



## Stone Temple News

May 2023

[OPEN THE ATTACHMENT FOR ACTIVE LINKS]

### **From the Minister's Study**

By McKayla Hoffman, Ministerial Intern

### **Article II Revision - Follow-up Information and Getting Involved**

“A creative life is any life where somebody consistently follows their curiosity more than their fear.”  
–Elizabeth Gilbert

On Sunday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, we shared just a bit about the extraordinary, risky, creative work of the Article II Commission, those Unitarian Universalist leaders tasked with leading a national effort to reinvigorate how we language the central purpose of our faith—and how we can shape it to better fit the world in which we live in 2023. Indeed, the work done by this commission and the thousands of Unitarian Universalists who have contributed their thoughts and suggestions is befitting a creative life, in Elizabeth Gilbert's definition above.

In that spirit, we are all invited to follow our curiosity, our hopes and dreams, and our greatest imagining for our faith by becoming involved in the Article II revision process!

If you are interested in getting involved, or are curious about what this re-languaging looks like and means, you are encouraged to check out the resources below.

What is Article II?

Article II is the section of the Unitarian Universalist Association Bylaws that describes the purpose of our congregations—who we are, what we believe, and how we are called to be together and in this world. Check out this [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page to learn more, including why we outline our purpose, the history of previous changes to Article II, how the proposed Article II came about, what the process has been like, and much more.

All are especially encouraged to read the [Article II Study Report](#), which contains our current Article II and the proposed changes.

How can I get involved?

[General Assembly](#)

May is upon us, and we are ever closer to [General Assembly 2023!](#) General Assembly is the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists in the United States, which takes place in person (this year in Pittsburg, PA) and online. During General Assembly, there will be a formal “mini-assembly” amendment process for Article II, when folk can discuss and suggest amendments. Then, delegates from congregations across the United States will vote on this amended version at General Assembly 2023. The Article II Study Commission will then take this version and clean it up for a final vote in 2024.

Please reach out to [David Bousquin](#), Office and Property Manager, if you are interested in being a delegate (a congregant with voting privileges at General Assembly) for United First Parish Church at General Assembly.

## Discussion

In advance of General Assembly, there will be three amendment discussion workshops on May 11, May 18, and May 21. You can register for one of these workshops by visiting the [Article II Study Commission page](#) and scrolling down to the “Discussing Amendment Ideas” section.

Next year, we will be discussing Article II in detail through worship services and programs. If you’d like to get the conversations started now, feel free to use these [conversation prompts](#) to guide you.

## Submitting Ideas/Suggestions

If you cannot or do not wish to participate in General Assembly, you can also submit suggestions (not amendments) to the proposed Article II [here](#); we encourage you to follow the link at the beginning of this form to get a sense of other’s thoughts and suggestions, and to be involved in the conversation on a larger scale.

If you have any questions or would like to talk more about anything related to Article II, or other efforts or organizing in wider Unitarian Universalism, you are always welcome to reach out to [Rev. Rebecca Froom](#) and [myself](#).

Beloveds, let us use the creative potential of these times to awaken curiosity where there might be fear or cynicism. Let us embrace our living tradition, our faith that uniquely calls us to challenge, stretch, and breathe new life into what our Unitarian and Universalist ancestors gave us. And, let us imagine generously, together.

## **Sprit Circle**

By Nan Moore, Director of Family Ministry

First, as April comes to an end, I want to thank Brenda Reed, Marie-Louise Jackson-Miller, David Bousquin and Albert Vaughn for their support before, during and after the Earth Day Worship service on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The group provided such a nice luncheon for the community and their efforts were appreciated by all who enjoyed the luncheon. Also, a BIG thank you to Andrew Carleen and Peter Kovach for helping the children plant some seeds for the organic farm and assisting our Holly Hill instructor Jon Belber. Thank you so much!

May has arrived! This is the time of year the RECOM will be thinking about an ending to the first year of our pilot program and sharing new creative ideas for next year. This month the instructors for Music, Mindfulness and Earth Carers will be bringing their learning lessons to a conclusion as they prepare for an ending with the children.

NEW RECOM MEMBERS NEEDED! At the May 21<sup>st</sup> RECOM zoom meeting members will be meeting to discuss who will be returning on the committee next year. This month I will be reaching out to invite a church member to join our engaged committee next year. We are seeking another parent to be on the committee as a voice for what we will be creating next year in Spirit Circle. In May the RECOM will begin percolating new ideas and possibilities for 2023-2024. We are also seeking a NEW non-parent member to help with ideas and setting up some Adult Education classes for the coming year and how to space them out by content variety, time, and interest. There has already been a request for an adult education class on Buddhism and meditation practice. If you have ideas for any new adult programs please contact me, Nan Moore [nanmoore5@gmail.com](mailto:nanmoore5@gmail.com)

**May 7:** Spirit Circle Music instruction with Elisabeth Moore. This will be Elisabeth’s last instruction class for the year, please join her for a full-on fun time of singing and celebration. RE HOST will be Andrew Carleen.

**May 14:** Mother’s Day Multigenerational Worship service whereas the children remain in the sanctuary for the entire service, which will be provided by Rev Rebecca and Ministerial Intern McKayla Hoffman.

**May 21:** Spirit Circle Mindfulness with Paula Webster. Paula invites all to come to the Spirit Circle room to pay attention to how mindfulness can help bring a state of peace and calm as a valued part of your children’s lives. There is no more adult RE classes. April was the final class.

**May 28:** Spirit Circle Earth Care with Jon Belber. Jon will also be providing the message for all ages this Sunday. Jon prepares lesson that are in harmony with the cycles of the earth all year round, which include his enthusiasm and earth wisdom.

Here is my latest video I created here in Scotland. I will be returning on June 14th. This video is a bit longer because there is a lot to see in the Findhorn community. I hope you enjoy it. Please give me any feedback or comments on these videos and specifically if you would like them to continue <https://youtube/KVyJPBaHY-I>.

May you enjoy this time of being together appreciating the sacredness of our UFPC community. Shalom, Salaam, Shanti, Paz, Mir, Peace.

### **Social Justice Action Committee**

By Claire Fitzmaurice, SJAC Chair

### **Donation Drive for Interfaith Social Services**

Extended through this month of May

The Social Justice Action Committee will co-ordinate with the RE Committee for one more Donation Drive for the Interfaith Social Services [ISS] to collect personal care and hygiene products to be distributed at the Food pantry located at 105 Adams Street. Our drive is extended through the end of this month of May.

SNAP and WIC benefits do not include personal care and hygiene products. These products include bars of soap, toilet paper, toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental floss, shampoo and deodorants. The members and friends of UFPC gave generously in November. Our Youth Group assembled bags of your donations. That extra effort was especially appreciated by the very busy volunteers of the Food pantry. Additional products that are in great need are diapers both for adults and infants. Sun screen products will also be helpful as the warmer weather comes. Our big green collection boxes will be located in the foyer of the Sanctuary and the Parish Hall. Thank you all so very much.

### **The Mother's Day Peace Walk (MDW4P)**

<https://www.mothersdaywalk4peace.org>

The SJAC is interested in fielding a group of members and friends to participate in the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Mother's Day Peace Walk. If you would like to represent UFPC, please contact Claire Fitzmaurice at [artclaire@comcast.net](mailto:artclaire@comcast.net) or 617-272-0274.

The Walk is "a beloved 27-year-long Boston tradition to create more peaceful communities. It is the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute's largest fundraising event to grow and sustain our services, advocacy and training. Our goal is to empower survivors, Generation Peace and communities impacted by murder, trauma, grief and loss to cultivate cycles of peace and healing."

If you are unable to participate in person, or we do not get a team together this year, there are a couple UU churches that are already accepting pledges. We recommend that you go to the website to learn more.

### **Welcome to the Path of Creativity**

A May reflection from Soul Matters theme-based ministry

"Creativity is our ability to dream things up and make them happen."  
— Peggy Taylor

Dreaming things up. We're all familiar with that part of the quote. Who doesn't love conjuring up new ideas and images? Who isn't impressed when someone takes pieces of what is and - almost magically - presents us with what could be?

However, the same can't be said about the second half of the quote, the part about "making those dreams happen." That side of the creativity equation gets short shrift. We celebrate the fun piece about dreaming and leave off the hard piece of making our imaginings real.

And it's not just the hard part; it's the scary part too. Maybe that's why we avoid it. Putting something new into the world takes bravery, whether that's a piece of art or the art that is you. Being creatively unique can cause the crowd to cheer and swoon, but it can also lead to being laughed at and left out. Yes, there is joy, beauty and play in creativity, but there is insecurity, loneliness and self-doubt as well. Which means that this month is not just about imagination, artistry and self-expression, but also courage.

Once that's in view, it's clear that we also need to talk about "co-creativity" this month. Something as daring as creativity is dangerous if we try to do it alone. Indeed, where did we get the silly idea that artists, innovators and originals are isolated, independent geniuses? When it comes to myths about creativity, that one tops the list. We need to remind each other that there is no such thing as "a person of creativity," only "people of creativity." For instance, new ideas come from the clash of debate. New art emerges after inspiration from those who've gone before. Better forms of community are built on the back of those who have toiled and sacrificed long before we put ourselves on the line. Bottom line: there are no creators without companions!

It's all a way of reminding us that the secret to creative self-expression is staying connected to each other. Those sacred sources of inspiration inside us – our imagination, unique voice and inner muses – are like wild animals: They are hungry to run free but are also shy and easily scared away. They want to come out and play, but will only do so when coaxed and cared for by the inspiration and support of others.

So, in the end, maybe the most important question this month is not just "What do you want or need to create?" but also "Who are your partners?"

## WORSHIP SERVICES

Worship services are held on Sunday mornings at 10:30 am [unless otherwise stated] in-person and via livestream.

[May 7]

### **"It is Solved by Walking: Celebrating World Labyrinth Day"**

Rev. Rebecca Froom and McKayla Hoffman

In honor of World Labyrinth Day, we reflect on the spiritual practice of labyrinths. Following the service, we'll head across the street to the library lawn to create a walking labyrinth with chalk lines, under the creative leadership of Claire Fitzmaurice and Beth Cook.

[May 14]

### **"The Creator's Workshop"**

Rev. Rebecca and McKayla Hoffman

Where do we come from? Join us for a multigenerational worship where we tell a fantastical (and very interactive!) story, about our planet's birth, in which humans are given the precious gift of freedom. When is our freedom to choose one thing instead of the other frightening? When does it feel especially juicy, and ripe with promise? How do we use our freedom wisely?

[May 21]

### **"Leaves from the Vine"**

McKayla Hoffman and Rev. Rebecca Froom

What makes anything sacred? Does something become sacred because of our imagination, our experiences, or perhaps our material reality? This Sunday, we will expand what we imagine is worthy of veneration, and explore how we can embody the sacred for the transformation of ourselves and our world.

[May 28]  
**“Show Your Love”**  
McKayla Hoffman and Congregation

How do we share our generosity with our neighbors in the greater Quincy community, as a congregation and as individuals? On April 30<sup>th</sup> we had a “reverse offering” where we gave congregants cash from the Minister's Discretionary Fund with the invitation to use these funds in creative ways to support the needs of our Quincy area community. In this service we share our stories and insights for how we used this money to show our love for our community beyond the walls of our Stone Temple.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

For our most up-to-date announcements, please see our “Weekly Announcements” which are emailed to the congregation on Thursdays or Fridays, posted on our website and available by print on Sunday mornings.

**Sunday Morning Meditation**

Sundays, 9:00 am, in-person

We will have meditation on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am outside in the garden, weather permitting, and in the church parlor (with masks) when it rains. Our practice includes guided, walking, and silent meditation. Feel free to contact Marie-Louise at [marieljm1961@yahoo.com](mailto:marieljm1961@yahoo.com) or 857-526-2579.

**Standout Quincy for Black Lives**

Thursdays, 3:30–5:00 pm, in-person

UFPC partners with Quincy for Transformative Change for an initiative in support of Black Lives Matter. We stand in front of the church to bear peaceful witness and to advocate for justice and equity for our fellow citizens of color. You are invited to join our small but dedicated group. Kindly contact Claire Fitzmaurice at 617-272-0274 or [artclaire@comcast.net](mailto:artclaire@comcast.net). Please check out our Facebook page: StandOutQuincy4BlackLives managed by our co-leader Mimi Balsamo who can be reached at [mimibalsamo@gmail.com](mailto:mimibalsamo@gmail.com).

**Book Group**

Thursday, May 4, 7:00 pm, online

The Book Group meets on the first Thursday of the Month from 7:00 to 8:30 pm, with a gap in summer and in December. All members and friends are welcome to join us. We will conduct our meetings via Zoom. Each year, we choose a variety of genres and forms. This Church Year all our selections are in response to book banning across the United States. You are welcome to come even if you have not finished the book.

The book this month is Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison (1952). It is the story of a young, college-educated black man struggling to survive and succeed in a racially divided society that refuses to see him as a human being. Told in the form of a first-person narrative, the book traces the nameless narrator's physical and psychological journey from blind ignorance to enlightened awareness through a series of flashbacks in the forms of dreams and memories. The novel is set in the US during the pre-Civil Rights era when segregation laws barred black Americans from enjoying the same basic human rights as their white counterparts.

Join by computer: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89427298331>

Join by telephone: 1-646-558-8656, Meeting ID: 894 2729 8331

## **Writing Group**

Sunday, May 7, 12:00 pm, in-person

Our UFPC Writing Group will be meeting again this year. We will meet the first Sunday of the month in-person in the parlor at 12:00 pm. There are no meetings in January or June. As in past years, we welcome everyone to join us in a free writing session and optional sharing of our words that pursue thinking on a theme. This is a non-critiqued, open minded, generous group that encourages self-expression in a supportive gathering. You can attend one or more sessions. No advance reservation is required. Groups tend to vary in size between 6 and 14 participants, and the session lasts for forty-five minutes to one hour. Contact facilitator Jim Petosa at [jimjamespeto@aol.com](mailto:jimjamespeto@aol.com) or 301-442-3781.

## **Kindred Spirits Discussion Group for Seniors**

Friday, May 19, 10:00–11:30 am, in-person

Join Rev. Rebecca for a monthly discussion group, grounded in our UU values, where we reflect on current events and pressing social issues. This group is open to seniors aged 60+ and will meet on the third Friday of the month at our church in the parish hall. Coffee and tea are provided! Please contact Rev. Rebecca with any questions at [rev.rebecca.froom@gmail.com](mailto:rev.rebecca.froom@gmail.com) or 617-803-1159. If you need to enter the building via the handicapped accessible entrance, please contact David Bousquin at 617-842-1706.

## **Congregational Annual Meeting**

Sunday, May 21, 12:15 pm, in-person and online

The Board of Governors invites members and pledging friends to attend our congregation's Annual Meeting at 12:15. In this meeting we will vote on our budget for the coming year and elect new members to our Board of Governors, Committee on Ministry, and Nominating Committee. We will also unveil our new United First Parish Church logo!

## **Poetry Group**

Rev. Rebecca, Albert Vaughn and Florence Noonan have been discussing the formation of a poetry group at our church. Several members and friends have already shown interest in the idea. What does poetry mean to you? An expression of feelings and ideas? Perhaps of beauty? If you are interested in poetry and would like input in forming a poetry group, please contact Albert at [vaughn.albert@icloud.com](mailto:vaughn.albert@icloud.com). We will hold a founding meeting later this spring.

## **General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association**

Wednesday, June 21–Sunday, June 25, in-person or online

Every year thousands of Unitarian Universalists from around the world gather for a General Assembly to discuss and vote on the business of the UUA, participate in workshops on a broad range of topics, and attend meaningful worship services with great music and inspirational preaching. General Assemblies are now held in a multi-platform format where participants can attend virtually or in-person. This year GA is meeting in Pittsburgh, PA. For more information and registration go to [uuu.org/ga](http://uuu.org/ga). Please let Rev. Rebecca or Jim Petosa know if you are interested in serving as a UFPC Delegate for the business meeting portions of GA. There are also limited scholarships available through the Ministerial Discretionary Fund for UFPC members to attend GA; contact Rev. Rebecca and [rev.rebecca.froom@gmail.com](mailto:rev.rebecca.froom@gmail.com) for more information.

## **Visitors Program Vignettes**

By Bill Westland, Church Historian

Seeing as we opened the Visitors Program on Patriots Day and will be open seven days a week after having a reduced schedule because of the pandemic, I thought that I would once again give you a brief history of it. Back in 1976, the Bicentennial Year, church member, Dorothy Wrigley, started the Visitors Program. The church was



open for tours from July 4<sup>th</sup> to Labor Day, seven days a week. All the guides during the week were volunteers, some church members and some not, and Dorothy and her husband, Walter, did the weekends. This was an amazing undertaking. Some of our guides were public school teachers so this fit into their school year. There was not any admission charge and only a voluntary donation box. The premise was that the church was performing an important community service after being declared a National Historic Landmark in 1970, and was not trying to make a profit. Whatever money that came in from donations was used for printing up handouts etc. and was never part of the church budget.

In 1989 Dorothy “retired” from running the program, and for one year, 1989, former State Treasurer Tim Cahill, who at the time was a City Council member, ran the program. Tim also owned what is now Craig’s restaurant back then, so was always close by. He gave up running the Visitors Program after that one year, and from 1990 through 1992 I tried to keep it going. Most of the volunteers now were quite elderly and the best I could do was to stay open three days a week. I thought that we had a duty to stay open to the public, plus the only way to get grant money for building maintenance etc. was to emphasize UFPC’s historical importance. I still feel the same way. In 1993 Mayor Sheets, who was trying to create tourism in Quincy, made us a proposal. If we would stay open from April 19 to November 11 like the National Park Service, he would get us \$20,000 in corporate donations in order to hire a director of the program, and the National Park Service would provide rangers to conduct tours along with our volunteers. We would also have to start charging admission in order to pay the director and cover other expenses. This worked out well for a couple of years until the corporate funding dried up and we started to run a sizable deficit. The city ran a concert by the Irish tenor, John McDermott, in 1997 to eliminate the deficit, and then the Quincy Patriot Ledger in 1999 ran a public subscription campaign to keep the program going. Our debt at that point was \$26,281. That same year the National Park Service pulled out its rangers without warning and we were completely on our own. We survived thanks to the subscription campaign. It showed that people of Quincy really liked us and wanted us to remain open.

Things turned around in the early 2000’s as tourism picked up when the Adams HBO series and the David McCullough book about John Adam created a tremendous interest in the Adams family. Also, thanks to Kirt Switzer we started to get support money from the Massachusetts Secretary of State. It has varied from \$4000 to \$10,000 a year. I figured out last year that from the year 2002 to the pandemic year the tour program has shown a profit of close to \$8000 a year. Now the program is part of the church budget and the proceeds go to the church, which pays the salary of the director (when we have one) and other expenses of the program. Incidentally, the last time we tried to get corporate sponsorship was back in 2007, so perhaps now is a good time to try again. I was hoping for more income over the years, but at least we are not losing money, and to my way of thinking it is important that we be open to the public.

We have had four directors since 1993. Soon after the last director, Bob Damon, left to work for the City of Quincy four years ago the pandemic set in so he was not replaced. We weren’t open for tours that year at all that year, and decided to wait to see what happened the next year before hiring a replacement for Bob. We hoped to get through that year without a replacement, managed to, and haven’t hired one since then. We couldn’t have done this without the outstanding and loyal group of volunteer guides that we have, both church and non-church members. This is my 36th year being involved in the program, and in all that time I cannot remember a single complaint about any of our volunteers. This is really remarkable. The only complaints that we receive once in a while are from people who think that the tour should be free. They don’t realize that even though we are considered to be part of the Adams Historic National Park, we are completely independent and do not receive any money from the Federal government. I wish that we did, but we don’t.

After being completely closed in 2020 we opened for tours on Fourth of July in 2021, Patriots Day in 2022, but only six days a week, but this year we are back to normal and will be open seven days a week again. Unfortunately, the Adams National Park won’t open until May 21st, and then for only five days a week, which certainly won’t help us, but we shall see and hope for the best. We had to cancel our signature Presidential Birthday Wreath Laying ceremonies in 2020, had watered down versions in 2021, but last year for the birthday of John Quincy Adams in July were able to have the usual ceremony but without the reception. In October we had both the ceremony and reception for John Adams including the birthday cake, and intend to do the same this year.

## Church Staff and Lay Leaders

Staff: Rev. Rebecca Froom (Lead Minister), Rev. Dr. Sheldon Bennett (Minister Emeritus), Nan Moore (Affiliate Lay Community Minister), McKayla Hoffman (Ministerial Intern), David Bousquin (Office and Property Manager), Norman Corey (Music Director)

Board of Governors: Jim Petosa (President), Juan Ramos (Vice-President), Clyde Cortright (Treasurer), Erwin Schaareman (Assistant Treasurer), April Bargout (Clerk), Kim Dangora and Karl DeBisschop (Stewardship), Claire Fitzmaurice (Social Justice Action), Elizabeth Black (Communications), Marie-Louise Jackson-Miller (Congregational Life), Peter Kovach and Kendra Dupiton (Religious Education)

Congregational Committees: Ann Marie Willer (Committee on Ministry), Fiona Sankey (Nominating Committee)

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Office and Property Manager [David Bousquin]: [office@ufpc.org](mailto:office@ufpc.org)

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