



First Parish, Hingham
Old Ship Church

Unitarian Universalist
14 Main Street Hingham, MA 02043
(781) 749-1679

office@oldshipchurch.org www.oldshipchurch.org

March 2024 Monthly Newsletter

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Deadline for April's newsletter: Friday, March 15, 2024

Worship: 10:30 a.m.

Multi-Platform:

**Join us in-person in the Meeting House
or on Zoom**

(masks are optional - and vaccination strongly urged)

Zoom link opens at 10:15 a.m.

[Click here to join Sunday Worship!](#)

Sunday, March 3

Ebenezer Gay's Natural Religion

What the longest serving Old Ship minister contributed to the religion we know as Unitarianism?

Sunday March 10

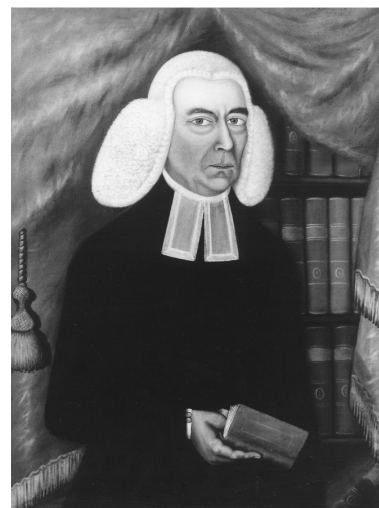
Spring Cleaning

Is there any hope of bringing order to our lives?.

Sunday, March 17

Rev. Paul Sprecher, pulpit guest

"The Story of My Country" Many of us are wrestling with how to understand the history of the United States in light of what we are coming to learn about the history of Black Lives and Indigenous lives and the lives of those who have been marginalized -- not to mention women's lives. After so much oppression, what's left to love?



Sunday, March 24

The Worth and Dignity of a Congregation and belated St. Patrick's celebration

Pledge drive kickoff..

Sunday, March 31

Easter

A Religious Naturalist Resurrection

The Minister's Monthly Musings Rev. Edmund Robinson

Spring is going to happen, no matter what the groundhog says or does in February. In my 24 years of UU ministry, I have developed the philosophy that you can't celebrate spring too much. We get so many opportunities: the Vernal Equinox, St. Patrick's Day, Palm Sunday, Easter, National Poetry Month, Earth Day, May Day, Mother's Day and Memorial Day. The earth cooperates by giving us a great fashion show ablaze with colors and outdoor warmth. Let us rejoice that we are here to see yet another seasonal affirmation of life!



Blessings,
Edmund

Edmund's Office Hours

My office hours are Tuesday afternoons from 1 to 4, but you can make an appointment for any time I am available. I want to get to know you. Call me at 617-710-0508 or email at edmund@gmail.com (yes, that's two "u"s).

Board of Trustees' Updates

The Board met for a monthly business meeting on Thursday, Feb. 1. Here some items discussed but not noted elsewhere in the newsletter;

Trustees of Invested Funds sent a proposal by email to merge the small endowment fund with the larger fund. Per the Old Ship bylaws this

change would require an amendment to the current bylaws. The TIF proposed that this item be added to the Annual Meeting agenda and voted on at the Annual Meeting in May. The inclusion of this proposed change was unanimously approved by the Board.

Worship and Music Committee. WAM needs a chairperson as well as additional members. See Karen Churchill for more information.

The Finance Committee recommended to finance the \$67,320 cost for the renewal of the lease at 14 Main St. from the following sources FY 23/24 Operating Budget - \$42,320 from existing surplus funds. FY 24/25 Operating Budget - \$25,000 from funds to be collected. The Board voted unanimously to approve this recommendation and ask for congregational approval at a Special Parish meeting set for 2/25. NOTE: Both articles related to lease renewal and sources for funding were approved by unanimous congregational votes on 2/25.

Community Space Team. The Team (Stuart Patterson, Ron Pollara, Elaine



Gomez, Laura Harbottle, John Sneath and Board Liaison Dennis Hogan) have had several meetings. The team has been making good progress on their due diligence and has come to a consensus on a tentative budget and basic space requirements. They are now arranging calls with a few architects/builders to get directional feedback on the project. Open meetings are set to begin in March.

Building and Grounds Committee A tree fell on the shed in a recent wind storm, damaging the roof and some of the siding. Our Sexton, Mark Curran, took care of repairs. Dave Petrie and Tom Willson are looking into having the plaque on the wall of the Meeting House engraved with the date of the end of Ken Read Brown's ministry. Church Mutual (our Insurance Company) did a risk assessment on the Meeting House in December, 2023 and there were several findings which will be attended to in the coming months.

The Nurturing Community Committee is also looking for members. The committee is especially in need of weekly "Greeters" to welcome people to service. There will be circle dinners in March with a theme to engage in a conversation about why people come to church. See chairperson Diane Elliott to sign up.

Website Redesign. Old Ship has signed a contract with KLS Designs for a redesign of our current website. Trish McAleer and Office Admin. Lisa Beck met in early Feb. with KLS to discuss a timeline and to give initial impressions on design and content. It is expected that the new website, pending Board approval, will be operational later this spring.

Special Ministry Search Meeting

The Board met for a second time on Thursday (2/15) in open session to discuss our ministry search for next year. Prior to meeting, Board members familiarized themselves with a summary of the types of transitional ministry described in the UUA Transitional Ministry Handbook. [Click here for the link to Ministry Summary.](#)

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) recommends congregations engage in an interim ministry process prior to calling their next settled minister. The interim process is vital to help congregations review their practices, transitioning from past ministry, set their sights forward, and connects lay leadership and the congregation with resources.

Having considering both the past experience and future needs of our church, the Board unanimously agreed that hiring an experienced interim minister for next year is our best next step. We should note that last year's interim ministry unfortunately coincided with the turmoil and contentiousness of the Parish House sale which made interim work unfeasible. But although we did not engage in interim work, our previous interim minister provided valuable input on areas that needed our attention. Acting on this input, since last winter we have focused on healing and strengthening our church community by a number of activities. These have included our listening circles, parish conversations in the Meeting House, and community dinners.

In summary, we believe there is now greater readiness for interim work and plan to hire an interim minister through the UUA's search process this spring. The Board welcomes your feedback on this important topic. Please email any questions or comments to President@oldshipchurch.org.

Trish McAleer, President

Musical Notes

Hello Old Ship,

March is a month of transitions. We change our clocks, dream of confidently putting our snow shovels in storage, and prepare to welcome spring once again to chilly New England. At the end of the month we will celebrate Easter with themes of renewal and new beginnings. There will be guest musicians joining us and the music is not to be missed. I hope you can join us, whether it's singing in the choir or in the pews. Happy (almost) spring!

Musically Yours,
Christopher



Pastoral Care Leadership Team

We are all on the pastoral care team, but our "Pastoral Care Leadership Team" meets each month to share any concerns about parishioners who are ill, in the hospital, or facing other significant challenges, and to coordinate responses. If you have a pastoral concern to share with our Team, please feel free to contact any member of the group:



Ralph Brown
Liz Flint
Elaine Gomez
Fan Leonard
Claire Petrie
Joan Wilson
Louise Smith
Edmund Robinson

Wisdom of the Poets

HOPE

Old spirit, in and beyond me,
keep, and extend me. Amid strangers,
friends, great trees and big seas breaking,
let love move me. Let me hear the whole
music,
see clear, reach deep. Open me to find due
words,
that I may shape them to ploughshares of



my own making.

After such luck, however late, give me to give to
the oldest dance....Then to good sleep,
and - if it happens - glad waking.

the late Maine poet, Philip Booth

comments always welcome: [Elizabeth Torrey](#)

SUNDAY FLOWERS DONORS NEEDED

Interested in being a donor for the Sunday flowers? March 10 & 31st are available. You may provide your own arrangement, or the Sunday Flowers Committee will create a lovely arrangement for a \$50 charge. Contact [Sharon Prehn](#) (781-925-0101).



Together, Step by Step

"Together, Step by Step" will be the theme of this year's stewardship campaign. The campaign will kick off on March 24th and run for five weeks through April 26th. Stay tuned for more information!

2024 Stewardship Campaign Committee:
[Janet Asnes](#), [Mary Markel Murphy](#), and
[Susannah Thomas](#)

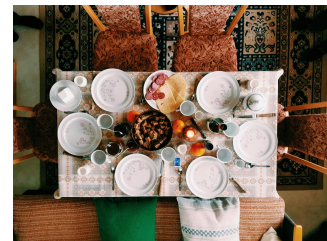
Fellowship Conversations

"Our Journey could be to transform the big and the small, to transform ourselves and to transform the world."

Our Old Ship Community is in a time of transformation. The Nurturing Committee and 2 liaisons from the board, Clayton Handleman and Janice McPhillips, are setting up Listening Circle Dinners, Lunches or Teas this spring.

We hope to bring people together to share a meal, engage in conversation and get to know each other better. At this time, two of these gatherings will take place on Saturday, March 23 at 6:30 pm: one at Ellie and Clayton's home and the other at Rich and Diane's home.

We are looking for volunteers to host a dinner and parishioners to attend. Meals will be pot luck. The hosts will be in charge of assigning the needed dishes to create the meal.



Knowing that we all have busy lives, the dinners can take place at times other than March 23rd. Also knowing that some people do not like to go out in the evening, day time opportunities will be available.

If you would like be a host or an attendee please contact [Diane Elliott @ dianeabbeyelliott@gmail.com](mailto:dianeabbeyelliott@gmail.com) or 781-264 6234.

Knowing that it takes a village, love and dedication to transform and grow, we hope that you will join us.

Yours in Love,
Diane

Life Learning Offerings

click here to see our [2023-2024 Life Learning Web Page](#)



Ceilidh! – Gathers on the first Tuesday of each month. This means our next monthly song/poem circle will be on **Tuesday evening, March 5th at 7:00 p.m.** We are currently planning to gather in the Parlor as well as on Zoom. Email [Eric Cornetta](mailto:eric.cornetta@gmail.com) with any questions about Ceilidh `` The zoom link is: <https://zoom.us/j/92888235659>

The Gathering

The Gathering will meet **every Wednesday at 1:00** at 14 Main Street Parlor. All women are welcome! For info contact [Diane Elliot](mailto:diane.elliott@gmail.com) or [Carol Valentine](mailto:carol.valentine@gmail.com).

Sacred Texts Meditation Group

**Next gathering: Thursday, March 14th
4:00 - 5:30 p.m., Zoom**

Second and fourth Thursday afternoons

Each session will have a reading, a 15-minute meditation, and exploration of one chapter from the Tao Te Ching (including its meaning to each of us), as well as related writings, poetry or art. Newcomers are welcome. Gatherings will be Zoom only. For information and the Zoom link, contact [Rich Elliott](mailto:rich.elliott@gmail.com).

Bodhisattva Study Group - Every Sunday morning, 8:30 AM. Zoom only. Twenty minutes of sitting meditation followed by discussion of a Buddhist or related text, facilitated by Catherine Mayes. For questions and Zoom link, email [Lisa Sawyer](mailto:lisa.sawyer@gmail.com)..

Men's Breakfast – Meets on the Fourth Sunday morning, **8:30 a.m.**, of each month. Our next gathering will be **March 24th** – in 14 Main St. Parlor and on Zoom. Contact [Ralph Brown](mailto:ralph.brown@gmail.com) or [Rich Elliott](mailto:rich.elliott@gmail.com) for information and, for the Zoom link.

Coming of Age

Sundays, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

The Coming of Age program is a wonderful opportunity for our youth to develop and grow within our faith community. to participate in social justice activity and decision making together and to have fun. We can't wait to see you soon and hope that this opportunity lines up with your family's schedule.

If interested in joining this call please contact [Maureen Butler](#) or cell: (617) 877 - 5204



Religious Naturalism

Rev. Edmund Robinson

Wednesday, Feb. 28, 6:00 p.m., Hybrid



Several varieties of non-theistic religion exist today — atheism, agnosticism, humanism. There are also some branches of older religions which consider the existence or power of divine beings irrelevant. Following the examination of agnosticism, this class will explore what is called religious naturalism. It does not take a position on whether divine beings exist, or what their powers might be, but is insistent that supernatural accounts of any phenomena are not permitted. Religious naturalism takes the picture of the world that modern science gives us and tries to understand the world through that. For information, contact [Rev. Robinson](#). [Click Here for the Zoom Link](#)

SPRING (VERNAL) EQUINOX POETRY CIRCLE

Come join the ongoing poetry renaissance in America, northeast branch, Old Ship affiliate! Bring and read or speak a favorite spring poem, one that speaks to new beginnings, or one that has inspired you and given you hope, or even one that made you laugh out loud. We will meet at 14 Main and on zoom at **7 PM on Tuesday, March 19th**, the first day of spring.

[click here for zoom link](#)

For more info: elizabethtorrey@hotmail.com



Grow Old Along With Me

Elizabeth Torrey

**One Wednesday, March 27, 3:00 p.m.
34 Ship Street, Hingham**

Elizabeth will share a video of Julie Harris, Hume Cronyn and James Earl Jones, among others, reciting poetry about aging and talking about what getting old is like for them. Other artists, including Buddhist nun Pema Chodron, see aging as a creative process that in later

*“When there is a great disappointment,
we don't know if that's the end of the story.
It may be just the beginning
of a great adventure.”*

— Pema Chödrön



years can give birth to one's full humanity. They deal with loneliness, give us encouragement to face our fears, and help us embrace who we have become. We learn how creative this journey into elderhood can be. The presentation will take place in Elizabeth's home. For information, contact [Elizabeth](#).

Serving Others

News from the Social Justice Council (SJC)

Everyone is invited to join us at our next meeting on Saturday, March 9, at 9 a.m. on Zoom. Here is the link to the meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82151949456?pwd=93A3y3pSToP6ZexCAGBDR2XalHwYyl.1>



March Special Plate Collection and March 10th Forum: Father

Bill's/Mainspring — We are deeply aware of how many of our South Shore neighbors are in need of food, housing, and other necessities of daily life. Thus, we have decided to support Father Bill's/Mainspring this month. This organization is a "regional innovator and provider of prevention services, emergency shelter, permanent supportive housing, and supports to help those [they] serve on their path to stability and self-sufficiency." As you may know, we have provided 24 meals a year (through our six cooking teams) for Father Bill's shelter in Quincy for many years. On March 10, we are excited that Catie Reilly, Chief Development Officer for Father Bill's/Mainspring, will be with us for our service. Following the service, Catie will speak to us more generally about the work of the organization and how we can provide more support for it. The forum will begin shortly after church in the parlor at 14 Main. To learn more about Father Bill's/Mainspring, go to [Father Bill's & MainSpring – Nobody Should Be Homeless. \(helpfbms.org\)](#).

For the special plate collection, donations can be made in one of two ways this month. You may make your donation as part of the special plate collection in the Meeting House on March 10. You also may make your donation online through the Old Ship website. Click the donate button and then designate your donation for the Outreach Offering: Father Bill's.

Appreciation for Donations from Old Ship Members and Friends to

Renewal House — We recently sent a check for \$1,156.72 to the UU Urban Ministry for Renewal House. Thanks to everyone who contributed to support this domestic shelter program at the UU Urban Ministry.

Hingham Food Pantry — We collect food each week for the Hingham Food Pantry. Please leave your donations in the bins located in the vestibule of the Meeting House and at 14 Main Street. Items especially needed this month include the following: Healthy Cereal, Cookies, Canned Tuna, Pasta Sauce, Regular Ground Coffee, and Canned Pasta. Also, as another way to donate food, there is a box for donations at the front of the Stop and Shop in Hingham

Anti-Racism/Social Justice Drop-in Book Group— All are invited to join us on **Sunday, March 17 at 7 p.m. on Zoom** for our discussion of the first six chapters of Michelle Norris's book, *Our Hidden Conversations: What Americans Really Think About Race and Identity*. Journalist Michele Norris

began The Race Card Project by asking people to send her their thoughts on Race in six words. Over half a million people have submitted their stories and the result is this interesting book, spanning the full spectrum of race, ethnicity, identity, and class. Because this is a lengthy book, we have decided to discuss it over two meetings. The second half of the book will be discussed at our May 19th meeting. (We had already planned to discuss Uche Blackstock, MD, *Legacy: A Black Physician Reckons with Racism in Medicine*(2024) at our April 21 meeting). Here is the Zoom link for March 17: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87505468383?pwd=NKSfLa6Eleal4Xnpyc41vLjGR6bZ3p.1>.

UU Urban Ministry Community Conversations: Restorative Homeownership: Fighting the Fight —

This conversation, on **Tuesday, March 5, from 6-7 p.m.**, will focus on how we can work together to advocate for more affordable housing. Participants include the UU Urban Ministry, UU Mass Action, and Homes for All Massachusetts. How do we put our knowledge of housing injustice into action to work for justice now? Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86566155224>

Old Ship Social Justice Action Alert Network— Sign up for the Old Ship Social Justice Action Alert Network to find out about specific advocacy opportunities such as letter writing, advocacy calls, and participating in educational and advocacy events with local legislators. Send your email address to [Davalene Cooper](mailto:Davalene.Cooper@oldship.org), Keeper of the List.

Writing History - In Poetry and Memoir

A Poet and a Memoirist meet for lunch. They both recall the day they met in high school, 30 years ago. Whose account is closer to the “truth?” Does it matter?



Join acclaimed poet Charles Coe and newly published memoirist and editor Mary Ford on **Saturday, March 23 at 4:30 pm** at Old Ship Meeting House for a fascinating discussion of how our personal histories are preserved in words. What rises to the surface of memory?

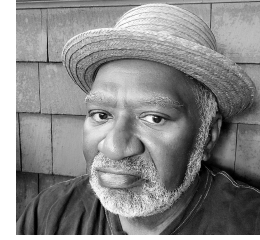
Charles Coe has published 4 books of poetry and a novella. He’s taught at numerous writing conferences, has been poet-in-residence at Wheaton College and the Chautauqua Institution, and is a professor of English and writing. He has also served as artist-in-residence for the City of Boston. For eighteen years he supervised the Organizational Support Grants program at the Massachusetts Cultural Council, where he heard the stories of many other artists and organizations. Learn more about Charles at www.charlescoe.org.

Mary Ford’s fascinating memoir-turned-novel, “Boy at the Crossroads,” about the early life of her husband Conley Ford, was published in 2021. Mary Ford is a retired, award-winning journalist who spent twenty-eight years as the beloved editor of two successful, small-town newspapers in Massachusetts, the Hingham Journal and the Cohasset Mariner. Learn more at maryfordedit.com

They will share readings of their own life’s stories and talk about how they were able to capture the essence of those moments. This will play out inside

the Old Ship Meeting House - a National Historic Landmark with a long history of its own. Please join Charles and Mary as they add their unique voices to this special space.

Writers Workshop with Charles Coe



Please join us for a special event, “Writing as a Spiritual Practice,” a writing workshop happening **Saturday, March 23rd, from 10 am to 2pm** at the home of Nina Wellford, 231 South Main Street, Cohasset, MA. The workshop, sponsored by Friends of Old Ship Meeting House, will be run by Cambridge-based writer, poet, and teacher Charles Coe. You can learn more about him at www.charlescoe.org. Everyone has a story to tell or feelings to explore... how do we express ourselves with honesty and craft?

The day will include writing prompts and exercises, conversations about the craft of poetry and prose poetry, and a “deep dive” into how we can use the medium of poetry to explore and express a world view based on spiritual, humane values grounded in experience. The work of poets such as Emily Dickenson, Philip Larkin, Mary Oliver, and William Carlos Williams will be discussed.

The class will be limited in number, and Charles will send a prompt or two to registered participants before the workshop. If you’d like your poetry discussed, please send Charles three poems at charles52@comcast.net.

Cost is \$125 per person, and includes a light lunch. To register, please contact Nina Wellford ninawellford@gmail.com.



The Old Ship Calendar

The Old Ship Church calendar is available on our website by clicking [here](#).

If you have an upcoming event or meeting and you want to see it on the calendar, please email [Lisa](#) in the office.

Additionally, if your contact information has changed, please email [Lisa](#) so she can update the Old Ship database.

Upcoming Committee Meetings

- **Choir Rehearsal** - Sunday, March 3, 9:30 a.m.
- **Pastoral Care Team Meeting** - Tuesday., March 5, 1:00 p.m.
Zoom/Parlor
- **Board of Trustees** - Thursday, March 7, 7:00 p.m. Zoom/Parlor; [Click here for the Zoom Link](#) Agenda will be available in next week's update

Printer Cartridge Collection

Please bring your used printer cartridges to 14 Main St and help raise funds for our office supplies. In 2023, we were able to convert used cartridges into almost \$500 of office supplies! Drop off your cartridges in the 14 Main Street office. Any brand or type of cartridge is fine. Thank you!



HAPPY SPRING!

from your friends at Old Ship Church!

First Parish, Old Ship Church | 14 Main Street, Hingham, MA 02043

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