



Worship in the Meetinghouse at 10:00 am

Zoom Social Hour every Sunday at 11:30

<https://uso6web.zoom.us/j/99906139969>

All worship can be found on youtube at www.dedhamuu.org after the service

Sunday, September 10, 2023

The Nature of Waterways

Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.

This homecoming Sunday we will explore the October 2022 Supreme Court Ruling against the EPA and how the reframing of waterways affects us all. Please bring water that represents some of your summer to share as part of our Water Communion. A Potluck lunch picnic will follow worship. Sandwiches and drinks will be provided, salads and desserts will be welcomed.

Sunday September 17, 2023

Constitutional Celebration

Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.

We will explore the philosophy of John Locke and consider how the American Constitution has shaped our democracy. And how democracy forms our UU faith.

Sunday, September 24, 2022

A Last Will Be First Economy

The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.

Socialist mantles are often ascribed to those who wish to redistribute wealth and who consider progressive ideals. This Sunday we will consider the spiritual ground of redistributist ideals and how we might live our values more fully.

October 1, 2023

Anthropomorphization

Rev. Rali Weaver will preach

We will consider the risks and benefits of anthropomorphization and celebrate what the real lives of animals can teach us. We will have a pet blessing at 11:30 after worship.

Sunday, October 8, 2023

Mercy vs Tough Love

Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.

Away from the political rhetoric and pundits banter we will consider the history of immigration in our country and how we might respond from a holy place to those displaced in our day.

Sunday, October 15, 2023

Memories

The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.

How do our memories shape our future? Can we reshape our memories so that we can reshape our past? These are questions we will explore in worship.

Sunday, October 22, 2023

Apocalyptic

The Rev. Rali M. Weaver will preach.

In the face of so much dystopian fiction we will explore the idea of the apocalypse and what endings might be good.

Sunday, October 29, 2023

Halloween!

The Rev. Hank Peirce will Preach

Our friend Hank Peirce will return to the pulpit for Halloween!

A costume parade will begin worship. Feel free to come in costume to worship.

Our Minister: The Rev. Rali M. Weaver

What a wild, strange sabbatical we have had. Jenny and I have traveled so many places and I hope that our travels will feed my sermons for years to come! At our homecoming service I invite you to bring water from all your travels to share. In the past we have had a slideshow of people's summer trips. If you have pictures you would like to share for the slideshow please send them to me at raliweaver@dedhamuu.org. Or drop your pictures by the church office for Grace to scan. There will be a picnic on the green following worship after that Homecoming Service. I hope this will give me lots of opportunities to reconnect with all of you.

I will be back in the parsonage August 28 and welcome any requests for visits. I will try to reconnect with everyone in the coming months and am always available when you reach out to me. I have set some open office hours for work to be done and drop in's and will keep Grace updated on my schedule- however if you want to make a one-on-one appointment with me email and phone calls work.

I understand that many of you have enjoyed the variety of voices and sermons this past year. This makes me so glad. In light of your feedback I think it is time to start the Worship Committee back up . If you are interested in worship planning and prep and or being a worship associate please let me know. I would love the help. I also hope to invite some of the ministers from the past year to the pulpit from time to time. If you had a particular favorite please let me know.

I understand that your communication increased in my absence. In the past we had a lackluster response to setting up talk circles, small group ministry and critical friends groups. It does seem that we need more opportunities to connect in smaller groups and to build long lasting deeper relationships. If you would like to help with organizing smaller talk circles for groups please let me know.

There are many ways to be involved and to get to know others in our congregational church. By our governance it takes all of us to keep the church running. Our Church is made up of committees and groups, classes and concerts and coffee houses, a theater group, and civic engagement activities that all need interested people to operate. Our Congregational Polity is the democratic religious structure that was formed by the Cambridge Platform in 1648. The Cambridge Platform was a group of New England Puritan Ministers who decided that the proprietors of the pews were the 'saints'. Which basically means that the people who attend church are the ones who make all the decisions and decide what our church is. Even my role as the minister has no power at all separate from your trust in me.

I am excited by all the new connections you have made in my absence and hope that we can work together to build a stronger community with all of the insights you have gained in my absence.

I am so thankful to all those who worked to make things run in my absence! Special thanks to Grace and Lisa and Darry who went above and beyond to make the work of the church run smoothly in my absence.

I look forward to reconnecting with you all in the coming months.

Sincerely, Rali

Rev. Rali M. Weaver on Zoom 8-8:30 am in the church office
and on zoom <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/89727997701>
for daily check-in and meditation
Thursdays 5-6:30 on Zoom for Readers and Writers workshop <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/83183979464>
In the Church Office Tuesday through Friday 9-2 and by appointment.
raliweaver@dedhamuu.org or 617-459-5979

Our Interim Director of the UU Explorers Program: Lisa Pilat

Hello Church family,

Welcome back, I hope you all had a fun, restful and enriching summer.

We are back in the swing of things 😊

The nursery will be staffed by Desi Langmead and we have a new nursery caregiver, Cailey Walsh.

Here is her bio:

My name is Cailey and I grew up in Mansfield. I lived in Colorado for a few years where I had my son, Teddy. We moved back to MA to be close to family and it's been so great seeing Teddy's relationship with his cousins and family. I've worked on the administrative side of health care for the last 5 years. I look forward to this new opportunity and to meet everyone!

I will be sending out the R. E. registration forms soon!

Spirit Play, UU Explorers and Worship Leaders classes will begin on 9/17/23.

Once I receive your registration I will let you know your child's class.

Neighboring Faiths will begin on 9/17/23.

OWL 7-9 will meet on 9/17/23 at the Dedham Community House.

Some things to look forward to this year:

Fall season we will offer Spirit Play, UU Explorers, Jr Worship Associates and OWL 7-9.

We will be having OWL 4-6, Neighboring Faiths and Coming of Age in the Spring.

I hope to focus our children's ministries on Dimensions of faith this year. It is so important to understand the phases we all pass through in our faith development and this extends to our youth.

I plan to have some teacher training and small group discussions on this as well.

I look forward to seeing you all on Homecoming Sunday 9/10/23.

With love,

Lisa

Our Music Director: Darry Dolezal

Welcome! Calling all singers to lift your voices with the choir. Choir membership is open to everyone. Our first rehearsal will be Thursday, September 7 at 7:30 pm in the Dining Room. We will practice music for upcoming services followed by a little party to celebrate the beginning of the church season. Feel free to bring refreshments.

If you are not able to attend rehearsals that's okay. We meet every Sunday morning at 8:45 to warm up and go over the music for the service. Again, all are welcome to join us.

Everyone young, old and in between may take part in the Intergenerational Choir which will sing an easy, fun introit on the second Sunday of each month beginning on October 8. Please come 15 minutes before the service to go over the music. Bring the whole family!

Please consider sharing your talents with the congregation by performing an offertory this year. I will be happy to help you put it together, just contact me: darrydolezal@dedhamuu.org

Church Administrator: Grace Peña

Starting September 1st, Church Office hours will be:
Monday & Friday ~ 10 am - 3 pm
Wednesday ~ 12 pm- 5 pm (through the end of October)

Starting in September, I will be in the office again for three days a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The office is closed on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Stay tuned for lots more activity around church like the return of Sunday services, coffee hour, children's RE classes, etc. You can always reach me at firstchurch@dedhamuu.org or when I am in the office at 781-326-7463,

If you would like to receive our weekly email, please contact me either at firstchurch@dedhamuu.org or by phone at 781-326-7463 and I will add your email address to that contact list. The all church email usually goes out on Thursday afternoon.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have stopped receiving the weekly email what likely has happened is that the software has marked your email address as inactive. This automatically occurs if you do not open that message for a while. Please make sure to at least open the message even if you do not click through. Please contact the office if you need your email address placed back on the contact list.

Care and Concern

We continue to have parishioners who are not feeling well and/or cannot make it to worship or virtual services, and would benefit from a call, a card or a visit.

If you have a care or concern to share or an address and phone number, please contact our church office by calling 781-326-7463 or emailing firstchurch@dedhamuu.org or contact Susan White at sbsw6567@gmail.com

Civic Engagement

Dedham Food Pantry

Dedham Food Pantry needs volunteers at this time. If you can help, please sign up by going to: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409of4caca829a2f49-20201>

Adult Religious Exploration

New UU

Sunday, September 17, 24 and October 8 and 15th at 11:30 There will be a New to Unitarian Universalism Class held in the Parsonage following worship, lunch will be provided. To sign up contact raliweaver@dedhamuu.org 617-459-5979

Nature and Nurture Society: Come rain or shine we will be walking together on Saturday, September 16th and Saturday October 14th. Contact Rali if you are interested so she can give you directions and knows who to wait for. 617-459-5979 or raliweaver@dedhamuu.org. New walkers are always welcome!

Daily Meditations: Join Rali for 30 minutes of check-in and meditation, 8:00-8:30 every weekday of the week on Zoom <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/684365896>

The First Church Reader and Writer Group will begin meeting again **starting September 14 every Thursday** from 5pm - 6:30 pm on Zoom. Please join us for reading and listening and writing both poetry and prose. Even if you aren't a writer, bring some of your favorite author's work to share. This is a fun and enjoyable time for all those who participate. Please join us on Zoom <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/87160212466>. New readers and writers are always welcome.

Are you interested in starting a new small group conversation or dinner group? or teach an Adult Class? Contact raliweaver@dedhamuu.org or 617-459-5979.



First Church Friday Coffee House presents its first concert of the 2023-2024 season featuring Slow Boat Home in the Parish Hall at First Church and Parish Dedham 670 High Street on Friday, September 22, 2023 at 7:30 pm in the Auditorium. There will be refreshments for purchase. Tickets are \$15 and will be available at the door. Doors open at 7:00 pm.

Slow Boat Home is a fun-loving Americana band playing original tunes mixed with a lively collection of country, blues, jazz, and jug band music. Selecting many tunes from the first half of the 20th century. Slow Boat Home makes them their own with stellar lead and ensemble vocals, harmonica, mandolin, bass, dobro, guitars, keyboard, and percussion.

When it comes to influences, Slow Boat Home is an eclectic bunch. Jim Kweskin, Bonnie Raitt, Bessie Smith, Lee Dorsey, Mississippi John Hurt, Big Bill Broonzy, Toots & the Maytals, Jerry Douglas and many more supply musical inspiration.

First Church and Parish Dedham Unitarian Universalist was first gathered in 1638 and is located in Dedham Center at 670 High Street. Its lively music program includes its choir at Sunday services, and the Parish Players theater troupe in addition to our Friday Coffee House events.

FIRST CHURCH & PARISH IN DEDHAM HISTORICAL NOTES

Alvan Lamson (1818-1860)

Alvan Lamson was born on November 18, 1792 in [Weston, Massachusetts](#) to John and Hannah (née Ayres) Lamson. He grew up on a farm and then attended Phillips Andover. Lamson graduated from the theologically liberal Harvard Divinity School in 1817. (He later received a Doctorate in Divinity from Harvard in 1837.) During his student years at Harvard, controversy between liberal and conservative Calvinists was becoming more heated. Starting in 1805, liberal professors such as Henry Ware Sr. attained prestigious chairs on the Divinity School faculty. These liberals critiqued many orthodox Calvinist doctrines, such as the total depravity of human nature, God's predestination of souls to either heaven or hell, justification (redemption) solely by faith and not moral action, and Christ's co-equality with God in the Trinity. Liberals argued that such Calvinist doctrines were not mentioned in the Old and New Testaments. Moreover, these orthodox doctrines undermined Jesus's message about God's fatherly love of humans. And they held that some of the Calvinist doctrines challenged reason itself, for example, the idea that the man Jesus had been co-equal with God since the beginning of time. In part due to his liberal Harvard education, Lamson tended to preach about God as a loving father who sent Jesus on a divine mission to teach humans about their potential for virtuous behavior, and to cause them to seek salvation through moral actions. Lamson's theology was soon to become known as Unitarianism, as opposed to the orthodox Calvinist Trinitarianism that Joshua Bates, the previous First Church minister, had espoused, and thereby was sown the seeds of a dispute which was to disrupt many New England churches.

Lamson was paid for delivering several sermons in Dedham in the spring of 1817 by the pulpit committee which, impressed with his abilities, voted on July 13, 1817 to dispense with hearing other candidates and instead simply hire Lamson. Despite the objections of several of the "most respectable and substantial inhabitants," the ensuing August 31 Parish meeting of Dedham citizens voted 81 to 44 to elect Lamson as "the public protestant teacher of piety, morality, and religion" for Dedham's First Parish. On the same day actual members of the church who were accustomed to Bate's conservative Calvinism voted to reject Lamson election as pastor by a 17-15 vote. Thus began a controversy which was to bring about dramatic change in the relationship between church and state in Massachusetts.

On Sunday, November 15, 1817, a meeting of church members chose Lamson by an even wider margin, but his more orthodox opponents boycotted this meeting which they declared to be irregular and invalid. A council of ministers from neighboring parishes was assembled and this conclave ruled that Lamson was a fit minister and called upon fractious parties to resolve this dispute in a "spirit of candor and benevolence, of meekness and condescension." When the parish installed and ordained Lamson, the more conservative or orthodox members in 1818 decided to form a new church nearby, today known as the Allin Congregational Church. During the split, the departing members including Deacon Samuel Fales, took parish records, funds and the valuable silver used for communion with them. The parish then elected two Deacons who sued for the repossession of the church property at the time in Deacon Fales's hands.

This suit was referred to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court in October 1820. Arguing for the plaintiffs was Daniel Davis, Solicitor General for the Commonwealth, and Daniel Webster argued for the defendants. Chief Justice Isaac Parker wrote the decision finding that the parish, not the church, owned the disputed property. Parker found that the church was an appendage of the parish, rather than a

separate partner. According to ancient land grants as well as the 1780 Massachusetts constitution, towns in Massachusetts granted lands and funds to the church to maintain a “teaching church officer.” By this token, the citizens members of the Dedham parish were the trustees of church property who have the ultimate authority to grant funding to and appoint ministers of the town’s Congregational church. The court held that the property taken by Fales and other orthodox dissenters had to be returned to First Church, setting a precedent for future congregational splits that would arise in many of New England’s more than 600 churches, as Unitarianism grew. (The Communion silver disappeared for over 105 years, to emerge from hiding places to be housed and the Dedham Historical Society and later at the Museum of Fine Arts.) The Dedham case was also a major milestone in the road towards the separation of church and state, as recurring demands of Baptists, Universalist, and Methodist churches to share town tax revenues caused the Commonwealth to formally disestablish the Congregational Church in 1833.

Lamson married Frances Fidelia, the daughter of Chief Justice Artemas Ward Jr. on July 11, 1825 with whom he had four children. He was a great supporter of the Dedham Public Schools and was instrumental in establishing Dedham High School. It was said of the 24-year member of the School Committee that “probably no citizen of the town ever took a deeper interest in the schools or worked harder to raise their character and standard.” He organized reading circles in the parish library and engaged in editorial pursuits with other Unitarian ministers. He was a member of the Massachusetts Historical Society and the first president of the Dedham Historical Society from its establishment in 1859 till his death on July 18, 1864.

Bibliography

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvan_Lamson, not the church
https://www.google.com/books/edition/History_of_Norfolk_County_Massachusetts/HzoWA_Arguing_for_the_plaintiffs_was_AAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Alvan+Lamson+1818-1860&pg=PA440&printsec=frontcover
Smith, Frank. *A History of Dedham*. Dedham; The Transcript Press, 1936.
[The History of Dedham, From the Beginning of Its Settlement, in September 1635, to May 1827 - Google Play Books](#)
Filing Cabinet: Ministers-1688-1897: First Church Papers- 1627-1965; Dedham Museum and Archive
Filing Cabinet: History: 1839-1900: History of First Church in Three Discourses by Alvan Lamson
[The Dedham Case Revisited on JSTOR](#)
[History of Dedham, Massachusetts, 1800–1899 - Wikiwand](#)
[Privatizing the Church: Disestablishment in Connecticut and Massachusetts on JSTOR](#)
[Notes on Disestablishment in Massachusetts, 1780-1833 on JSTOR](#)

Parish Committee Minutes

First Church & Parish Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday, May 2, 2023, 7:00 Meeting on Zoom

Attendees via ZOOM: Julia Gecha, Paquita Bass, Debbie Harrison, Howard Ostroff, Kerrie Gallagher, Erik Meyer-Curley, Jonathan Pape, Rebecca Vautour, Lisa Pilat, Grace Pena, Mathew Grady, Mary Lynn Davis, Geoff Tegnell, Andrea Gilmore

Meeting Called to Order: 7:00 pm

Gratitudes: Grateful for support from community, for Gordon Lightfoot, for the fact that her dogs were not attacked by coyotes, that Spring has sprung, and her dogs were allowed to be out with mom.

Review and Approve:

1. Minutes from April 4th, 2023 were accepted.
2. Treasurer's Report from April 4th, 2023 was accepted.
3. RE Report from April 4th, 2023 accepted.
4. Administrator Update - Building Use update.

Link to reports above are here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1woNRjzEcEeYGzqGJpBOBybKtvmXq5_K

5. Buildings and Grounds Update (Bathrooms) – Andrea showed us the layout of the Parish House main floor and basement and where the new bathrooms would be built and the old bathrooms taken out. The stairs to the right of the main floor bathroom and “Rali’s bathroom” would be closed off. One of the bathrooms would be enlarged and a closet would be added to the area where the stairs were closed off. The 2 bathrooms in the basement would be removed and replaced by 4 new bathrooms. The Women’s Alliance said they would contribute funds to fix up the bathrooms and are waiting for final quotes before they agree to a final number.

Old Business:

1. FY 2024 Budget Progress ([Current Draft](#))
 - a. May 30 zoom meeting for budget vote (June 4 Annual Meeting)
2. Stewardship Committee update
 - a. So far 29 pledges came in totaling \$56,754. The list of people who had not yet pledged was distributed to Stewardship committee members who will contact them to make their pledges.
 - b. Weekly Announcements and Email mention of status will be made. We have 4 Sundays left to encourage people to make their pledges.
3. Safe Church Policy - Policy Review/Becca gave an update. Parish House doors need to be locked from the inside once classes have begun. Ushers will have their own set of keys which they will pick up from the church office every Sunday. They will be able to open the Parish House doors and accompany church goers into the building as necessary. Work on this policy will continue into the next year.
4. Dedham Refugee and Resettlement Collaborative – Howard and Paquita gave an update. Father Steve from St. Suzanna’s is heading this project. Members of various Dedham churches can volunteer to help resettle the next refugee family that becomes available. Catholic Charities started this project 7 years ago. Our church members will be receiving information on how to help in this effort.
5. Parish Committee Rethink
 - a. We need to find out if formal approval is needed for the Rethink. The Rethink document will go to Rali and into the Annual Report and will be implemented at the beginning of the next church year. Thank you to Paquita and Jonny for doing such an exhaustive and fabulous job with this document.

- b. We need to discuss what will be the impact of the Rethink document on the Charter.

New Business:

1. Various people need to submit entries into the Annual Report. Among these are Debbie and Geoff.
2. Nominating Committee needs to be picked and 2 new Parish committee members need to be chosen. Committee includes Geoff Tegnell, Carol Dixon-Hutton, Liza Arend, Dale Meyer-Curley.
3. Date for Annual Meeting is June 4th.
4. 2 warrants will be put together and need to be signed by May 28th.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, June 6th, 2023, in person. Potluck dinner will start at 6pm and meeting will start at 7pm meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 8:32 pm on May 2, 2023

Respectfully submitted,
Julia Gecha, Clerk
First Church and Parish in Dedham

First Church & Parish Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 6, 2023, 7:00 pm

Attendees: Julia Gecha, Paquita Bass, Debbie Harrison, Howard Ostroff, Kerrie Gallagher, Erik Meyer-Curley, Jonathan Pape, Rebecca Vautour, Lisa Pilat, Grace Pena, Mathew Grady, Mary Lynn Davis, Geoff Tegnell, Aoife Barrington

Meeting Called to Order: 7:07 pm

Gratitudes: Grateful to Jonny and Paquita for their energy and leadership, for the Parish Committee and hope that it keeps growing, for Lisa and the terrific RE year.

Review and Approve:

1. Minutes from May 2nd, 2023 were accepted.
2. Treasurer's Report from May 2nd, 2023 was accepted.
3. RE Report from May 2nd, 2023 accepted with update – Women's Alliance bought the new curriculum for Coming of Age called Soulful Manner
4. Building Use update. DLIT gave us \$1000.00 for property use. Also, we need to advertise that our space can be rented.
5. Four new members to our church have been approved. They are Lisa Brayton, Susan Short, Ben Taylor and Sarah Taylor. Carol Dixon does a wonderful job with personal contact to get new members.

Old Business:

1. Safe Church Policy – We need to come forward with a new plan for discussion in September.
2. New Treasurer and new Parish Committee member needed – We need to send out an email saying that we still need a new treasurer and one more Parish Committee member.

New Business:

1. Flag Day Parade participation - Send a church email requesting that people join the parade and look for Howard Ostroff at the start of the parade.
2. Green's Keeper – spring cleanup/fall cleanup can be done in the future, but do we really need it? The issue needs to be discussed.
3. Parsonage – sewer problem cost \$1800.00, kitchen floor cost \$3000.00, bathroom tile cost \$4,200.00. Rali, Deacons and Buildings & Grounds will decide who is responsible for what in the future.
4. New Idea for Picnic Sunday – Lisa will organize T-Shirt decorating for Flag Day Parade event to take place during picnic.
5. Accountant – Eric will tell Jenny what extra duties we need her to perform, and she will tell us how many hours this would take and how much it would cost. Jenny should document her job responsibilities in case she leaves. Also, we need to decide if Jenny should be on salary.
6. Kerrie Gallagher and Howard Ostroff are next year's co-chairs.
7. Add New Tab to Website – New tab would say “Church Building Rental”. People could choose which building or room they want to rent, how much it would cost, etc.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, August 1, 2023.

Meeting adjourned: 8:20 pm on June 6, 2023

Respectfully submitted, Julia Gecha, Clerk,
First Church and Parish in Dedham