



Stone Temple News

June/July 2024



From the Minister's Study

By Shiloh Hoffman, Ministerial Intern

When I first pulled up to United First Parish Church in the summer of 2022, I was a little starstruck. I tried to conjure the picture I had of it when I drove by it in 2016 after visiting the Adams National Park, but what I remembered hardly did it justice. I thought about the legacy of this place, and the residual energy that radiated in a powerful, persistent way. I felt the earth deep beneath my feet where the ancestors of the Neponset band of the Massachusetts tribe hunted, fished, and settled for millennia. I felt the gravity of the Adams family and what they left behind, evidenced by both a very Unitarian granite building and the beating heart of our democracy. I wondered what it would be like to learn and grow in such a place. I took a deep, readying breath.

And, I had no idea of the warmth, authenticity, groundedness, healthy systems, and love of this community that permeated from the inside out.

The photo above is the first picture I took of UFPC—taken neither from a great angle nor with spectacular lighting, but it is one that I treasure. And as I scrolled through my phone to find this image, I found precious memories we've all made together: garden beds built by young hands, the fireplace lit on New Year's Day, an awe-inspiring array of Sunday flower arrangements, decorating the sanctuary for Christmas (and a few of us belly-laughing when the Santa hat kept falling off of John Quincy Adams' marble bust). I continued to scroll and saw the heart that the young ones drew in the center of our grass labyrinth, the Radiators jamming out in the 2023 auction, and the twinkling lights adorning the square as we ventured outside during the Christmas eve service. And in between these memories, there have been beloved members of our community we have said goodbye to, great losses endured within the congregation and in our world, and injustices that we've answered with love.

Beloveds in faith, these memories mean so much to me. And, this experience has shaped both the person and minister I am today. I count myself so lucky to have been able to learn from and with each of you in these two short years.

As I make my leave as your intern, I do so with a heart feeling full with the gifts and learning you have given me, and with sadness to leave you. In the spirit of leaving you each well, I want to clarify what an intern leaving looks like. There are important boundaries that the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) expects of interns when their time at a congregation ends. The UUA requires interns to cease contact with congregants at their internship site for at least one year a.) to give the intern (and congregation) space to experience grief, and then recognize ministry as a service, b.) to re-clarify your relationship to Rev. Rebecca as your primary minister and give her the space to do her transformative ministry, c.) to give any potential interns of the future spaciousness to grow unimpeded, and d.) so that I can focus on ministering to those in my new context. For me, this transition means that it will be important to disconnect from you all in person and also online/through social media. I will remain in collegial contact with Rev. Rebecca, and she will be aware of my professional milestones and will keep you all updated.

Please know that I hold these boundaries with great love and respect for you, and for our collective calling in this faith to nurture healthy relationships, ministries, and congregations. Know that I will treasure UFPC and this beloved collective, *always*. Many layers of emotion can well up during transitions and goodbyes like these. Amidst these feelings, I am breathing with you. And, I am celebrating you, this special community, and the next bright chapter of UFPC's history. I feel incredibly hopeful for what lies ahead for this community: for the community partnerships to be strengthened, for the loving strength and capabilities of your leadership, and for the difficult and good work of building Beloved Community that is nurtured here.

I want to first thank Rev. Rebecca, who has been an exemplary mentor and who I am so fortunate to count as a friend and colleague. I extend my gratitude to Nan Moore, David Bousquin, and the Board of Governors for your prophetic leadership and enthusiastic support of my learning. And, I thank each and every congregant and friend of UFPC for your good hearts, your sense of humor, and your ever-open arms of welcome. There is so much good that you have done over the last two years, and I know that your circle of welcome and love will draw ever wider. Indeed, it is one of your greatest strengths.

And so, beloveds,
Remain bold and unapologetic in your "you-est" selves,
Continue to share your gift of tenderly holding stories,
And don't forget: you are *loved*, and you are *enough*.

With my great admiration and hope for our journeys.

—Shiloh Hoffman

Spirit Circle

By Nan Moore, Outgoing Director of Family Ministry

As we enter June and July we will enter the end of the year and the Summer Solstice.

June 2: Our Spirit Circle classroom will be led by Olga Popova, which will be the last class she will be teaching for this year. Olga will not be returning next year as she will be moving on to New York City. Olga stepped in to the music instructor in January when we needed a teacher. We are thankful for her engagement and her request for feedback to learn teaching in the environment here in UFPC. The helper this Sunday will be Mariah Maines and Nan Moore.

Following the service there will be a Quincy Pride Festival. On the website it stated: The event will include special presentations by Reverend Rebecca Froom, local representatives, including members of the City of Quincy LGBTQIA+ Commission along with a performance from the Quincy Choral Society. This should be a fun festival and celebration hoping you will be joining the community of Quincy following worship beginning at Noon.

June 9: Spirit Circle a Multigenerational Celebration. This will be a time to celebrate the children and their accomplishments as well as fun music, slide show, and overview of this year. Our instructors will be present to reflect on this year, as well as Shiloh and Nan. Following the service, we will enjoy a pot luck lunch with the entire community.

June 16: Flower Communion (multigenerational); this service will also include a farewell to Ministerial Intern Shiloh Hoffman and Director of Family Ministry; We hope you can join us on this special Father's Day and end of the year.

Exiting as Director of Family Ministry:

I will be creating a comprehensive document for my successor, incoming Director, that will include the logistics and whatever is needed to inform that person of Spirit Play and "How it Works". I will be ending my work here as your DFM at the end of June 2024. I have served this community as an Acting Director, Religious Education Director, Lay Community Minister, and finally Director of Family Ministry, on and off over the course of 17 years. I have known this congregation in many ways through the years with its challenges and successes. Gratitude is what is in my heart as I leave this position. The opportunity to birth a new idea and develop a spiritual program for children and youth anchored in creativity after the time of isolation following covid, has brought me real creative joy and a sense of completion within. I now complete my own Life Circle knowing I was called to a purpose here, which brought out my gifts, contributions and best qualities. I appreciate all of you and the staff I have worked with here.... precious is what comes to mind. Going forward I will not be a part of the RE program in the future but I will continue in my role as your Affiliated Lay Community Minister when I am needed. Thank you so much for allowing me to step into the welcoming comfort in a place of belonging knowing in my heart I can always return. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

With love and gratitude.

–Nan Moore

Welcome to the Gift of Renewal

A June reflection article from Soul Matters Sharing Circle

We are renewed by so many things: nature, each other, memory, music, play, solitude, silence, and - of course - our faith. Through small groups, calls to justice work, worship, caring for one another, covenant and accountability, our faith breathes new life into us.

But it also renews us in a way that often goes unnoticed: through questions! Or to be more precise, our faith has a sneaky way of changing our lives by changing the questions we ask.

Questions around renewal are a great example of this.

For instance, the "renewal questions" lifted up by our secular culture revolve mainly around health (Are you drinking enough water? Are you getting enough sleep?) and work/life balance (Are you making enough time for family, play and rest?). Those are fine questions, but they only go so deep and push us so far.

Here's where our faith comes in. It enters the scene and in effect says, "Hey, look over here. There's a box with an entirely different set of renewal questions that maybe you haven't opened yet." Questions like:

- Are you sure it's your body that's tired, or could it be your soul?
- What if "time away" isn't about restoring yourself in order to return to work, but rather making space to decide if it's time to re-imagine what your "true work" really is?
- Is it time to renew your responsibility to those who will come after you?
- Is it time to renew your commitment to carry on the work of those who came before?
- What if you saw your daily living and loving as an opportunity (even a calling) to renew others' faith in humanity?
- Could it be that continual self-improvement is not the path to renewal, but instead compassionate acceptance of who you already are?

And those are just the questions sitting on top of the pile! So, friends, this month, let's renew and refresh the questions we ask. Let's remind ourselves that, indeed, we change our lives by changing our questions. And, maybe most importantly, let's each ask ourselves, "What renewing question do I want to take with me into the summer?"

WORSHIP SERVICES

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

[June 2]

“Let Your Inner Star Shine”

Shiloh Hoffman and Rev. Rebecca Froom
Tony Winters, Guest Musician

There is a wide gulf between the world we wish for and the world that exists. And, in this space of possibility, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ+) folx and allies boldly journey to build a more compassionate, loving, and radically welcoming world. But when hope is hard to find, how can the work continue? What “North Star” can we follow when injustice goes unanswered, or when hatred overshadows progress? Join us for a community Pride Month service where we will source hope in the holy work of building a more just world. Following the service, all are welcome to gather on the Hancock-Adams Common to parade to the Quincy Pride Festival at Ross Parking Lot.

Please note, in this service we will not be having Joys and Sorrows. There will be the option of participating in a short sharing of Joys and Sorrows before the service, in the parlor at 10:15 am, led by Rev. Rebecca Froom.

[June 9]

“Celebrating Spirit Circle”

Nan Moore and Rev. Rebecca Froom

In this multigenerational service we celebrate and honor this year’s Spirit Circle program and the ways in which we have experienced renewing multigenerational community this year. Our four Spirit Circle Instructors will join Nan Moore (newly returned from Scotland!) and Rev. Rebecca to lead this service full of music, story, and art.

[June 16]

“Flower Communion Sunday”

Rev. Rebecca Froom and Shiloh Hoffman

On our final Sunday of the church year, we invite everyone to bring in a flower to participate in the Unitarian Universalist tradition of a “Flower Communion.” In this multigenerational service we offer our goodbyes and blessings to our Ministerial Intern, Shiloh Hoffman, and Nan Moore, our Director of Family Ministry as they leave these positions in our congregation.

Chalice Circle: Creating our Covenant and Chalice Circle Schedule

Sunday, June 23, 10:30–12:00, parish hall

What topics are on your mind and heart this season? Join us for our first Chalice Circle of the summer where we will create our covenant, brainstorm topics, and set a schedule of presenters. Each summer we gather on Sunday mornings for Chalice Circles rather than worship. Chalice Circles are a form of small group ministry which invites deep listening, reflection, and sharing on a thoughtful topic. Each Sunday a congregant leads that week’s Chalice Circle, presenting the topic for reflection and discussion. The presenter is paired with a “host” from our Chalice Circle leadership team. Chalice Circles run from June 23rd–September 1st.

General Assembly Sunday Worship: “Weaving our Lives”

Sunday, June 23, 1:00–2:30 pm, parish hall

Join Unitarian Universalists from around the world as UFPC hosts a “watch party” for the livestream of the Sunday worship service from the Unitarian Universalist Association's Virtual (online) General Assembly. This inspiring service will be full of fabulous music, storytelling, and preaching, led by UU worship leaders from across the country.

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.

“Third Annual Progress Pride Flag Blessing”

Saturday, June 1, 6:00 pm, in-person

The third annual flying of Quincy’s Progress Pride Flag is scheduled to take place on June 1st at 6:00 pm outside the United First Parish Church (Church of the Presidents) in Quincy Center. We are co-hosting this annual event alongside Quincy Pride, the City of Quincy LGBTQ+ Commission, Quincy Interfaith Network, and PFLAG Quincy Chapter. This annual event is the symbolic moment to begin Pride month with the flag flying in Quincy Center for the entire month of June. All are welcome to join us for this blessing of the pride flag and the community.

Sunday Morning Meditation

Sundays, 9:00–9:45 am, in-person

Meditation is offered on Sunday mornings from 9:00am to 9:45 am. We meet in the parlor, and when weather permits, we meet outside in the garden. We begin with a poem by Thich Nhat Hahn to center our intentions, followed by a walking meditation, then silent meditation, and ending with sharing our thoughts and insights. Feel free to contact Marie-Louise at 857-526-2579 or mariejm1961@yahoo.com.

Quincy Pride Festival 2024

Sunday, June 2, 12:00 pm–5:00 pm, in-person

Join Quincy Pride for their annual pride month festival on Sunday, June 2nd at the Ross Lot (37R Parkway, Quincy, Massachusetts 02169). There will be local/LGBTQ+ vendors, food trucks and drag queen performances. United First Parish Church will be represented at the festival. Stop by our table and enjoy this city-wide kickoff to pride month.

Book Group

Thursday, June 6, 7:00 pm, online

The UFPC Book Group meets on the first Thursday of every month from 7:00 to 8:30 pm, with a gap in summer and in December. All members and friends of UFPC are welcome to join us. We meet on Zoom. We try to select a balance of styles. You can come even if you have not finished the book.

The book this month is Moses, Man of the Mountain by Zora Neale Hurston. In this 1939 novel based on the familiar story of the Exodus, Zora Neale Hurston blends the Moses of the Old Testament with the Moses of black folklore and song to create a compelling allegory of power, redemption, and faith. Narrated in a mixture of biblical rhetoric, black dialect, and colloquial English, Hurston traces Moses’ life from the day he is launched into

the Nile River in a reed basket, to his development as a great magician, to his transformation into the heroic rebel leader, the Great Emancipator.

Join by computer: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/89427298331>

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

Annual Flag Day Parade, Ceremony and Fireworks

Saturday, June 15, 7:00 pm–11:00 pm, in-person

Standout Quincy for Black Lives of the Social Justice Action Committee is supporting Quincy Votes, which is a nonpartisan “organization aimed at boosting civic engagement and will work to raise awareness about elections, candidate records, and the voting process.” Quincy Votes has invited us to walk in the parade with them. I have never walked in the Flag Day Parade. If you haven't either, please join me. See www.quincyvotes.org for more details about this worthy group. On June 15th, the participating groups assemble at Coddington Hall at 6:30 pm. The Parade steps off at 7:00 pm at the intersection behind our parish hall. Please contact Claire Fitzmaurice if you are interested at 617-272-0274 or artclaire@comcast.net.

Kindred Spirits Discussion Group for Seniors

Friday, June 21, 10:00–11:30 am, in-person

Join us 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 Froom with any questions at rev.rebecca.froom@gmail.com or 617-803-1159.

Visitors Program Vignettes

By Bill Westland, Church Historian

In 1614 Captain John Smith explored the Quincy Bay area in one of his voyages to North America, and then in 1621 Captain Myles Standish led an expedition here from Plymouth. However, it wasn't until 1625, when Captain Wollaston, Thomas Morton and a group of indentured servants arrived from England that a trading post was established. Captain Wollaston, a real adventurer and rather unsavory character, left within a year but Thomas Morton ran a very successful beaver pelt business, trading with the Massachusetts (as it was called then) Indian tribe. Felt was made out of beaver pelts and was in great demand in Europe because everyone wore hats back then. Even though Wollaston had departed for Virginia the region was called Mount Wollaston for some reason. Thomas Morton was a free spirit and even called himself “the Lord of Misrule”, and soon Mount Wollaston was called Merry Mount and was noted for all sorts of raucous behavior. On May Day in 1627, Morton set up a maypole and hosted a celebration of song and dance with plenty of rum on hand for both his own settlers and the Massachusetts tribe. On top of this, he was selling guns to the Massachusetts tribe so that they could defend themselves against rival tribes. All this was too much for the Pilgrims in Plymouth, and Captain Myles Standish and a group of militias marched up to Mount Wollaston and arrested Morton for public drinking, dancing, selling guns and rum to the savages and indulging in sinful pleasures. He was exiled to England. Of course, it could have been that Plymouth was also involved in the lucrative beaver pelt trade, and this was a good way of eliminating a strong competitor. We will never know. Governor Endicott and a group of stalwarts from Salem also arrived to make sure that the good times and frivolity at Merry Mount had ended once and for all. None of these accusations against Morton were considered to be crimes in England so in 1629 Morton returned. He was promptly arrested by the magistrates in Boston and returned to England. While the ship was leaving the harbor Morton's house was burned down. I guess that he got the hint he was not welcome because he never returned. In 1628 the Massachusetts Bay Company was incorporated in England with a charter from the King so that investors could start the Massachusetts Bay Colony in what is now Boston and its suburbs. This colony was established in 1630 with about 1000 Puritans arriving from England. Back then to encourage families to come over from England, they were given land grants, usually about seven acres per family member. In 1632 Reverend Thomas Hooker and his followers arrived from Braintree, England to settle in the Mount Wollaston area. This

group was called the Braintree Company. In 1633 the more famous Reverend John Cotton, the rector of Saint Botolph's in Boston, England, arrived with about 200 followers, including William Coddington, Edmund Quincy, and William and Anne Hutchinson. There was not enough land in Boston left to accommodate them so the General Court allowed Boston to annex Mount Wollaston. Hooker and most of his followers then moved to Hartford Connecticut, although a few remained in Mount Wollaston and Hingham. Still, Braintree became the town name in 1640.

Reverend Cotton was much more liberal than most of the other clergy, and had a large following so was named teacher (associate minister in today's terms) of the Boston church. One of his most staunch followers was Anne Hutchinson. In 1636 Reverend John Wheelwright, Anne Hutchinson's brother-in-law, arrived from England. Wheelwright was also very liberal and a group wanted him to be named teacher in the Boston church. Even Reverend Cotton was opposed to that idea. Perhaps he considered Wheelwright to be a potential rival. There had been a lot of complaints from this Mount Wollaston area about the distance people had to travel to go to church in Boston, and there was a lot of agitation about gathering a church there. In 1636 it was decided to allow a church to be gathered in the Mount Wollaston area. It was also decided to make Reverend Wheelwright the minister. This would get him out of the Boston church. One liberal minister there was enough. In 1636 a branch church of the Boston church was gathered, and the next year a crude wooden church was built probably near what is now the Hannon Connector on Hancock Street, but nobody really knows. It was called the "Chapel of Ease" because people no longer had to make that long trip into Boston any longer.

Reverend Wheelwright was soon accused of sedition for his challenging of the Calvinist church doctrines such as predestination in 1637, and Anne Hutchinson was accused of heresy that same year for criticizing the infallibility of the ministers. Both were expelled from the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Once again Mount Wollaston was without a sanctioned church. In 1639 the Messrs Tompson, Flynt, Rose, Kinsley, Dasset, Potter, Saunders. and Belcher signed a covenant creating our United First Parish Church, the 15th church in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Reverend William Tompson was called to be our first minister because he had recently arrived from England and was not involved in the Wheelwright controversy. The congregation probably would have preferred Reverend Henry Flynt, but at one time he had supported Wheelwright, and thus would have been a controversial choice. Flynt was made teacher and was called to be our second minister when Tompson passed away in 1659.

Church Staff and Lay Leaders

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

Board of Governors: Fiona Sankey (President), Jacqueline Rodriguez (Vice-President), Clyde Cortright (Treasurer), Erwin Schaareman (Assistant Treasurer), Patricia Sullivan (Clerk), Karl DeBisschop (Stewardship), Claire Fitzmaurice (Social Justice Action), Jamie Grassmann (Communications), Marie-Louise Jackson-Miller (Congregational Life), Peter Kovach and Andrew Carleen (Religious Education), Open (Worship Committee)

Minister [Rev. Rebecca Froom]: rev.rebecca.froom@gmail.com

Affiliate Lay Community Minister and Director of Family Ministry [Nan Moore]: nanmoore5@gmail.com

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

United First Parish Church, Unitarian Universalist, 1306 Hancock Street, Quincy, Massachusetts 02169
617-773-1290, www.ufpc.org, www.facebook.com/ufpc/uu