend Rebecca offered a final blessing, thanking the congregation and reminding us that membership is a privilege and an opportunity and added, “Let us go lifted up, grateful for the resources to care for this beautiful building.”

Jim Supple offered a motion to adjourn which was passed by acclamation and the meeting was closed at 12:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Desilets, Parish Clerk

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

Parish Board

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

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:

Tina Benik (Vice Chair), Rev. Rebecca Bryan (ex-officio), Lori Clark, Catlin Creps, Kathy Desilets (Parish Clerk), Vern Ellis (Stewardship Chair), Laurie Evans-Daly, Minnie Flanagan, Bob Higgins (Finance Treasurer), Tom Himmel (Governance Chair), Liss Larsen, Annie Maurer, Jim Supple (Chair), Renee Wolf Foster (Finance Chair).

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

The Parish Board focuses its energy and action to support the Values and Mission of FRSUU. This year has been one of change, and in partnership with our minister we have taken courageous action by working to realign the staff and recommending a budget that supports our mission. We have worked to strengthen authentic connection with the membership by holding ongoing meetings where members can engage with the board and be heard. We strived to do our work in a manner that demonstrates love in the way we treat each other and all who work with us and to accept each other with our unique gifts and talents. We hold the spiritual needs of all whom we represent at the center of our decision-making process.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

In a year of change, we have worked to empower teams to do the work of our church life. We established the 4th Century Team to help the church envision the future, celebrate our history, and articulate the needs of our community. We established a Grants Team to begin the process of institutionalizing the application and receipt of grants to support our historic building and our mission. We have developed and approved a Gift Acceptance Policy to help members better understand how they can best financially support the work of the church. We have supported our Minister in several searches for new and existing roles within our church. We have played an active and supporting role with the members of existing teams, such as the Anti-Racism team, to ensure that our mission to transform our world is never far from our sight.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

To ensure that the great work of the Grants and Facilities teams to obtain funding results in the successful installation of a new roof for our Meetinghouse. To support and begin the celebration of our church's 300th anniversary. To work with the 4th Century Team to bring a recommendation to the congregation for a Capital Campaign to support the vision of our members and community. To continue to do the work of a church in a manner that helps our members and friends strengthen their sacred connections and journey towards spiritual wholeness.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

The continued active engagement of the entire church community and the extraordinary work of team and committee volunteers to do the work of the church.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

Ensure that there is a fitting celebration of this milestone in the life of our church community.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

Work to ensure that our policies, procedures, and actions are intentional in working towards the goal of eliminating racism and other systems of oppression.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Supple, Parish Board Chair, jim@greatmarsh.com

Annual Giving Campaign**What is the mission or purpose of your group?**

The Annual Giving Campaign is our church's primary means of funding its operations. Through an effort to engage the entire church community in a conversation regarding what we value most about our mission, the campaign team solicited pledges to contribute money for the year ahead. This year's theme of "Strengthening Sacred Connections in Our Interconnected World" focused on the many aspects of our church's efforts to live its values, mission and ends now and into the 4th century of this parish. The financial aspect of our goal was to raise \$575,000.

Names of people involved:

Captains: Tina Benik, Sue Creed, John Mercer, Lark Madden, Forrest Speck, Susan Ricker, Jim Supple, and Ray Wilson.

Stewards: Mimi Brile, Holly Cashman, Lori Clark, Tom Clark, Eileen Vargas-Costello, Nancy Crochiere, Jennifer Day, Kathy Desilets, Minnie Flanagan, Ann Haaser, Cecilia Healy, Bob Higgins, Tom Himmel, Lisa Johnson, Doug Latham, Pam Lessard, Betsy Lewis, Andy Lobb, Rebecca Lobb, Art Henshaw, Annie Madden, Annie Maurer, Hugh Martinez, Julie Menin, Marge Peterson, Walter Power, Mary Sortal, Susan Stone, Anne Verret-Speck, Pat Skibbee, Bettina Turner, and Renee Wolf Foster.

Steering Committee: Tina Benik, Bart Bracken, Rev. Rebecca, Diane Carroll, Sue Creed, Vern Ellis, John Mercer, Susan Ricker, Jim Supple, Cynthia Walsh, and Ray Wilson.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

In Strengthening our Sacred Connections through outreach, authentic connection, courageous action, love, spirituality, wonder, come as you are, and journey together in love, we are able to continue to act with courage, transforming our interconnected world.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

Throughout the month of March, we celebrated the many ways the First Religious Society lives up to its mission through the preaching of Reverend Rebecca, the testimonials of our members, and the music of our choir and guest musicians. The team of Stewards and Captains also connected with nearly every member of our community to solicit support for the mission of our church. As of May 22, 2024, we reached our campaign goal! The Campaign team would like to thank all our members and supporters who pledged to sustain the work of our church. A special thank you to a group of donors who funded a "Match Pool" in the month of May to help encourage others to pledge or increase their pledge. We are deeply grateful for all your generosity in reaching our goal!

Again this year, with the tireless work of Bart Bracken, Diane Carroll, Vern Ellis, Jim Supple, and Cynthia Walsh, we were able to improve the management of information throughout the campaign. The team, and our entire community, owe you all an enormous debt of gratitude. Special thanks to Justin Murphy-Mancini for recording all the videos.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

In the year ahead we hope to help continue to streamline the information management process that is necessary to run a campaign as large as the one required to support our mission. We also hope to maintain the visibility of personal stewardship throughout the year ahead.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

The next Annual Giving Campaign will be for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. We were highly successful in increasing the number of Stewards this year and we hope to engage even more of our church community's members to play an active role in the campaign next year as we begin our church's fourth century!

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Creed, wakeupsingin@comcast.net and Ray Wilson, skypastures@gmail.com, Campaign Co-Chairs

Finance Committee**What is the mission or purpose of your group?**

The Finance Committee is 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.

Names of people involved:

Rob Authier (ex officio), Rev. Rebecca Bryan (ex officio), Joe Brouillet, Vern Ellis, Art Henshaw, Bob Higgins, Tom Himmel, Kim Kenly, Betsy Latham, Lark Madden, Renee Wolf Foster (chair).

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

The Finance Committee faced some challenges this year, especially with myriad concerns regarding the Meetinghouse and Parish Hall. We focused on strengthening authentic connections with each other and honored the Facilities Team's courageous actions as they identified those concerns. We demonstrated our willingness and desire to journey together in love as we supported their endeavors and supported the Stewardship Committee's Annual Campaign pledge goal.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- We recommended and supported the congregational warrant that allowed the Facilities Team to continue negotiating with the chosen roofing contractor, which the congregation approved unanimously.
- Betsy Latham carefully monitored our books and financial reports so that the work done last year to ensure accurate financial reporting continued throughout this fiscal year. After Rob Authier departed, Betsy oversaw balancing the monthly books and provided insightful reports to the Finance Committee and Parish Board.
- Finance Treasurer Bob Higgins stepped up after Rob Authier's departure to handle some of the day-to-day issues. Jim Supple, Board Chair, took an active role developing the draft budget as well as streamlining the narrative accompanying the financial reports.
- Art Henshaw supported this year's budget process by analyzing the past ten fiscal year budgets and identifying trends that we need to safeguard against to manage the expected increase in facilities-related expenses.
- Most importantly, the Finance Committee transitioned from focusing on numbers to the bigger issues surrounding church. We were then better able to support Rev. Rebecca's organizational restructuring strategy, demonstrating our faith in her leadership as well a thoughtful understanding of the need to make those changes.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- Close out Fiscal Year 2024 by the end of July for the second year in a row.
- Support the new Director of Finance while continuing to effectively monitor the P&L statement and Balance Sheet on a monthly basis.
- Keep the congregation up to date on FRS's financial status, in terms of both income as well as expenses. We would like to provide opportunities for members and friends to have a better understanding of our financial structure, challenges, and needs on an ongoing basis.
- In conjunction with the Parish Board, begin to develop a longer-term financial plan/strategy, e.g. 2-5 years, considering the ongoing needs for maintenance of the FRS physical facilities as well as to support the expected needs of FRS programs and staff.
- Increase the diversity of the Finance Committee representation.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

- The Finance Committee will need to continue defining and agreeing upon a workable and repeatable process for considering difficult issues and making decisions, with the buy-in of the full committee.
- The Finance Committee should work more closely with the Endowment and Stewardship Committees on common goals and problems.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

As of right now, we don't know what our role could be.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

Unknown.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Wolf Foster, Chair, rwolffoster@gmail.com

Finance Treasurer**What is the mission or purpose of your role?**

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.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Courageous Action, Spirituality, Journey together in love.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- Attended Parish Board and Finance Committee meetings.
- Reviewed expenses and signed checks weekly, including disbursements to the Swasey Children's Fund and Segregated Funds, including funds from outside sources for the Mirzayee family.
- Processed payroll on an interim basis during the period between the departure of the Director of Church Operations and the hiring of the Director of Finance; assisted with that transition.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- A smooth and efficient transition to the incoming Finance Treasurer.
- A closer relationship with the Director of Finance to enhance the Finance Treasurer's understanding of our vendor contracts and other obligations to more effectively provide oversight.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

- Effective onboarding of incoming Finance Treasurer.
- Coordination with the new Treasurer and staff to “change the guard” on signing authority.
- Timely review and signing of FRSUU checks.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Higgins, Finance Treasurer, bobhiggins@gmail.com

Auditor**What is the mission or purpose of your role?**

To conduct a review of the financial records and internal financial controls to ensure compliance with the Parish Board policies and acceptable accounting practices.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

I conducted several reviews of the accounting procedures, documents, and controls during the fiscal year. The reviews were conducted to ensure that the financial records were correct and in accordance with best accounting practices. Specifically, I reviewed the approval and payment procedures, payroll, benefits, insurance coverage, appropriate taxes and endowment payments. I found no discrepancies in these areas.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Continue to perform the internal auditing duties as outlined in the Parish Board Manual.

This audit would not have been possible without the cooperation and assistance of Rob Authier, Diane Carroll, Michele Doucette, Bill Clary, and Kim Kenly.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Brouillet, Auditor, josephbrouillet@comcast.net

Governance Committee**What is the mission or purpose of your group?**

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:

Lori Clark, Kathy Desilets, Bob Higgins, Tom Himmel.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Built Authentic Connection between members, identified opportunities for Courageous Action, approached candidates for leadership positions who would reflect FRSUU values and support our Mission and Ends.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- Updated bylaws to reflect results of Annual Meeting.
- Updated Parish Board Manual and conducted Parish Board new member orientation.
- Continued updating/working a running list of governance issues raised during the course of operating the church, holding some for future consideration.
- Identified and recruited nominees for open elected Board and officer positions.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 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.
- Identify an effective way to identify/encourage people to act as delegates to GA.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

Continued support from FRS leadership to assist to identify good candidates for Board and officer positions.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

There has been no discussion of this, though the Committee would be open to consider what involvement would be fitting and appropriate.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

There has been no discussion of this, although it would be appropriate for the Parish Board to consider this with respect to all the standing committees.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Himmel, Chair, thimmel43@mac.com

Facilities Team**What is the mission or purpose of your group?**

The Facilities Team assists with managing maintenance of the physical facilities of the parish. We work with church staff, the Finance Committee, the Parish Board, and members of the congregation. We advise groups that make proposals for enhancements, we advise the Finance Committee and the Parish Board on the feasibility of proposals, we assisted the DCO with decisions and approvals of routine repair and maintenance projects, and we monitor and develop cost estimates and budgets for all repair and maintenance of the facilities.

Names of people involved:

Ed Budelmann*, Jim Kidd*, Doug Latham, Annie Madden, Julie Menin, Forrest Speck, Susan Thorne**, Bill Zarakas. (*Joined during the year; **Left during the year)

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Because our work is so physical in nature, we are supporters of all the church programs, particularly in managing budgeting for the facilities. We work to be prudent advisors to ensure the physical and financial continuance of the parish. Costs associated with this element of the church budget and the extraordinary inflation of recent years make our work important to all aspects of the church programs and life.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- We engaged a structural engineer, who provided an assessment of several concerns that were identified in the Meetinghouse structure and was able to provide specifications for minor remedial work.
- The structural engineer also evaluated the Meetinghouse structure for its capacity to carry the additional weight of solar panels, and provided a specification for reinforcing the roof purlins, both to ensure compliance with current building code and provide a margin of safety for adding solar panels in the future.

- We worked with the Parish Board and other key stakeholders to define a specification for a new roof for the Meetinghouse, put the spec out to bid, evaluated bids, recommended a vendor to the PB and congregation, and contracted with the winning vendor. The work is expected to be done within the next month.
- We worked with the Green Team to assist their project to bring the church to Net Zero carbon footprint.
- We developed a budgeting program for all repair and maintenance of building systems decades into the future.
- We worked with church staff and volunteers to clean up Parish Hall for general use; this included disposing of unwanted furniture items and cleaning the interior of the building (ongoing).
- We established a routine of monthly meetings.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- We plan to continue work on cleaning and making minor improvements to Parish Hall.
- We will continue to monitor issues with the buildings and grounds to provide a safe, comfortable space for the congregation and staff to use and enjoy.
- We will work with the Green Team and the Parish Board to finalize a Net Zero policy and develop a slate of potential projects for the congregation to consider as solutions to weaning our church operations from fossil fuels.
- We will work with stewardship groups to plan sufficient budget resources.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

The continued dedication of our volunteer team and the collaborative support of the congregation and staff.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

Since buildings are a typical pillar of any capital campaign, the Facilities Team expects to be closely involved with the planning of the 300th anniversary and associated capital campaign. We are aware of several potential campaign goals that we hope to help define: Parish Hall Revitalization, Green Energy Systems for the Church, and an enhanced Endowment Fund for building maintenance and preservation. All of these are worthy objectives with potentially large funding requirements and need careful evaluation for the congregation to choose where to place its financial support.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

The Facilities Team will consider the 8th Principle in our work by being open to and affirming of FRS's efforts to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community. We can particularly contribute by supporting projects that enhance the accessibility and welcoming nature of our facilities.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Latham, Facilities Team member, dnlatham0129@gmail.com

Fourth Century Vision Team

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

The FRSU Parish Board charges the 4th Century Vision Team with the development of a timeline and action plan for the Church Year 2024–2025 which outlines the committee's plans and associated lay leadership related to its areas of focus:

- Budget for and celebration plans for the church's 300th anniversary in 2025.

- The target fundraising range and associated components for a capital campaign are based on the lessons learned from the Congregational Insight Workshops and the findings of the Facilities, Grants, and Green Teams.
- Timeline for launching a capital campaign.
- Budget for planning and preparation for a capital campaign.

Names of people involved:

- Congregational Insight – Barbara Garnis
- Facilities and Green Team – Doug Latham and Bill Zarakas
- Planned Giving – Tina Benik
- Stewardship – Vern Ellis
- Capital Campaign – Lark Madden
- Grant Development – Forrest Speck, Ed Budelmann, and Peter Morbeck
- 300th Anniversary – Laurie Evans-Daly and Annie Maurer

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

To support the VME, the Fourth Century Vision Team is working to sustain the health and vitality of the congregation for the next century.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023–2024 church year:

This year, the Fourth Century Vision Team has been involved in:

- Assisting in the Congregational Insight survey.
- Assisting in creating the Grants Team which has already applied to several grants.
- Aiding in the completion of the Gift Acceptance Policy.
- Developing a plan for an upcoming capital campaign, including:
 - Identifying the congregation's goals: facilities, parish hall, community programs.
 - Identifying all the outside sources that will support the goals: Sacred Places grant, community grants, environmental grants.
 - Then determining the goals that will be the fundraising focus.
 - Before the rollout we will work on ensuring a reasonable range for the ask in the fall and engage upper-end donors.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024–2025 church year?

- To launch a Planned Giving Team
- To launch a Capital Campaign early 2025 in conjunction with the 300th anniversary celebration

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

The continued success of the congregation's growth in membership and staff as well as its fundraising abilities.

Respectfully submitted,

Vernon Ellis, Fourth Century Vision Team, vellis@ellisdesign.net

300th Anniversary Team

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

We are planning the celebration for the First Religious Society's 300th anniversary.

Names of people involved:

Laurie Evans-Daly, Annie Maurer, Cynthia Walsh.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

We are working to foster authentic connections and love among our community members. We hope to work together to celebrate the history of our church and its place in the world.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

We have gathered articles from many members of the church to describe the journey of our congregation in the last 300 years and especially during the 21st century. We have outlined several events (a picnic, several historical plays, an art project, a tea, etc.) and who will organize them, to provide opportunities for our community to come together to celebrate. We have also worked on some fundraising events (sale of weathercock pins, the history book, possibly a pie sale or tee-shirt sale) to help pay for the celebration. We have also worked on developing a budget for the anniversary activities.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Our vision is that the anniversary celebrations will create a stronger community and encourage people to become more aware of the long history of this congregation and more active in the life of the church. We want people to enjoy themselves and feel the excitement of this special year. We hope to offer a variety of activities so that everyone will find a way to be involved.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

We will need some financial support for the project just in case our fundraising doesn't cover the costs of the activities. We will need more volunteers to help us organize and hold events. We would like other groups in the church to find ways to celebrate our anniversary through their own activities.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (Jan. 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025)?

Everything we do is part of the anniversary.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

The book created for the event examines our congregation's history regarding slavery, abolition, and the Civil Rights movement. We are considering other ways of addressing this important topic.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Maurer, Co-chair 300th Celebration Subcommittee, anniemaurer174@gmail.com

Congregational Insight Team

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

- Identify a roadmap for FRS to move in the 4th century.
- Provide an opportunity for the congregation to inform the roadmap.
- Identify priorities to move from our earlier visioning activities into action.

Names of people involved: Barbara Garnis, Chair, Jeff Bard, Tina Benik, Joe Brouillet, Kathy Desilets, Ann Haaser, Michelle Kimball, Doug Latham, Leslie Lawrence, Andy Lobb, Rebecca Lobb, Annie Madden, Annie Maurer, Johnathon Pape, Alan Seale, Reverend Rebecca, Minister.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- From November 2023-February 2024 held 12 workshops with 19 groups.
- 125 individuals participated in the workshops.
- Conducted personal interviews.
- Length of FRS membership of participants ranged from greater than 20 years to not a member.
- Within the key themes of the workshops, 757 ideas were generated.

- 82% of the votes by participants for priorities include the following:
 - Parish Hall 17%
 - Communication and Planning 13%
 - Worship Services 12%
 - Social Justice/Inclusion 10%
 - Program Features 9%
 - Environmental Impact Activities 9%
 - Adult Programming 7%
 - Youth Programming 5%
- Data was analyzed and presented to the Parish Board, FRS Congregation, and the 4th Century Vision Team.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- Schedule a community meeting in October 2024.
- Integrate information received from the October 2024 community meeting with the FRS program planning.
- Continued communication with the FRS congregation on the progress of moving forward with implementation of priorities and ideas identified by the congregation.
- Continued membership on the 4th Century Vision Team.

On behalf of The Congregational Insight Team, I would like to express my appreciation to those that attended the workshops and expressed their dreams and wishes for FRS as we enter our 4th century.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Garnis, Chair, barbaragarnis@comcast.net

Planned Giving Team

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

The purpose of this group is to encourage, facilitate, and make operational a planned giving program at FRSUU. A robust planned giving program will provide additional financial stability for FRSUU in the future.

Names of people involved:

This group has not yet been formally organized. However, numerous people have been involved for several years with the conception of, and laying the foundation for, a Planned Giving Program, which will include as certain of its mainstays, a Gift Acceptance Policy, and a Gift Acceptance Committee. The founding members and other people later involved with this effort thus far include (and with apologies if anyone has been omitted) Lark Madden, Annie Madden, Vern Ellis, Art Henshaw, Joe Brouillet, and Tina Benik.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

The Planned Giving program, as it reaches fruition, will help to support all our values and all parts of our mission and ends. With the hoped-for financial support and stability that a robust planned giving program can provide, FRSUU will be better positioned to continue to support the staff and other programs that are the foundation to us realizing our Values, Mission and Ends.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

A final Gift Acceptance Policy was drafted and finalized by the team and then approved by the Parish Board in January 2024.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Among our goals and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year are to:

- Formalize the membership of the Planned Giving Team/Gift Acceptance Team (“PG/GAT”).
- Have the PG/GAT create and adopt necessary procedures and practices (as to its own operation).
- Create and launch a communications/informational packet to share with the congregation about the existence of the Planned Giving Program and to encourage congregants to participate in the parts of the program that are fitting and attractive to them.
- Identify ways that Planned Giving can be combined with the 300th anniversary events.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

- The formalization and identification of the Planned Giving Team and the Gift Acceptance Team.
- Some level of work over the summer of 2024 to lay the foundation for the work to begin in earnest in September 2024.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

See above – TBD.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

As we do our work, we will continually remind ourselves to bring a broader lens to our work and thinking and outreach.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Benik, tiben1989@gmail.com

Grants Team

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

The Parish Board established the Grants Team in January 2024. The goal is to develop additional financial revenue from foundations, governmental entities, and others to support the Values, Mission and End points of the FRSUU. Such efforts will support and complement, not supplant nor compete with other efforts of the Board, the Standing Committees, Ministries, and the Endowment Committee.

1. To build a team knowledgeable of the grant submission processes and of the financial needs of the church.
2. To submit grant requests approved by Reverend Rebecca and/or the Parish Board.
3. To capture our shared learnings in a centrally accessible manner to facilitate knowledge transfer and sustainability.

Names of people involved:

Forrest Speck, Ed Budelmann, Kathy Desilets, Andy Lobb, Peter Morbeck, Cynthia Walsh, and Ghlee Woodworth.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

As of May 1, 2024, a total of five (5) proposals have been submitted by the GT and others as follows:

- **Meetinghouse Emergency Roof Replacement:** \$64,000 request to the City of Newburyport for extraordinary expenses.
 - **Status:** **APPROVED** by the City Council April 29, 2024.
- **Preservation Projects for the Meetinghouse and Parish Hall:** \$10,000 to \$500,000 request to the National Fund for Sacred Places for planning.
 - **Status:** anticipated notification for this very competitive grant will be received in June.

- **Meetinghouse Clock Mobile Exhibition:** \$1,567 - 1735 Meetinghouse clock (struck by lightning in 1754 and observed by Benjamin Franklin)
 - **Status:**
 - \$1,067 received from the **Jim Dyer fund**.
 - \$500 received from the **Newburyport Bank**.
 - \$500 request pending from **Institution for Savings**.
 - Discussions are underway with **Lowell's Boat Shop** to build the mobile exhibit.
 - An additional \$2,000 was requested from another grant maker. The proposal was rejected because the project did not align with this year's priorities.
- **Christmas Candlelight Original Choral Composition:** \$6,000 - 2024 multiple sources are being sought for commissioning a new choral work to be performed at the 2024 Candlelight Service to commemorate our Tricentennial.
 - **Status:** Commitments for \$4,500 have been secured from a private foundation and internal funds. Making this project a reality will require an additional \$1,500. Please contact any member of the Grants Team if you wish to help.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- To research and qualify potential funding sources for FRSUU.
- To submit grant requests supporting the timelines and priorities of the FRSUU Ministries and Committees especially the Capital Campaign, compliant with FRSUU Values (e.g., Reduce the carbon footprint of FRSUU).
- To work with the Board, Endowment Committee, and respective entities to explore the feasibility of establishing a "Preservation Endowment" for our historic buildings.
- To work with the 4th Century Vision Group to support activities commemorating the FRSUU 300th anniversary.

For anyone who does not wish to attend regular meetings but is willing to work on specific short-term tasks such as writing thank you notes to supporters or profiling funding sources, opportunities will be available. Skill sets needed to support the GT on a flexible part-time basis include accounting (to administer grants once received), legal, finance, proofreading, research, writing, and others. If you have the desire to help in this way, contact Forrest Speck, forrest.speck@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Budelmann, ebudelmann@gmail.com

Human Resources Subcommittee

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

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:

Rebecca Brodish, Kathy Desilets, Leslie Lawrence, Hugh Martinez, Julie Menin, and Jim Supple.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

In our role as an advisory group to the Parish Board and FRS staff on issues related to FRS personnel, employee benefits, and the care of staff, the Human Resources Subcommittee supports FRS efforts in encouraging Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder, Come as you are, Journey together in love, Act with courage, Transform our world.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- Conducted annual salary review in light of current inflation data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and UUA's new fair compensation guidance.
- Based on this analysis, presented recommendations to the Parish Board on staff salaries for the next church year and for the implementation of a paradigm shift in developing fair compensation recommendations going forward to better reflect guidance of the UUA.
- 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.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- Continue to act in an advisory capacity to Parish Board and FRS staff on issues related to FRS personnel and employee benefits.
- Assist FRS staff and the Parish Board with updating its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 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.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

- Lay leaders of the Human Resources Subcommittee will be engaged in promoting participation in these efforts by members of the activity and interest groups in which they participate.
- We will assist the Parish Board and FRS Staff in other ways as requested.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

The Human Resources Subcommittee's work in the coming year updating FRS policies and practices related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is directly related to our commitment to implement the 8th Principle.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Lawrence, leslie.lawrence55@gmail.com

Stewardship Committee**What is the mission or purpose of your group?**

The primary mission of the Stewardship Committee is 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.

Names of people involved:

I will not be able to list everyone who has been involved. Some of the key people are Michelle Kimball, Renee Wolf Foster, Stephen-Wolf Foster, Paula Renda, Betsy Latham, Doug Latham, Bob Higgins, Forrest Speck, Tina Benik, Barbara Garnis, Joe Brouillet, Mary Sortal, as well as many event volunteers and everyone on the staff.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Stewardship tangentially touches on all the Values and our Mission through the creation of fellowship.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

This year Stewardship has been involved in:

- The Fall Festival to support Cynthia Walsh, the event coordinator.
- The Auction held at the Newburyport Community Center which was moved to the fall.
- Producing and selling the Daily Muse, a calendar with a quote for each day.
- The Cookie Walk during one of the Newburyport downtown invitation nights.
- The Annual Giving Campaign co-chaired by Sue Creed and Ray Wilson; it was very successful and met the established financial goals.
- Brought back the online raffle for Dinner Anywhere in the World.
- Tina Benik finalized the gift acceptance policy and received approval from the Board.
- Creation of the Fourth Century Vision Team which involved five sub-teams: Congregational Insight, Planned Giving, Stewardship, Facilities, and Green Team.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- We will continue to develop new ideas for creating fellowship and revenue streams (large and small) for the church. One current thought is selling merchandise and snacks during citywide events such as Yankee Homecoming, the Pride Parade, and the Classic Car show.
- After Tina Benik stewarded the gift acceptance policy through the Board for acceptance, we now have put together a team to plan and roll out FRS Planned Giving next church year.
- Create an alcohol policy to allow us to have events that might include the consumption of alcohol at the church for FRSUU events as well as for building rental, such as weddings.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

The success of creating fellowship and stewardship generates excitement in our community. With the 300th anniversary rapidly approaching we expect to have a busy year. We need to develop more diverse fundraising/fellowship events to draw in more involvement of the members and friends of the congregation. And we need to develop long-term revenue streams to keep the church healthy and well maintained.

Respectfully submitted,

Vernon Ellis, Stewardship Committee Chair, vellis@ellisdesign.net

Trustees of the Endowment**What is the mission or purpose of your group?**

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:

William Clary and Jim Supple, Co-Chairs; Kim Kenly, Treasurer; Tina Benik, and Tim Fountain.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

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

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- Updated the Trustees Manual.
- Submitted recommendation to implement the changes to the Endowment fund allocations and names that were consistent with the 2019 Art Henshaw report and new Gift Acceptance Policy.
- Disbursed funds to the general operating account, community accounts, and capital/maintenance accounts in accordance with policy.
- Held quarterly meetings with financial advisor Pathstone Financial.
- Released quarterly endowment one-page reports to the Parish Board and Steeple newsletter publication.

We also experienced some challenges:

- Policy creation, review, and completion is a difficult process and poorly understood.
- Endowment fund growth has been hampered by market fluctuations, and energy prices.
- New contributions to the Endowment are needed to help fund church operations and capital needs in both the Meetinghouse and Parish Hall.
- In 2015, the church commissioned a financial review with a recommendation from Nobelin that roughly \$30,000 annually be added to the Endowment Capital Funds to support maintenance and capital needs. This recommendation has not been implemented in the budgeting process.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- Increase the total Endowment value to \$3.0MM; Operations - \$1.5MM; Buildings - \$1.0MM; and Community - \$0.5MM.
- Work with Stewardship and Finance Committees to add funds to the Endowment to provide more income for the operating budget and capital funds.
- Implement proposed endowment fund reorganization and reporting.
- Continue quarterly performance reporting to the congregation of the Endowment.
- Move files gathered for historical record to church OneDrive account for the Trustees as a permanent record.

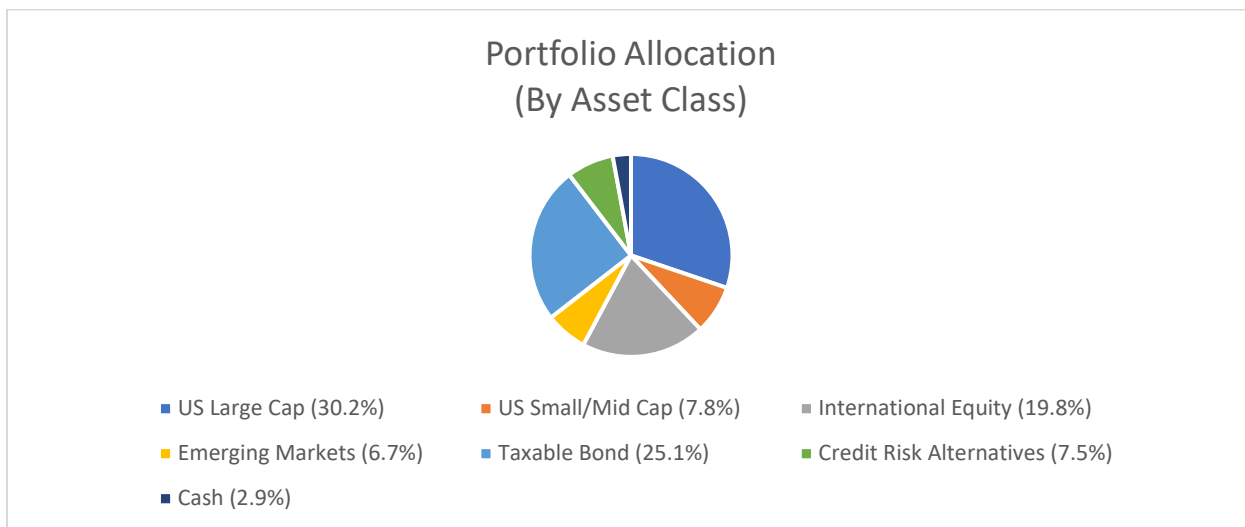
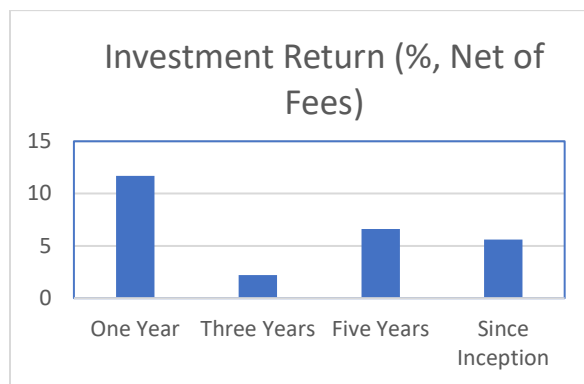
What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

- Assistance from the Parish Board to implement the fund changes.
- Gifts of \$500,000 for the Endowment.

First Religious Society of Newburyport Performance Report - As of March 31, 2024

The First Religious Society Unitarian Universalist of Newburyport maintains an endowment for the immediate needs and long-term health of the church. Below please find a summary of the endowment's overall performance for the 2024 fiscal year. Please forward any questions to Bill Clary, the Chair of the Trustees, at 978-270-0755 or williamclary860@gmail.com.

Endowment	Value
Beginning Balance (07/01/23)	\$1,709,157
Change in Market Value	\$141,719
Distributions	-\$51,253
Ending Balance (03/31/24)	\$1,799,623



Distributions (2024 Fiscal Year)	
Operating Budget	Funds distributed from the endowment totaling \$29,967 to our annual operating budget.
Community Support	Funds distributed from the endowment for community support totaled \$10,362.
Capital Support	Funds distributed from the endowment for capital expenses totaled \$10,924.

Respectfully submitted,

William B. Clary, Trustee of the Endowment Co-Chair, williamclary860@gmail.com

REPORTS FROM THE MINISTER AND AFFILIATED MINISTERS

Minister's Report

Dear members,

My closing remarks in a sermon I delivered last June promised that I would be attentive to the pace of change, and to try to have change within our church occur at a slower pace this year. Then life happened,

and we experienced a series of losses that significantly affected the church and even the surrounding community.

These developments began in January 2024 with the announcement that Justin Murphy-Mancini, Director of Church Music, had secured a job as *Assistant Professor, Paul Fritts Endowed Chair, of Organ Studies and Performance* at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington and would be leaving FRS at the end of June 2024. Soon thereafter, Julie Parker Amery announced her retirement in March 2024, after 23 years of service to our church, including 18 years as Director of Young Church and the last five years as Director of Faith Formation and Spiritual Exploration.

These staff changes were accentuated by the shocking and tragic death of one of our Affiliate Ministers, Reverend Helen Murgida, in late February of this year. Rev. Helen was killed while crossing the street to deliver an interfaith prayer for the State of the City. This tragedy affected the entire city. We held vigils and offered support to our members and friends, and the Greater Newburyport community, remembering all who were impacted by this loss, including, Rev. Helen's family, members of our church and the community, the truck driver and first responders, and Rev. Helen's colleagues in her work as an advocate for students with special needs in the State of Massachusetts.

Change is a constant in life. Our beloved community of FRS responded to these changes with resilience. Thank you for your care for each other during this difficult time and for helping ensure that our doors were open to everyone in the community who was affected by this loss.

As is the case, there is good that has come out of these changes. Our mutual care as we grieved Rev. Helen's death reinforced the importance of our church community and reinforced our commitment to her legacy of Accessibility and Inclusion. Justin's and Julie's departures offered us the opportunity to evaluate the best staffing structure for our church today and who we are becoming. The biggest change we made is to hire an Assistant Minister of Congregational Life, whose areas of focus will include membership and strengthening congregational connections, adult faith formation, and support of our Youth and Children's Ministries under the leadership of Mara Flynn. The organizational chart following this letter illustrates our revised staffing structure and positions.

Deep thanks to the members of the search committees and their chairs:

Assistant Minister of Congregational Life (no chair)

Amy Cameron, Vern Ellis, Mara Flynn, Tom Himmel, Leslie Lawrence, August Mead, Rev. Jane Tuohy, Rev. Rebecca

Director of Church Music

Alan Seale, Chair, Jeff Bard, Lori Clark, Betsy Latham, Hugh Martinez, Rev. Rebecca

Director of Finance

Jim Supple, Chair, Bart Bracken, Diane Carroll, Kim Kenly, Renee Wolf Foster

The staff selected include Reverend Laurel Gray, Assistant Minister of Congregational Life (start date 8/13/24), Nick Place, Director of Church Music (start date 8/1/24) and Dan O'Shea, Director of Finance (start date 5/1/24).

We mourn the loss and celebrate the lives of the following members of the FRS who died since our 2023 Annual Meeting:

Pat Hurzeler – 11/5/23

Ned McClung – 12/24/23

Rev. Helen Murgida – 2/28/24

Aster Shepherd – 3/15/24

We welcome the following new members who have joined the FRS since our 2023 Annual Meeting:

Dd Allen
Andrew Boger
Carol Gamble
Kristen Giessler
Pam Lessard
Karen Letourneau
Cailin McFarland
August Mead
Katie Mead

Mary Lou Monteiro
David Pillemer
Jane Pillemer
William Raschke
Katherine Roth Huse
Teddy Speck
Rebekah Stafford
Sharon Tillman
Mary Valle

We have accomplished so much this year including meeting our Annual Campaign goal of \$575,000. The campaign was co-chaired by Sue Creed and Ray Wilson, with an Advisory Group of eleven members and more than forty stewards who helped make the campaign a success. We voted to replace our roof, which was sorely needed, and were awarded a \$64,000 grant from the City of Newburyport to support the project. Thanks to our newly formed Grants Team, led by Ed Budelmann and Forrest Speck for this work; to our Facilities Team, chaired by Bill Zarakas; and to the Green Team, represented by Doug Latham; for the hard work to ensure that the planning and review of construction bids was done well and responsibly.

Plans are well underway for our 300th anniversary, which will be celebrated during the 2025 calendar year. Thanks to Laurie Evans-Daly and Annie Maurer for their dedication to this project, including ensuring that we will have an updated volume to our FRS history books.

The 4th Century Team, chaired by Vern Ellis, is a collaborative effort focused on ensuring that we are clear on our direction as we enter the 4th century, and that we hear from the congregation to understand our dreams and priorities. Many thanks to Barbara Garnis for chairing the Congregational Insight Team and to the 15 people who facilitated congregational workshops as well as to Rebecca Lobb, who led the analysis of the data shared in the 19 groups.

We were thrilled that the Mirzayee family found long-term rental housing in Newburyport and moved out of Parish Hall in December 2023. This rental is supported through a combination of private donations, rent reduction, and payments assumed by the Mirzayees. Thank you to David Hall for making this property available, to all the private donors from the community, and to the hundreds of FRS members and friends who have supported this effort over the last two years. We will be resuming use of the Parish Hall next year, while simultaneously doing further discernment on future uses as informed by our congregation and the community at large.

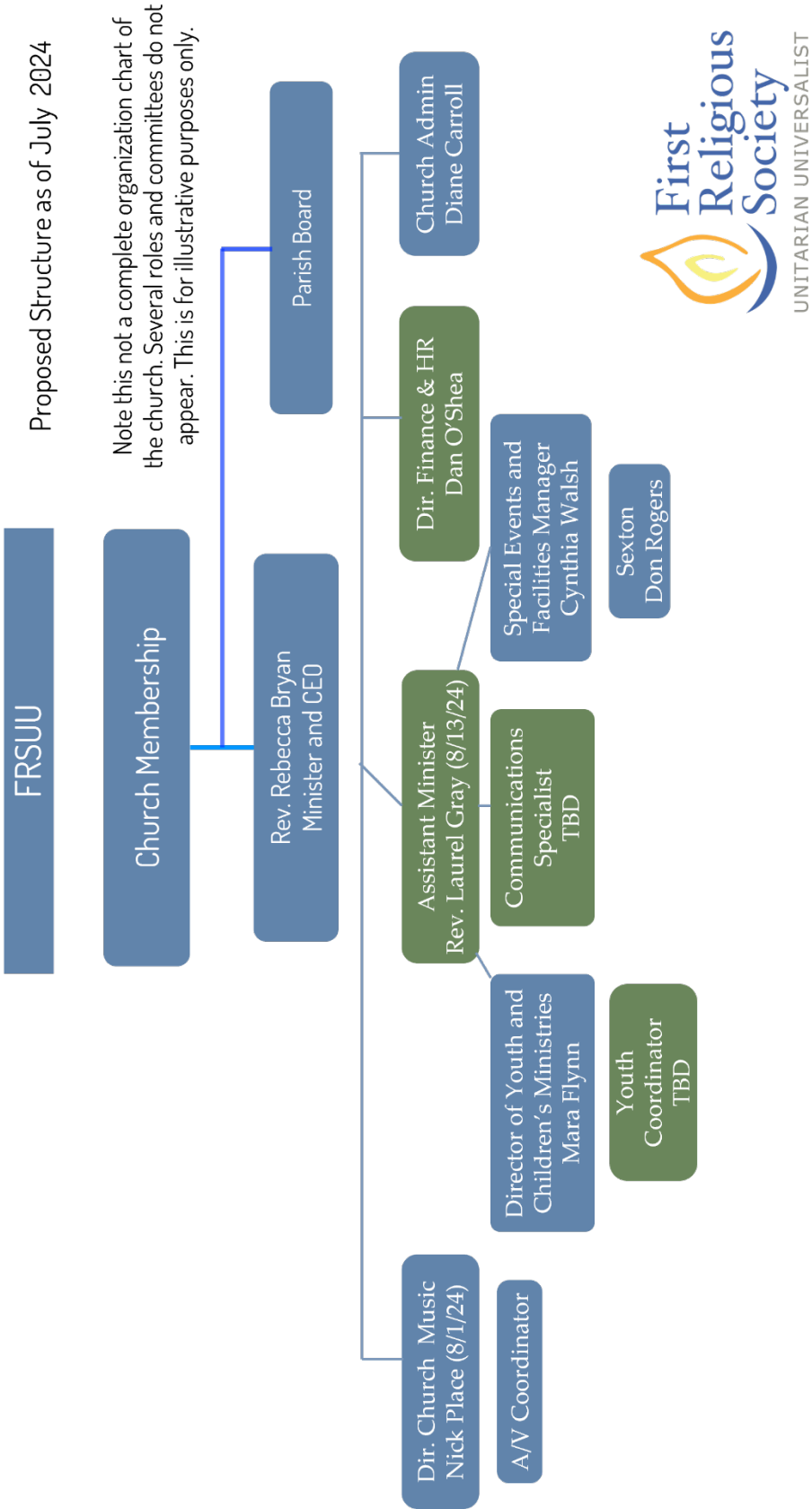
There is so much more that I could acknowledge. Please read this entire report!

I offer my deepest thanks to members of the Parish Board, chaired by Jim Supple, to the hundreds of volunteers who contributed your skills and time in countless ways, and to all of you, for being a part of our beloved church community.

In faith and love,

Reverend Rebecca, RevRebecca.Bryan@frsuu.org

FRSUU Organizational Chart



Search Committee Reports

Assistant Minister of Congregational Life Search Committee

The Parish Board voted unanimously to hire The Reverend Laurel Gray to be our new Assistant Minister of Congregational Life! This is a hired ministerial position with a one-year renewable contract, different from a called ministerial position.

As our .75-time Assistant Minister of Congregation Life, Rev. Laurel, will report to Rev. Rebecca and work in collaboration with the staff and all of you. Her ministry will focus on three primary areas of church life including membership, adult faith formation and programming, and supporting Mara Flynn, Director of Teen and Youth Ministries, in creating vibrant children's, youth, and young adult religious education and programming. She will also preach over the course of the year and serve in Rev. Rebecca's absence for vacation and study leave.

Rev. Laurel will start her ministry at the FRS on August 13. There will be welcome activities at the start of the church after Labor Day.

Search Committee: Amy Cameron, Vern Ellis, Mara Flynn, Tom Himmel, Leslie Lawrence, August Mead, Rev. Jane Tuohy, Rev. Rebecca Bryan.

Director of Church Music Search Committee

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

To find the next Director of Church Music for FRSUU.

Names of people involved:

Rev. Rebecca, Jeff Bard, Lori Clark, Betsy Latham, Hugh Martinez, Alan Seale.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Our aim was to find a Director of Church Music who, among other things, embodied all of our values and our mission.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

We completed our search and recommended Nicholas Place as our next Director of Church Music to Rev. Rebecca and the FRS Board.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Our task is complete.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Seale, Chair, Director of Church Music Search Committee

Director of Finance Search Committee

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

To find a Director of Finance who would focus on financial reporting and analysis, payroll, benefits administration, contract review, and other financial matters.

Names of people involved:

Jim Supple, Chair, Bart Bracken, Diane Carroll, Kim Kenly, Renee Wolf Foster.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Our goal was to find a Director of Finance who could enhance financial strategies to ensure sustainability and growth, while also fostering a spirit of community and stewardship.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

We completed our search and recommended Dan O'Shea as our Director of Finance to Rev. Rebecca and the FRS Board.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Our task is complete.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Supple, Chair, Director of Finance Search Committee, jim@greatmarsh.com

In Memoriam



Reverend Helen M. Murgida

September 18, 1943 – February 28, 2024

Community Minister Affiliated

What is the mission or purpose of your role?

To support the overall ministry of FRSUU as a Community Minister Affiliated.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Through occasional preaching, pastoral care, and participation in education/spirituality offerings of FRS, I hope to support and challenge us all to be more authentically welcoming of the fullness of our own humanity as well as that of others. This will necessarily involve and foster a deeper connection and journey with each other, open us to love and wonder, and require as much courage as we can summon from within and among us. I hope to do my part in helping us engage the potential of our diverse congregational and community spirituality, in order to play our part in bringing about hoped-and prayed-for transformation.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- Led worship on January 29, 2024, exploring how understanding and practicing “adoration” can (and does) make a contribution to our lives.
- Provided pastoral care for church members.

- Participated in a series on “mysticism,” including presenting on spiritual experience and the Islamic inner path of Sufism.
- Took part in occasional meetings with Rev. Rebecca and other Affiliate Ministers.
- Was interviewed on February 14, 2024 for the March broadcast of the “Lifting Your Spirit” series.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- Continue to support the ministry of FRSUU within the congregation and in the larger community.
- Support and co-operate with Rev. Rebecca in her central leadership role.
- Plan and preside at one Sunday morning service during the year and provide support in other services as requested by Rev. Rebecca.
- Provide support, as needed, for activities which can benefit from my knowledge of and experience with the Qur’an and Islamic spirituality.
- Be part of welcoming and supporting the integration of our new Assistant Minister and Director of Church Music.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

As far as I can see, nothing beyond the usual support I receive from Rev. Rebecca, other staff, and the congregation.

How will you be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

Unclear at this point.

How will you consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

Primarily through the way my awareness of the intersection of religious diversity with cultural and racial diversity impacts my preaching and teaching.

Respectfully submitted,

Stanton H. Barrett III, Affiliate Minister, stan.barrett1@verizon.net

Community Minister Affiliated

What is the mission or purpose of your role?

Our purpose is to support Rev. Rebecca in meeting the spiritual care needs of our growing congregation.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

We support the values of FRS in a variety of ways. We offer support to individual members of the congregation in difficult times. We assist Rev. Rebecca in planning and delivering services. We support different social justice task forces. Additionally, I created and supported the Serenity in the Sanctuary worship services during December holidays and an Interfaith class.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

I covered for Rev. Rebecca when she was on vacation this winter. As a member of the Worship Associates and an affiliate minister, I participated in a number of services. The Interfaith Exploration of Mysticism class has attracted people new to FRS which I hope over time will contribute to our membership. Additionally, I believe the class is partially meeting a desire of participants for deep conversations about ultimate questions. Exposure to instructors from different faith traditions and different fields is helping me grow spiritually and I hope others as well. Mystical experiences are deeply personal and unique, and I believe this class has created a safe space for individuals to talk about experiences which are very important to them but sometimes difficult to share because of skepticism or a lack of skillful response from those who have

difficulty with “knowledge without evidence” (which Houston Smith calls faith). I continue to support the Anti-Racism Initiative (ARI) as we have throughout this year tried to build understanding and support for the 8th Principle.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

My vision for 2024-2025 is to help the new staff acclimate and seek Rev. Rebecca’s advice as to where I can be helpful as the ministerial team is reshaped with the addition of Rev. Laurel Gray. There is all the planned work of the church and then there is the unplanned work. I hope to be flexible and do what is most helpful.

I also hope to assist in developing the skills of members of our congregation related to engaging in interfaith dialogue. I think the ability to engage skillfully with others whose beliefs are different than ones one is very important for our spiritual growth. We do draw wisdom from different faith traditions but at times have not been as skillful in engaging in dialogue across the theist- humanist continuum of beliefs. Becoming more so opens up doors for rich dialogue and growth.

I hope to help figure out what the passage of the 8th principle will mean as we move from planning passage to implementation.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

The death of Rev. Helen Murgida has been a great loss to me since she and I worked together as a team and supported each other. And we were friends. Because the Affiliate Ministers are volunteers, and each of us is quite different in our interests, time available, and skill sets, we have each fulfilled this role in different ways. With the addition of Rev. Laurel Gray, I hope to be part of a ministerial team in which our roles, responsibilities, and authorization are clear while preserving the flexibility that I believe is important in order to be able to respond to the unplanned.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

This is not yet clear to me.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

I think we need to set some goals regarding the 8th Principle implementation and these should be aligned with a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) plan. For example, might we develop a strategy for creating a pipeline for candidates for staff positions so that when staff openings occur we have more access to diverse candidates including those who already know us because they have been involved in internships or other forms of partnerships.

Over the last few years, I believe that FRS has grown in credibility as a community leader in anti-racism work. I think this is because we can be counted on as a “first responder” when there are incidents of racism in the community. We have not yet figured out what it means for us to have community partners in this work. Some aspects of our work have been more successful than others. The MLK service and other times when Rev. Rebecca has spoken from the pulpit on racism have, I trust, had some impact. On the other hand, the educational programs offered by our ARI have been excellent in content but only attracted a handful of people.

I hope that 2024-2025 will be the year in which we determine how to join with other community groups in anti-racism work that harnesses our collective energies and passion for justice and has a real impact on our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Jane Tuohy, Affiliate Minister, jt@cambridgehill.com

REPORTS FROM STAFF

Church Administrator

What is the mission or purpose of your role?

To be a point-of-contact for congregants and the greater Newburyport community; support church operations, finance (bookkeeping), programming, and VME; and support congregants and staff. My role is evolving with the staff reorganization.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

My role as Church Administrator connects to and supports all of FRS's values and all parts of our mission.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year:

300th Anniversary (ongoing): sold weathercock pins during office hours, supported committee members in locating historical documents and materials.

Administration/Operations: Administrator of Microsoft 365 account and main Zoom account; worked with IT consultant on installation of new office phone system; coordinated distribution of Market Basket gift cards to area residents in need; managed supply room and servicing of office copier; supported Cynthia Walsh and Don Rogers in facility-related matters since March.

Annual Campaign: member of the Annual Campaign Steering Committee, reviewed/edited campaign materials, updated/maintained Online Pledge Form and Pledge page on the FRSUU website, processed all pledge and pledge increase forms from congregants, worked with Bart Bracken to track campaign data.

Annual Report/Annual Meeting: compiled/reviewed Annual Report submissions from staff and congregants, produced Annual Report and related documents, managed member check-in at Annual Meeting.

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 of Newburyport* Friday religion page; produced Wayside Pulpit posters.

Finance/Bookkeeping: pledge payments/donations, weekly bank deposits, QuickBooks entries; supported congregants setting up recurring online pledge payments; maintained Online Giving Form and donation fund list; generated pledge statements and 2023 giving statements; managed Sunday Shared Collection analysis and distributions; assumed responsibility for Accounts Payable in May; member of Director of Finance Search Team.

Fundraising (auction/raffle/misc.): edited/printed promotional materials, processed auction bids and payments, sold and processed raffle tickets, credit card processing support, accounting of income and expenses post-event.

Memorial Services: produced 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 Candlelight program and Wilson Concert Series programs.

Rentals/Room Reservations/Church Calendar: processed reservations/meeting requests, updated rental contract template, updated online Room Reservation Form, prepared rental contracts for external renters.

Website: maintained Parish Board webpage, Staff page, Employment page, and Worship/Sermons page; posted documents: sermon transcriptions and links to printable sermons, Orders of Service,

hymns, lyrics, Parish Board meeting minutes, and other documents; updated/edited other content as needed.

Worship: produced weekly Orders of Service and other printed/online materials, coordinated Sunday flower arrangements and steeple lighting sponsorships, produced printable sermons.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year:

Collaborate with our new Director of Finance, Dan O'Shea, in church financial work, efficiencies in processes, moving to electronic storage of files, reviewing/cleaning out old files, and possibly exploring new platforms for our congregational/pledge/campaign database. Enhance my QuickBooks skills.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

Becoming a full-time staff member (3/11/24) and having our Director of Finance in place are a great start. Finding our Communications Specialist is the next step. I am grateful for our amazing staff and congregation, and I look forward to another great year at FRSUU!

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Carroll, Church Administrator, diane.carroll@frsuu.org

Director of Church Music

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

The music ministry of the First Religious Society brings people together to grow spiritually through music-making.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

The music ministry grew in diversity, skill, and integration with the wider FRS community. The Adult Choir participated in an interfaith choral concert celebrating the 175th anniversary of Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church in Newburyport. Their repertoire continued to diversify, with many different genres and composers represented. The Adult Choir sang at special services and memorial services in addition to their regular presence on Sunday mornings. We welcomed racially, culturally, and stylistically diverse guest musicians, including the Spirituals Ensemble from the Boston Arts Academy, singer-songwriters, and soprano soloist Neva Ventullo. FRS members, including Gay Pearson and Greg Garnache, premiered brand-new, original music at Sunday services. The Candlelight Service was one of the most successful in recent memory, with the return of the brass ensemble and an especially strong ensemble of singers. Many thanks to Mara Flynn for her work leading the Young Church Singers, who sang at Candlelight and Easter services this year.

Jazz Vespers took place a few times this year, in an effort to make this celebrated tradition a regular feature of next church year's programming. Thanks to Lark Madden for his work to keep jazz a regular feature of FRS life. Tom Stites led a successful Jazz Service in April 2024 as well. The Wilson Music Series invited Winsor Music, Spectrum Singers, Arpeggione Ensemble, and Sarah Johnson to the Sanctuary this year, with excellent attendance for all programs. Special thanks to John and Florence Mercer for their decades of behind-the-scenes support for bringing excellent artists to FRS in the winter months.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

We are excited to have great music planned for the church's 300th anniversary year. Though I will not be with you, I hope I will be setting a great foundation for the future. We already have guest musicians including guitar soloists and chamber music ensembles scheduled to perform during the 2024-25 church year. The Wilson Music Series and Candlelight Service will include special music and artists and an interfaith choral concert is also planned.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

Music will be a vibrant element of the 300th anniversary, with special guest musicians, performance opportunities, and the 100th anniversary of the Candlelight service.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

The FRS music ministry programs music by artists from all backgrounds and styles, working intentionally to highlight the work of black, indigenous, and artists of color. Guest musicians of color are regularly welcomed into the Sanctuary to perform the music most important to them. Music on Sunday mornings strives to achieve parity in musical contributions between men and women, and music purchases prioritize adding BIPOC composers to the music library.

It has been a privilege and an honor to work with the many musicians who are a part of the FRS community these last five years. It has been an equal pleasure to meet so many other people (our supportive audiences!) and work with kind, dedicated, and luminous members, friends, and guests. I wish all of FRS the very best in their future musical endeavors! I promise not to be a stranger to my FRS family.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin J. Murphy-Mancini, Director of Church Music, justin.murphy-mancini@frsuu.org

Director of Congregational Engagement and Community Outreach

What is the mission or purpose of your role?

To support parishioners in their journey of engagement at the 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.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- Created and published weekly Steeple communications throughout the church year.
- Created monthly events calendar.
- Maintained FRS website, posted weekly worship descriptions, and ensured timely news is posted in the Latest News section.
- Supported setup of vestibule each week for Sunday worship services and other special events.
- Worked with local newspaper to publish information on events at the FRS.
- Supported 300th anniversary chairs in planning celebratory events and other programming for 300th anniversary.
- Grew membership at the FRS. In the church year, we welcomed 20 new members.
- Organized New Member Sunday.
- Met with newcomers to engage them in the FRS.
- Organized historic church tours and created a small group of trained docents.
- Hosted Sunday fellowship socials following worship services.
- Responsible for setting up Opening Sunday and the Church Picnic.
- Supported in person meetings at Rev. Rebecca's home including Program Council and Young Church Social.
- Supported Justice Sundays with Soup and Salad Luncheons.
- Served as staff support on Stewardship Team and provided hands-on support with annual Auction, Holiday Cookie Walk, and other initiatives as needed.
- Served as staff support on Facilities Team and Grants Team.

- Built rental relationship with North Shore Mediation and Insight Center.
- Provided support for memorial services upon request.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Walsh, Director of Congregational Engagement and Community Outreach, cynthia.walsh@frsuu.org

Director of Youth and Children's Ministry

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

Each week, grades K-8 gather to participate in engaging curriculum that draws on worships themes, UU Principles and rituals, the FRS Vision, Mission and Ends, and is grounded in UU Religious Education goals: *"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

FRS Young Church builds joyful and meaningful connection with all ages, our faith, and our community. Our youth and children's programming fosters respect for ourselves and others, a deepening awareness of our interconnectedness, and social justice engagement as an expression of our spirituality and love.

Names of people involved:

Mara Flynn, Director of Youth and Children's Ministry, Joanna Fernandes (parent volunteer), August Mead (young adult volunteer), Julie Parker Amery.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

Young Church Program – We registered over 40 children in Pre-K - 9th grade and ran programming that connected to and supported all our VME.

Crossing Paths: Facilitated by parent volunteer Joanna Fernandes, students explored eight faiths over the year, engaging with practitioners of each faith and visiting eight different houses of worship. This program is based in the ethic of religious pluralism and focuses on working to understand and respectfully connect with others who may hold different beliefs, while also seeking each religion's crossing points with Unitarian Universalism.

Little Free Diverse Library: Families and congregants donated books for our LFDL, supporting our mission to circulate books in our community that amplify and empower diverse voices, books written about/by Black, Indigenous, people of color, immigrants and LGBTQ+ authors.

Special Guests/Community Partnerships & Engagement:

- Megan Chiango (visual artist and activist) collaborated with us for our Trash Fashion Workshop and Trashion Show.
- ACES published six of our Young Church children's Earth Day poems in *The Daily News of Newburyport*.

Congregational Collaborations:

- FRS Green Team – Worked with Green Team leadership and members to offer community-building events: An all-ages Trash Fashion Workshop and a Trashion Show and Potluck for the Planet, as well as a student-led TFAA in the Earth Day service.
- Welcoming Committee – Young Church collaborated to participate in Newburyport's Pride Parade.
- Anti-Racism Initiative – Led a TFAA about White Privilege as part of the Anti-Racism Team's service.

Multigenerational Worship: Organized and led multigenerational worship services (the Annual Christmas Pageant and Young Church Sunday) and Time for All Ages throughout the church year.

Young Church Singers: Children rehearsed and performed songs in the Candlelight and Easter services.

Worked with staff to identify and secure new members.

Renovated and opened a new nursery space.

Deepened connections with families:

- Held several family social events to answer questions, listen to ideas, and discuss deeper engagement and program support.
- Removed barriers to deepen family participation, offering childcare during a Special Congregational Meeting and the Annual Meeting Service.
- Parent and youth groups participated in the Congregational Insight Workshops.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Young Church programming will continue to build joyful and meaningful connections with all ages, our faith, and our community. Goals and Objectives:

1. Begin to build back our Youth Group program in collaboration with youth, families, and our new Assistant Minister, Reverend Laurel Gray. Work with Cynthia Walsh and Donny Rogers to renovate Youth Room space.
2. Explore idea of a native species/pollinator garden collaboration with Green Team and Young Church
3. Continue to build relationships with youth, children, and families, listening to what helps deepen their connection to and participation with our church community.
4. Work closely with the future Communications Director to improve clarity and accessibility to Youth and Children's Programming.

What will you need to be successful in the 2023-2024 church year?

Continued communication and collaboration with staff and congregants. Continued relationship building with children, youth, and families, and a commitment to centering their voices, ideas, and desires around creating deeper engagement with our faith community.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

I am in communication with Rev. Rebecca and Laurie Evans-Daly to discuss possible theatrical offerings and exploring impactful ways to connect children and youth with FRS history.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

Our youth and children's programming will continue to explore themes of anti-racism, allyship, systemic oppression, and climate justice.

A Note about Youth Programming:

Julie Parker Amery retired in March. Here's what she had to say about Youth Programming:

"This church year, the leadership team (Eileen Vargas-Costello and Steve Costello, Mike Dorsey, and Becky Dill) decided that we'd offer a somewhat organic program for the youth—not a Sunday morning youth group, but instead offering activities, overnights, and projects. This was mainly so that youth could continue to assist Mara in Young Church. We were aware that the active youth would be those on the younger side, those who were coming up fresh from Young Church, and we knew that they were happily engaged as mentors to the younger children... I think that this is a great time to build a program from the ground up and I'd hesitate to offer too much material or format or anything that we've used in the past. Of course, I

have all the files and will leave them here; they might be useful if you decide you'd like to do either Coming of Age or a trip program. However, Mara knows these youth and families and likely has a very good sense of what's most needed and wanted—and I know she consults with them every step of the way. This can be an exciting time of creating a ministry that will best serve the needs of today's youth."

Respectfully submitted,

Mara Flynn, Director of Youth and Children's Ministry, mara.flynn@frsuu.org

Sexton

What is the mission or purpose of your role?

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

Tell us how your role is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, and Wonder

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

Maintaining the lawn and gardens, cleaning out Parish Hall, cleaning out offices for new staff, keeping grounds clean, helping people feel good about the beauty of the building, trying to save the church money making decisions.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Maintaining the buildings and grounds, working with Cynthia Walsh to get Parish Hall cleaned up.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Rogers, Sexton, donny.rogers@frsuu.org

CARE MINISTRY

Addictions Ministry Team

The Addictions Ministry Team has reenergized itself after taking a hiatus during COVID. Reverend Nathan Detering preached on addiction issues in the fall and Reverend Rebecca published an article in *The Daily News* in the "In The Spirit" column. We look forward to a full and engaging year next church year.

Dementia Caregivers Support Group (DCSG)

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

To provide support and education to caregivers whose family members or friends are experiencing the myriad issues and challenges associated with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia.

Names of people involved:

Nancy Kidd, Linda Harding, and Richard George, in collaboration with Reverend Rebecca.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

The value our caregiver group most readily supports relates to creating AUTHENTIC CONNECTIONS. Caregivers who are constantly in the position of giving their time, energy, and love to friends or family who have a dementia diagnosis come to group to be heard, to be seen, and to have their feelings validated by fellow attendees and facilitators. As an ongoing drop-in group, we are OPEN AND WELCOMING of anyone who shows up to COME AS YOU ARE. The most valuable contribution the group makes to the church and

wider community is in many ways a simple one: space. DCSG offers a quiet, safe place for sharing personal caregiving stories, ones that make us laugh and ones that make us cry. The WONDER of it all lies within the many great ACTS OF COURAGE, and LOVE performed hour after hour, day after day. As group leaders, we listen with empathy and compassion. We respond with love.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

In March 2024, after a series of planning meetings and a few weeks of publicity, we launched our first Dementia Caregivers Support Group at FRS. There were six or seven attendees at that first meeting, many of whom have continued to participate each month since.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Our plan is to continue to offer DCSG next year, hopefully growing its attendance and potentially broadening its scope to include caregivers of all kinds. The group's leaders plan to meet before the 2024-25 church year begins to review lessons learned from the four sessions held this spring and to consider how our roles as facilitators might grow or change to best serve attendees. A greater goal might be to develop programming that would lead to FRS becoming a more dementia-sensitive community.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

The Dementia Caregivers Support Group will thrive on the continued administrative and logistical support of the Church staff. A collaborative effort to raise awareness and educate the FRS community about dementia would naturally complement our program as well.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

TBD.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

TBD.

Perhaps there is a way to address the 8th Principle through education re how differently people with dementia are treated by the medical community and other institutional settings depending on their race, ethnicity, and gender identities. More broadly, it would be interesting to look into the different degrees of stigma borne by people with dementia across those three groups.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Harding, lharding6@comcast.net and Nancy Kidd, nankdd@gmail.com

Memorial Services Team

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

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, Sherry Evans, Barbara Garnis, Monique Greilich, Florence Mercer, John Mercer, Justin Murphy-Mancini, Rev. Helen Murgida, Bettina Turner, Cynthia Walsh.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

In supporting grieving families, the team connected to and supported Authentic Connection, Love, Spirituality, and Journey together in love.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year:

Five memorial services for FRS members and three services for family members or area residents were held in the Sanctuary.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Continue to provide support to families in planning memorial services for members and friends.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

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

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Carroll, Church Administrator, diane.carroll@frsuu.org

Parish Friends

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

The Parish Friends network supports 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, provide emergency childcare, and assist with light chores, including occasional pet care.

Names of people involved:

The roster of over 70 Parish Friends is kept current on FRS Connect (Realm). Additional volunteers are welcome.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supported our Values, Mission and Ends:

Our activities supported FRS values of Authentic Connection, Love, and Wonder, and certainly supported much of the FRS mission, most notably to “Come as you are” and “Journey together in love.”

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

Parish Friends remained very active throughout the church year. Many heartfelt thanks to all who have remained ready to connect and serve.

The Parish Friends network of over 70 parishioners supports our church community members and friends in times of challenge, crises, transition, and special needs. Over this past 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.
- Rides to church functions and medical appointments.
- Our card writing team was active throughout the year.

The Parish Friends actively supported church-wide initiatives, including:

- Participating in the Passion Action Fair.
- Delivering baked goods during their Holiday Pie Project.
- Assembling bouquets and delivering on Valentine’s Day to parishioners who experienced loss of a close loved one the year prior.

We initiated a monthly informal gathering of Parish Friends for coffee and conversation on “Third Thursdays.” This was intended to strengthen our connections within Parish Friends, to share our

experiences, and to simply introduce ourselves to each other. Our last gathering was in May and will resume in September.

To request support for yourself or others, contact Parish Friends through a call to the church office or email to parishfriends@frsuu.org. You can also reach out directly to Susan Ricker at smricker@aol.com.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- Meet more often, especially for each of the functional service areas.
- Expand offered services, including more emergency gardening and snow removal.
- Create and strengthen connections with young church families.
- Improve communication with the church community.
- Continue to recruit more members.

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.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

Our success in 2024-25 will be helped by a kickoff organizational meeting when we return to church in the fall. Availability of accessible meeting space will also be helpful.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

We can be available to offer rides to anniversary events. We will include this question of involvement in our fall planning meeting.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

We will include this question in our fall planning meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Ricker, for Parish Friends, parishfriends@frsuu.org

Pastoral Care Associates

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

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

Names of people involved:

Rev. Rebecca Bryan, Julie Parker Amery, Linda Harding, Betsy Hazen, Tom Himmel, Nancy Kidd, Hugh Martinez, Rev. Helen Murgida, Susan Ricker, Bettina Turner.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Authentic connection, between ourselves as a PCA team and with those members and friends whom we serve, all in Love; Courage to re-think how we carry out our mission on behalf of FRSUU; reading and discussion that we do for some of our meetings has help to build in a stronger sense of spirituality.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- Provided pastoral care to approximately 25 members of our FRS community during the year.
- Partnered with Parish Friends in supporting the FRSUU community.

- Provided pastoral care coverage during the Minister's summer absence. It should be noted that the Rev. Helen Murgida was a central and key part of this, and her loss was and is deeply felt by all of us who were privileged to know and serve with her.
- Welcomed two new Pastoral Care Associates.
- Arranged for a presentation on a Community Nursing program in New Hampshire to help us think about options for providing service.
- Began an Alzheimer's Caregivers support group.
- Began consideration of forming a crisis support team, with the help of non-PCAs in FRSUU.
- Lit candles for "Joys and Sorrows" at Sunday worship services.
- Met with UUA Trauma Team associates in response to the sudden and tragic loss of Rev. Helen.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- Planning a joint meeting of the FRSUU care ministry teams with intent of continuing periodically.
- Consider how the PCA team is structured.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

PCA began in 2019. During the last five years the needs of our congregation have changed, as has the situation in the world around us. We are in the process of discerning what needs to change in our structure and membership to better meet those needs.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

We have not yet reflected on this as a team; this would be an appropriate topic for our Annual Retreat (tentatively August).

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

We have not yet reflected on this as a team; this would be an appropriate topic for our Annual Retreat (tentatively August).

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Himmel, Chair, thimmel43@mac.com

WORSHIP AND ADULT FAITH FORMATION MINISTRY

Chalice Circles Steering Committee

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

Chalice Circles Steering Committee (CCSC) coordinates Chalice Circles (CC) as a way to help people think about their spiritual lives and build community through the process of sharing their thoughts and experiences with others. 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:

CCSC members: Ted Stedman, Linda Tulley, Howard Mandeville (LOA), Beth Munro, Julie Parker Amery (Staff Liaison). CC co-leaders: Nancy Kidd and Marijane Helbick, Mark Hodgson and James Lacey, Marguerite Flanagan and Jean Noonan.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Chalice Circles offer a small group ministry opportunity to explore a deeper connection to the values espoused above. Session topics based on Reverend Rebecca's monthly sermon themes elicit deeply personal reflections on people's values and life experiences. Circles delve into spiritual beliefs, experiences,

and values resulting in profound awareness about who and what we are as individuals and in a greater whole. Participants tend to develop close relationships with each other, finding a caring and supportive community within our larger congregation.

Based on deep listening, an initial climate of respect becomes a journey of loving kindness and truly authentic connections. Sharing one's deepest thoughts and feelings is an act of courage, and the level of trust that develops is often transformative.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- Presented an interactive Training for CC Leaders both in person and via Zoom.
- Ran two in-person CC and one Zoom CC, serving 23 members and friends.
- Continued to expand the overall library of session topics available for use.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Offer in-person Chalice Circles and one Zoom Chalice Circle, continue emphasis on encouraging newcomers to participate, continue to determine options for the Gift of Service activity that are inclusive and flexible.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

A budget of \$100, continued support on the FRS website, in the Steeple and Order of Service, room reservations, Zoom links (with a host code, if possible), a staff person as a liaison.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

We plan to create a CC session topic inviting people to consider comparing their spiritual journey to that of FRS.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

We plan to develop a CC session topic to address the 8th Principle. (We already use an awareness of it in assessing current and evolving session topics.)

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Munro, CCSC member, defineyoursuccess@gmail.com

Monday Night Meditation

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

To support anyone interested in finding a group to support their efforts to meditate. Very beneficial for those wanting a spiritual practice rather than a dogmatic one.

Names of people involved:

Many different people, usually 12 to 16 people between in-person and Zoom.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

The program supports Authentic Connection, Love, Spirituality, Come as you are, Journey together in love, Act with courage, and Transform our world. Especially focusing on eventual world peace and inner peace.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

We have several new members including one psychologist, two persons working in the hospice field, and one who is new to the area and is recovering from surgery. People say they love the readings/lessons I read and add to before and after our meditation session.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Continue increasing/maintaining a vibrant group who support each other and hopefully begin advertising in *The Daily News* to reach out to more individuals/youth who are still lonely and feeling isolated after the Covid lockdown. After 13 to 14 years (started the group in late 2010), I would love to find someone who is ready, able, and willing to lead if I am sick or on vacation. Over the summer I would like to provide one or two four-to-six-hour retreats on a Saturday. We have about a half dozen folks very interested in this. We did several successful retreats prior to the COVID lockdown but haven't done any since things have been vastly improved.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

Continued use of the Lower Meetinghouse Main Room has been a gift that is so needed and appreciated!! If the group continues to grow, the Lower Meetinghouse works well.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Haydock, joycehaydock@outlook.com

Wednesday Guided Meditation**What is the mission or purpose of your group?**

A weekly 30-minute session to assist participants in learning relaxation techniques, centering, and how to anchor oneself.

Names of people involved:

Susan Cooper.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Authentic Connection, Wonder, Journey together in love.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

Increase in participants. Feedback is that people are using the techniques learned in their everyday life.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Continue offering support and guidance, offering a safe and loving space.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

Hold hope, passion.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Cooper, LICSW, susanc0805@gmail.com

Worship Associates**What is the mission or purpose of your group?**

Our aim is to provide meaningful leadership and support in Sunday worship services and other special services alongside Rev. Rebecca and guest speakers.

Names of people involved:

Jessica Brown, Steve Costello, Joanna Fernandes, Charlie Higgins, Sarina Khan Reddy, Doug Latham, Alan Seale, Rev. Jane Tuohy, Eileen Vargas-Costello, Stephen-Wolf Foster.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

By creating worship experiences each week that express and support our values, mission, and ends.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year:

We have continued to focus this year on bringing a stronger sense of spirituality and worship to our services, whether in person or online—to create an open, inviting, and inspirational atmosphere where worship participants find love, support, care, nurture, and encouragement for their daily walks in the world.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

While we have not specifically outlined this, my sense is that the Worship Associates will continue on the path we have forged over the last couple of years.

What will you need to be successful in the 2023-2024 church year?

The continued commitment of the Worship Associates themselves. This has been a very dedicated and committed group, and I fully expect that to carry over into 2024-2025, even as some of us complete our terms and others step in to begin their three-year terms. Together, we continue to explore ways that our worship services can be a foundation for people finding a spiritual home in FRS, whatever that means for them. That in our sanctuary, they find themselves in a sacred place filled with love, support, care, nurture, and encouragement for their daily walk in the world. And that they find community as well as opportunities through the week for expression of who they are and what they are called to bring to the world through some of the programs and groups at FRS. In short, we will continue to do our part to make FRS a place that feels so good to be a part of, a place that people feel called to contribute to, and a place that more and more people feel drawn back to week after week.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

To some degree, this will be determined by the incoming chair of Worship Associates in partnership with Rev. Rebecca and Rev. Laurel Gray. That said, the co-creative role that the Worship Associates plays in the creation and leadership of worship at FRS will no doubt continue.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

Again, to some degree, this will be determined by the incoming chair of Worship Associates in partnership with the ministerial staff.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Seale, Chair, alanseale@alanseale.com

FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY

Exploring Elderhood Together

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

Exploring Elderhood Together provides members and friends, ages 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 our own lived experience, to build a greater sense of belonging within our community.

Names of people involved:

Steering Committee: Alexandra Mezey, Mark Hodgson, Jean Noonan, Julie Parker Amery (staff), and Rev. Rebecca Bryan.

Nancy Kidd organized a program presented by Care Dimensions (The presenter was Mary Crowe, LICSW, ACSP-SW, C.D.S., CDP, Director of Professional and Community Education.).

Program Participants: Programs drew between 6–20 FRS members and friends.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Exploring Elderhood Together embodies all the Values. We connect authentically; welcome all; share ideas from our life journeys as we explore what aging means in the 2020s; present programs that include spiritual as well as practical aspects of aging; and hope to act with courage and transform the world's awareness of ageist beliefs and practices.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

We created, presented, and/or sponsored the following programs:

- “Not Your Grandparents’ Thanksgiving” – a discussion on intergenerational conversations.
- “A Roadmap for Aging Well” – a video presentation and discussion on assessing strengths and weaknesses in 10 life domains and planning for the future.
- “Conversations when it Matters Most: Conversations about Health Care Proxy, Five Wishes, and More,” which was coordinated by Nancy Kidd and presented by Mary Crowe of Care Dimensions.
- “Planning Your Memorial Service,” led by Reverend Rebecca.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

As some members have moved off the steering committee in the past couple of years or needed to take on less active roles, and with staff membership on the committee changing with Julie Parker Amery's retirement, we'll be evaluating our direction going forward with input from the community and Reverend Rebecca on a meaningful yet sustainable program format.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

We could use a few more members on the steering committee and input from the community on needs and interests for future programming. This is very important for the program to continue. We'd like to know what the community is looking for in the way of compelling issues and topics.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

To be determined. We haven't discussed this yet as a committee. One idea put forward is a program about the change in the roles of elders in society over the past 300 years.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

To be determined. We haven't discussed this yet, but one possibility is a program about the effects of inequities faced by elders in BIPOC and other oppressed communities that are different from those typically faced by Newburyport and many FRS seniors. It's not clear at this point how this would inform action for justice.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Noonan, Steering Committee, noonan.jean@comcast.net

Friday Book Group

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

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

Names of people involved:

Open to all, no set membership.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

All interested are welcome to “come as they are”: We are not a closed group or a “club.” Through our reading and discussion, we forge Connection and journey together in Love. Not infrequently our reading sheds light on current events and society and can thus move us to act in courage—and transform ourselves if not our world.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- Met weekly in Hybrid mode (in-person and via Zoom); some have attended who were out of the area; online participants have at times outnumbered those in the room.
- Read multiple works of both non-fiction and fiction that led to highly-engaged group discussion; reading *Moby Dick* was a particular success.
- Have adopted a “facilitated” mode for most meetings in order to ensure all get an equal chance to participate.
- Continued democratic (group decides!) process for choosing each new work.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- Continue to do hybrid meetings in a manner that works for those who must or prefer to connect online.
- Continue to choose a mix of works that provide varied reading/discussion opportunities.
- Maintain a core of participants who are committed to the ongoing life of the group.
- Be open to different points of view whether in terms of literary matters or social issues.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

Maintain successful hybrid meeting technology and process which is essential for this group; this requires willingness of some participants to be familiar with setting up the needed equipment.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

There has been no discussion of this, though the group would be open to consider this topic.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

There has been no discussion of this, though the group would be open to consider this topic. One way it could be approached would be to discuss specifically how the 8th Principle might influence our choice of reading or how it might apply to topics that arise from the reading.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Himmel, thimmel43@mac.com

Retired Old Men Eating Out (ROMEEO)

Retired Old Men Eating Out (ROMEEO) is not a club. There are no dues, no membership requirements, and no officers. Ed Budelmann is the acting clerk. The group meets at noon on the second Wednesday 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.

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Budelmann, ebudelmann@gmail.com

Short Story Group

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

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

Names of people involved:

No set members – all are welcome.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

We have a fairly regular group of attendees (who come as they are) at every meeting; this has enabled the building of relationships (Connection). New people are welcome to join at any time. We offer loving conversation on various matters, some personal, as well as themes in the reading.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- Connect those with a love of reading and discussing; group continued to meet regularly (in-person) all throughout the year.
- 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.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- Select as a group a new source of readings when we finish the current anthology, one that meets the interests of the group going forward.
- Encourage broader participation by continuing to communicate about the group and its being open to all who are interested.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

Continue to have a core group of people who participate regularly at in-person meetings, which the group seems to prefer. There has been no specific need or interest expressed in doing hybrid meetings; doing so might present a challenge with setup.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

This has not arisen as a topic, either from within the group or from without. We could certainly consider some way of doing this!

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

Unknown at this time. Assuming adoption of the 8th Principle, it might be helpful for some guidelines to be considered for FRSUU groups, perhaps via the Board or the Program Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Himmel, thimmel43@mac.com

INCLUSION MINISTRY

Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM)

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

AIM supports our FRS **Values** in that we establish **Authentic Connection** through deep listening and trust building with people with disabilities who offer advice to our community to improve accessibility and

inclusion. This requires **Courageous Action** for them to share very private parts of their identity to encourage our community to affirm disability as a positive identity.

Names of people involved:

Rev. Rebecca Bryan, Rev. Helen Murgida (deceased), Lea Pearson, Jo An Kincaid, Lance Hidy (author of this report with help from Lea), Jenny Ross.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Our AIM mission embodies every aspect of the FRS mission statement: Come as you are. Journey together in love. Act with courage. Transform our world.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- **With the death of Rev. Murgida, the AIM Committee is in hiatus.**
- Monthly Zoom meetings were on the 3rd Wednesday of month; email mailing list of 35 people.
- These meetings served partly as a support group for the committee members.
- Explored adding another wheelchair accessible pew.
- Provided large print hymnal and assistive listening devices; requested large print Orders of Service.
- Remote access to services and meetings, sometimes with real-time captions.
- Temporary signage about the elevator door that doesn't close properly, making it inoperable.
- Work with city on repair of uneven brick sidewalk.
- Maintain portable curb ramp for wheelchairs.
- Explore adding automatic door opener to side vestibule entrance so wheelchair users can enter unassisted. We are looking at possible vendors and talking to Facilities Team.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

- Regroup the committee and find a new chair to replace Rev. Helen.
- We hope to continue movement toward the previous goals:
 - Talk to those who require assistance and attempt to offer support.
 - Continue monthly Zoom meetings.
 - Work with Facilities Team for funding the automatic door, for repairing elevator door, and adding another wheelchair accessible pew.
 - Monitor quality of sound system and assistive devices to see if upgrades are needed.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

- The primary goal is to regroup the committee and choose a new chair.
- We need to keep the board and Facilities Team aware of the urgency of the most important accessibility projects that require funding—especially the side door, the wheelchair pew, and the elevator door.
- Beyond that, we will continue to communicate with people in the congregation who require accommodations, and to recruit members to the AIM committee.

Respectfully submitted with deep gratitude!

Lance Hidy, lancehidy@gmail.com, and Lea Pearson

Welcoming Committee

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

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

Names of people involved:

Melissa Williamson, Holly Cashman, Susan (Woman) Cooper, Nancy Crochiere, Christine Doherty, Erin Hutchinson-Himmel, Paula Renda, Rev. Rebecca.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

The Welcoming Committee supports several of our Values, including Authentic Connection, Courageous Action, Love, Spirituality, Wonder; and our Mission includes, Come as you are, Journey together in love, Act with courage, and Transform our world.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

The Welcoming Committee completed a year of renewal work to uphold the Welcoming Congregation designation for FRS. The committee:

- Coordinated Transgender Day Of Remembrance Vigil 11/19/23.
- Organized two worship services uplifting LGBTQ+ lives. (One on 2/11/24 about the history of LGBTQ. One upcoming on 6/16/24).
- Attended ongoing training and information sessions from the UUA and Side With Love.
- Increased community awareness of LGBTQ+ Days of Observance and calls to action through notices in the Order of Service and on the FRSUU Facebook page.
- Hosted a Justice Sunday program featuring Heather Vickery who discussed the current threats against the trans and gender-expansive community in the U.S., which has caused many to locate to a safer state.
- Collaborated with Newburyport Pride and the City of Newburyport on the first ever Newburyport Transgender Day of Visibility Flag Raising at Newburyport City Hall on 3/30/24.
- Collaborated with the Newburyport Pride Board to feature our June Welcoming Worship Service in the Newburyport Pride programming.
- FRS is one of the sponsors of Newburyport Pride this year!
- Coordinated a group of FRS walkers to take part in the Newburyport Pride parade.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

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

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

- Create ways to have congregation members become more involved; offer a variety of programming.
- Find ways to have the entire committee meet successfully monthly.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

We plan to work to highlight the history of our church welcoming the LGBTQ community over the past 300 years during one of our services by looking at the history of the welcoming committee at FRS.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

We will work to highlight the intersection of oppression within racism and LGBTQ individuals.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Hutchinson-Himmel, Co-Chair, ehutchinson@nsedu.org

SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY

Afghan Resettlement Team

It's been almost 2½ years since the Mirzayees, our Afghan family, arrived in Newburyport, and they continue to thrive. They have settled nicely in their rented half-house at 14 Cottage Court in Newburyport. The family pays a portion of the rent, as well as the utilities and other house expenses. Rent is partially subsidized through the generosity of David Hall and several community members.

Mohammad continues working full-time as a mechanic, while Zarifa's sewing business also helps support the family. The children are thriving in school and sports and receive positive feedback from their teachers. The oldest son, Tawab, graduates from high school and will be taking a class at Whittier Tech this summer to gain valuable construction skills. Soma, Huma, and Shoba all attend high school, and some have made the honor roll. Shabir is finishing his freshman year at Whittier Tech, Samira is in 4th grade at the Molin School, and Yaser is in 3rd grade at the Bresnahan School. The twins, Masiha and Masihullah, completed kindergarten at the Montessori School and will start 1st grade at Bresnahan next year. The boys have participated in soccer and wrestling, while Samira has taken an interest in volleyball.

Four members of the family, Mohammad, Zarifa, Tawab, and Soma, have driver's licenses; they share three cars, which were generously donated.

In addition to the ESL classes at school, FRSUU-sponsored volunteers continue to tutor individual family members on a regular basis at their home.

Due to continued unrest in Afghanistan, Mohammad's brother, Noor Agah, recently secured a Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) to come to America. He, along with his wife Najia and their two-year-old son were sponsored by Catholic Charities, and arrived in Boston this past March, where they've been living in Brighton. The FRSUU volunteer team has offered assistance in getting them settled and they recently secured an apartment in Amesbury.

It's been heartening to observe how close this family is, especially considering the age range with the children, from 6-22 years old. They care for and support each other, and family birthdays are always celebrated as a special occasion.

The family continues to be very grateful for the assistance provided by FRSUU and its members. There's always a sincere "thank you," as well as a generous plate of food, when leaving their home!

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Sortal, masortal@aol.com

Anti-Racism Initiative

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

Our mission is to explore how the UUA's 8th Principle (stated below) may deepen our pursuit of the FRS Values, Mission and Ends and to work with Rev. Rebecca and the Parish Board to prepare the congregation for a vote to support its adoption.

8th Principle: We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

Names of people involved:

Vern Ellis, Susan Fasoli, Julie Menin, Julie Parker Amery, Sandra Thaxter, Rev. Jane Tuohy, Eileen Vargas-Costello, Karen Letourneau, Sharon Tillman.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

Authentic connection, courageous action, and journeying together in love as we work to transform our world. The three “Ends” that we identified as most relevant to our Anti-Racism team efforts are to:

- Articulate our individual and congregational Unitarian Universalist identity.
- Welcome people in all their diversity and create belonging for one another.
- Work in partnership, as individuals and as a congregation, to advance justice and put courageous love in service to our community and our world.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

At the June 2023 Annual Meeting, FRS members voted unanimously to support continued exploration of the UUA’s 8th Principle and how its adoption may inform the work of our congregation. Members of the Anti-Racism Initiative (ARI) met frequently this year to plan learning opportunities and gather information about the 8th Principle and how it has been adopted and implemented by other UU congregations.

Accomplishments this year include:

- Distributed an Anti-Racism Activities Survey to identify topics and types of anti-racism activities of most interest to the congregation. Based on survey results, the ARI team led two, six-session 1619 Project discussion groups that addressed racial justice, white privilege, and the continued effects of systemic racism in today’s society.
- Developed and disseminated educational materials about 8th Principle via the Steeple, Orders of Service, and the 8th Principle information table located in the FRS vestibule.
- Established connections with area UU congregations that have adopted the 8th Principle. Representatives from the North Church of North Andover, First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church in Medfield, and the First Unitarian Universalist Society in Newton participated in a panel discussion about racial justice initiatives and 8th Principle adoption during our ARI-led Justice Sunday on January 14, 2024.
- Planned, organized, and implemented a Sunday service titled “Journeying Toward Spiritual Wholeness: Why Does the 8th Principle Matter?” (1/14/2024), highlighting work of the ARI team and Rev. Jane Tuohy’s sermon on “Whiteness.”
- Initiated a monthly “Antiracism Initiative News” email to individuals who have signed on to the distribution list, with information about our ARI team meetings and upcoming community events focused on racial justice.
- Engaged in discussions with the Parish Board, Rev. Rebecca, and Paula Cole Jones, a leader in advancing the UUA’s 8th Principle, about two learning opportunities for the 2024-2025 church year focused on building a culture of inclusion and community.
- ARI members have engaged in and co-led FRS participation in racial justice events, including the PEG Center series “Being Black in White Spaces” and the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute’s Mother’s Day Walk.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Goals for the 2024-2025 Church Year:

- Increase member engagement in antiracism and anti-oppression initiatives through a variety of workshops and racial/social justice events at FRS and in neighboring communities.
- Involve the FRS members, Parish Board, and social action groups in discussions about ways in which the 8th Principle may guide actions taken to achieve our Vision, Mission & Ends.

- Strengthen relationships with other predominantly white UU congregations about what changes they have made or are contemplating making to realize their commitment to dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our congregation.
- Build partnerships with diverse community groups & organizations engaged in antiracism & anti-oppression work.

Objectives for the 2024-2025 Church Year:

- To explore how/why antiracism work is central to “journeying toward spiritual wholeness” and building a diverse, Beloved Community through workshops led by Paula Cole Jones, a UU visionary and leader in advancing the 8th Principle.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

- Continued support and commitment from the Parish Board and Rev. Rebecca.
- Support for this work to be integrated into the FRS budget.
- Interest and commitment from the congregation.
- Strengthened connections with community partners engaged in antiracism and anti-oppression initiatives.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

- Learn how our FRS history is related to slavery and oppression of Black, Indigenous and persons of color.
- Coordinate with those working on FRS history, assist members and friends in processing both moments of pride and moments of pain from an anti-racist perspective. This celebration can offer wonderful educational opportunities.
- Attend and help to lead 300th anniversary celebrations, acknowledging the many strengths and limitations of our FRS history.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

The 8th Principle is central to all actions and programs of the Anti-Racism Initiative. We look forward to engaging FRS members in this work during the coming year, as highlighted above.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Fasoli, Chair, susanfasoli@gmail.com

Community Outreach Group

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

The Community Outreach team provides a wide range of programs donating needed resources to community organizations, individuals, and families.

Names of people involved:

Jeff Bard, Linda Buddenhagen, Nancy Crochiere, Barbara Garnis, Monique Greulich, Ann Haaser, Annie Maurer, Ann Power, and Faith Sherlock.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- **2023-2024 Sunday Shared Collection:** After soliciting suggestions from the congregation, the following organizations were selected by Community Outreach:
 - September: Jeanne Geiger Center
 - October: Greater Newbury Elder Pet Fund

- November: Essex County Habitat for Humanity
- December: Fuel Assistance
- January: Nourishing the North Shore
- February: MA Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence
- March: United Teen Equality Center (UTEC)
- April: Merrimack Valley Feline Rescue Society
- May: Emmaus Inc.
- June: Newburyport Pride
- July: Community Action Head Start
- August: LGBT Asylum Task Force
- In September, 15 FRS walkers participated in the Jeanne Geiger Annual Walk Against Violence. A portion of the September Sunday Shared Collection was donated to Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center and FRS was named as a sponsor of the walk.
- In October, we participated in the Action Passion Fair. This year, we recruited two new members to the Community Outreach Team.
- In November, we sponsored a food drive for Newbury Food Pantry; 250 lbs. of food were donated and \$415 collected.
- In December, we held our annual Joy of Giving at Kelleher Gardens. Approximately 20 children were able to select gifts for their parents, caregivers, and siblings. Children ages 3-18 look forward to this event each year. This program is possible because of the new/used gifts donated by FRS members and friends.
- In February, we sponsored a food drive for Newbury Food Pantry; 242 lbs. of food were donated and \$370 collected.
- In April, we sponsored a successful diaper drive for Emmaus House Family Shelter.
- In May, members of FRS participated in the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute's Mother's Day Peace Walk. A portion of the donations to Sunday Shared Collection in February was donated to the Mother's Day Walk for Peace. FRS was identified as a sponsor of the walk.
- Sixteen applications were received and funded by the Swasey Children's Fund. Total distribution for this church year was \$25,610.
- Among Friends, a Monday evening meal program sponsored by St. Paul's Episcopal Church, provides 100 meals to individuals and families in Newburyport and surrounding communities. Members of the Community Outreach Team and other volunteers from FRS congregation cooked and served a meal quarterly.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

At the June meeting, members of Community Outreach Team will vote on the organizations to be selected for the Sunday Shared Collection. The selection is based upon requests received from the congregation and the team discussing the anticipated continued need of social service organizations identified for the Sunday Shared Collection in 2023-2024.

At both the June and September 2024 meetings, the team reviews current programs and a decision is made regarding continuing for the 2024-2025 church year. Also, the team discusses additional programs within the communities that the team might support.

Members of the Community Outreach team are grateful to members of the FRS congregation for their generosity throughout the year. Because of your support, Community Outreach can provide the above programs to those with limited resources in Newburyport and the surrounding communities. "Service is our Prayer."

Respectfully submitted with appreciation,

Barbara E. Garnis, barbaragarnis@comcast.net

FRS Green Team

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

Vision: Earth, well cared for, providing a sustainable climate and environment for all life.

Mission: To apply our energy, activism, and optimism to engage the congregation and the wider community to learn and work together toward a healthy future for life on earth, by addressing climate change, declining biodiversity, overconsumption, and other environmental challenges.

Names of people involved:

Annie Madden (chair); Core Team: Bill Clary, Betsy Hazen, Art Henshaw, Lance Hidy, Doug Latham, Patricia Skibbee, and Sandra Thaxter. Over 25 others following us.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

This church year, we met monthly with plenty of activity between meetings on multiple environmental initiatives to address climate change and biodiversity loss among other issues. Two years of extensive investigation and research now support a set of recommendations to reduce our FRS Meetinghouse greenhouse gas emissions and energy associated costs. These recommendations were shared and reviewed with the Facilities Team and the Parish Board in the spring and will be brought to the Congregation in the coming months. (Connection, Journey, Courageous Action, Transform our World).

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

- We hosted educational potlucks on the importance of native plants (Carol Decker from West Newbury Wild and Native) for mitigating biodiversity loss and protecting dark skies (Madelyn Kumin from Parker River Wildlife Refuge), which helps to save energy, benefit migrating birds, and save hordes of insects who often succumb when trapped in excessive night lighting, among other benefits.
- We collaborated with Storm Surge and the Screening Room to support the screening of the film *Inundation District*, by David Abel of *The Boston Globe* which highlighted the development of the Seaport District despite clear predictions of significant sea level rise.
- In the spring we hosted a Heat Pump Party, coordinating with the City of Newburyport, ACES, Chamber of Commerce/Forever Green, and commercial partners, to educate about the residential and commercial use of this efficient technology which can help reduce use of fossil fuels.
- The Green Team also collaborated with Rev. Rebecca to offer another Earth Day Service and Justice Sunday with a leading climate scientist, Erika Spanger, who spoke personally and powerfully on the imperative to address the climate crisis, and the related serious impacts across the region and the world. She shared reasons to have hope in this effort. (Courageous Action, Wonder, Journey). The service included a group of FRS youth poets who presented their poems on caring for our earth. Green Team partnered again with Mara Flynn and youth in the joyful Trashion Show in early May. (Connection, Wonder).

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

Our vision and mission will remain as noted above. We will continue to work with the Facilities Team and Finance Committee, along with the Parish Board, to continue to advocate for the implementation of low carbon impact operations in the church, and to act as a beacon of hope in the community. As is typical, we will have an early summer retreat to focus on specific goals for the 2024-2025 church year.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

We welcome more active members to our core group of regular participants. We look to support from the congregation and its leadership on the Green Team recommendations for green energy options to reduce

our campus carbon emissions and associated costs. We will continue to partner with community groups, as climate and environmental challenges require broad activism to make a difference.

How will your group be involved or consider being involved in the 300th anniversary of FRS (January 1 – December 31, 2025)?

We were pleased to contribute to the FRS 300th anniversary book of FRS history due to come out soon. We will be happy to participate in the activities surrounding this notable anniversary year, and to be specifically engaged in the history and future activities of social, environmental, climate, and generational justice initiatives of the church in our community.

How will your group consider the 8th Principle in your work and programs next year?

We will strive to draw attention to climate and environmental justice issues as part of our overall climate and environmental advocacy.

Please go to the Appendix to see the addendum with some of the Green Team activities as designed by Lance Hidy and dedicated to Rev. Helen Murgida.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Madden, Green Team Chair, madden.anne.b@gmail.com

FRS Habitat for Humanity

What is the mission or purpose of your group?

Create safe and affordable housing and inclusive communities.

Names of people involved:

Rick Anderson, Bart Bracken, Vern Ellis, Lee Fasoli, Susan Fasoli, Mark Hodgson, Howard Mandeville, Thayer Phipps, Forrest Speck.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

FRS Habitat volunteers offer hands-on help to Habitat home buyers. Volunteers have the opportunity to work with Habitat home buyers who help build their homes by investing their own “sweat equity.” FRS Habitat volunteers connect with Habitat applicants and other Habitat volunteers and staff, forging authentic connection and engaging in courageous action, experiencing wonder, and enhancing their love and spirituality.

FRS volunteers offer their time and hard work one day a month, usually the third Saturday of each month, rain, snow, or shine. Howard contacts the volunteers and confirms their participation. Each third Saturday, there are usually four to six FRS Habitat volunteers at the building site, building homes. Our work site has been Habitat’s building site in Salisbury where volunteers and Habitat home buyers completed building seven homes. VME and FRS staff help in publicizing FRS Habitat through after-service information session and frequent and effective posts in the Steeple.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

FRS Habitat volunteers celebrate the completion of seven Habitat homes in Salisbury and started the construction of 10 units in Hamilton.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

In the next church year we will see an increase in volunteer participation and a strengthening of allegiance by FRS members to contribute to the stability, safety, and connection to foster citizenship and neighborly friendship.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

Inclusion of Habitat families and leaders in social justice and affordable housing initiatives undertaken by FRS.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Mandeville, FRS-Habitat Liaison, howard.mandeville@gmail.com

FRS Walk Team - Louis D. Brown Peace Institute Mother's Day Walk for Peace**What is the mission or purpose of your group?**

To support the work of the Peace Institute to bring healing to individuals and a community deeply affected by gun violence.

Names of people involved:

Ann Haaser and Karen Letourneau organized, 9 people in total walked, many more donated.

Tell us how your program is connected to and supports our Values, Mission and Ends:

We traveled to a historically underserved community and walked shoulder-to-shoulder with people who don't look like us, beginning a relationship of Authentic Connection. Love, one of the Peace Institute's seven principles of peace, is reflected in our own values and brings our two communities together.

What are some of your accomplishments in the 2023-2024 church year?

Raised \$4,960 in direct donations (as of this writing) and shared offertory donations of \$515 for the Peace Institute's ever-expanding work.

What are your vision, goals, and objectives for the 2024-2025 church year?

To increase our commitment to this Walk, to deepen our relationship with the Peace Institute and the community it serves, to bring more awareness to the FRS community of the enduring effects of trauma on an individual and a community and how healing is a violence-prevention initiative.

What will you need to be successful in the 2024-2025 church year?

More messaging to the congregation regarding the Walk, specifically how the Walk reflects our congregational commitment to our Values, Mission and Ends and UU Principles. Increased participation of families and other groups within the congregation. Focus on this within a church service.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Haaser, ahaaser@comcast.net

FY25 BUDGET WORKSHEET

	FY 24 (projected)	FY 25 Budget	YoY Variance
Contributions	\$ 591,103.10	\$ 618,251.48	5%
Steeple Rentals	\$ 86,457.50	\$ 95,072.00	10%
Reserve Funding	\$ (10,350.00)	\$ (8,400.00)	-19%
Building Rentals	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 16,250.00	103%
Fundraising	\$ 47,734.53	\$ 64,700.00	36%
Misc. Income	\$ 1,068.00	\$ 2,000.00	87%
Total Operating Income	\$ 724,013.13	\$ 787,873.48	9%
Salaries	\$ 458,310.65	\$ 494,628.00	8%
Benefits	\$ 99,611.84	\$ 128,385.00	29%
Contracted Services			
Accounting	\$ 12,158.00	\$ 29,700.00	144%
Tech	\$ 20,807.50	\$ 15,000.00	-28%
Other	\$ 885.19	\$ 8,250.00	832%
Supplies	\$ 13,538.56	\$ 15,500.00	14%
Computer & Internet	\$ 17,043.46	\$ 8,000.00	-53%
Equipment	\$ 8,756.74	\$ 7,200.00	-18%
Office Expenses	\$ 6,986.43	\$ 4,500.00	-36%
Facilities Expense	\$ 42,860.07	\$ 44,425.00	4%
Utilities	\$ 22,509.63	\$ 27,732.00	23%
Other Expenses	\$ 23,030.02	\$ 20,480.00	-11%
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 726,498.09	\$ 803,800.00	11%
Net Operating Income	\$ (2,484.96)	\$ (15,926.52)	541%
UUA Dues	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	0%
Community Partner Contributions	\$ 15,669.12	\$ 16,500.00	5%
Total Non Operating Expenses	\$ 45,669.12	\$ 46,500.00	2%
Endowment Income	\$ 53,481.00	\$ 51,744.00	-3%
Total Non Operating Income	\$ 53,481.00	\$ 51,744.00	-3%
Net Income	\$ 5,326.92	\$ (10,682.52)	-301%
Reserve Funding	\$ -	\$ 12,500.00	
Net Cash	\$ 5,326.92	\$ 1,817.48	-66%

Notes on Extraordinary Changes

	YoY			
	FY 24 Projection	FY 25 Budget	Variance	
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
4100 • Contributions				
4101 • Pledged	\$ 520,000.00	\$ 551,226.00	6%	
4102 • Prior Year Pledges	\$ 7,721.00	\$ 7,000.00	-9%	
4103 • Processing Fees Donated	\$ 882.10	\$ 1,000.00	13%	
4106 • Non Pledge	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	0%	
4107 • Sunday Collection	\$ 33,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	6%	
				2% Reserve is anticipated for late or unpaid pledges
4109 - Reserve for Unpaid Pledges	\$ (5,000.00)	\$ (10,974.52)	119%	
4111 • Pledge Matching	\$ 26,000.00	\$ 26,500.00	2%	
4125 • Steeple Lighting	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	0%	
Total 4100 • Contributions	\$ 591,103.10	\$ 618,251.48	5%	
4135 • Steeple Rentals				
				DISH Lease will be recognizing a full year in FY25
4151 • DISH Steeple	\$ 20,700.00	\$ 28,000.00	35%	
4155 • AT&T	\$ 65,757.50	\$ 67,072.00	2%	
Total 4135 • Steeple Rentals	\$ 86,457.50	\$ 95,072.00	10%	
4200 • Fees for Services				
				Increased focus on generating income with Parish Hall
4208 • Building Rental	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 16,250.00	103%	
Total 4200 • Fees for Services	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 16,250.00	103%	
4300 • FUNDRAISING INCOME				
4301 • Auction Income	\$ 27,008.89	\$ 30,000.00	11%	
4302 • Christmas Eve Plate	\$ 2,791.01	\$ 4,000.00	43%	
4303 • End of Year Appeal	\$ 1,540.00	\$ 2,000.00	30%	
4304 • Cookie Walk	\$ 1,106.76	\$ 1,200.00	8%	
4307 • Raffle	\$ 10,998.86	\$ 15,000.00	36%	
4308 • Candlelight Service	\$ 2,133.00	\$ 2,500.00	17%	
4311 • Yankee Homecoming Fundraising	\$ 1,118.00	\$ 1,500.00	34%	

4315 · Steeple Mug Fundraising	\$	100.00	\$	-	-100%
4318 · External Fundraising	\$	599.68	\$	7,500.00	1151%
4319 · Miscellaneous Fundraisers	\$	338.33	\$	1,000.00	196%
Overall fundraising activities will be dramatically increased in FY25					
Total 4300 · FUNDRAISING INCOME	\$	47,734.53	\$	64,700.00	36%
4400 · INCOME FROM COMMITTEES					
4402 · Hospitality	\$	568.00	\$	-	-100%
Total 4400 · INCOME FROM COMMITTEES	\$	568.00	\$	-	-100%
4500 · MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	\$	500.00	\$	2,000.00	300%
4550 · INCOME FROM ENDOWMENT					
Total 4550 · INCOME FROM ENDOWMENT	\$	53,481.00	\$	51,744.00	-3%
Total Income	\$	787,844.13	\$	848,017.48	8%
Gross Profit	\$	787,844.13	\$	848,017.48	8%
Expense					
6690 · Reconciliation Discrepancies	\$	(68.90)	\$	-	-100%
7200 · SALARIES					
7221 · Salary	\$	353,876.06	\$	338,590.00	-4%
7250 · Payroll Taxes	\$	22,173.85	\$	19,290.00	-13%
7255 · SS Allowance			\$	15,410.00	
7265 · Housing Allowance	\$	76,922.40	\$	115,000.00	50%
7275 · Sabbatical Leave	\$	5,338.34	\$	5,338.00	0%
7281 · Affiliate Minister Stipend	\$	-	\$	1,000.00	
Total 7200 · SALARIES	\$	458,310.65	\$	494,628.00	8%
7288 · BENEFITS					
7230 · Retirement Contributions	\$	52,693.91	\$	63,689.00	21%
7240.1 · Health Insurance	\$	20,805.46	\$	34,282.00	65%
7240.2 · Life Insurance	\$	2,906.00	\$	3,810.00	31%
7240.3 · Dental Insurance	\$	936.00	\$	2,160.00	131%
7240.5 · Workers Comp	\$	4,334.75	\$	3,084.00	-29%
7260 · Professional Development	\$	17,935.72	\$	21,360.00	19%
Growth Focus With Additional Minister					

Total 7288 · BENEFITS	\$	99,611.84	\$	128,385.00	29%	Growth Focus With Additional Minister
7500 · OUTSIDE SERVICES						
7515 · Consultant	\$	(7,987.92)	\$	-	-100%	Reduce usage and subsequent reimbursement of external Consultants
7520 · External Accounting Fees	\$	1,353.00	\$	1,500.00	11%	Formalized Accounting Dept with Director of Finance
7525 · Accounting	\$	10,805.00	\$	28,200.00	161%	Reduced reliance on external services
7530 · Legal fees	\$	7,750.00	\$	7,750.00	0%	Reduced reliance on external services
7540 · Professional fees - other	\$	1,123.11	\$	500.00	-55%	Reduced reliance on external services
7550 · Temporary help - contract	\$	20,807.50	\$	15,000.00	-28%	
Total 7500 · OUTSIDE SERVICES	\$	33,850.69	\$	52,950.00	56%	
8100 · Supplies, Comm & Equipment						
8110 · Supplies & Materials	\$	13,538.56	\$	15,500.00	14%	New phone contract has dramatically reduced expected communications costs
8130 · Telephone & telecommunications	\$	9,774.96	\$	4,000.00	-59%	
8140 · Postage, shipping, delivery	\$	1,295.34	\$	1,500.00	16%	
8160 · Equip rental & maintenance	\$	8,756.74	\$	7,200.00	-18%	
8165 · Computer Expense	\$	7,268.50	\$	4,000.00	-45%	FY24 had Computer equipment purchases not expected in FY25
8170 · Outside Printing & Copying	\$	1,551.98	\$	2,000.00	29%	
8180 · Books & Curricula	\$	64.37	\$	-	-100%	
8190 · Furniture & Equipment Expense	\$	3,808.40	\$	1,000.00	-74%	FY24 had equipment purchases not expected in FY25
8100 · Supplies, Comm & Equipment - Other	\$	266.34	\$	-	-100%	
Total 8100 · Supplies, Comm & Equipment	\$	46,325.19	\$	35,200.00	-24%	
8200 · FACILITIES EXPENSE						
8210 · Rent, parking, other occupancy	\$	4,760.00	\$	5,000.00	5%	
8217 · Repairs and Maintenance						
Total 8217 · Repairs and Maintenance	\$	22,317.07	\$	22,425.00	0%	

8220 · UTILITIES	\$	22,509.63	\$	27,732.00	23%
8520 · Building & Liability Insurance	\$	15,783.00	\$	17,000.00	8%
Total 8200 · FACILITIES EXPENSE	\$	65,369.70	\$	72,157.00	10%
8300 · Travel & meetings expenses					
8310 · Travel					
8320 · Conference,Meeting & Retreat					
Total 8300 · Travel & meetings expenses	\$	840.61	\$	1,000.00	19%
8500 · MISC EXPENSES					
8505 · Dues and Subscriptions	\$	30,000.00	\$	30,000.00	0%
8517 · Flowers and Altar	\$	928.37	\$	700.00	-25%
8530 · Membership dues - organization	\$	80.00	\$	-	-100%
8540 · Staff development	\$	1,303.45	\$	-	-100%
8570 · Advertising expenses	\$	2,836.01	\$	1,080.00	-62%
8575 · Safe Deposit Box	\$	100.00	\$	200.00	100%
8582 · Food & Refreshment	\$	2,857.58	\$	2,000.00	-30%
8583 · Capital Reserve Provision	\$	10,350.00	\$	8,400.00	-19%
8585 · Bank Service Charges	\$	3,455.48	\$	4,000.00	16%
8586 · Commissions & Fees	\$	1,525.00	\$	1,500.00	-2%
8590 · OTHER EXPENSES					
Community Partners	\$	15,669.12	\$	16,500.00	5%
Misc Other	\$	9,103.52	\$	10,000.00	10%
Total 8590 · OTHER EXPENSES	\$	24,772.64	\$	26,500.00	7%
Total 8500 · MISC EXPENSES	\$	78,208.53	\$	74,380.00	-5%
Total Expense	\$	782,517.21	\$	858,700.00	10%
Net Ordinary Income	\$	5,326.92	\$	(10,682.52)	-301%
	\$	0.01	\$	(0.01)	
Propoaed Contribution from Futures Fund			\$	12,500.00	
2024-2025 Projected Surplus/Deficit			\$	1,817.48	

ACCESSIBLE, VISUAL COMMUNICATION IN FRSUU GREEN TEAM ADVOCACY, 2023–24

Personal note from Lance Hidy—This addendum to the Green Team’s annual report is a tribute to Rev. Helen Murgida. Aware of my work as an accessible media specialist, including twenty-one years at Northern Essex Community College, she welcomed me to her FRSUU committee, the **Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM)**, and encouraged the Green Team’s visual, graphic advocacy as a role model for accessible communication within the FRSUU community.

1—We developed a pictorial logo.



GREEN TEAM
FIRST RELIGIOUS SOCIETY
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS

2—In 2023 we obtained permission from Robin Wall Kimmerer, author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, to illustrate and publish her essay, “How The Myth Of Human Exceptionalism Cut Us Off From Nature.” Our members raised money to print 750 copies of this 8-page booklet.

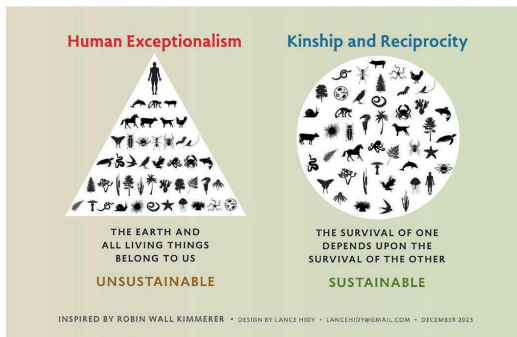


When that printing was exhausted, we raised more money, half of which came from the Minister’s Fund, to print another 1,000 copies. We have distributed booklets in person, as well as in a wall-mounted display at the Tannery, and at the Mass Audubon Joppa Flats Education Center. We estimate that we have given away about 1,200 booklets so far. Our agreement with the author stipulated that the booklet would be free, not a commercial edition.

3—We helped Rev. Rebecca with the Sept. 24, 2023, service on Our Interconnected World. A five-minute speech on the importance of insects, including our Church Wasp colony, was accompanied by a two-page flier on biodiversity. Copies of the flier and the Kimmerer booklet were handed out to everyone who attended the service—roughly 200 in all.



4—At the request of Rev. Rebecca the Green Team developed a biodiversity poster design adapted from the Kimmerer booklet that she presented to Mary Jacobsen, host of Joppa Radio’s “The Morning Show” during her televised interview.



Cynthia Walsh framed a second copy of the poster for permanent display over the coffee table in the FRS Lower Meeting House. Additional copies were also printed in a small, post-card-size format.



5—Collaborating with Storm Surge, a local climate advocacy group, we had an information table at the Screening Room during viewings of The Boston Globe documentary, *The Inundation Zone*. Many copies of the Kimmerer booklet were given away. We also handed out a bookmark with the Green Team vision and mission statements.



6—Collaborating with West Newbury Wild and Native, we developed a two-hour workshop on how to photograph garden insects with a smart phone, and how to edit the images. Twelve people participated. A five page syllabus was handed out with technical information on photography, along with material about biodiversity and a bibliography.



7—Collaborating with the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge and West Newbury Wild and Native we developed a poster draft to promote dark skies during migration seasons. The poster was tabled until the fall because of water damage to the FRSUU steeple lighting fixtures.

