



The Herald

A Publication of the First Church in Salem, Unitarian Universalist



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SPRING 2021

First Church in Spring

Important Joint Announcement from the Trustees & the Standing Committee

From the Trustees

In these extraordinary times of a pandemic, and when daily challenges faced by so many individuals and institutions are not even remotely reflected in the strong performance of the stock market, the First Church Trustees have voted to make a one-time distribution of up to \$100,000 from the endowment to the Church for use as the Standing Committee and Reverend Ide believe best.

The year 2020 brought physical, emotional and financial hardship beyond what many people in our church and community at large had previously experienced. Each church ministry had to adapt, figuring out how best to serve one another and lean into our principles and covenant at this trying time. Pastoral care, social justice, worship, religious education, garden, archives --- all First Church ministries look different right now. Amid all of this, the Standing Committee must look to the future with an eye to what can be done now to help us navigate the current crisis while positioning us to emerge strong and prepared to live into our Unitarian Universalist faith.

The ministry of the First Church Trustees is to steward the Church's endowment so that it will support the church and its Unitarian Universalist principles for generations to come. Typically, we do this by: 1) setting an investment strategy for the endowment's funds in consultation with Cabot Wealth Management, and 2) determining a yearly income distribution policy that supplements member giving to the church's annual operating budget. By calibrating these, we can ensure that the endowment increases over time and thus continues to support the church into the future.

For the last several years, the financial markets have performed very well, generating returns far greater than those historically experienced. About a year ago, the 17-year rate of return was approximately 5.8%. Based on this, and the church's need at that time, we increased the endowment distribution rate from 4.5% to 5%, thus providing ongoing, increased support to the Church's annual operating budget.

Over the years, the Trustees also have occasionally voted to make a lump-sum distribution from the endowment to help the church with something extraordinary, such as helping to fund important construction projects.

As we see it, the needs of the current time are certainly extraordinary. At the same time, the value of our endowment has grown considerably due to a stock market that is seemingly impervious to the distress of so many people. Because of the endowment's strong performance, we have determined that lump-sum distribution of up to \$100,000 to the Standing Committee could help the Church navigate the current circumstances and/or prepare for next steps, while causing no harm whatsoever to the endowment's capacity to support the Church's long-term sustainability.

Reverend Ide and Anthony Silva, Chair of the Standing Committee, will work with the Standing Committee to direct the process by which needs are identified and funded. We welcome your questions about the church's endowment at any time; our contact information is below.

In covenant, the First Church Trustees

Peter Andrew Copelas, peter.copelas@gmail.com; Nicole McLaughlin, nmclaugh@comcast.net; Laura Caron, lauracaron@gmail.com

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From the Standing Committee

All of us on the Standing Committee are looking forward to when we can all safely return to the Meeting House as we continue our discussions on what that will eventually look like in the months ahead. This alone is something to celebrate. As we develop those plans, the decision by the Trustees has added a real incentive to address some longtime needs within the church that may be addressed now that the building has limited use. After speaking with numerous committee chairs, past presidents and other members, we are developing 'a plan to welcome the future' aimed at five goals:

1. Increased safety and accessibility for members and visitors
2. Improved technical quality for worship, weddings and other events
3. Moving forward with the First Church's Master Plan
4. Continuing the mission of First Church
5. Helping local families and the local economy

Specific improvements that may now be funded and carried out include electric system upgrades, improved public address system, improved WiFi and live streaming capability, improved pulpit accessibility, new wireless assisted hearing system, new carpeting and pew coverings, improved security system, improved signage. Many of these are long overdue. Much needed improvements in Wilson Hall and to the Church Organ should also be addressed. The Standing Committee has voted to support the spirit of this plan and prioritize these projects as well as earmarking 10% of the distribution to support charities aimed at acute community needs.

After last Sunday's Service, many of you took part in a Zoom discussion on this plan and you offered great support, encouragement and ideas on what should be accomplished. The Standing Committee will move forward with your help and assistance to make a real difference in the religious community we all love. Together, we remember that this 'plan to welcome the future' is made possible because of the sacrifice, commitment and largesse of our forebears. We carry on their belief that this work is important not only for us but for those who are yet to come.

Please, if you can help, feel free to reach out to me or any member of the Standing Committee.

Anthony Silva, Chair
anthony0602@verizon.net

Small group gatherings, called **Soul Matters Sharing Circles**, are an opportunity to more deeply explore our monthly spiritual themes and practices such as integrity, belonging, and resilience.



March's monthly theme:
Commitment



April's monthly theme:
Becoming



Looking for ways to weave spiritual exploration into your routines with little ones and youth? **Soulful Home** is a resource for the next generation of Unitarian Universalists and their nurturers who want to create sacred spaces in their lives.

[Click here for more on Soul Matters.](#)



MARCH: Women's History Month

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7 9am Worship Mtg 10:30am Service	8	9	10 7pm Lenten Meditation	11 5:30pm Sacred Writing	12	13 <i>Daylight Savings: Spring Ahead 1 hour before you go to bed!</i>
14 9am Worship Mtg 9:30am Children's Chapel 10:30am Service	15 6pm Book Club: <i>Wintering</i>	16 2pm Staff Meeting	17 7pm Lenten Meditation	18	19 6pm Soulful Home	20
21 9am Worship Mtg 10:30am Service 12:15pm Soul Matters	22	23 2pm Staff Meeting	24 7pm Lenten Meditation 7pm Standing Committee	25 7pm Musical Moment	26	27
Palm Sunday 28 9am Worship Mtg 9:30am Children's Chapel 10:30am Service	29	30 2pm Staff Meeting	31 7pm Lenten Meditation			

April: National Poetry Month

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 7pm Maundy Thursday Service	Good Friday 2	3
Easter 4 9am Worship Mtg 10:30am Service	5 2pm Staff Meeting	6	7 4pm Worship Committee	8	9	10
11 9am Worship Mtg 9:30am Children's Chapel 10:30am Service	12 2pm Staff Meeting	13	14	15	16 6pm Soulful Home	17
18 9am Worship Mtg 10:30am Service 12:15pm Soul Matters	19 2pm Staff Meeting	20	21	22 5:30pm Book Club: <i>Me and White Supremacy</i>	23	24
25 9am Worship Mtg 9:30am Children's Chapel 10:30am Service	26 2pm Staff Meeting	27	28 7pm Standing Committee	29 x	30	

Spring Holidays and Services

- Every Wednesday Evening through Easter at 7:00pm Lenten Meditation
- Saturday, March 20 Spring Equinox
- Sunday, March 28 Palm Sunday Service at 10:30am
- Thursday, April 1 Maundy Thursday Service at 7:00pm
- Friday, April 2 Good Friday
- Sunday, April 4 Easter Sunday Services at 7:00am and 10:30am

Coming Up in Children's Ministry

Promising Adventures: Our next **Soulful Home** gathering is at 6pm on Friday, March 19th. Kids and their grown-ups are invited to join Revs. Elizabeth & Jane for a playful, interactive evening where we find out what it means to be a family of commitment. Registration is helpful but not required, and please feel free to bring your dinner!

Upcoming Children's Chapel Dates: [Mar 14th](#) | [Mar 28th](#)
Sunday's at 9:30am

Care Corner

The Pastoral Care team continues its work of aiding people in our church community.

This is a wrap up of some of the activities of Pastoral Care in the last few months. Some people do not want to be mentioned and we honor their privacy.

In December we created a flower ministry. We provided cyclamen plants and cards to some of our community who were shut in, experienced illness, lost loved ones and had other challenges during 2020. This project was initiated by pastoral care and funded by the Garden/Decorating committee. The two committees have been merged. Since we were not decorating the meeting house, these flowers were delivered to about 30 of our community providing holiday cheer. We included the church staff in our flower ministry. We are grateful to the Garden Committee.

In December, we provided meals to the family of Tyler Hains who had two surgeries on a broken leg. We offered condolences to Lucy Sprague for the loss of her father Manuel Candido. Sympathy was also offered to Catherine Bertrand for the loss of her mother-in-law.

Holiday cookies and cheer were delivered to Jean Arlander by Christy Evans and Sally Millice. Charlene Long continues to check in with Susan Engelke regularly. Well wishes were sent to Brenda Marean who had successful knee replacement surgery in late November.

The care team is providing meals as part of a meal train to support the family of Laura Caron and Neil Alsip. Laura had successful cancer surgery in January and is recovering. Well wishes may be sent to Laura Caron at 27 Lakeshore Ave. Beverly, MA 01915

In January we initiated Call Buddies, a way for participants to call one other person on a regular basis. This provides another way to create community and expand our circle of friends. So far we have fewer than a dozen participants. Anyone who wants more information may contact us at pastoralcare@firstchurchinsalem.org. We are happy to add more participants.

Condolences were offered to Spencer Felder who lost his mother Florine in February. We offer thoughts and prayers to Claire Donaldson who is having health issues. Cards may be sent to Claire at 388 Eastern Av. 1st floor, Lynn, MA 01902.

We continue to offer greetings to Paul Madore at Pilgrim Rehab ,96 Forest Street Room 319, Peabody, Ma 01960. He enjoys receiving cards and calls on his cell 978-790-0512.

The Pastoral Care team offers sincere condolences to Peter Copelas on the passing of his wife Emily Trespas on Feb 11. [Learn more about her incredible life here](#). We hold you and your family in loving support. Cards may be sent to Peter at 40 Warren St. , Salem, MA 01970.

In the fall we learned of the [passing of Bill Smith](#) in a river rafting accident in Maine in August. Bill and his wife Sarah were long time members of First Universalist Church in Salem. They moved to Belfast, Maine in 2010. Sarah passed away in 2020.

In this challenging time when we cannot meet in person as a congregation, we invite you to reach out to us if you know of anyone who might appreciate assistance. Our email pastoralcare@firstchurchinsalem.org. will come directly to Sally Millice, Linda Stark and Mame Meleski, the committee members. Our team of volunteer care angels are happy to help. If you decide to receive help from the care team, you have the option to remain anonymous.

If you prefer to contact Rev. Elizabeth Ide, her office number is 978-741-1629.

We are deeply grateful to our care angels for providing meals, cards, calls and rides: Linda Stark, Brenda Marean, Mary Krigbaum, Susan Linder-Bean, Richard Hannah, Christy Evans, Mame Meleski, Charlene Long and Alicia Diozzi.



Stewardship and Finances

Spring brings longer days, warmer temperatures, and budget season! This year the goal around budgets, Stewardship and the pledge campaign is one of transparency. A process seemingly shrouded in mystery, it is not meant to be that. It is a process with many moving parts and lots of people involved. It's like a clock—on the outside it seems fairly straightforward, but the inside is a lot of gears that work together to make it operate seamlessly.



The Stewardship Committee will be meeting the second week of March to discuss the upcoming Stewardship and Pledge Campaign and the Treasurer and Standing Committee have begun budget discussions. If you are interested in being a part of the Stewardship team please reach out to Catherine Bertrand or Marlene Warner by email or by calling the church office.

Writing as a Spiritual Practice - Drop In

Thursday, Mar. 11 at 5:30pm

Join Rev. Elizabeth for a drop-in writing practice where those in attendance can use writing as a means to deepen and explore spiritual practices.

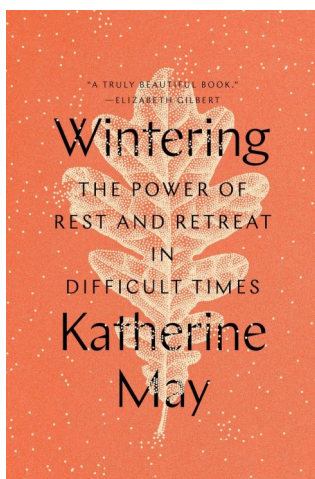
The group will gather for an hour that will include introductions, viewing a short piece of content, and then free writing in response to a prompt. Sharing your writing is encouraged but voluntary! Please reach out to [Rev. Elizabeth with any questions](#). Please note the link will be in the Weekly on March 11. Keep an eye out!



Upcoming Book Club Selections and Dates

Monday, March 15, 2021 at 6pm

Thursday, April 22, 2021 at 5:30 pm

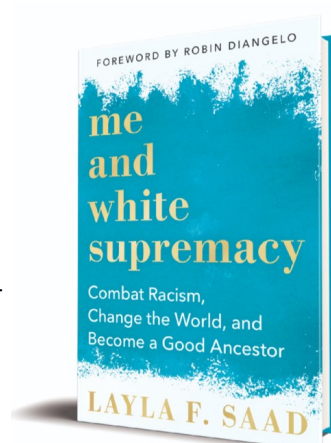


A moving personal narrative shot through with lessons from literature, mythology, and the natural world, May's story offers instruction on the transformative power of rest and retreat. Illumination emerges from many sources: solstice celebrations and dormice hibernation, C.S. Lewis and Sylvia Plath, swimming in icy wa-

ters and sailing arctic seas.

Ultimately *Wintering* invites us to change how we relate to our own fallow times.

Me and White Supremacy leads readers through a journey of understanding their white privilege and participation in white supremacy, so that they can stop (often unconsciously) inflicting damage on Black, Indigenous and People of Color, and in turn, help other white people do better, too. The book goes beyond the original workbook by adding more historical and cultural contexts, sharing moving stories and anecdotes, and includes expanded definitions, examples, and further resources.



Communication Reminders and Admin Updates

- This year we will continue our weekly electronic newsletter published on Thursdays. Content for The Weekly is due EACH Wednesdays by noon for the next day's publication.
- The seasonal newsletter, The Herald, will next be published in June: The Summer Herald. **The deadline for submissions is Monday, May 10.** [Submit them here](#) or by emailing firstchurchinsalem@gmail.com.
- The Sunday Service Reminder will continue to go out on Sunday mornings between 9:30am and 10am. This piece of communication includes that day's Zoom Service Meeting Link, Order of Service, Links to Contribution and Pledge Pages, and other pertinent forms or information that may be needed.
- Thank you to everyone who activated their Breeze accounts. Using this platform continues to be a work in process and I've been working with them on a plan to continue the rollout and follow up on using it.
- Staff Office Hours: Congregational Administrator, Catherine Bertrand: Catherine is available Mondays from 9am-10:30am and Wednesdays from 1pm-2pm by appointment. [Please email her to set up a time.](#) Senior Minister, Rev. Elizabeth Ide: Rev. Elizabeth has office hours by appointment. [Please email her](#) and set up a time to chat.
- Lastly we have been fielding zoom meeting requests with some regularity. Just as if we were in the building and you were in need of building space for meetings please reach out to Catherine if you are in need of a zoom room for a meeting. [Details can be found here.](#)

Annual Meeting Date and Materials - Annual Meeting: Sunday, May 2

Emails are going out later this month. But we wanted to let everyone know we are looking to staff, officers, or committee chairs (or members) for a written description of the activities for the church year spanning March 2020 to March 2021.

Annual Reports are due no later than Wednesday, March 24.

Please email your report in a Word Document to firstchurchinsalem@gmail.com and include the following information:

- Name of the chair and any other officers
- List of committee members
- Mission statements and/or goals of the committee
- Activities, achievements, and highlights of the year
- Financial information about monies received or spent
- Plans for the future



Understandably there are a lot of committees that went on hiatus this year and some that have pivoted how they work temporarily. If your committee submitted a report last year I do need one this year. The Annual Report serves the dual purpose of keeping the congregation informed as well as a historical record of events. Please think about what you can contribute as a church leader regardless of the level of activity of the committee you lead or serve on.

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Senior Minister: Reverend Elizabeth M. Ide

Director of Music: Michael Kraft

Director of Henny Penny: Tricia Pini

Congregational Administrator: Catherine Bertrand

Sexton: Billy McCarthy

Chair of the Standing Committee: Anthony Silva

Chair of the Deacons: Eric Kenney



From *In This Place (An American Lyric)*

There's a poem in this place—
a poem in America
a poet in every American
who rewrites this nation, who tells
a story worthy of being told on this minnow of an
earth
to breathe hope into a palimpsest of time—
a poet in every American
who sees that our poem penned
doesn't mean our poem's end.

There's a place where this poem dwells—
it is here, it is now, in the yellow song of dawn's bell
where we write an American lyric
we are just beginning to tell.

~ Amanda Gorman

Calendar Listing | Links available in e-Weekly

Sunday, March 7
9am Worship Meeting
10:30am Sunday Service

Wednesday, March 10
7pm Lenten Meditation

Thursday, March 11
5:30pm Sacred Writing

[Daylight Savings:
Spring Ahead 1 hour before you go to bed!]

Sunday, March 14
9am Worship Meeting
9:30am Children's Chapel
10:30am Sunday Service

Monday, March 15
6pm Book Club: *Wintering*

Wednesday, March 17
7pm Lenten Meditation

Friday, March 19
6pm Soulful Home

Sunday, March 21
9am Worship Meeting
10:30am Sunday Service

Wednesday, March 24
7pm Lenten Meditation
7pm Standing Committee

Thursday, March 25
7pm Musical Moment

Sunday, March 28 PALM SUNDAY
9am Worship Meeting
9:30am Children's Chapel
10:30am Sunday Service

Wednesday, March 31
7pm Lenten Meditation

Thursday, April 1
7pm Maundy Thursday Service

Friday, April 2 GOOD FRIDAY

Sunday, April 4 EASTER SUNDAY
7am Sunrise Service
9am Worship Meeting
9:30am Children's Chapel
10:30am Sunday Service

Please note meeting and program times are
subject to change.
Keep an eye on The Weekly published Thursdays!