



GETTING INVOLVED AT FRS INTEREST GROUPS, COMMITTEES AND PROGRAMS

First Religious Society, Unitarian Universalist

Newburyport, MA

www.frsuu.org

We welcome all to explore, test out, and become active in our programs. Please follow your interests, skills, values, curiosity, and intuition by showing up at a meeting or event, or making contact with the people listed here.

Need a phone number, or an introduction? Call Diane Young, Director of Community Engagement, 978-465-0602 X409.

Subscribe to our newsletter by emailing info@frsuu.org or calling 978-465-0602 X401.



"First Religious Society, UU, Newburyport"

Facebook group:
"FRS UU Members and Friends"

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The **Nursery**, in the Lower Meeting House, is available for one- and two-year olds. It is staffed by a church teen and an additional volunteer.

Our Whole Lives (OWL) is a comprehensive sexuality education program offered every other year to 7th and 8th graders.

Young Church is the Sunday School of FRS. Classes are taught by parents and friends using a curriculum developed by our certified Director of Religious Education. We explore many different religious beliefs and encourage questioning and self-expression. *Contact Julie Parker Amery, julie.amery@frsuu.org*

Senior High Youth Group (grades 9-12) meets every other Sunday. It gives teens opportunities for service work, and a safe place to ask questions, explore life issues, and socialize.

Youth Choirs and Teen Choirs. See the Music section, page 2.

The **Young Church Advisory Group** meets several times a year to discuss curriculum and direction of our Young Church programs and provides ad-hoc support and feedback to the Director of Religious Education. *Contact Karen Young*

FUNDRAISERS

The **Annual Fundraiser** is a social event with a goal of raising considerable funds for FRS. There are opportunities for people to help with planning by being on the committee or by sharing their talents and muscle on the day of the event. *Contact Sarah Spalding*

Book Sale in mid-summer. Donate hardcover and paperback books in decent condition, including children's books, specialty magazines, sheet music, and various media. Help sell and move boxes. *Contact Barbara Owen*

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ART

The **Tiny Gallery** in the stairwell of the Meeting House showcases art by members and friends of FRS. It is open on Sundays and on weekdays, 9am-1pm. *Contact Bettina Turner*

May Breakfast, an annual tradition, is the first Saturday of May. Open to the whole Newburyport community, it's also a nice time for families and friends to enjoy time together. You can help by contributing homemade baked goods or other breakfast food, setting up, cooking, or serving. *Contact Leanna Sorcar*

Rummage Sale, fall and spring. For clothes and accessories only. Donate items from your closet, or volunteer to sort or clean-up. *Contact Florence Mercer or Anne Verret-Speck*

JUSTICE ISSUES

Alternatives to Violence works within area prisons, providing workshops on resolving conflict non-violently. *Contact Ed Mair*

The **Climate Action Project (CAP)** seeks to engage the congregation and community in steps that will diminish the impacts of the Climate Crisis through two of our seven principles: "a free and responsible search for truth and meaning," and "respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." *Contact John Harwood*

The **Escalating Inequality team** leads our congregation in learning, reflecting, and acting on the current UUA Study/Action Issue. *Contact Susan Swan*

Fair Trade coffee, tea, and chocolate from Equal Exchange are sold at Coffee Hour, supporting small-scale farmers.

The **Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence**, of which FRS is a member, works on education, advocacy, and legislation. *Contact Ann Haaser*

Local Poverty Matters is a monthly lecture series jointly sponsored by the Social Action Committee of FRS and by Pennies for Poverty, a local nonprofit dedicated to alleviating poverty in our area. *Contact Michael Sandberg*

Our **Partner Church** is the Unitarian Church in Ujszekely. This Transylvanian farming village of 600 is in the ethnic Hungarian region of Romania. The two churches support and visit each other. *Contact Harold Babcock, harold.babcock@frsuu.org*

A **Peace Vigil** takes place every Sunday from noon to 1pm in Market Square. *Contact Niki Rosen*

The **Social Action Committee** is the umbrella for FRS justice work, such as prison work and gun control. *Contact Ann Haaser or Annie Maurer*

MUSIC

The **Candlelight Chorale** offers three programs each year: a fall concert, a spring concert, and the Christmas Candlelight service (a Newburyport tradition since 1925). Singers are welcome to join for individual programs, and they need not be church members. *Contact Leonardo Ciampa*

The **Church Choir** sings choral music and hymns for Sunday services and occasional special services. Rehearsals are Thursday evenings, 7:30-9pm. The repertoire ranges from the classics of early Renaissance and Baroque to "Come Sunday" of Duke Ellington to vocal jazz. Auditions not required. *Contact Leonardo Ciampa,*

Jazz Vespers celebrates the inspiration of jazz music and provides the membership and community a time to gather together for an evening--usually on the first Wednesday of the month--to enjoy music, readings, and time for reflection. *Contact Cyd Raschke*

The **Jean C. Wilson Music Series** is held early each year, usually from January through April. A wide range of professional ensembles and soloists have included early music groups, string, woodwind, and brass ensembles, and solo pianists, organists, and singers. Suggested donation \$20, seniors \$10, students and children free. *Contact Leonardo Ciampa*

Young Church Choir and **Teen Choir** train musically literate young singers who inspire the congregation and greater community through the power of singing. The Teen Choir rehearses every Sunday, 9-9:40am. This lively group consists of about fifteen singers who are in Grades 7-12 and who are at least 12 years old at the beginning of the church year. The Young Church Choir is open to singers in Grades 2-6, and rehearses every Sunday from 9:40-10:20am. Children in this group start learning how to read music and how to sing with good tone production and diction. *Contact Kristen Miller, kristen.miller@frsuu.org*

READING GROUPS

Friday Book Discussion meets every week at 10am in the Conference Room. Each meeting covers the next section of a fiction or nonfiction book. Join anytime. *Contact Nancy Herbison-Evans*

Lunch with the Minister meets on occasional Tuesdays at noon. Join the Rev. Harold Babcock and a raucous group in discussing a short story. Check the *Steeple Biweekly* for upcoming titles. Bring your lunch, or not.

RUNNING THE CHURCH

The **Committee on Ministry** (appointed) gives confidential support to the minister. *Contact Florence Mercer*

The **Communications Brain Trust** works to improve all aspects of communication in the church. *Contact Diane Young, diane.young@frsuu.org*

The **Finance Committee** oversees the budget, the stewardship campaign, and planned giving. *Contact Lark Madden*

The **Governance Committee** (appointed) is in charge of bylaws, nominations, and leadership development. *Contact Marie Murphy*

The **Historical Committee** undertakes two sets of responsibilities: to organize, conserve, and protect the historic materials and artifacts of the First Religious Society; and to research and share the history of the church in hopes of aiding individuals, the congregation, and the broader community in our mutual efforts to be of service to one another. *Contact Sally Foskett*

The **Human Resources Committee** (appointed) advises on issues concerning staff and volunteers. *Contact Barbara Garnis*

Leadership Council welcomes all who are leaders or aspire to be. Meetings provide an opportunity for collaboration, information-sharing, and directing the life of the congregation in an advisory way. Meets three or four times during the church year. *Contact Diane Young, diane.young@frsuu.org*

Parish Board (elected) advises, governs, oversees policy and direction, and assists with the leadership and sustainability of FRS. Observers are welcome. *Contact Bettina Turner*

Trustees of the Endowment (elected) oversee the FRS's endowment funds. *Contact Donald Askey*

UU Connect (Denominational Affairs) promotes awareness of the greater UU movement and of our central organization, the Unitarian Universalist Association, UUA, to the FRS congregation. *Contact Forrest Speck*

SOCIAL SERVICE

Comfort Shawls are handmade shawls, knit with love and healing, given to seriously ill and bereaved members and friends. Knit or crochet with your own pattern and yarn, or use the instructions and yarn in the Conference Room cabinet (suggested donation, \$12 for 3 balls of yarn). *Contact Linda Buddenhagen*

The **Community Human Services Committee** directs and manages a wide range of programs for local people that are struggling and in need of assistance. We also manage the monthly loose plate collections for selected charities and distribute Swasey Fund contributions to qualified recipients. *Contact Jeff Bard*

Parish Friends help church members with meals, rides, visits, and even dog walking. Parish Friends always need more volunteers, especially for meals and rides. *Contact Florence Mercer*

SOCIALIZING AND FELLOWSHIP

The Alliance is a benevolent organization with a tradition of service. It donates money and time to benefit FRS and takes pride in its role in the social and philanthropic work of the parish. Luncheon meetings are held at noon on the second Wednesday of the month in fall and spring. Each meeting includes a one-hour presentation on topics such as Newburyport history, book authors of Newburyport, music, and travel experiences. All are welcome. *Contact Patty King*

Circle Dinners on a Saturday night in fall and spring provide people in the FRS community a chance to get to know each other better in a relaxed setting. Groups of four to ten share dinner in a home. The host coordinates the menu. Sign up during Coffee Hour to be a guest or host. The dinners are potluck and the conversation is lively! *Organized by the Hospitality Committee.*

Coffee Hour happens every Sunday after the service in the Parish Hall.

The **Hospitality Committee** offers the opportunity to serve the church through fellowship at coffee hours, a mid-winter party, Circle Dinners, the May Breakfast, and Soup Sundays. *Contact Leanna Sorcar*

The Mid-Winter Party boosts our spirits with a potluck and BYOB at the home of a member. Sign up in advance, since space is limited.

Opening and closing cookouts happen on the first and last Sundays of the church year. Enjoy hot dogs, burgers, and veggie options out on the side patio. Bring a side dish to share if you like.

Retired Ladies Lunch. We don't wear red hats and we don't gossip. We do chow down at one of many eateries along the coast once a month. And we're always ready to welcome anyone who is retiring or only working part time. Or taking a sick day. *Contact Peggy Mays*

Retired Old Men Eating Out (ROMEIO) Retired guys get together for lunch and sociability once a month, often with the minister. *Contact Les Ferlazzo*

Soup Sundays are offered once a month during Coffee Hour. Pay \$5 for all-you-can-eat chili and homemade soups. The usual coffee and goodies may be had without charge. *Contact Allyson Lawless*

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Adult Education offers courses and one-time programs as learning opportunities for adult spiritual growth. The Adult Education Planning Team selects and schedules them. *Contact Diane Young, diane.young@frsuu.org*

Buddhist Meditation is led on Mondays, 6:30-7:30pm in the Lower Meetinghouse, Rooms A&B. In the Kwan Um School of Zen, the purpose of our meditation practice is to clear our mind so that we can become peaceful and compassionate and then help save other beings from suffering. First-timers, please come at 6pm for an orientation. *Contact Joyce Haydock*

Chalice Circles are small group ministries in which eight to ten people come together twice monthly for spiritual development and friendship. The program is structured around topics that generate deep exploration and discussion. To learn more, go to frsuu.org/chalice-circles *Contact Diane Young, diane.young@frsuu.org*

Rites to mark life passages--child dedications, weddings, and funeral services--may be arranged with the minister.

Our **Journey of Faith** program, in which a church member or friend tells his or her story at the beginning of a Sunday service, was started to increase lay participation in our service, to help us get to know each other better, and to appreciate the spiritual diversity in our congregation. Consider giving your Journey of Faith. *Contact Alex Mezey or Merry Maleska Wilbur*

SUNDAY MORNINGS

Flowers are donated each Sunday. Donations usually carry over from year to year. You may provide the bouquet yourself or have the office order them for \$35. To honor someone by donating flowers, *contact Nicole Salemi, nicole.salemi@frsuu.org*

Light the Steeple for a week with a donation of \$50. Donors are listed in Sunday's Order of Service. *Contact Nicole Salemi, nicole.salemi@frsuu.org*

Sunday morning volunteers include ushers, Visitor Table staffers, and chalice lighters. Training provided. *Contact Diane Young, diane.young@frsuu.org*

The **Worship Committee** handles responsibilities related to the weekly worship service: "housekeeping" tasks such as opening and closing the church and preparing the communion table; giving the Welcome and Announcements; assigning Chalice Lighters; locating guest speakers and working with each of them to organize a service on Sundays when our minister is not in the pulpit; and soliciting recommendations for enhancing the service experience for the congregation. *Contact Merry Maleska Wilbur*

SPECIAL SERVICES

Family Services once a month
Guest speakers every month or so
Flower Ingathering on Opening Sunday
Animal-related service in October (including an Animal Blessing every other year)
New Member Recognition Sundays (May and November)
Christmas Pageant Family Service
Christmas Candlelight Service
Christmas Eve Service
Martin Luther King Jr.-related service (January)
Unitarian Universalist Association Sunday (February)
Maundy Thursday Communion service
Young Church Sunday (May)

A Light in the Darkness is an occasional solemn service for people who are grieving or feeling lonely and blue, and for those who support them. The service includes quiet reflection, music, readings and ritual. *Contact: Bettina Turner*

April 2016