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Bridgewater MA 02324

FIRST PARISH CHURCH

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

*50 School Street
Bridgewater, MA 02324*

*Annual Report
2002—2003*



*Annual Meeting
Sunday, May 18, 2003*

*Rev. Rachele D. Rosi, Minister
Pamela Hayes-Bohanan, Parish President*

Minister's Annual Report
First Parish of Bridgewater, MA
May 18, 2003

This first year of my ministry with First Parish has also been my first year as a solo minister. In comparison with my experience as an assistant minister, it has been a challenge, yet the joys of solo ministry far outweigh the difficulties. I have been especially fortunate to have been called to a congregation with such a wealth of lay leaders. The fact that I am only three-quarters time has meant that the congregation must play an active role in planning worship services and in the work of other committees. I admire your commitment to First Parish and greatly appreciate all the hard work of volunteers. Unitarian Universalism, more than any other faith, is "the ministry of all believers." We are a volunteer organization that happens to hire some people to do what volunteers are unable or do not have time to do. Working alongside of you has been the greatest pleasure of this year.

As I look back upon our first year together I make note of the following accomplishments:

1. You have welcomed 5 new members since September. In accordance with the new membership process, these new members attended the New UU course prior to New Member Sunday on March 9th. So far, these new members are all actively engaged in the Parish in one way or another.
2. After a longer than expected wait, the new lift was dedicated on September 29th. Stephen Richard was the first rider on the lift and he was greeted in the Parish hall with balloons and good cheer. An article in the Enterprise documented the event. It was a very special accomplishment for the congregation, and you should rightly be proud to have a lift.
3. The work of Expansion of the building has begun! At a special meeting on February 16, you approved funds up to \$6000 to pay for an architect to draw up preliminary plans for expansion. On March 30th, in my sermon for the closing Sunday of Stewardship month, I offered some ideas for the expansion of First Parish and then asked you to add your ideas in writing. The ideas were passed on to the architect and he is busy working on it.
4. In anticipation of the expansion of the building, the Parish Committee has been working hard to anticipate the expansion of membership and volunteer involvement through the continued work of evaluating committee structures that began during Rev. Dick Fewkes' ministry.
5. Despite our need for more space, the present space received a face-lift this fall when the downstairs Parish Hall was painted. And the space taken up by the Lift created a new room for RE in the basement. It has freed up much needed wall space in the larger downstairs room. The upstairs office and stairwell also received a face-lift as extra desks were removed and a new coat of paint was applied by Peter Lauricella and his crew. They also sanded and re-varnished the back stairs. Our space is still small, but more beautiful.
6. A new tradition was introduced to the First Parish by members Frank Yeatman and Eileen Hiney. Yuleboecks were a tradition in their past UU church in Kansas City and we thank them for sharing this tradition with us. Yuleboecks brought people together during the months of December and January to socialize in people's homes in a way similar to our circle dinners, but in a more informal "open house" format. Turnout showed this new tradition to be a success.
7. In January we began a new worship tradition of lighting a candle in honor of our Partner Church in Haranglab, Transylvania. This time in the service allows for us to reflect on the new relationship we are cultivating with the Haranglab congregation.

8. The relationship between Bridgewater State College and the First Parish continues to improve. Three members of the First Parish, including myself, sit on the Safe Campus Coalition and many other First Parish members are employed by the college as faculty and staff. Other non-First Parish UU faculty and staff have also welcomed me warmly to the campus community. The new president of BSC, Dr. Dana Mohler-Faria, is a member of another South Shore UU congregation and welcomes First Parish as a partner in providing services to students, faculty and staff of BSC. I hope this will become a long-term relationship that will outlast my ministry.
9. Finally, this year's Every Member and Friends Canvass was transformed into a month-long celebration of Stewardship during the month of March, celebrating the stewardship of all our resources. The Stewardship Committee consisted of Peter Fuller, Eileen Hiney, Tom St. Thomas, Kathy Keenan, and Anita Sethares. The Stewardship campaign was a success, resulting in a 11% increase in pledges.

Looking ahead towards next year I would like to make the following suggestions and recommendations:

1. In the hopes of bringing in even more new members (and keeping them), I suggest the New UU course be taught once or twice a year so that new members understand the history of our church and the rights and responsibilities of membership. The New UU course should be open to all, not just for new members. It provides a good basic introduction the Unitarian Universalism and our church.
2. Now that we have a lift, we can now begin the process of making the entire building accessible. I encourage you to make accessibility a major component of the building expansion project.
3. With all the major structural changes that will be taking place, I encourage us not to overlook some current building and grounds needs.
 - (a.) The new RE space in the basement needs to be painted and outfitted with a dehumidifier to prevent art supplies from molding. The space by the bathrooms could also be painted and outfitted for RE use. It is presently being used by an outside renter while RE has little space to put supplies.
 - (b.) Internal and external signs are needed both to inform members of office hours and office and supply locations and to alert outside visitors to the location of the office and sanctuary. Road signs on both driveways should be moved so as to be more visible and the road sign on School St. needs to be replaced.
 - (c.) A complete overhaul of the Parish Hall should be done to remove from the building unnecessary furniture and supplies and find better storage for the necessary supplies. As our membership grows, especially in RE, the space will feel more and more crowded. We need to streamline the space we have until the building expansion is complete.
 - (d.) The donation of a few picnic tables could make the back lawn more usable for RE classes, meetings, or potluck gatherings during the spring, summer, and fall.
4. As First Parish continues to grow it is imperative that increased church staffing be planned for. With your previously settled minister you promised that the congregation was moving towards hiring a full-time minister. Your last settled minister Kim Wood served First Parish for four years at three-quarter time and then you had a half-time interim Dick Fewkes for two years. In the last six years, growth has occurred but you have not yet felt you are able to support a full-time minister. First Parish needs a full-time minister. Consistently since I began last fall, I have gone beyond the three-quarter time allotment,

with many months counting a whole week over, which is equal to full-time. By 2005, assuming our membership growth continues, First Parish should commit to supporting a full-time minister along with adequate support staff including a half-time to three-quarter time church administrator, paid music director, and three-quarter time DRE. Between now and then, increasing the hours and compensation of support staff will make the transition smoother. I suggest that each year between 2003 and 2005 the hours of all support staff be increased by 5 hours a year at UUA guideline compensation. Increased and/or reallocated responsibilities should be part of the increased hours as well.

5. As a way to help raise funds for future staffing costs, I suggest that the Stewardship Committee become a standing committee, perhaps with the added responsibility of organizing or coordinating fund-raising activities year round.
6. Growth of our membership should not be limited to attendance on Sunday morning. As one of the largest employers in Bridgewater, BSC is a prime area for recruitment of new members and it sits right in our front yard (as well as our back and side yards)! There are many UU members of faculty and staff that have already said they would welcome a weekday worship service and a monthly brown bag discussion with other UUs. This "weekday" congregation could become a viable and lively subset of the First Parish, financially supporting itself through offerings at worship, fund-raisers on campus, and "pledges" of some sort. Having a college next door is an opportunity, not a liability. Making BSC programs an official outreach project of First Parish will do a lot to increase membership and involvement on Sundays and throughout the week.
7. Recruitment of new members is something we all need to be a part of. Development on the South Shore is moving incredibly fast and we are competing against some very well-organized evangelical Christian congregations. If we hope to grow our membership we need to commit to a plan of outreach and public relations that is aggressive and welcoming. As many of you have expressed to me, you found First Parish because you needed a place that stood in contrast to the prevailing ethos of your neighborhood or children's school community. We are that welcoming place and we need to let other people know that we're here. Outreach should be the prime directive for the next five years and should be a major factor on how space is allocated in the expansion.

In closing I wish to thank you all for a wonderful first year. They say of a settled minister's first year that it's "the honeymoon year". Well, maybe the honeymoon's over, but the work of this marriage can still be enjoyable even with it's inevitable challenges. I look forward to the years ahead, may they be many. As the sign by the front door to the sanctuary says-- "Spreading the Good News about Unitarian Universalism" -- let us spread the "good news" to our friends and family, coworkers and neighbors. And may we rejoice in our good fortune to be here together.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Rachele Rosi

**First Parish Unitarian Universalist
Bridgewater, Massachusetts
Annual Report – Parish Committee
2003**

The Parish Committee met monthly to conduct the business of the church. Each meeting included the Secretary's Report Treasurer's Report, Minister's Report and RE Report New and Old Business was discussed.

This year we welcomed our new Minister, Rev. Rachele Rosi. An installation ceremony was planned by the Search Committee. The Parish Committee scheduled a "start-up" meeting with Rachele, Bill Zelazny from the Ballou Channing District, and other lay leaders of the church. During this meeting we discussed the history of First Parish, norms, expectations (what the Minister expects of the Congregation and what the Congregation expects of the Minister), and goal setting. Some concerns that were brought up included personnel issues (relationship between board and staff), committee structures, the Congregation's relationship with the UUA and the UUMA, and the Congregation's commitment to getting a full-time minister.

We have had several discussions at our meetings regarding committees. Last year our Interim Minister, Dick Fewkes, met with Committee Chairs to begin the process of reviewing committee structure. Rev. Rosi has looked at the notes from the meeting and has begun to diagram a hierarchy of committees. The Parish Committee needs to continue this work with her. We have also discussed the need to get the liaison program up and running again to improve communication between committees.

Our Church Secretary, Cindy Lyman, brought to our attention that some of our parking lot customers were complaining that too many people who did not have parking stickers were parking in the Church lot, leaving no room for paying customers to park. Our parking lot attendant was asked to tow more aggressively, and to check the parking lot more often.

The Committee also decided to raise the rent on non-Church use of the building. Currently our only renters are Weight Watchers and Al-Alon. Since Al-Alon is a community service the rent was not raised for this group. When Bill Hanson and Tom St. Thomas tried to contact Weight Watchers the contact person proved elusive. As of the April meeting it had not been settled.

The Parish Committee wishes to express its gratitude to Lisa Troy for her excellent work and dedication to the children of First Parish during her two-year tenure as RE Director.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Hayes-Bohanan, Parish President
Bill Hanson, Vice President
Joe Snyders, Treasurer
Julie Wood, Secretary
Deborah Baumgarten
Laura Elmore
Ginger Irish
Louella Mann
Frank Yeatman

DRE Annual Report April 30, 2003

The RE Program has had a busy year, with many new activities introduced, traditions from past years renewed, and new faces joining our classes. I gratefully acknowledge all of our dedicated volunteer teachers, because our RE Program could not exist without them! It is only because of their generosity and commitment to the religious education of our children, that we have had such a wonderful and what I hope has been, for many of us, fulfilling year together. Also, RE Committee members Jenny Donahue, Meg Fedor, Janet Dye, Anne Meade, and Wendy Budwey deserve a special thanks for all their hard work and enormous efforts in helping to run the RE Program. It has been my deep pleasure to work with all of our children, and during these past few years I have thoroughly enjoyed hearing their stories, listening to their joys and concerns, pondering their questions and comments, and watching them grow.

To begin our church year, the RE Office was moved to the corner spot behind the new elevator lift in the lower parish hall. Although a cramped office space, it is a good space for storage of RE supplies and curricula, and the move provided our church with a more spacious office for the minister - and a very nice "welcoming room" for potential visitors. In addition to our move, and with help from the RE Committee, Tom St. Thomas, and many other volunteers, I organized the painting of the lower parish hall, thereby giving our downstairs classrooms a much cheerier look.

In addition to my normal duties of administering the RE Program, I have also been involved with several committees, including Social Justice, Worship, Stewardship, and most recently, the Welcoming Congregation committee. Every month I attend the Parish Committee meeting. Most importantly, I have maintained a high level of interest in current trends in UU religious education, and have spent many productive hours researching, reading and often purchasing new materials for our RE library. By the fall of 2003, our RE library will be quite full.

Highlights of the RE Program for 2002/2003 include:

- **Chapels** have been offered on a monthly basis (except during the Mini arts semester and during the month of December, when we were preparing for our holiday pageant), in groupings of PreK-3, and Grades 4-8
- Once a month, **UU Minutes** have been presented in the sanctuary by our 4th-8th graders, (second year in a row)
- We have started a **junior choir**, under the direction of Lisa Rue. Although not meeting every Sunday, the choir has been organized around key services in the sanctuary, rehearsing at least 3 times prior to a service in which they might be performing.
- Our first **RE Newsletter**, written by the children, was printed and distributed this past fall. This project was led by RE Committee members Wendy Budwey and Meg Fedor
- On two Sundays, lessons were designed and implemented for the entire Sunday school that complemented the theme introduced in big church – namely, the celebration of **Samhain**, and the **Guest At Your Table** program. (This particular structure of Sunday School is one I am hopeful the RE Committee will want to pursue further in the near future: one theme being explored by all classes at the same time with age-appropriate activities designed for the various classes

- **Pledge cards** were designed and distributed to the children of 1st Parish, and their responses to the pledge cards were shared with the congregation on the final Sunday of Stewardship month
- **A beautiful book**, with pictures and information about all of our Sunday School children, was created for Rev Rosi's installation
- A **"Breakfast with Our Minister"** series was introduced this year, hosted by the RE Committee
- A **Teacher Appreciation Breakfast** was given for all volunteer teachers (second year in a row)
- In conjunction with Rev Rosi, I helped **design several intergenerational services**, including Water Communion, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Easter, and Flower Communion
 - An original "Holiday pageant" was created for 1st Parish, based on research, adaptation, and which included my own writing
 - I will be responsible for the design of our RE Sunday presentation, will highlight the work of all our classes, as well as honor all of our wonderful volunteer teachers
- A **6 week mini-arts semester** has again been included as part of our RE Program. This year our work was based on the extraordinary story The Quiltmaker's Gift, which I adapted and directed. The children did a wonderful job, as did all the adults who contributed their numerous creative energies. Lead teachers included Sam Baumgarten (dance), Janet Dye (quilting projects), and Jim Donnelly (music).
- **I have worked to strengthen the Social Justice element of our program by:**
 - having several classes create different types of "gift bags" for the Conway House in Middleboro, in conjunction with the GAYT program;
 - organizing a community soup making project, the proceeds of which went to benefit the UUSC;
 - distributing info about UNICEF, and making boxes available for any interested families;
 - organizing our second canned goods hunt on Easter (we delivered over 120 food items to the local food pantry in Bridgewater)
 - asking that *a quilt be made* by the children as part of our mini arts semester, and then having that quilt donated to a worthy organization
 - continuing the tradition of our Mitten Tree

My recommendations for the RE Program:

- Adult RE Classes must be offered on a more regular basis – given that the DRE's current position calls for only 13 hours a week, I don't believe that the responsibility of Adult RE should fall on the shoulders of the DRE
- All of our books and curricula need to be better organized so more people/teachers may benefit from them
- The DRE and members of the RE Committee should stay actively involved with the Expansion Committee, as our current space problems heavily impact the program
- I would like to see one Sunday a month devoted to a Social justice issue – regular teachers would get the Sunday off, and with the support of the DRE, lesson plans would

be designed for different age groups, but all groups would work with the same theme/issue, etc.

- The RE Committee needs to reach out and encourage more parishioners to volunteer as teachers for the RE Program
- I believe that an evaluation of the RE Program should be scheduled, separate from the monthly RE Committee meetings. At this meeting, I would ask that we look closely at the current structure of our program – even at the Pillars that we have targeted as the cornerstone of our program - and brainstorm alternative structures that offer our children a very different experience than that of “school”. Alternative structures in RE programming has been an important topic for religious educators in the past months (as I have noted on the invaluable REACH list to which I belong), and one worthy of discussion here at 1st Parish
- I am hopeful that the RE Program can sponsor more community or family events in the coming years – events that create traditions, build community, and that also help build memories for our children.

Although I am sad that these are my last months as DRE at 1st Parish, I am looking forward to continued involvement with the RE Program and church life in general, as I most certainly consider 1st Parish to be my church home.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Troy, DRE

**Annual Report of the
Chair of the Religious Education Committee
May 18, 2003**

The current Religious Education (RE) Committee members include Jenny Donahue (Chair), Janet Dye, Anne Meade and Wendy Budwey. Meg Fedor completed her term in January. Marianne Welch-Batstone, Mary Fuller and James Hayes-Bohanan will join the committee in the fall. Meetings were held on the first Wednesday of each month. Members also communicated with each other through phone calls and emails.

The church school program continues to grow both in numbers and spirituality. With the numbers increasing, the issue of space has been confronted. Thanks to the Expansion Committee we are on our way to resolving this issue. The current church school space got a fresh coat of paint at the end of the summer thanks to Tom St. Thomas, the RE Committee and others.

The first edition of the children's newsletter was published. First Parish children submitted poems, stories and drawings for the edition. The publication was well received. The children's choir, directed by Lisa Rue, began rehearsals and performed on several occasions. A new tradition of "Breakfast with the Minister" was established and all age groups were able to meet and talk with Reverend Rachele.

The committee provided teachers with prepaid postcards to send messages to those students who had been absent for a few weeks. It is important that all children know they are missed when they are not here, and that this church family is thinking of them. The committee realizes that teacher training should be provided so that more people will feel comfortable taking on the special task of religiously educating our children.

The RE Committee assisted DRE Lisa Troy with several tasks such as rehearsing with children and preparing the Parish Hall for performances, organizing the supply area, and creating the special soup for the Guest At Your Table project. Lisa Troy has resigned from her position as DRE. The RE Committee has begun to advertise and search for a candidate to fill the position for the fall. As of this writing one applicant has been interviewed. We greatly appreciate all the time and energy Lisa has put into the program, which has really incorporated a child-centered approach.

The Welcoming Congregation Committee has requested our Committee to begin thinking of ways to incorporate this theme/issue into our curriculum. We have also discussed ways of restructuring the RE Sunday morning program. This discussion was sparked by an article in the UU World about boys and church school. We would like to incorporate more social justice projects. The Committee also recognizes that Adult RE is also an important component of Religious Education.

Curricula for fall 2002/spring 2003:

- Preschool - Celebrating Me and My World
(Jim just called out to me that he has renamed it "Celebrating Me and My Boys"; same curricula for spring 2003)

- K&1st Grade - Honoring Mother Earth: Experiences in Native American Spirituality (Same curricula for spring 2003)
- 2&3rd Grade - Honoring Mother Earth (for Spring 2003: UU Journey Class)
- 4&5: Timeless themes; for spring 2003: Honoring Mother Earth
- Grades 6-8: Neighboring Faiths; same curricula for spring 2003

The high school youth group with Middleboro began in the fall, but due to lack of interest, has stopped meeting. The Committee foresees a brighter future for the youth group as the numbers in the upper elementary grades have been growing and the bond between the children seems to be strong.

We would like to thank all the dedicated teachers and helpers for providing their time, energy and love to our children. From those who donate snacks, to helping in the nursery, to teaching one-room schoolhouses, and especially to the weekly classroom teachers, and everyone in between: you are all greatly appreciated. We truly are the church of the open mind, the loving heart and the helping hands.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Donahue
RE Chairperson

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2002-2003

A new process for membership was instituted under the guidance of Rev. Rachele Rosi. The four steps are:

1. Let your interest be known to a member of the Membership Committee
2. Schedule an appointment with our minister
3. Attend one of the twice-yearly "New Member Orientation" classes led by our minister.
4. Attend New Member Sunday and sign the Membership Book.

This process was established as the result of discussion by the committee, Rev. Rosi and our past interim Rev. Dick Fewkes. A three-session class was held in February, led by the minister with the assistance of some church members.

At our March 9th Membership Sunday Service led by Rev. Rosi, First Parish honored new members from the past two years. A special welcome was given to Ellen Compton, Kelley and Stephen Greenlee, Christopher Holton-Jablonski, and Lynda Mullen who have joined during this past year. We are pleased to have them actively participating as Yuleboeck host, workers in the Sunday School, ministerial student, and a member of the Book Club and Hospitality Committee.

Our highly successful book club has been dubbed TUUrnning Leaves, thanks to Jan Thompson. Since November the meetings have been Potlucks at various homes, adding to the congeniality. One exception was the April meeting at which Thoreau's *Walden* was discussed at the War Memorial Park in West Bridgewater on a day and place that were in tune with the book.

A winter round of Circle Dinners was held in four homes with 37 adults and 5 children participating. Thanks to Eileen Hiney and Frank Yeatman a new community tradition was begun. Yuleboecks, holiday open houses, were held in Dec. and Jan. at the homes of Eric and Ellie Ericson, Ellen and Ken Crompton, Sally Payne, and Eileen Hiney and Frank Yeatman. Thanks to all the hosts at these events for helping develop the feeling of community.

Although this has been an extremely active year with the arrival and installation of our new minister and the usual services and programs with many guests in attendance, there have been no weddings or dedications in the immediate church family. A most unusual situation! We mourn the loss of David Sample, brother of Anita Sethares. Rev. Rosi helped officiate at his Memorial Service in Brockton.

We have several graduates to honor. Congratulations to Marianne Terruso on her graduation from Bridgewater State College; Abby Haines from East Bridgewater High School; and Emily Kasmarek from Loomis-Chaffee in Windsor, CT. In the fall Abby will be attending U. Mass at Amherst - Commonwealth College, the Honors College. Emily will be attending New York University in New York City. Our best wishes to them all in their new ventures.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Gilson, chair, Jenny Donahue, Bill Hanson, Ginger Irish, Jeanette Irving, Nancy Paxcia-Bibbins, Jan Thompson and Marianne Welch-Batstone

Annual Report of the Registrar

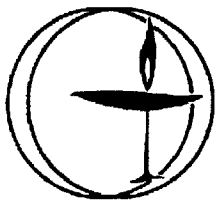
2002-2003

New Members

M. Ellen Crompton
Kelly Greenlee
Stephen Greenlee
Christopher L. Holton Jablonski
Lynda Mullen

Marriages

Ellen Keylor and Michael Query



Worship Committee Annual Report

Welcoming Rev. Rachele Rosi, increasing the involvement of the members of the congregation, and retaining the high quality of worship were the hallmarks of the Worship Committee's work for this year.

The church welcomed Rev. Rosi with great enthusiasm, and installed her as the new minister in a memorable ceremony.

With Rev. Rosi in the pulpit, usually three Sundays a month, the Worship Committee needed to fill fewer Sundays. We were fortunate to welcome outstanding guests to our pulpit, including Rev. Dorothy Boroush, Rev. Katherine Cullen, Ms. Abigail Stockman, Rev. Dick Fewkes, Rev. Jan Knost, and Rev. Eugene Navias and members of the Partner Church committee of Belmont, MA. In addition, members of our own congregation, Dr. James and Pamela Hayes-Bohanan, Dr. Susan Holton, and Nancy Donnelly presented services. Members of committees, including Religious Education, Social Justice, Stewardship, Worship, and Welcoming Congregation and members of the First Parish Choir, also assisted in services.

Every Sunday, at least three different members of the congregation were involved in worship. These included people in the role of Welcomer, Usher, and Visual Focus creator. Bill Hanson continued in the important role of head Usher.

Services were enhanced by the joyful, colorful and creative work of Lisa Troy as she led the children in song, dance and dramatic readings.

The new Children's Choir, under the direction of Lisa Rue, was a welcome addition to our music program.

Nancy Donnelly continued her "above and beyond" contributions to the church as the Choir Director and the Music Coordinator. Nancy Donnelly, Bob Gilson, Dr. Eileen Hiney, Dr. Vahe Marganian, Rosemarie Curran, the Quartet of Jim Slavin, Jim Donnelly, Joe Snyders and John Dye, the Recorder Group including members Pamela Hayes-Bohanan and John Dye, and the First Parish choir provided music for services.

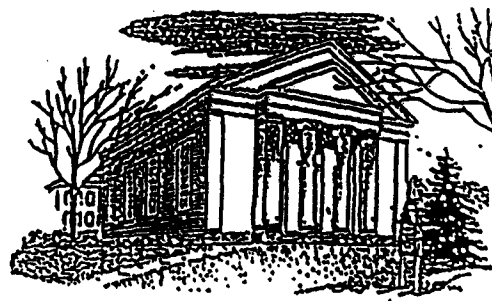
The Worship Committee is a group of dedicated individuals who care deeply about the quality of Sunday worship. It has been an honor to serve with them.

Susan A Holton, outgoing chair

Nancy Donnelly, Janet Dye, Cindy Lyman, Peter Lauricella, Joe Snyders and Rachele Rosi, ex-officio

First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church

50 School Street, Bridgewater, MA 02324
(508)697-2525



Social Justice Committee

April 30, 2003

To: Parish Committee, First Parish Church

Re: Annual Report of Social Justice Committee for 2002/2003

The Social Justice Committee was very active during the past year, organizing many successful and stimulating programs. These included:

1) Guest at Your Table

This year the parish collected a total of \$954.84 to support the social development programs of the UU Service Committee. This is the largest financial contribution ever from our church to the UUSC. The congregation is to be commended for this very strong display of interest in social justice matters.

2) The "Stone Soup" service

Under the direction of Lisa Troy and the Religious Education committee, a Stone Soup luncheon was prepared as a finale to the Guest at your Table service. Profits from the luncheon were donated to the UUSC. This was very a successful event and should become a tradition.

3) MainSpring lunches

This program continues to be very successful thanks to the strong leadership of Betty Gilson. On the first Tuesday of each month, a group of concerned members of First Parish prepare 100 lunches which are then delivered to MainSpring House in Brockton. Special thanks to Debbie Baumgarten, Julie Davidson, Laura and Theodore Elmore, Joanne Giannino, the Hamilton-Domschne family, Thais and Reba Kasmarek, Louella Mann, Anita Sethares, Doreen Slayin, Jan Thompson, and Elsie Whitman for their diligence and hard work.

4) Stoughton Homeless Shelter

The committee contributed \$100 to "adopt" a room at the Stoughton shelter being prepared by the MainSpring House Coalition for the Homeless, with the money being used to make one room livable. Members of the parish also contributed money and items for the new home. Peter Lauricella kindly contributed the supplies and painted the room that was selected by the Bridgewater Council of Churches.

5) Candidates Forum

On October 16th, 2002, the committee hosted the second Political Candidates Forum. State and county candidates representing the Democratic, Green, Libertarian, and Republican parties were invited and they presented their views on range of issues to the public. This program has become a local tradition and will be presented every two years.

6) Equal Exchange coffee

Under the leadership of Janet Dye, fairly traded coffee has been available for purchase by members of the congregation. The sale of this coffee assists local small-scale farmers in Central America. Equal Exchange coffee is served at church functions.

7) Make-a-Difference Day

Due to a heavy downpour on Saturday October 26, 2002, the usual softball game versus Brockton Universalist Unitarian Church become an indoor afternoon of board games and refreshments, about 20 people from the two churches enjoyed friendly competition among mixed teams. Sue Davis of the Brockton church collected personal items and money to deliver to MainSpring House.

8) Canned goods collection

Reviving an old tradition, on the first Sunday of each month, canned goods were collected and delivered to the town food pantry.

9) UU Service Committee service

On April 27th the committee assisted the minister with a service focusing on the work of the UUSC. Several Social Justice committee members participated in the service.

10) Peace Vigils

Several members of the Social Justice Committee joined others in the area in protesting the war in Iraq. They participated in peace vigils in Bridgewater and in surroundings communities.

The committee ends 2002/2003 with a sense of enthusiasm for all of the exciting projects accomplished and for those that still remain.

Submitted by:

Vernon Domingo (Convener)
Janet Dye
Joanne Giannino
Betty Gilson
Thais Kasmarek
Reba Kasmarek
Beth Manchester-Howell
Anita Sethares
Lisa Troy

WELCOMING CONGREGATION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT, 2003

The Welcoming Congregation (WC) Committee conducted "Workshop" in September as part of the regular Sunday service. This was designed to familiarize parishioners with the feelings of bisexual, gay, lesbian and transgender (BGLT) people who are constrained in their ability to share personal information with others.

As part of our increasing visibility as a certified Welcoming Congregation, the committee with the approval of the Parish Committee initiated the addition of the phrase "Welcoming and celebrating lives: gay, lesbian, straight, transgender and bisexual persons" to official church publications. Janet Dye developed new flyers to indicate our new status.

A series of workshops using the new curriculum "WC II, Living the Welcoming Congregation" is being planned. However, the curriculum is still being developed by the Office of BGLT. So an evaluation session was held on March 9th at which time those attending made plans for the next steps for First Parish to take in this journey,

Plans are being made for our church to have representation at the Gay Pride march in Boston on June 14, 2003. On June 1 a workshop will be held to discuss plans and to work on a banner for this event. Participation is invited for this project.

Juanita Brunelle and Betty Gilson, co-conveners
Vernon Domingo, Janet Dye, Beth and Keir Manchester-Howell

**Committee on Ministry
Annual Report
May 18, 2003**

The Committee on Ministry has met with Rev. Rosi on a monthly schedule. Various discussions were held concerning the relationship of the Minister and Congregation. The discussions were positive and open. Hopefully, they made for increased communications and even more positive relations.

Committee members are Nancy Paxcia-Bibbins, Marilyn Lauricella, Jo-Ann Compagnone, Jim Slavin, and Louella Mann.

Respectfully submitted,

Louella B. Mann, Chair

First Parish Church of Bridgewater Massachusetts, Unitarian Universalist

Annual Report of the Partner Church Council Committee

May 2003

James Hayes-Bohanan, Chair

The 2001 – 2002 church year was the second year of our active participation in the Partner Church Council (PCC), an affiliate of the Unitarian Universalist Association. The purpose of the PCC is to form connections between UU congregations in North America and Unitarian congregations in Transylvania, a region of Romania that is the historic hearth of Unitarianism. The partnerships provide opportunities for North American UUs to become more deeply connected to their heritage while providing Unitarians in Transylvania with both moral and material assistance in various struggles that they face as religious and ethnic (Hungarian) minorities in sometimes very difficult situations.

Active members of the committee during this second year include Joanne Giannino, James Hayes-Bohanan, Pamela Hayes-Bohanan, and Janice Thompson. This group maintains contact with the PCC organization, particularly with the First Parish Church of Belmont, Massachusetts, whose partner church in Desfalva shares a minister - Rev. Sandor Szentgyorgy – with our partner church in Haranglab. The Belmont church has been especially helpful in mentoring us as partners. During one of their own trips to Desfalva, a delegation from Belmont brought both greetings and a cash gift from Bridgewater to Haranglab. This money was used the very next day to restore the steeple on the Haranglab church. Our brothers and sisters in Haranglab were interested to learn that our congregations had steeple problems in common.

Early in 2003, several members of the Belmont PCC committee came to Bridgewater to present an especially moving Sunday morning service, in which they shared their experience as a partner church, especially the experiences of their most recent travels to Transylvania. Our PCC committee chair, James Hayes-Bohanan, was able to begin to repay the kindness of the Belmont church by updating its PCC web site. Our own committee web site presents extensive resources on Transylvania and the PCC movement, news on our own church's activities, and daily news headlines from Central Europe.

A wood carver from Desfalva sent a beautiful candlestick that now graces the front of our sanctuary. A candle is lit following the chalice lighting each week in recognition of our slowly growing bond with the Haranglab congregation.

During the spring of 2003, several of our Church School classes prepared pictures and notes for the children in Haranglab, which will be sent with the next available PCC travelers to the area. Several church members, including youth, have expressed interest in a pilgrimage from Bridgewater to Haranglab to take place in the summer of 2004. Our friends in Haranglab would like to see us visit sooner, but this seems to be a very realistic goal. James and Pam Hayes-Bohanan will be leading the trip. The committee would like to explore fundraising options to assist any youth who may wish to participate.

Building and Grounds and Expansion Committee Annual Report
May 18, 2003

Last summer saw several projects underway in the church. The elevator in the parish hall was under construction and was completed in time for the first church service of the fall season. Several church members met to explore possible expansion options including possible modifications in the sanctuary, improvement of the basement space below the sanctuary, possible expansion outside the existing walls of the church, and other ideas. We met with builders who directed us to the basement area as being the most promising. We then talked with John Queen and Peter McCarthy, a structural engineer and an architectural designer, who have presented a plan for designing improvements for the space. Peter has requested that a certified plot plan of the church property be done, and Sally Payne and I have talked with Larry Silva, an engineer and surveyor in town about doing this. Larry said to us that in view of the many property issues going on around us, a more definitive survey might be a good idea. He will give us a proposal explaining our options.

When the surveys and plans are completed, we will have to put the project out to bid, and only then will we know how much money will be necessary. A capital fund drive will then have to be organized before construction could begin.

The near future holds some real challenges for us all, along with huge opportunities to make changes and improvements that will help to make the church facility an even better and more beautiful place to do the things that a church should be doing.

Jim Donnelly

**Annual Report of the
Accessibility Committee
May 18, 2003**

I read the article in the May edition of *UU World*, and was both proud and dismayed. In the fact that little attention was paid to the many volunteer hours given by Chris Kasmarek, Jim Donnelly, John Dye, Tom St. Thomas, Paul Hanley, and myself to make the project a success. I emphasized this to the writer, but I will have to write a letter to the editor to emphasize this fact. I was misquoted in the fact that I didn't say whoever comes, we're ready for them. Until the church installs an earpiece sound amplification system for about \$800 and a handicapped accessible bathroom in the basement, we won't be completely ready to serve everyone. Moving a few front pews for wheelchaired members is still under consideration. I also suggest being sure that anyone who misses the service because of illness or other commitments should be able to obtain a video of the service missed as well as other special events, such as the talent show last month.

Fortunately, we followed the guidelines for elevator construction very closely working with the Town Building Department and Fire Inspectors every step of the way. I just spoke to a member of another congregation in the beginning of expanding their church to make it larger and more accessible with bathrooms and ramps. They not only had to tear down the existing parish hall to expand their Sunday school, they had to remove and rebuild their access ramp to meet the town building codes, to the tune of \$20,000, which is only a small portion of the \$5 million price tag for their building expansion!

Next time you see any of these or the many other volunteers who contribute so much to this church, give them a hug or, at least, a "thank you"!

Eric Ericson

ANNUAL MEETING OF FIRST PARISH
Sunday, May 18, 2003
REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

For those who are new to the Church, the Board of Trustees consists of five members, elected by the Parish, to manage the Church's endowment funds. These funds are invested to produce income for the support of our Minister. This income covers only a portion of the Minister's salary. The remainder (in addition to other church expenses) is raised by the congregation through pledging, fundraising and other contributions. Your Trustees, who have a fiduciary responsibility as custodians of the endowment funds, are committed to, and strictly bound by their bylaws. The Trustees bylaws prohibit the spending of any of the principal. The current value of the funds held by your Trustees is \$329,797.74. Most of the income from these funds is paid to the Parish Treasurer monthly. A small amount is reinvested for growth of the endowment.

It has been another very trying year for this Board. The portfolio has declined from \$336,568.29 to \$329,797.74. This, however, was not as severe as it might have been, had we not made some changes in 2001 and 2002. In spite of that decline, our total earnings were \$20,376.86! That is approximately 6.1%, overall. A total of \$15,512.76 was paid to the Parish for the support of the Minister. That amount exceeded our prediction of \$11,400 by \$4,112.76.

Your Trustees continue to be concerned about market conditions, but have taken steps to reduce risk to our portfolio. During this past fiscal year we have continued investing our funds in more conservative investment vehicles. CDs, although the rates have not been very impressive, have allowed us the opportunity to earn a reasonable guaranteed income, and enjoy the security of FDIC, etc. insurance. This, however, is not intended to be our long term strategy.

The *estimated* total income that your Trustees expect to provide for the Parish during the next fiscal year is \$12,500. Your dedicated Trustees will, of course, continue to monitor market conditions vs. our investment strategy and make changes that seem prudent. The Trustees will advise the Parish President and Treasurer of any events that may cause this estimate to be altered.

Your Trustees, as always, are available to answer any questions and/or provide additional information regarding the management of your Church's endowment funds.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally D. Payne

Sally D. Payne
Treasurer, Board of Trustees

<u>Board Of Trustees</u>		<u>Term Expires</u>
President:	John McGovern	2004
Clerk:	James Slavin	2004
Treasurer:	Sally D. Payne	2006
Trustee:	Nancy Donnelly	2005
Trustee:	Jane Haines	2006

FIRST PARISH ANNUAL MEETING

18-May-03

preliminary REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

PERIOD JULY 1, 2002 TO JUNE 30, 2003

INVESTMENT:		AS OF	FISCAL YEAR TO DATE INCOME			AS OF
		July 1, 2002	July 1, 2002 To June 30, 2003			18-Apr-02
		BEGINNING	INCOME TO	Previously	"G" All Income	ENDING
		PRINCIPAL BAL	PAR COMM	Designated "G"	REINVESTED	PRINCIPAL BAL
B' WATER SAVINGS BANK		\$ 2,500.00	\$ 139.95			\$ 2,500.00
BROCKTON CREDIT UNION 1		\$ 12,032.10	\$ -			\$ 12,032.10
BROCKTON CREDIT UNION 2	C	\$ 21,377.43	\$ 3,793.86	\$ -		\$ -
BROCKTON CREDIT UNION 4 ***	C	\$ 23,517.80	\$ 1,335.22	\$ 3,161.98		\$ -
CRESCENT CREDIT UNION # 5	G	\$ 25,233.33				\$ 25,233.33
DODGE & COX BALANCED # 1		\$ 25,916.44	\$ 1,014.24			\$ 22,919.52
DODGE & COX BALANCED # 2 **	G	\$ 27,396.85			\$ 1,147.60	\$ 26,690.46
FIRST CITIZEN'S FED CRED UN #1		\$ -				\$ 9,000.00
FIRST CITIZEN'S FED CRED UN #2		\$ -				\$ 8,000.00
NORTH EASTON SVGS BANK # 2		\$ -	\$ 378.38			\$ 21,377.43
NORTH EASTON SVGS BANK # 3		\$ -	\$ 69.61			\$ 6,982.43
NORTH EASTON SVGS BANK # 4 ***		\$ -		\$ 153.88		\$ 17,147.31
NORTH EASTON SVGS BANK # 5 ***		\$ -		\$ 164.88		\$ 16,535.37
NORTH EASTON SVGS BANK # 6		\$ -	\$ 12.37			\$ 6,517.81
OAKMARK EQUITY & INCOME	G	\$ -			\$ -	\$ 12,449.76
PAX WORLD FUND (EBC) ***		\$ 39,805.15	\$ 701.94			\$ 38,606.72
PLYMOUTH SAVINGS BANK # 2 ***	C	\$ 17,147.31		\$ 1,023.67		\$ -
PLYMOUTH SAVINGS BANK # 3 **	G, C	\$ 11,571.28			\$ 690.79	\$ -
PLYMOUTH SAVINGS BANK # 4 ***		\$ 21,377.42				\$ 21,377.42
SHARON CREDIT UNION # 1		\$ 39,559.07				\$ 39,559.07
SHARON CREDIT UNION # 2		\$ 5.00				\$ 5.00
SOUTH SHORE SAVINGS BK 2 ***	C	\$ 23,517.81	\$ 1,184.12			\$ -
SOUTH SHORE SAVINGS BK 3 **	G, C				\$ 3,025.71	\$ -
UUA GIF 1		\$ 45,611.30	\$ 2,381.68			\$ 42,864.01
EXCESS CAPITAL GAINS					\$ -	
ADJUSTMENTS			\$ (3.02)			
=====						
TOTALS		\$ 336,568.29	\$ 11,008.35	\$ 4,504.41	\$ 4,864.10	\$ 329,797.74

** Growth fund - income becomes principal and is reinvested by Trustees

*** Previously designated growth fund - Income paid to be deposited in an "emergency fund" for Minister's salary only.

"G" = GROWTH, "C" = Closed

Treasurer's Report

May 1, 2003

Despite the rough winter and the high price of fuel, this has been a financially successful year. Pledges and collections are coming in above budget, and thanks to the diligence of our Trustees, so is the income from the Trustees' funds.

Parking and rental income should be close to budget. We had a very successful Variety Show, and if our Auction is as successful as last year, our fund raising income will also be close to budget. The best news is that, even though we had budgeted to use \$9,975.00 from our Minister's Reserve Fund, we will probably use less than half of it. Although our fiscal year income so far is less than expenses, our General Fund bank balance as of April 30, 2003 is \$ 11,362.00 ?

Our expenses have been higher than budgeted in a few areas. Gas, Oil and Electric are, of course, way over budget. Who could have predicted the events of this year? Office expenses have been higher than budgeted due to a very busy and exciting year. Some additional expenses voted by the Parish Committee that were not budgeted for this year were Rachele's installation, the purchase of the beautiful choir robes, and updating the Minister's Plaque at the back of the church with Rachele's name.

Money from the Chris Canning Fund was used to pay off the last of the Accessibility lift expenses, and to fund the architect's expansion proposal. The remaining amount has been reinvested in a new CD for future use.

Additional accounts as of April 30, 2003 held by First Parish are as follows:

Organ Maintenance Fund – \$1,274.31	Organ Maintenance CD – \$2,083.00
Church Restoration Fund – \$2,877.33	Restoration Fund CD - \$10,234.00
Church Building Fund – \$8,085.73	Chris Canning CD - \$7,291.00
Accessibility Fund – \$430.14	Expansion Fund – \$296.46
Minister's Reserve Fund – \$36,327.20	

(As written in the Trustees' bylaws, this is the portion of the endowment income from interest and dividends that is set aside for the support of the minister. This is over and above the monthly income from the Trustees that goes into our budget for support of the minister.)

Special thanks to those who have paid their pledges up to date, and to all the volunteers that have worked so hard to make this a fiscally successful year.

Joe Snyders, Treasurer for the Parish Committee

FIRST PARISH BRIDGEWATER
Proposed Budget 7/1/03 to 6/30/04

EXPENSES

INCOME

Operating Expenses

1	Office supplies	1,500
2	Postage	950
3	Telephone	725
4	Copier Maintenance	1,800
5	Cleaning Supplies	125
6	RE Supplies, Curricula, etc.	1,000
7	Organist, etc. (42 wks x \$80. + \$350)	3,710
8	Guest Worship Leaders (8 Sundays)	1,200
9	BCD Dues (86 members x \$14.)	1,204
10	UUA Dues (86 members x \$48.)	4,128
11	Leadership Development	600
12	RE Professional Development	600
13	General Assembly - Minister	600
14	Staff Holiday Bonus	400
15	Committee Expenses	300
16	Misc.	500

Pledges	54,400
Collections	3,300
Fundraising	5,000
Parking	13,800
Rentals	4,000
Trustee's Interest	12,500
Minister's Fund	9,663

TOTAL INCOME **102,663**

Operating Subtotal **19,342**

Personnel Expenses

17	Minister - Salary	12,450 *
18	Housing	17,510 *
19	Professional Expenses	3,800 *
20	Benefits	9,500 **
21	Total Minister's Package	43,260
22	RE Director (13 hr / wk)	9,700
23	Secretary (13 hr / wk, \$11. / hr.)	7,436
24	Custodian	4,600
25	Parking Attendant	1,600
26	Childcare (\$20./ wk + xmas, summer)	1,000
27	Insurance - Workers' Comp.	750
28	Payroll Tax	2,300

* estimate

* estimate

* estimate

** Health, Dental, Life, Disability, Pension

Personnel Subtotal **70,646**

Facility Expenses

29	Electric	2,400
30	Gas	1,400
31	Oil	2,400
32	Maintenance: Building & Grounds	1,200
33	Rubbish Pickup	375
34	Snow Removal	800
35	Security	240
36	Water/Sewer	260
37	Building Insurance	2,400
38	Transfer to Building Fund	1,200

Facility Subtotal **12,675**

TOTAL EXPENSES **102,663**