

First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church

Scituate, MA
established 1634

2025 Annual Report

presented to the Annual Meeting
June 8, 2025

Our Covenant

Love is the spirit of this church, and service is its law.

This is our great covenant:

to dwell together in peace,
to cherish the living earth,
to seek truth in love,
and to help one another.



Our Vision

*We aspire to be a beacon of
liberal faith, strong community, and transformative service
rooted in Love*

Our Mission

Liberal Faith

*We commit to participate side-by-side across generations in worship, religious
education, social activities, environmental protection,
and social justice work—learning, sharing, and growing together.*

Strong Community

*We commit to care for one another, nurture the light that shines within each of us, and
support each other's individual search for truth and meaning.*

Transformative Service

*We commit to pursue diversity, justice, equality, reason, and discourse;
provide inspiration through music, creativity, and the arts;
and work cooperatively to affect positive change in our community and beyond.*

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	3
Warrant.....	3
Minutes from the 2024 Annual Meeting.....	5
Reports of:.....	6
The Minister.....	6
The Parish Committee.....	7
The Music Director.....	9
The Religious Education Coordinator.....	10
The Social Justice and Denominational Affairs Committee.....	11
The Ministerial Search Committee.....	13
The Publicity Committee.....	14
The Building and Grounds Committee.....	15
The Nominating and Bylaws Review Committee.....	16
The Collectors.....	18
The Ushers.....	19
The Hospitality Committee.....	20
The Endowment Committee.....	21
Endowment Funds.....	22
Five Year Endowment and Budget Projection.....	22
The Finance Committee.....	23
Year-to-Date Financial Reports.....	25
Balance Sheet (5/13/25).....	25
Profit & Loss Statement (5/13/25).....	25
Documents for Voting.....	26
FY2026 Proposed Budget.....	26
Slate of Nominees.....	26

**Warrant
for the 391st Annual Meeting of
First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church
of Scituate, Massachusetts**

May 25, 2025

You are requested to assemble following the service on Sunday,
May 25, 2025 to hear and act upon the following articles:

Article I: To suspend the meeting until Sunday, June 8, 2025

June 8, 2025

Article II: To receive and approve the Minutes from the June 9, 2024 Annual Meeting.

Article III: To receive and act on the reports of the Minister, Staff, Officers, committees and organizations as printed in the Annual Report.

Article IV: To receive the Nominating Slate and to elect Officers and Members of the Parish Committee, the Endowment Committee and the Nominating and By-Laws Review Committee for the coming year, beginning June 8, 2025.

Article V: To receive and act on the Annual Budget and the appropriation of money for the 2025-2026 church Fiscal year.

Article VI: To amend the by-laws as follows:

“Article 7, Section 7.2: Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting for the transaction of business of the Church shall be held on a date no earlier than April 1 and no later than the last Sunday of the church year, to be determined by the Parish Committee.”

Article VII: To transact any other business that may properly come before the parish.

Article VIII: To Adjourn the Meeting

MJMcGowan

Michael J. McGowan, Moderator

Minutes from the 2024 Annual Meeting

Sunday, June 9, 2024 at 11:30 am | First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church of Scituate, MA

Call to Order:

Moderator Michael McGowan called the meeting to order immediately after the Sunday Service. It commenced at 11:30 am.

Article I:

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2023 (first meeting) and continued minutes from June 4, 2023 (second meeting) as recorded in the Report to the Annual Meeting was made and seconded.

Vote: The motion to approve the minutes was approved unanimously.

Article II:

A motion to accept the Reports of the Minister, Staff, Officers, Committees, and Organizations as presented in the Report to the Annual Meeting was made and seconded with all agreeing unanimously.

Discussion: This involved continued clarity around the combined efforts of the Endowment Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Parish Committee to develop a “5-year plan” allowing us to hire a “developmental minister” after Rev. Erin Splaine completes her second year as an interim minister. Her position closes on June 8, 2025. The new position would begin in August of 2025.

Article III:

A motion to accept the Nominating Slate to Elect Officers and Members of the Parish Committee, the Endowment Committee, and the Nominating and By-Laws Committee for the coming year, with Terms beginning June 1, 2024.

Discussion: Kate Glennon agreed to serve as Parish Co-Chair with Ann Svensen. Erica Boyle will continue as Treasurer and Carol Sullivan-Hanley will continue as Clerk. Approved unanimously.

Article IV:

Members received and reviewed the plan developed by the Endowment Committee and Finance Committee to hire a full-time Developmental Minister beginning in August 2025. All church members present approved this unanimously.

Article V:

The plan to receive and act upon the recommendations of the church leadership (Endowment Committee, Finance Committee and Parish Committee) to hire a full-time Developmental Minister in August 2025 was unanimously approved.

Article VI:

The Nominating Slate proposed by the Parish Committee to form a Search Committee for our next Developmental Minister was approved. The members will include: Laura Carson, Jim Duff, Mary Ann Perry, Mary Beaulieu, and Abby Diamond-Kissiday.

Article VII:

The Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 was presented and approved.

Article VIII:

No other business was properly presented.

Article IX:

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 12:10pm.

Reports of:

Report of The Minister

to the 391st Annual Meeting of the First Parish UU Church of Scituate

As we end our two years together, I am filled with gratitude for you all and the work we have shared. Gratitude for the ways you welcomed me and let me earn your trust. Gratitude for the ways you all listened to, learned from, and supported each other in this time of change. By all measures, you all have had a successful and fruitful interim time and are well situated to continue to thrive.

Of course, thriving does not always translate to smooth transitions. You all are carrying on the long history of this congregation, facing timeless pressures: *How can you grow the number of kids and young families? Address the need to expand and deepen your membership in order to strengthen your finances? Balance the need to be an active presence in the public square while still nourishing the still small voice within?* You are doing so in unprecedented times and yet not entirely facing heretofore unknown pressures.

My hope, wish, and prayer for you all is that you stay the brave course you charted at your Annual Meeting last year. There will be times when the goals and realities of the vote to use endowment funds will seem close enough to give you comfort to continue and times when the goals seem far enough away to cause you to question and think about scaling back. I encourage you to not scale back.

Our UU faith, your Scituate community, and our country need bold leaders who are willing to stake their claim to what is good and true with a vision of remaking our world so that it will be more just and equitable for all. First Parish is such a place. I encourage you to double down on your faith in each other, to continue to use your resources (time, treasure, and talent) wisely and unsparingly to help shape a better future that allows you to build on the resilience you have always had and your strong desire to nevertheless persist.

It has been an honor to be with you all. I will miss you, just as I will miss working with Beth, Tricia, and Emily. You all are in good hands – each other's. Many blessings on your next chapter. From the bottom of my heart, thank you.

Peace,

Erin Splaine, Interim Minister

Report of The Parish Committee

Heading into the second half of our interim ministry, the goal set by the Parish Committee for this year was to build a strong foundation for systems and staff to be put into play upon the arrival of our new minister.

As we write this report, we are not where we hoped we would be, as the search for our new minister is still ongoing. Nevertheless, we continue to prepare and have begun implementing some of those foundational plans on our own as the search process continues.

Having a strong foundation is important, as one finds out when things take a rocky turn. This has been a tumultuous year on so many fronts. The economic uncertainties alone made for shocking statistics regarding ministerial matches, according to the UUA.

The good news is that applicants to our other staff positions did not have to contemplate obstacles like relocation, and we'll have an established support team in place to greet a future new minister.

In Community

Some highlights of this year brought light from darkness. This congregation called on our UU values during this outbreak of political chaos to engage in advocacy, confront oppression, and fight for justice, all the while building community:

- Church leadership joined leaders of other Scituate faith, education, and civic orgs in a council that meets regularly to combine resources in fighting for justice at a local level.
- An activist group grew out of the Fididdlers gatherings, and was organized into a local chapter of Indivisible, called Indivisible Scituate.
- First Parish UU Scituate and Norwell hosted a Patriots Day event for the 250th anniversary celebration, presented by the Scituate and Norwell Historical Societies. This reenactment play about the 1775 meeting of the town militia that occurred in our meetinghouse attracted a full house to our historic sanctuary, where the inspiration from this reminder of the country's dedication to resisting a king was palpable.
- "Acting Out Together," initiated this spring by Lin Haire-Sargeant and Claire Sherman, is gathering once a month to read and discuss dramas that pose questions about vital social, ethical, and spiritual issues.

In Preparation

The Parish Committee and Erin began the year with an August retreat. Our focus was on *staffing*, *programming*, and *organization*:

- We resolved to build on the strength of last year's efforts to keep lines of communication open between working committees, and between minister and the congregation, building trust, and being flexible about roles;
- We resolved to provide support for the newly-hired RE Coordinator and the needs of the new families;
- We resolved to provide support for the ministerial search team, and the patiently-waiting congregation;
- We resolved to create a structure for programming ideas and re-imaginings that may not have a committee or happen until a future time.

In Search

The Ministerial Search: Throughout the year, the Parish Committee communicated regularly with the Ministerial Search Committee, the Finance Committee, the Interim Minister, and our Regional UUA contacts. We assisted with preparing the Congregational Record and a ministerial contract and associated benefits package. We will continue this work even as the search continues past its projected cycle.

This has been an extremely challenging process, and the P.C. thanks everybody – committees and church community alike – for their patience, trust, and good humor. We'll get there!

The Religious Education Coordinator Search: In August of 2024, we welcomed Tricia Medugno to the RE Coordinator role at First Parish. Tricia has a background in teaching and is a beloved paraprofessional in our local public schools. She brings her love for children, her open heart, and her good-natured curiosity to the role. We are lucky to have her and look forward to her return in the fall.

The Church Administrator Search: The position as we had known it was eliminated in December in order to significantly expand the role. Stephanie Stewart had served as administrator for 7 years, and her presence is missed by all. In April, Emily Simmer accepted the new position of Office Administrator and Communications Specialist. She brings her advanced organizational skills to a workplace where she can find and build community and affect meaningful change. We think she will be an invaluable resource for our technical and editorial needs.

The Music Director Search: The P.C. communicated regularly with members of the Music Committee in support of finding the right candidate for the long-term. It won't be easy to replace someone as skilled, thoughtful, positive, and reliable as Beth Dubuisson, but we have faith in their ability to know when they have found a dynamic leader. We celebrate Beth for her years embodying First Parish's music ministry; she is simply extraordinary.

In Communication

Healthy communication was facilitated this year by continuing to hold joint committee meetings. We plan to continue to hold at least quarterly joint meetings with the Finance Committee. In addition:

- The PC continued to gather feedback and ideas from the congregation over the year regarding future projects and priorities.
- The work of choosing a new Church Management System was put on hold until we could have the input of the new Administrator. We are eager to streamline systems, update our hardware, and tend to the overdue housekeeping in the Google Drive.
- A goal for next year is to increase our attention to digital security and to create an updated set of "standard operating procedures" as a written resource for committee chairs.

Respectfully submitted,

The Parish Committee members for 2024-2025:

Outgoing Co-Chair: Ann Svensen

Incoming Co-Chair: Kate Glennon

Secretary: Carol Sullivan-Hanley

Treasurer: Erica Boyle

Members-at-Large: Charlie Ruddy, Jen McGonagle Dziedzic, Richard Kermond

Report of The Music Director

The following is an overview of the church year as Music Director.

Sunday Services

- Provided the music for 35 Sunday morning services (2 others were cancelled due to snow)
- Created the complete order of service for 2 Music Sundays and 1 Hymn Sing service
- Arranged for substitute musicians in my absence: Micah Mulder, Christina Laberge, (twice) Lynne Barton

Special Services

- Led music at a post-election service (pro-bono)
- Led music for a Vesper Service in December (pro-bono)
- Led the music for a 7:00 Christmas Eve service

Working with the Adult Choir/Bell Choir

- Rehearsed with the choir 34 times
- The following people sang with the adult choir: Deb Barnes, Mary Beaulieu, Laura Carson-Laciner, Vicki Davis, Lin Haire-Sargeant, Cathy Kang, Francis Kilduff, Mark Matthews, Cathie McGowan, Sarah Murdock, Carol Sullivan-Hanley

Planning Services

- Had weekly email and text correspondence with the church administrator, minister or guest worship leader regarding service music. Selected music (including hymns) to coincide with the theme of each service.
- Purchased new music for piano, organ, and choir
- Entered music selections in the shared Google doc every week. Practiced the music at home (and at church).
- Wrote a paragraph for the “What’s Happening” newsletter (9 months)
- Arranged for the piano tuner to tune the Grand Piano 2 times
- Arranged to have the Harpsichord tuned 2 times (paid for the tunings)
- Arranged for Andover Organ to tune the organ (November 2024)
- Met with Erin Splaine and/or attended a church meeting (monthly)
- Wrote and delivered a “This I Believe” for a service (May 2025)

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Dubuisson, Music Director

Report of The Religious Education Coordinator

This year has been so rewarding for me. The children and I have spent many Sundays getting to know and learning from each other. We have learned about our joys and concerns, our favorites and least favorites. We learned, through stories and discussion, the importance of standing up for those less fortunate, those being mistreated, and those who feel invisible.

We spent time outside picking up trash around the Memorial Garden as well as raking leaves and picking up sticks. We used power tools with the help of volunteers to make homes for our bird friends. We grew food and flowers and learned the importance of keeping our earth clean. We fed our fellow parishioners from our hearts with delicious cookies. We made cards for a friend who is saying goodbye.

We did so much, and we did it together with purpose. I consider myself very fortunate to have had this time with these amazing children and their families. This congregation is very special and I appreciate the opportunity to be part of it. The help that I received made all these experiences possible, and I could not have done it without this support from these very special people.

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia Medugno, Religious Education Coordinator

Report of The Social Justice and Denominational Affairs Committee

The Committee began the 2024-25 church year continuing to focus on fulfilling the requirements of the UUA's Five Practices of Welcome Renewal program that began in April 2024. This is the first time First Parish has participated in the annual process. Three Welcoming Worship Services occurred during the year: one introducing the Welcome Renewal program to the congregation and its importance to the members of the Committee, one in celebration of Pride month, and one in which Trans Day of Remembrance was acknowledged by naming all of the trans and nonbinary lives lost in the previous year. Six Welcoming Days of Observance were included in church life in various ways, including information posted in our newsletters, weekly emails, on flyers and posters in the Sloop Room and on the coffee hour table.

In an effort to provide Welcoming Religious Education for the congregation, the Committee organized two events. In May 2024 we held a public viewing of the documentary *Disclosure* about the depiction of transgender people in TV and film over time and held a discussion afterwards. In January 2025 we held an in-person seminar entitled "Gender in the 21st Century: An Overview." Last June we finally identified a Welcoming Project, Summer of Sass in Provincetown, and have decided to develop additional fundraising efforts during Pride month this year and going forward. The UUA accepted our application for Welcome Renewal status in March of this year; the certificate is on display in the foyer of the church. The Welcome Renewal process restarted in April for the next 12-month cycle, and next year's reapplication will include our co-sponsorship in this year's town-wide Pride Breakfast and Walk with St. Luke's, South Shore Pride, and STRIDE.

The actions of the new administration since inauguration have led to a shift in the focus of the Social Justice Committee to defending democracy. As always, universal love and grounding in UU values are the driving forces in our efforts in this area as all others. In March we held a watch party for a webinar offered by the UUA's Side With Love entitled, "Grounded, Resilient & Responsible: Responding and Organizing in Authoritarian Times." The coalition of organizations formed last year in sponsorship of the Pride Breakfast is growing into a larger grassroots community-building and organizing group. We began meeting in March when folks from FPUU, St. Luke's, South Shore Pride, and STRIDE were joined by leaders from the town DEI Committee, the METCO program, the newly formed Scituate Indivisible (led by 3 FPUU members), the Democratic Town Committee, and more. The group plans to continue meeting and recently named itself the Scituate Equity Team (SET). In May First Parish and Scituate Indivisible co-sponsored our first rally at the church, Standout for Democracy. We plan to continue to hold standouts and possibly other forms of rallies at church going forward.

Other activities the Social Justice Committee engaged in during the 2024-25 church year include those addressing issues we have dedicated ourselves to in the past. In September, through our connection with UU the Vote, we conducted a Get Out the Vote postcard-writing campaign to 200 voters in Texas. Recently the Parish Committee granted our request to endorse a slate of 5 bills in the current Massachusetts legislative session, along with UU Mass Action and other churches and community organizations. These bills reflect priorities identified by indigenous-led organizations to protect Native heritage and rights and end racist practices. The Committee continues to inform the congregation through the church newsletters and weekly emails about news and activities of our Unitarian Universalist denomination, particularly the activities of Side with Love organizations and the campaigns of the UUMass Action teams. The list below of recipients of the Special Monthly Collections in the past year demonstrates our commitment to providing support to those in need near and far who are suffering due to natural disaster, food/housing insecurity, and oppression.

We invite all members and friends of the church to join our Committee to increase the scope of social justice work at First Parish UU Church Scituate.

Recipients of the Special Monthly Collections for the 2024-25 church year:

- Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)
- DOVE (Domestic Violence Ended)
- UUA Disaster Relief Fund/Hurricanes Helene and Milton
- Scituate Food Pantry
- NeighborWorks Housing Solutions
- Red Cross/LA Wildfires
- Side With Love
- ACLU Foundation
- Summer of Sass

Submitted by,

Social Justice and Denominational Affairs Committee

Ellen Isley, Chair

Members: Abby Diamond-Kissiday, Jean Shildneck, Carol Sullivan-Hanley

Report of The Ministerial Search Committee

At the last annual meeting the congregation charged us with the most important job of searching for a new minister. The decision was made to search for a contract (minimum of 4 years) to call a developmental style minister.

Our committee began meeting in August 2024 to plan and begin to work on our Congregational Record that is published with the UUA so that ministers get a good understanding of what we are about as they are making their choices. The committee met almost every week from September until November working on our Congregational Record.

In September and October, we held several in-person and online focus groups with members and friends to learn what they wanted and needed from First Parish going forward.

In October we hosted a workshop given by the UUA Break Barriers, Build Beliefs (B4) that was attended by about 22 of our members and friends. This continued to assist the committee in learning what kind of minister we were looking for in our search.

In early November our completed Congregational Record was accepted and published by the UUA.

In January we began receiving applications and received a total of 11 interested ministers. We reviewed each of their 11 Ministerial Records and offered 4 of them an opportunity to interview. We had the first 3 interviews, and 2 of the 4 offered a first interview withdrew their applications. We then asked for second interviews with 2 of them, and one withdrew their application deciding to go with a settled search. After our second and then third interview with one minister, it was decided to make an offer. There were some extenuating circumstances with this minister, and he eventually declined our offer.

Our UUA support team through the Transitions Office indicated that this search cycle had been the most difficult ever – even more difficult than during the COVID 19 Pandemic. The Transitions Team reported that they usually have a 95% match rate but this year it is in the 20% percentile of matches. It seems that many ministers are hesitant to move in these times of great anxiety. The other feedback we have received is that the cost of living in our area may be difficult for some to consider a move.

As we understand the contract minister's search, we could receive more applications at any time, and we stand at the ready to continue this most important work as the Parish Committee directs.

Respectfully submitted,

Ministerial Search Committee

Laura Carson, Chair

Members: MaryAnn Perry, Mary Beaulieu, James Duff, Abby Diamond-Kissiday

Report of The Publicity Committee

The goal of Publicity is to promote specific activities and events at First Parish both within and outside of the parish, and in doing so, to promote to the greater community an awareness of how this church lives out its vision and mission.

Accomplishments

Community Events

- The long-discussed opportunity of hosting a church event during Heritage Days was realized with the August 2024 “Root Beer Float Extravaganza” in conjunction with the Lawson Tower concert. I worked with the fundraising team to design a graphic (well-enough received that we may print a tea towel!), which was shared with the Chamber of Commerce as well as in our own publicity (sandwich boards, flyers, social media). I also made an 8-foot lawn banner and fun payment tokens. All will be used again this August.
- In April, First Parish hosted the “Old Scituate Reacts” play for the Scituate and Norwell Historical Societies; we used their publicity pieces, and I created materials for a display table about the history of the church and its current work, and created QR code graphics for donations.
- I created a flyer for Social Justice for the May 9 stand-out.
- For the Snowflake Fair and Spring Fair, I created sandwich boards, lawn signs, flyers, and social media promotions.
- The Administrator and I hosted a table at the Chamber of Commerce's election candidate forum. (Lesson learned: bring chocolate giveaways!)

Website and Social Media

- Regular duties to update the website content include the monthly worship theme and services listings, the monthly Special Collection information and links, the newsletter postings to the blog, and any static content updates.
- Content changes included a removal of personal data in accordance with digital safety recommendations from the UUA (RE Coordinator and Administrator photos and family details were removed, as well as some personal data for the Minister and Music Director).

In-house Graphics

- I worked with the Finance Committee to create our first Planned Giving promotion. It matches the general FPUU brochure in style, and will be used for pews and mailings.
- I worked with the Social Justice Committee and the 2025 Pride Breakfast and Walk co-sponsors (STRIDE and St Luke's) to create a save-the-date postcard and a flyer for social media, the Patriot Ledger, and printed handouts.
- I worked with the Social Justice Committee to create a 2x3 poster board explaining the new flower design for the updated UUA Values.
- I ordered a batch of UU car decals for members, UU Hysterical Society graphics for a gender-neutral restroom sign, and a wifi password sign for guests.
- I created a sanctuary sign for the front door to deter warrantless entry by ICE, per recommendation of the UUA.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Glennon

Report of The Building and Grounds Committee

This year the B&G Committee continued to do minor repairs as needed to the Church and to maintain the Grounds.

The major project we are working on is the refurbishing of the Admin and Minister offices, including painting, flooring, and carpentry work. New front doors for the Church and potentially a few replacement windows will also be done. This work is being supported by a generous bequest by a Church member.

The lighting in the Old Sloop room was a big success and we will be updating Erdman's lighting as well with new energy efficient fixtures.

Monitoring of the Ash Borer continues, with Bartlett Tree working with us to maintain our specimen trees.

The Church was sprayed on the exterior for ants once in December and again this Spring. Mice have continued to be a nagging problem; poison cannot be used and traps continue to be the best option.

Painting of the Church exterior continues.

Upgrades to the Kitchen will wait until next fiscal year.

The Memorial Garden will be getting some professional clean up this summer thanks to a very kind and generous donation.

Many thanks to the many people who help maintain our Church, including Frank Kilduff, Pam & Wayne Molinari, Bob Murdoch, Jim Duff, Howard Matthews, Jean Shildneck, and Karen Frey.

Respectfully,

Erica Boyle and Joe Williams

Report of The Nominating and Bylaws Review Committee

Overview of Responsibilities

- The Nominating and Bylaws Review Committee (NBRC) is a three-person committee elected each year by the membership at the Annual Meeting.
- The roles and responsibilities of the NBRC are:
 1. To nominate for approval by the membership each year at the Annual Meeting:
 - a. Church Officers,
 - b. Members of the Parish Committee,
 - c. Members of the Nominating and Bylaws Review Committee, and
 - d. Members of the Endowment Committee for any open positions.
 - e. The NBRC also has the authority to appoint a Member of the Church to fill any vacant positions resulting from the death or resignation of any elected Officer or elected committee member until the next Annual Meeting.
 2. To review all proposed changes to the bylaws of the church and recommend to the Membership whether or not they should be approved. The Committee shall also periodically review the bylaws and may recommend changes.

Status report on the Bylaws and Church Governance Policy Document

- The church is governed by a set of Bylaws. The congregation approved the current version of the Bylaws at the May 2022 Annual Meeting.
- The congregation also approved a new Church Governance Policy Document at the May 2022 Annual Meeting. This document remains incomplete and needs review and input from the Parish Committee.

Church Leaders, 2024/2025

- The N&BRC expresses deep appreciation to Ann Svensen, Outgoing Parish Committee Chair, whose term ends this spring. We are grateful for her superb leadership for the past two years.
- We are grateful to all members and friends who serve in elected and appointed roles as committee chairs and members, team leaders and members, and our unsung heroes who might not have a formal role, but who nevertheless jump in to help when needed.

Nominations for Elected Positions for the 2024/2025 Church Year

- The N&BRC has prepared a nominating slate that can be found elsewhere in the church's 2024/2025 Annual Report. The nominating slate reflects the N&BRC's effort to create a balance of skills and interests, as well as continuity and sustainability in church leadership, as recommended in the Church Governance Policy Document.
- The Nominating and Bylaws Review Committee recommends one Article for the Warrant for the 2025 Annual Meeting related to Nominations:
 - **Article:** To receive the Nominating Slate and to elect Officers and Members of the Parish Committee, the Nominating and Bylaws Review Committee, and the Endowment Committee for the coming year, beginning June 8, 2025.

Bylaws Revision

- The Nominating and Bylaws Review Committee recommends one Article for the Warrant for the 2025 Annual Meeting related to the Bylaws:
 - **Article:** To amend the bylaws as follows:
ARTICLE 7 – MEETINGS. Section 7.2. Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting for the transaction of business of the Church shall be held each

year on a date no earlier than April 1 and no later than the last Sunday of the church year, to be determined by the Parish Committee. ~~on a date in April or May of each year, to be determined by the Parish Committee.~~

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Matthews (marcus2tts@gmail.com)

Jean Shildneck (jean_shildneck@comcast.net)

Lin Haire-Sargent (haireARGE@massart.edu)

Report of The Collectors

The Collectors of First Parish are elected officers of the church responsible for seeing that all monies received by the church are recorded, deposited, and reported to the Treasurer. They also issue statements to pledging church members and resolve any discrepancies or payment questions regarding pledges and donations. Monies include pledges, Sunday plate, fundraisers, rental fees, electronic payments, and any other payments received. The Collectors are also active members of the Finance Committee and provide guidance to the annual stewardship drive and church budget preparation.

In 2025 we must replace our beloved but outdated MemInfo (the system used to record pledges and pledge and donation payments) with a more modern and integrated platform as that system is being discontinued. We hope to report on that transition in 2026.

The variety of payment options that we now accept has simplified making payments but complicated our reporting! We now track cash, checks, credit cards, debit cards, automatic bank payments, and Venmo. We are pleased to be able to offer all of these, especially at our fundraising events.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki Davis and Cathie McGowan, Co-Collectors

Report of The Ushers

Ushers greet Sunday morning attendees at the door of the sanctuary, handing out Orders of Service and performing any other needed duties during the service, including lighting the candles, taking the Collection, and greeting visitors. At the conclusion of the service they neaten up the Sanctuary and make sure that everything is ready for the following week. They also perform these duties on Christmas Eve as well as assist with any other services (Memorial Services, etc.) as needed during the year.

In 2024-2025, usher duties were handled by Vicki Davis and Cathie McGowan with assistance from Carol Sullivan-Hanley, Michael McGowan, and Mark Matthews.

Anyone in high school or older is invited and welcomed to join the Usher Team.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathie McGowan and Vicki Davis, Head Ushers

Report of The Hospitality Committee

Coffee Hour this year has been organized by Mark Meadows and Lin Haire-Sargeant, with Mark brewing the coffee and leading the clean-up, and Lin organizing the sign-up for Coffee Hour hosts to bring and serve the treats.

Lin has implemented a new monthly system. Now, everyone in the Members and Friends Directory is invited to host twice during our church year. Sorted alphabetically by last name, 5 equal cohorts are each assigned 2 months:

- September and February: A-C
- October and March: D-G
- November and April: H-L
- December and May: M-R
- January and June: S-Z

A week before the month begins, Lin emails an invitation to everyone in that month's group to host; they are asked to return-email their chosen Sunday and intended gift of food. Hosts have responded with wonderful generosity. Love and food have abounded!

Respectfully submitted,

The Hospitality Committee
Lin Haire-Sargeant and Mark Meadows

Report of The Endowment Committee

General Endowment

As of the close of business on Friday May 16, 2025, the parish's general endowment funds totaled \$1,086,148 (see attached). The investment returns from these accounts are available annually to cover a portion of the parish's operating budget. In the past, the disbursement from these funds was limited to approximately 4% of the year-end total balance.

At last year's Annual Meeting, the parish approved a five-year endowment and budget plan which allowed for drawdowns in excess of the standard 4% to fund the required compensation package of a full-time minister (see attached 5- year plan). This year's budgeted drawdown from the general endowment was set at a total of \$94,800 (a standard drawdown of 4% equaling \$41,600 plus an extra drawdown of \$53,200 to fund the plan).

Based on these drawdowns, the plan projected a FY 2025 year-end balance of \$992,460. It now appears that we are likely to end the year with a balance closer to approximately \$1,062,000 based on earnings to date, and the remaining scheduled distributions.

During the fall and early winter months, members of the Endowment and Finance Committees analyzed the performance and fees of several investment sponsors, interviewed two finalists, and then chose to consolidate 98% of the endowment total with Boston Financial Management (now a member of Captrust Financial Partners). This re-alignment of our investments allowed us to reduce fees and enhance overall performance.

Fiscal Year-to-date, the return on investment of the general endowment has been 10.7%, compared to the S&P 500 average return of investment of 9.1% during the same period. It should also be noted that a 10.7% performance would be more than double the 5% return on investment included in the 5-year plan.

Restricted Endowment

In addition to the General Endowment funds, the parish also has two restricted endowment accounts originally donated for specific uses under a trust agreement. The **Star Island Fund** with a current balance of approximately \$21,549 is available to fund expenses associated with attending the summer youth programs at Star Island. An award of \$950 is expected to be made this year to support the attendance of a member's daughter at one of these programs.

The **Julia Neely Fund** is held in trust by the UUA and the investment proceeds can be used for either a college scholarship for a women seeking a teaching degree or to support an elder woman experiencing financial hardship. An award of \$750 is expected to be made this year to support a parish member. The annual disbursement from these two restricted accounts is expected to be in the range of 4% to 5% of the year end account balances.

Respectfully submitted for the Endowment Committee,

Rich Towle

Members: Richard Leach, Mark Matthews, Cathie McGowan, Sarah Murdock, Claire Sherman

Thanks to: Erica Boyle, Jean Shildneck, and Vicki Davis

First Parish Endowment Funds (May 16, 2025): Annual Report FY 2024-2025

General Funds

Endowment Founders Fund (Boston Financial Management: CAPTRUST):	\$1,076,264
Allen Fund (UUA):	<u>\$9,884.00</u>
Total General Funds:	<u>\$1,086,148 *</u>

Restricted Funds

Star Island Fund (Boston financial Management: CAPTRUST):	\$21,549
Julia Neely Fund (UUA):	\$15,777

* \$23,348 FY2025 Withdrawals remaining from general funds

First Parish Church Five Year Endowment & Budget Projection May 9, 2024

FY	Endowment Balance 7/1	Expense Budget	Endowment Drawdown	Extra Drawdown	Pledge Income	Other Income	Endowment Bal. 6/30
2025	<u>\$1,040,000</u>	\$277,600	\$41,600	\$53,200	\$105,000	\$77,800	\$992,460
2026	\$992,460	\$287,316	\$39,700	\$58,418	\$108,675	\$80,523	\$939,059
2027	\$939,059	\$297,372	\$37,562	\$63,990	\$112,479	\$83,341	\$879,382
2028	\$879,382	\$307,780	\$35,175	\$69,931	\$116,416	\$86,258	\$812,990
2029	\$812,990	\$318,552	\$32,250	\$76,265	\$120,490	\$89,227	<u>\$739,415</u>

Assumptions:

Based on the FY 2025 Proposed Budget as revised on May 7, 2024.. A 3.5% escalation has been applied to expenses, pledge income and other income annually beginning in FY 2026. No net, new growth in Pledging Parish Members. The standard draw from the Endowment is projected at 4% with an endowment return on investment of 5% per year (consistent with the average rate of return over the past 5 years). The projected extra draw is the amount required to balance the budget each year. The base budget includes funding for a full-time minister at the current compensation level, plus Cost of Living Increases 2026-2029. The 7/30/25 Endowment Projection equals the April month-end balances, minus the remaining drawdowns, plus an increase in investments of .83%% for the last two months of the fiscal year.

Report of The Finance Committee

Overview

The goals of the Finance Committee in 2024/2025 were:

- to see that the church meets the budgeted fundraising targets for the current fiscal year (FY2025),
- to run the Stewardship Canvass to obtain pledges of financial support from members and friends for the next fiscal year (FY2026), and
- to draft revenue and expenditure proposals for the FY2026 budget.

The committee met regularly this year at the church. Committee members took turns chairing meetings and writing meeting notes. We have found that this distributed leadership model has worked well for us for the past two and a half years.

This year, we continued to hold joint meetings with the members of the Endowment Committee, a continuation of a practice we began in FY24.

Church Treasurer Erica Boyle presented monthly Financial Reports to the Finance Committee and to the Parish Committee and served as liaison between the two committees.

We thank Interim Minister Erin Splaine for providing valuable insights at our meetings.

The heaviest load on the committee comes in the second half of the year when the committee needs to carefully track actual income and expenses and project year-end income and expenses, all while running the canvass to raise pledges for next year and putting together next year's proposed budget.

This year, in the second year of Erin Splaine's interim ministry, the Finance Committee and the Endowment Committee continued to collaborate closely with the Parish Committee and the Search Committee to ensure that we are following the five-year financial plan that the congregation adopted at our Annual Meeting in the spring of 2024. This plan represents an investment in our future, allowing the church to withdraw extra funds from our endowment to cover our expenses this year and for the next four years.

Fundraising Activities

Members of the Finance Committee would like to thank everyone who worked on fundraising projects and financial activities this year:

Bottles and Cans Collection – Weekly on Tuesdays. Howard Mathews, Michael McGowan, and Mark McGuinness, along with other volunteers, have sorted redeemable bottles and cans at the Scituate Transfer Station, raising \$5,476 as of 5/13/2025. Members and friends are invited to contact Howard, Mike, or Mark if they are able to help with this fundraising activity.

Heritage Days Root Beer Float Extravaganza – Sunday, August 4, 2024. Members of the Fididdlers organized a new fundraiser this year, selling Root Beer Floats at the church on the Sunday of Scituate's Heritage Days weekend. It was great fun, and they raised \$854.

Snowflake Fair – Saturday, December 7, 2024. Members of the Finance Committee organized the Snowflake Fair this year, with assistance from practically every member of the congregation. Net revenues from this year's Snowflake Fair were \$12,241.

Spring Fair – Saturday, May 17, 2025. In addition to our traditional activities (the sale of organic seedlings, perennials from members and friends' gardens, baked goods, crafts, and a yard sale), this year's Spring Fair included the second installment of our pop-up art gallery featuring works by beloved former members Kay Shaw and Alan Donaldson. Emmitt Klein-Stropnick was also on hand selling his tide clocks and other metal work. This year's fair has raised \$4,157 to date, with sales still ongoing.

In Memoriam Gift

We received a financial gift from the Anderson family, and considered how Gail Anderson likely would have wanted the funds to be spent. The committee recommended that these funds be utilized to upgrade the Minister's Office, Administrator's Office and the kitchen. The Parish Committee approved this use of the funds and the Buildings and Grounds committee is overseeing the upgrades.

Fiscal Year 2025 Year-To-Date Financial Reports

Year-To-Date Financial Reports are included as attachments to this Annual Report.

Planned Giving

The Finance and Endowment Committees worked with the Parish Committee and others to develop a Planned Giving Brochure to encourage parish members to include First Parish in their estate planning efforts. The brochures were distributed to members and friends during a Sunday service and have also been placed in the literature holders in the pews. A follow-up mailing and general appeal will be launched next year.

2025 Pledge Drive/Stewardship Canvass

This year's Pledge Drive was officially launched with Stewardship Sunday being held on March 2, 2025. The annual pledge packet was sent out to all members and friends of the church by email and postal mail. Stewardship testimonials and updates from the Finance Committee were offered from the pulpit on Sundays through the end of the month. Follow-up emails, calls, texts, and letters were also sent, with additional communications in What's Happening and the monthly newsletter.

The Pledge Drive resulted in \$100,000 in pledges, below our goal of \$110,000 that would have kept us on target per the five-year plan. Church leadership is grateful for every pledge received.

Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Budget

Treasurer Erica Boyle created a Preliminary Proposed Budget for FY2026 which she shared with the Parish Committee for review at their April meeting. A budget for consideration by the membership is in the "Documents for Voting" section of this Annual Report.

Respectfully submitted by the Finance Committee,

Erica Boyle, Vicki Davis, Cathie McGowan, Jean Shildneck, and Richard Towle

Thanks to Members of the Endowment Committee: Richard Leach, Mark Matthews, Cathie McGowan, Sarah Murdock, Claire Sherman, Richard Towle

Year-to-Date Financial Reports

[Balance Sheet](#) (5/13/25)

Click to view PDF

[Profit & Loss Statement](#) (5/13/25)

Click to view PDF

Documents for Voting

[FY2026 Proposed Budget](#)

Click to view PDF

Slate of Nominees

Terms run from June 8, 2025 to May 31, 2026. (Terms of office do not run concurrently with the church's fiscal year.) According to the 2022 revision of the church's bylaws, the term for all positions is for one year, with the exception of the Endowment Committee, for which the term is two years. According to the Church Governance Policy document, nominees are requested to commit to a minimum of two years in a position. The Co-Chairs of the Parish Committee serve one year each as Incoming and Outgoing, for a total of two years.

Church Officers

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| • Moderator | Michael McGowan |
| • Clerk (also serves as Secretary of the Parish Committee) | Carol Sullivan-Hanley |
| • Treasurer (also serves as a member of the Parish Committee) | Erica Boyle |
| • Collector | Vicki Davis |

Parish Committee

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| • Parish Committee Co-Chair (Outgoing) | Kate Glennon |
| • Parish Committee Co-Chair (Incoming) | TBD |
| • Parish Committee Member-at-Large | Jen McGonagle |
| • Parish Committee Member-at-Large | Charlie Ruddy |
| • Parish Committee Member-at-Large | Richard Kermond |

Assistant Treasurer and Collector

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| • Assistant Treasurer | Jean Shildneck |
| • Assistant Collector | Cathie McGowan |

Nominating and Bylaws Review Committee

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| • Member at Large | Jean Shildneck |
| • Member at Large | Mark Matthews |
| • Member at Large | Lin Haire-Sargent |

Endowment Committee

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| • Term expires May 31, 2026; eligible for one more term | Sarah Murdock |
| • Term expires May 31, 2026; eligible for one more term | Claire Sherman |
| • Term expires May 31, 2026; eligible for two more terms | Richard Towle |
| • Term expires May 31, 2026; eligible for two more terms | Richard Leach |
| • FYI: Term expires May 31, 2027; eligible for one more term | Mark Matthews |
| • FYI: Term expires May 31, 2027; eligible for one more term | Cathie McGowan |

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Matthews (marcus2tts@gmail.com)
Jean Shildneck (jean_shildneck@comcast.net)
Lin Haire-Sargent (haireARGE@massart.edu)