



first parish, hingham
old ship church
unitarian universalist

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February 2026 Monthly Newsletter

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Deadline for March's newsletter: Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Multi-Platform:
Join us in-person in the Meeting House
or on Zoom
Zoom link opens at 10:15 a.m.

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



Embodying Resilience **February Newsletter**

Feb 1st I Wonder, Therefore I Am
Rev. Carie Johnsen, Rev. Ken Read-Brown &
Christopher Nickelson-Mann

The 17th century philosopher Descartes famously wrote "I think, therefore I am". But what if it is not thought but the sense of wonder that makes us human - maybe humane too? In the midst of all that we face these days in our nation and in the world and all that we feel called to do, maybe reclaiming a sense of wonder is as important as thinking clearly.

Feb 8th Connected, Resilient, and Strong
Rev. Carie Johnsen, Christopher Nickelson-Mann,
Spiritual Exploration Families & Committee

Following our monthly Love at the Center series, we will be exploring the value of Interdependence with our young people this morning. Bring your curiosity

and a willingness to play a bit as we explore the power and presence of the people connected.

Feb15th Keepers of the Earth

Rev. Carie Johnsen, Dr. Janet Limke, Christopher Nickolson-Mann, Green Sanctuary Committee

Imagine a world where humanity answers the call to be keepers of the earth and guardians of creation. A world where our relationship with Mother Earth guides our days. Join us this morning as we explore environmental health through the lens of animal-agriculture and lifestyle choices. The Green Sanctuary Committee will host a conversation with Dr. Janet Limke following the service in the Meeting House.



Dr. Janet Limke, MD, earned her medical degree from the University of Cincinnati. Over the course of 35 years, she has dedicated her career to working as a physiatrist, specializing in spine and musculoskeletal disorders.

Dr. Limke serves as a delegate to the Massachusetts Medical Society and is actively involved as a member of the Committee on Environmental and Occupational Health. As an avid environmentalist, she is dedicated to promoting education and policy that address the harms of animal-based agriculture, while encouraging a shift toward whole food, plant-forward nutrition to improve both human and environmental health.

Feb 22nd Discomfort Lead Us On

Rev. Carie Johnsen & Christopher Nickelson-Mann

In her poem, *The Layers*, Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer invites us to be with what aches and trust discomfort as a way forward. Join us as we explore the way vulnerability and distress strengthen capacity, builds resilience and prepares us for the world as we know it.

The February outreach/share the plate offering will be given to [Neighbors Helping Neighbors](#), a community fund for neighbors impacted by recent ICE enforcement in Minneapolis, MN.

Everyday Ordinary Theologies

Old Ship is a Ministering Community –
Courageous, Compassionate, Centered in Love.

These are not easy days. For many in our wider community—and for some within our own congregation—questions around immigration are not abstract or political. They are deeply personal. They touch families, livelihoods, safety, and the basic human longing to belong without fear. In times like these, it is natural to feel anxious, angry, heartbroken, or simply worn down.

Resilience in ministry, and in congregational life, is not about pretending these realities do not exist. It is about choosing, again and again, to meet them with courage, compassion, and clarity about who we are and what we stand for.



As Unitarian Universalists we are called to keep our hearts open, get out of the pews, and pray with our feet. It means remembering that this faith movement calls us to affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person—not as a slogan, but as a lived commitment. We are a people of covenant, and covenant means we promise to show up for one another, especially when it is hard.

Here at Old Ship, it means we show up on Wednesday mornings at the post office to speak truth to power. It means we show up at the No King Rallies to hold leaders accountable. It means we show up at vigils to be together in grief and outrage. It means we stay informed and show up courageously.

This week, it means speaking up for our siblings who are hiding or being held in terror by ICE. It means we call, email, write, or visit our legislatures to demand No New Funding and the dismantling of ICE. If you don't know how to reach out or where to start this call to act, try 5calls.org.

Here at Old Ship, resilience shows up relationship. We check in on one another. We reach out to our neighbors. We offer practical help. We practice kindness and compassion. We move through our discomfort. We stay present in difficult and painful conversations. We listen deeply to stories that are not our own. We refuse to let anyone feel invisible or alone. We show up when we tell the truth about what is happening. We choose to act from love rather than fear.

We may not be able fix everything but we can be a place of steadiness in an unsteady world. We can be a place of welcome in a time of exclusion. We can be a place where love is practiced, not just proclaimed.

Resilience, my friends, is not turning away, not giving up, and not letting fear have the final word.

Together, we will keep choosing courage.

Together, we will keep choosing love.

In faith, Rev. Carie

February Board of Trustees Update

On Wednesday January 7, the Board met for its monthly meeting. This month's meeting was held on the 1st rather than 2nd Wednesday due to Board member availability. Here are items of note

:

Personnel Team update:

Janet Asnes joined the Board Meeting on behalf of the Personnel Team (Janet, Mary Murphy, and Rev. Carie Johnsen). Janet advised that the team is working on reviewing and updating each employee's job description. This important task has never been done for some employees and is providing some much needed clarity to job roles.

Community Space Team update:

Trustee and CST Liaison Dennis Hogan provided an update from the Community Space Team. The group continues to meet weekly and they have finalized a presentation that they will give to the board at a special BOT meeting Wednesday January 28 at 6:30pm at 14 Main and on Zoom. See notice of this Special Meeting below for Zoom link.



Following the meeting the Board will schedule a Special Parish Meeting to present this information to the congregation followed by a member vote. After all approvals, the architects will need a few weeks to draw detailed plans which can be submitted to town and MA state boards for approval. It is expected that this process will take many months and the hope is that we can commence building in 2027.

Treasurer's report:

Acting Treasurer Jack Gomez reported that pledge income so far this fiscal year is running ahead of budget. There was an unexpected one-time expense of \$8000 plus monthly staff retirement contributions to come into compliance with First Parish's retirement agreement with the UUA. Jack reminded the board that our spending this year will use up the surplus cash that had accumulated over the past several years. This surplus resulted from several years of not having expenses for religious education. The Board also discussed the bequest we received from Diana Gay and decided to put the funds in an interest bearing account to earn some revenue. We also discussed a gift of \$250 Old Ship received from the F.L. Putnam, the firm that manages our endowment. The funds were put towards the purchase of electric candles for the Meeting House.

2026 Stewardship Team:

President Trish McAleer announced the members of the 2026 Stewardship Team: Bonnie Baynes, Derek Wadman and Pia Young have agreed to be a committee. Vice President Janice McPhillips and Trish will meet with the team in February to get them started with a planned stewardship kickoff sometime in March.

Spiritual Exploration Team (SET):

Trustee and SET liaison Cory Fitz-Marquez reported that the SET met with families of 3 of our young people. Discussed was a parent support drop in group, a float for the 4th of July parade, possibly organizing a neighboring faiths program and an OWL (Our Whole Lives) program.

The Board notes that as Trish McAleer will be away in February and March, Janice McPhillips will be Acting President during this time.

The Board welcomes your comments and suggestions by emailing us at President@oldshipchurch.com.

**Special Board Meeting
Wednesday, January 28th at 6:30 p.m.
at 14 Main and on Zoom**

On Wednesday, January 28th at 6:30 pm, there will be a special Board meeting to review the Community Space team's presentation of options for a new Parish House. The Community Space team will present two designs and budgets and review the various financial, historic, and construction issues. The Board will meet to discuss and recommend a course of action to the congregation. Additionally, they will schedule next steps, including a congregation wide vote. Members are encouraged to join this meeting online via this [Zoom Link](#)



TRANSITIONAL MINISTRY TEAM

On Saturday, January 17th, 50 parishioners gathered to Celebrate and Illuminate Shared Ministries at Old Ship. During the workshop we met in small groups to identify our individual strengths and then we shone a light on the many shared ministries within Old Ship. Finally, we considered our Old Ship community and how it can be a greater source of strength for all of us as well as for the wider community. Written reflections were woven into a loom that represents “Who is Old Ship”.



Thank you to all who participated! If you have not yet completed the workshop evaluation, please take a moment to let us know what was meaningful for you.

WHO IS OLD SHIP?

A Demographic Survey of the Community

The Transitional Ministry Team requests your participation with a **demographic survey** of the membership at Old Ship, including friends and former members. This survey is part of the continuing exploration of the question, ***Who is Old Ship?*** Demographics is one piece of our evolving exploration of congregational identity. Above you will find a QR code to complete the survey online. If you prefer you can access it with [this link](#). A printed copy is available at the office or the Meeting House on Sunday mornings. Additionally, you may send a request for a copy to be mailed to you by calling or emailing Lisa at Office@OldShipChurch.org or calling 781-749-1679.



Your Transitional Ministry Team,
Chris Johnsen, chair
Caitlin Gibson
Sarah Corey Swett
Rubin Marquez
Caryn Schneider
Bob Caravana
Teri Lillis
Rev. Carie Johnsen

Sunday, January 18th Service is viewable on YouTube this week!

NEWS! We will be providing a link to the previous week's service for a 1-week time period so that anyone who missed the service can view it. The video will only be available for that one week. Please [click this link](#) for the Sunday, January 18, 2026 Service.



Attention Families!

Join us for Children's Spiritual Exploration (formerly known as RE)!



Each Sunday, children and families begin in the Meeting House before heading down to 14 Main Street with at least two adults for activities that explore our UU values. Parents are welcome to stay in the Meeting House or join their children.

February 1 & 15: Addie will lead the children to 14 Main for activities related to the theme of Being Resilient.

February 8: Intergenerational service in the Meeting House, with young folks and families engaged in various parts of the entire service.

February 22: Children will make bag lunches for Father Bill's Quincy shelter

For the rest of the church year, Rev. Carie is planning an Intergenerational service in the Meeting House for the 2nd Sunday of each month, and on the 4th Sundays we will be making lunches for Father Bill's. Please encourage friends with children to come discover who we are as UUs and as a growing congregation!

Please note: families with children of all ages are also welcome to stay in the Meeting House for the complete service.

Fellowship Hour & Snacks Sunday, February 1st

Fellowship Hour will be held at 14 Main Street. **Last names beginning Q - Z** are asked to bring a snack on **Sunday, February 1st**. Some type of finger or toothpick food that

can be placed on a napkin is best. We don't have

volunteers to hand wash dishes and are going to keep things simple. Please bring your food item ready to go. Food can be left in its box or served on a paper plate. Thanks everyone.



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 listed below.



Ministerial Discretionary Fund

Have you encountered unanticipated medical bills? Are you experiencing financial strain from loss of employment or rising energy and food costs? Rev. Carie has modest ministerial discretionary funds to assist people in times of financial stress. Please reach out to her directly and/or encourage others to call to request assistance.

[Ralph Brown](#)

[Liz Flint](#) 508-560-1572

[Elaine Gomez](#) 781 820 4077

[Fan Leonard](#) 781-749-2852

[Claire Petrie](#) 617-642-2438
[Joan Wilson](#) 617-947-4664
[Louise Smith](#) 781-690-1165
[Rev. Carie Johnson](#) 508-221-5295

Musical Notes

Dear Old Ship,

As we move through the cold and snow of winter, I've been reflecting on how music is a source of hope when times feel particularly heavy. At first, I wished I had a song to share with you that has answers to our questions, some lyrics that would make sense of it all, an assuring melody knew the outcome.

But there isn't one. There's no song with answers to those questions, lyrics can't make sense of something that is senseless, and no matter how well a melody is composed it can't guarantee our future. But if music can't answer questions in a time like this, maybe it can ask them instead.



[Winter Song by Sara Bareilles and Ingrid Michaelson](#)

Winter Song nicely captures winter here in New England, especially after the snow we've just had. More importantly, this song also reflects how many of us are currently feeling as we watch fear, hatred, and violence sweep the nation. A line from the song's chorus repeatedly asks, "Is love alive?"

I believe love is still here, even if we have to look a little harder for it lately. Mr. Rogers taught a whole generation of children to "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." I'll continue to look for those who help, but now also for those who spread love when we need it most. Even though there might not be a song that answers the questions we have right now, my wish is that together we sing a shared anthem, a melody that reminds us to choose hope and continue on.

Warmly,
Christopher

Wisdom of the Poets

FEBRUARY TWILIGHT by Sara Teasdale

I stood beside a hill
Smooth with new-laid snow,
A single star looked out
From the cold evening glow.

There was no other creature
that saw what I could see -
I stood and watched the evening star
As long as it watched me.

NIGHT by Sara Teasdale



Stars over snow,
And in the west a planet
Swinging below a star -
Look for a lovely thing and you will find it,
It is not far -
It never will be far.

Responses always welcome - [Elizabeth Torrey](#)

Welcome Newcomers!
Join Us for a
Monthly Newcomers Coffee
Sunday, February 15, 2026



Are you new to our congregation and are wondering what we are all about? Do you have questions about Unitarian Universalism, Old Ship Church or are looking for a warm place to connect? We invite you to join us for our Monthly Newcomers Coffee Hour! It's a relaxed and friendly space where you can meet fellow newcomers, chat with long-time members, and learn more about the life and spirit of our community. Grab a cup of coffee or tea and come as you are – we look forward to welcoming you! The Newcomer Coffee Hour is held following the service on the third Sunday of each month.. Please join us on Sunday, February 15th at our church office and meeting space located at 14 Main Street, entrance on South Street. If you have any questions, please reach out to [Elaine Cusker](#), [Diane Elliott](#), [Teri Lillis](#) or our Minister, [Rev. Carie Johnsen](#)

Trans Parent and Caregiver Support Group
Thursday, February 18th at 6:30 P.M.
14 Main Street, Hingham

Gather with others who share your experience of being a transgender parent or caregiver. Come join us as we tell our stories in a safe and supportive environment. This group will continue to meet on the third Thursday of each month. Please contact Bob Caravana at bobcaravana@gmail.com.



Life Learning Offerings

Our Life Learning Committee has completed the schedule of classes and groups for 2025-2026. [Please click here for the schedule.](#)

The Gathering

The Gathering will meet **every Wednesday at 1:00 p.m.** in 14 Main Street Parlor. All women are welcome! For info contact [Diane Elliott](#).

Men's Breakfast – Meets on the Fourth Sunday morning of each month at **8:30 a.m.** in 14 Main St. Parlor and on Zoom. Our next gathering will meet on **Sunday, February 22nd**. Contact [Eric Espinosa](#) or [Rubin Marquez](#) for information and a Zoom link.

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 members of the group. For questions and Zoom link, email [Lisa Sawyer](mailto:Lisa.Sawyer).

Ceilidh! – Gathers on the first Tuesday of each month. This means our next monthly song/poem circle will be on **Tuesday evening, February 3rd 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) with any questions about Ceilidh. The zoom link is: <https://zoom.us/j/92888235659>

Sacred Texts Meditation Group

Next gathering: Thursday, February 12th

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).

Today, January 27th will meet by Zoom Only!

Religion in America

Dennis Hogan

Tuesdays at 4:00 P.M. January 20 – February 24

at 14 Main Street/Zoom

This class will be a topical survey of religion in the United States from the time of colonization to the present. We'll look at specific topics such as early foundations, belief systems and myths, impact on the U.S. Constitution and laws, role in westward expansion, political dynamics, relationship to slavery and indigenous life, demographics, current trends and potential implications for the future. There will be six classes over an eight week period. Readings will be provided digitally or through internet links. For information and to sign up, contact Dennis.

News from the Social Justice Council (SJC)

Our next meeting is Saturday, February 28th at 9 a.m. on Zoom. Here is the Zoom

link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88441445452?pwd=ul4hSho0ea6bCpz5Kzh7TSd77YtGB9.1>



February Outreach/Share the Plate: Supporting Immigrants at this Critical and Challenging Time

We know many in our community want to help immigrants during this challenging time when so many immigrants and their supporters are having their lives upended by ICE. The Social Justice Council has decided to support [Neighbors Helping Neighbors](http://NeighborsHelpingNeighbors.org), an organization raising funds to provide direct aid to members of the Minneapolis community who have been impacted by ICE operations. Our donations will provide flexible, immediate assistance for critical needs, including: groceries and basic household necessities, transportation support, and emergency support for families facing sudden loss of income. The goal of this organization is to help community members stay housed, fed, and supported during moments of profound

uncertainty. This is neighbors showing up for neighbors, preserving dignity, stability, and safety when our systems fall short. We learned of this organization through the Rev. Ashley Horan, a UU Minister who lives in the neighborhood where Renee Good was killed by ICE agents. In March, we will be supporting a local organization working to help immigrants, but we feel that the situation in Minnesota needs our help first.

Donations can be made as part of the special plate collection in the Meeting House on Sunday, February 8, or at anytime throughout the month through the Old Ship website. Click the donate button and then designate your donation for the Outreach Offering: Neighbors Helping Neighbors. Thanks in advance for your support of this important work that puts our values out into the world and take a stand against oppression and inhumane treatment of immigrants.

Seeking cooks for a Father Bill's Cooking Team

Since 1990, our Old Ship members have provided meals for Father Bill's in Quincy, our local service provider for adults experiencing homelessness. Currently new cooks are needed to prepare four meals each year by cooking a main dish or making a salad, delivering the food to Quincy, and helping serve the dinner meal (if your schedule allows, not required).

What's involved?

Shopping for and preparing a dinner dish or salad for four dates a year (known well in advance). You will get a recipe and list of ingredients for a nutritious main dish or salad. Currently, food costs for each meal are approximately \$50-70 per cook.

Delivering the dish to the Yawkey Housing Resource Center, 39 Broad Street, off of Rt. 3A in Quincy which can be done on the day of the scheduled meal, or a day or two in advance per your schedule. If delivery of your contribution is a challenge, team members can help.

And if you are interested, helping to serve the meal at 5pm on the scheduled day, a fun and meaningful way to engage with our neighbors in need.

Please contact Brenda Black at 781 740-2835 or blackpollara@verizon.net if you want to learn more about helping with a Father Bill's cooking team. If you are not a cook but want to help, there are ways you can support a cook by sharing in the food costs, by helping with delivery or serving the meal. As always, many hands make for lighter work.

For more information about the Father Bill's/Mainspring model and how the meals we provide contribute to their work see <https://helpfbms.org/yawkeyhrc/>.

Hingham Food Pantry

Each week during the service, we collect food for the Hingham Food Pantry. We also collect food at 14 Main whenever the office is open or whenever there is a meeting or other event there. We have noticed that our donations have dwindled in the new year. We want to remind everyone that given the economy and the reduction in federal SNAP benefits, there is still a need for us to support the food pantry as much as we can. Many people are facing difficult times financially and being able to use the food pantry may permit someone to keep their home and pay other expenses. In November, we donated 89 pounds of food to the food pantry. ***The food pantry is currently in need of canned beef stew, pasta sauce, and cookies.***

Antiracism/Social Justice Drop in Book Group

Our next book group meeting will be on February 15, 2026. We will be discussing *The Great White Hoax: Two Centuries of Selling Racism in America* by Philip Kadish. This is "a book that brilliantly puts our current era

into historical context, *The Great White Hoax* uncovers a centuries-long tradition of white supremacist hoaxes, perpetrated on the American public by a succession of political hucksters and opportunists, all of them willfully using racial frauds as tools for political and social advantage. In the antebellum era, slavery's defenders used bogus science to "prove" the inferiority of African American people; during the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln's enemies circulated a sham pamphlet accusing him of promoting a dilution of the white race through "miscegenation" (a racist term invented by the pamphlet's authors). . . . *The Great White Hoax* reveals white supremacy as today's real "fake news"—and exposes the cast of villains, past and present, who have kept American racism alive."

The Zoom link is <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87637841227?pwd=LVEbQGUtuRZIB83OZ5U9atbNmfgAHN.1>. Contact Patti Smith if you have any questions.

Join UUSC's Resistance Network: Building Power to Defend Human Rights and Democracy

This is a rapid response network that mobilizes people of faith and conscience to defend freedoms and protect communities facing injustice. Whether resisting civil society crackdowns, defending trans and non-binary communities, supporting people in migration, or countering climate regression, our network acts with urgency and solidarity. Click here to join the network: [Join UUSC's Resistance Network – UUSC](#).

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



Upcoming Committee Meetings

- **Choir Rehearsal** - Sunday, February 1, 9:30 a.m., Meeting House
- **Worship & Music Meeting** - Sunday, February 1, 12:15 p.m.. 14 Main St Parlor
- **SET/RE Meeting** - Tuesday, February 3, 6:00 p.m. 14 Main St Conference Room
- **Board of Trustees** - Wednesday, February 4, 6:30 p.m. Zoom/Parlor
[Click here for the zoom link](#) The agenda will be sent out the week of the meeting



**Happy Valentine's Day
from your friends at Old Ship!**

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