



first parish, hingham  
**old ship church**  
unitarian universalist

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## May 2026 Monthly Newsletter

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**Deadline for June's newsletter: Tuesday, May 19, 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!](#)



### **May Newsletter** Awakening Curiosity

**May 3<sup>rd</sup>**            **In the World with a Beginners Mind**  
**Rev Carie Johnsen**

We begin our month with the theme curiosity by exploring the Buddhist wisdom - *In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities. In the expert's mind there are few.* ~ Shunryu Suzuki

**May 10<sup>th</sup>**            **Let Mystery Be**  
**Rev Carie Johnsen, Christopher Nickelson-Mann**

Today we will explore the wisdom of Henri Frederic Amiel, *Let mystery have its place in you; do not be always turning up your whole soil with the ploughshare of self-examination but leave a little fallow corner in your heart ready for any seed the winds may bring.*

**May 17<sup>th</sup> Sing Together**  
**Christopher Nickelson-Mann, Rev. Carie Johnsen**

As usual, this year's service will feature beautiful music and readings, as well as lots of opportunities to make music together as a whole. Perhaps there will even be a surprise or two! We hope to have as much congregational participation as possible, so whether you're joining us on Zoom or in person, we would love all hands on deck for this yearly service. As always, thank you for your continued support of the music at Old Ship. We are fortunate to have such a kind and caring community.

**May 24<sup>th</sup> Prophets of the Possible**  
**Rev. Laura Randell, Guest Minister**

The gender expansive poet, Alok, says that there are as many ways to exist as there are existences. No matter our own personal journeys, we can all learn from the experiences of Two-Spirit, trans, and gender expansive beloveds. Join us for a celebration of wisdom, beauty, and divinity as we celebrate life beyond the gender binary and learn about the work of Pink Haven, a coalition of communities working to keep trans folk safe in a time of heightened persecution.



As the Director for Congregation Relations at UUSC, the Reverend Laura Randall (she/her/hers) facilitates partnerships to strengthen the impact of the UU Service Committee and the social justice reach of UU communities. Prior to joining UUSC, Laura's ministry included serving as the Legacy Campaign Director for the Unitarian Universalist

Association and hospice chaplaincy. She lives in Medford, Massachusetts with her spouse and their two dogs.

**May 31<sup>st</sup> TBA**  
Rev. Danielle Di Bona, Christopher Nickelsen-Mann

***Everyday Ordinary Theologies...***

This month, in the spirit of curiosity, I offer you five quotes to ponder. Pick one each week. Read daily. Post in visible location. Engage in the company of others. Listen for your quiet wisdom. Pay attention to your longing heart. Let spirit move you. Stay open. Cultivate curiosity. Be surprised by what is revealed.



*Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer. ~ Rainer Maria Rilke*

★

*We can lean into worry's opposite – curiosity. As Rabbi Marcia Prager teaches, where worry says, "oh no, what is going to happen?" curiosity says "oh wow! I wonder what will happen!" ~ Rev. Kimberley Debus*

★

*It's important to get conscious and aware of the fact that the questions that we have been trained to ask, to trade in — the questions we reflexively ask, at least in Western culture, are not suited to the fact that we have a world to remake. We are very fluent in blunt, materialistic, capitalist questions: What? How soon? How much? What I hope that we can learn to do is add questions of moral imagination to that mix: questions like “Why?” and “To what human effect?” and “How much is enough?” ~ Krista Tippett*

★

*Being curious means asking why before assuming. It means seeking to understand someone's story rather than making assumptions based on what we see on the surface. When we approach people, situations, and even ourselves with curiosity, we open the door to empathy, learning, and connection.*

*Judgment, on the other hand, builds walls. It limits our ability to grow, to appreciate diverse perspectives, and to create space for dialogue and understanding. ~ Melanie Gamble*

★

*Discovering you were wrong is an update, not a failure, and your worldview is a living document meant to be revised. ~ Julia Galef*

I'm curious to hear about your experience. Let me know what wisdom and revelations surface.

In faith, Rev. Carie Johnsen

## May Board of Trustees Update

On Wednesday March 11, the Board met for its monthly meeting. Here are items of note from that meeting:



**Music Budget** - Guest Music Director Christopher Nicholson-Mann – Christopher asked about the Torrey Music Fund and the appropriate uses of this money. Though the Old Ship budget is sufficient for the rest of the year, in order to hire musicians for Music Sunday (5/17) additional funds may be needed. The Board approved allocating up to \$300 to spend on musicians for music Sunday.

**Stewardship Campaign Results;** As of March 10 the total pledges are \$237,000, short of funding next year's budget. Further discussions revising the budget will be on held at a special April 29 meeting.

**Nominating Committee Update** – President Trish McAleer advised that the Nominating Committee had filled all open spots for next year other than the Board Treasurer.

**UUA General Assembly** - The Board will solicit members to serve as delegates at this years UUA General Assembly, held virtually. The Deacons will provide registration reimbursement for delegates.

**Building Use Policy & Contract** - Snow Removal Amendment – There has been an issue of the church incurring expenses for plowing when the Meeting House is rented. Need to update rental policy to insure OS is not required to provide. Further discussion is required on the costs to bear.

**Annual Report Printing** – It was decided that as the cost to print is much higher than before, the annual report will be printed and assembled in house by a group of volunteers Vice President Janice McPhillips will oversee this process.

**501(c)(3) creation** - To continue to be eligible for the ZOOM non profit rate, Old Ship will be required to have it own number. Janice will summarize and send more information regarding this process.

**Treasurers Report** - Acting Treasurer Jack Gomez shared that expenses probably will come in about \$10,000 more due to increases in benefits. He also shared that a line of credit with Hingham Institution for Savings requires real estate which would mean a lien on 90 Main Street. As this will encumber the property for an expense greater than 25,000, per the bylaws, the congregation must approve an article permitting a lien. Jack will draft an article to be included in the annual meeting warrant.

**SET Name Change** - There also will be an article presented for proposing a name change from the Religious Education Committee to the Spiritual Education Team.

The Board welcomes your questions and comments. Please contact BOT President Trish McAleer at [president@oldshipchurch.org](mailto:president@oldshipchurch.org).

### **Special Board Meeting on 26/27 Budget**

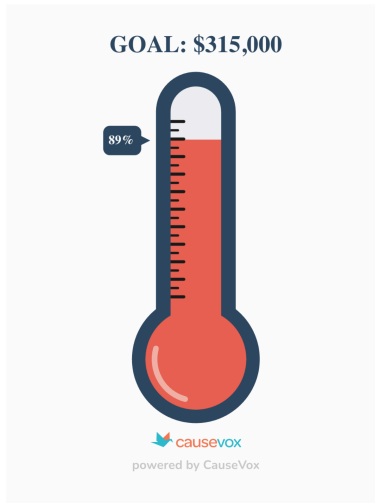
**Tomorrow Wednesday, 4/29 @ 6:30 pm**, the Board will be convened for a special meeting to discuss and vote on the 2026/2027 budget. This meeting will occur at Zoom at this [link](#).



### **Community Space Team**

The Community Space team is finalizing the building and site design for the new Parish House with Torrey Architecture. The team will use the design to engage with the town of Hingham and with Massachusetts Historical Commission to secure the necessary approvals and permits for the project. The team will also send the design and specifications to builders for bidding. This pre-construction process is expected to take about six months, after which construction can begin. The team will present the floor plans and site plan to the Board at the May 13 Board meeting and to the Congregation at the May 17 Annual Meeting.





## We are 89% to a fully funded budget. Can you give a bit more?

Our 2026 pledge total is now at 281K, still short fully funding next year's budget. As we no longer have a cash surplus, a shortfall in pledges will necessitate difficult cuts to our programming and/or staffing. **Please consider if you can increase your pledge for next year.** Remember, you only need to complete a pledge form at this time. Your payment(s) don't need to begin until the start of the new church year in July. Just call the office to increase your pledge or fill out a revised pledge card [here](#).

## The Nominating Committee is looking for a Treasurer Candidate to join the Old Ship Board of Trustees for the coming church year. Could this be you?

Treasurer, Board of Trustees

*One member to serve as Treasurer*

(Term = one year; maximum of two additional successive terms)

The Treasurer oversees the financial activities of the Parish and the work of the Bookkeeper, advises the Board and Parish on financial matters, and is a voting member of the Finance Committee.

**Please contact [Joan Wilson](#), [Claire Petrie](#) or [Dana Kintigh](#) if you would like to learn more. Thank you!**



## Transitional Ministry Team

The TMT continues to meet and discuss topics raised at our January workshop. This process work continues to look at the big picture of "Who is Old Ship". Our mission is to raise conversations concerning where we are now while we also consider our growing edges. This work will culminate in a final report to be presented to the congregation before the end of the church year.



## Sunday, April 19th 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, April 19, 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.

In May, our children will continue to explore our 6th and 7th UU Values, have additional activities that focus on living in a mindful manner with gratitude and from a place of love and mindfulness. We will spend more time outdoors as the temperature warms and practice mindfulness and observation in nature. We hope to see you on Sundays at 10:30  
In wonder and anticipation of a meaningful spring  
Spiritual Exploration Team of Old Ship

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.

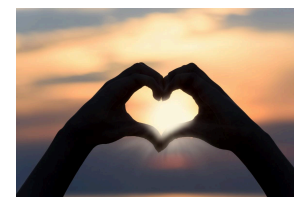
**Fellowship Hour & Snacks**  
**Sunday, May 3rd**

Fellowship Hour will be held at 14 Main Street. **Last names beginning Q - Z** are asked to bring a snack on **Sunday, May 3rd**. 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.

[Joan Wilson](#) 617-947-4664

Debbie Squire-Lee

[Elaine Gomez](#) 781 820 4077

[Claire Petrie](#) 617-642-2438

[Louise Smith](#) 781-690-1165

[Rev. Carie Johnson](#) 508-221-5295

## Musical Notes

Dear Old Ship,

Join us on May 17th for Music Sunday! As usual, this year's service will feature beautiful music and readings, as well as lots of opportunities to make music together as a whole.

Perhaps there will even be a surprise or two! We hope to have as much congregational participation as possible, so whether you're joining us on Zoom or in person, we would love all hands on deck for this yearly service. As always, thank you for your continued support of the music at Old Ship. We are fortunate to have such a kind and caring community.

Musically,  
Christopher



## Wisdom of the Poets

The Simple Chat

A burning coal against the flesh - who has not felt this, from news that reached you, or the shock to your nerves from bearing eyewitness to horrific events?

The avalanches come; we should help dig each other out.

The simple chat will return. May it last long, and be realized as precious.

Persian poet Hafiz (1320-1389)

Responses always welcome - [Elizabeth Torrey](#)



**Trans Parent and Caregiver Support Group**  
**Thursday, May 21st 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](mailto:bobcaravana@gmail.com).



## SUNDAY FLOWERS DONOR

Interested in being a donor for the Sunday flowers? May 24 is available. You may provide your own arrangement, or the Sunday Flowers Committee will create a lovely arrangement for a \$50 charge. Contact [Sharon Prehn](mailto:prehn@verizon.net) (prehn@verizon.net).



*Life Learning*  
at Old Ship  
2025 – 2026



## 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 the 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, May 24th**. 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](#).

**Ceilidh!** – Gathers on the first Tuesday of each month. This means our next monthly song/poem circle will be on **Tuesday evening May 5th at 7:00 p.m.** We are currently planning to gather in the Parlor. Email [Eric Cornetta](#) with any questions about Ceilidh.

## Sacred Texts Meditation Group

**Next gathering: Thursday, May 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](#).

## Old Ship Annual Plant Sale Saturday, May 9th 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

The annual Old Ship Plant Sale is being held on the lawn in front of the Meeting House on Saturday May 9 from 9am – 1pm. We need help in many ways:

1. If you have a garden and can pot-up some perennials to share, please do so.

Please carefully label your plants with as much information as possible including growth habit, height and bloom time. It's great if you can include a photo or a picture of the flower. We find that having photos helps shoppers envision how the plant will look in their yard and this is one of the secrets to the huge success of our plant sales over the past years. If you need pots, please reach out to Janice McPhillips or Brenda Black.

2. We need helpers to pot up and label a large variety of perennials from Brenda Black and Ron Pollara's garden on Whitcomb Avenue in mid-Hingham. No gardening experience or equipment necessary. The last potting up date is Friday 5/1 from 3-5pm. Good company, good tunes, lots of fun! Contact Brenda Black for more info.

3. We also need help transporting plants from Brenda and Ron's house to the Meeting House front lawn on Fri 5/8 from 2-5pm.

4. We will be bagging up composted manure to sell at the plant sale sometime the week of May 4, depending on the weather. If you're interested in helping with that, please contact Janice McPhillips

4. And finally, if you can help the day of the sale too, please contact Louise Smith

To help in any of these ways, please contact Louise Smith at [louise.smith@umb.edu](mailto:louise.smith@umb.edu). For questions about any of this, please contact Janice McPhillips at [jbbmcphillips@gmail.com](mailto:jbbmcphillips@gmail.com) or Brenda Black at [blackpollara@verizon.net](mailto:blackpollara@verizon.net). Thank you!

## Old Ship Church Plant Sale Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> 2026 9:00am to 1:00pm Old Ship Meeting House 90 Main Street, Hingham

Beautiful, healthy perennials from local gardens,  
colorful annuals, and bags of composted horse manure



Cash, checks, or credit cards are welcome  
Proceeds benefit First Parish in Hingham, also known as  
Old Ship Church  
Please join us, rain or shine

## News from the Social Justice Council (SJC)

### May Outreach Offering for the Hingham Food Pantry

Old Ship has supported the Hingham Food Pantry since its founding more than 30 years ago. Given the continuing issues around food insecurity, we have decided to name the Hingham Food Pantry as our special plate recipient for the month of May. We think this is an important way to serve our Hingham neighbors in need. Donations can be made online through the Old Ship website. Click the donate button and then designate your donation for the



Hingham Food Pantry. The outreach offering during a Sunday service will be announced in a weekly newsletter.

In addition to this month's outreach collection, we also collect food donations for the Hingham Food Pantry each week in the Meeting House and at 14 Main; there is a basket in the vestibule for donations. **Currently, the following items are especially needed for the pantry: Pasta Sauce, Crackers, Instant Regular and Decaf Coffee, Granulated Sugar in 1 or 2 pound bags, and Chunky Peanut Butter.**

### **Successful UU Mass Advocacy Day!**

On April 16<sup>th</sup>, Old Ship members Davalene Cooper, Laura Harbottle, Ellie Handleman, Nina Wellford and Nancy Bettinger met with Senator O'Connor and with Representative Meschino's Aides, Jane Fulton and Harrison Bushnell, to ask to advocate support for UU Mass Action's legislative priorities. We had good discussions about bills related to Indigenous People's rights, the environment, criminal justice, trans people's rights, immigration and end-of-life options. The Senator and the Aides responded positively to all of the issues we brought forward. Kudos to Davalene for emphasizing that several of the bills reflect our deep concern for social justice beyond our own community. This is a crucial point because legislators are inclined to focus mainly on issues they believe are important to their own constituents, which can leave marginalized communities to fend for themselves. Thanks to Nancy for organizing the event and to Ellie for being our Zoom manager.

### **Anti-Racism "Drop In" Book Discussion on May 17, at 7 p.m. on Zoom**

**This month, we will be discussing *Black AF History: The Un-Whitewashed Story of America* by Michael Harriot.** Harriot writes that "[t]he story of America is a fantastical, overwrought, and fictive tale. It is a fantasy where Christopher Columbus discovered a land that he never set foot in.... It is George Washington's cherry tree and Abraham Lincoln's log cabin. It is the story of slaves who spontaneously teleported themselves here with nothing but strong backs and a brainful of negro spirituals. It is Betsy Ross's sewing kit and Paul Revere's horse and Thomas Jefferson's pen and Benjamin Franklin's eyeglasses and George Washington's teeth and liberty and justice for all. And it is a history predicated on lies." In reviewing the book, Erica Taylor, in reviewing this book, stated, "Harriot peels back the layers of those lies to reveal stories about the Black experience in this country. He explains how enslaved people skilled at growing rice on the west African coast were responsible for saving "the entire Carolina economic system from collapse — with the introduction of America's first edible cash crop." He breaks down how a massive slave rebellion accelerated the process of the Territory of Orleans becoming the state of Louisiana. He documents the brief period during which formerly enslaved people actually received the 40 acres promised them by General Sherman — until the land was taken back and returned to its former Confederate owners."

All are invited to join us for a discussion led by Brenda Black. The Zoom link is <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87637841227?pwd=LVEbQGUtuRZIB83OZ5U9atbNmfgAHN.1>. (passcode is 139097, if needed). Contact Patti Smith if you have any questions.

### **March Outreach Update**

Thanks to all who donated to L.U.C.E. Immigrant Justice Network in Massachusetts during the month of March. We recently sent them a check for \$1270.92.

## Save the Dates! Celebrate Spirits of '76 June 5th and 6th!

Friends of Old Ship Meeting House and Hingham Cemetery are joining together to celebrate *Spirits of '76*, with two unique events on Friday, June 5th and Saturday, June 6th!



Friday evening at 7 pm, meet at the Meeting House for a brief, inspiring talk by historian Jim Conroy, who will connect the revolutionary spirit of 1776 to the questions Americans are wrestling with today. Then, in the twilight, we'll walk the path from the meeting house to the Cemetery's Ames Chapel. Massachusetts poet laureate Regie Gibson will toast the Spirits of '76 to kick off the rest of the evening, filled with tasty hors d'oeuvres, libations and good cheer. This fund-raiser is \$75 per person.

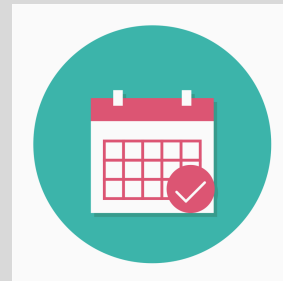
On Saturday, start at the Meeting House at 10 am for guided small-group tours through Hingham Cemetery. Eileen McIntyre has created a captivating glimpse into the stories of 36 everyday and influential townspeople who were alive during the Revolutionary War. The tours run for about an hour and a half; they are appropriate for youth in 4th grade and older, and people comfortable with walking on uneven ground. The rain date is Sunday, June 7 at 1:00 pm. \$25/adult and \$5/youth.

The Friends are thrilled to be working with the Cemetery folks to bring our unique spaces to life. Please join us, and spread the word with your friends! For more info and to purchase tickets, go to [www.oldshipfriends.org](http://www.oldshipfriends.org).

### 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

- **Special Board Meeting - Wednesday, April 29, 6:30 p.m.** Zoom [Click here for the zoom link](#)
- **Choir Rehearsal - Sunday, May 3, 9:00 a.m.**, Meeting House
- **Worship & Music Committee - Sunday, May 3, 12:00 p.m.**, 14 Main Street

**Save the Date:**



Annual Meeting  
Sunday, May 17th  
12:00 P.M.  
Meeting House

## New Office Hours

The office will be open Tuesday through Friday  
9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m



Happy Spring from your  
friends at Old Ship Church!

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

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