

First Parish in Cambridge Unitarian Universalist

Policy & Procedures Handbook

July 24, 2014

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First Parish in Cambridge Unitarian Universalist

Mission Statement and Covenant

Our Mission

Awakened by worship, nourished by tradition, and united by love,
we strive to create a multicultural, spirit-filled community
that works for justice,
fosters spiritual curiosity and faith formation,
shares joy, heals brokenness,
and celebrates the sacred in all.

We welcome people of all beliefs, ages, classes, colors, ethnicities,
abilities, sexual orientations, and gender identities and expressions.

Adopted June 5, 2011.

Covenant

In covenant with one another and all we hold sacred
We answer the call of love –
Welcoming all people into the celebration of life,
Searching for truth and meaning,
And striving for justice and compassion –
To nourish and serve each other, our community and our world.

Adopted November 9, 2003

Nuestro Convenio

En convenio mutuo y con todo lo que consideramos sagrado,
respondiendo al llamado del amor,
invitamos a todos a la celebración de la vida,
buscamos la verdad y el sentido del ser,
y nos esforzamos para alcanzar la justicia
y la compasión, para apoyarnos y servirnos mutuamente,
a nuestra comunidad y a nuestro mundo.

**Adoptado por voto de la congregación el 9 de Noviembre del 2003.
Traducido por Lilia Cuervo.**

Covenant of Right Relations First Parish in Cambridge

Introduction

Unitarian Universalists are united not by belief but by covenant: the sacred promises we make about how we treat one another and our world. Recognizing that conflict is normal and healthy, we embrace right relations not as a set of rules but as a spiritual practice that connects us to our own and others' inherent worth and dignity and to the interdependent web of all existence. When our affections become strained, we seek to restore one another and our community to wholeness.

This covenant affirms our values and aspirations. Because we are imperfect beings, we will live this covenant imperfectly even as we seek its guidance. As each of us is responsible for upholding the covenant in congregational life, we will ask for assistance as needed from each other and our ministers.

We will lift up this covenant in our meetings, programs, communications, and worship. We will revisit it at least every five years, amending it as appropriate. It is a living document that will change and grow, even as we ourselves change and grow.

Covenant of Right Relations

In the spirit of right relations, we covenant to:

Acknowledge and celebrate our differences.

Listen compassionately, speak respectfully, and take responsibility for our actions and feelings.

Speak from personal experience, use "I" statements, and avoid judgment, generalizations, and offering unsolicited advice.

Deal directly with others to resolve conflict.

Strive to stay in relationship through conflict.

Fulfill our commitments, complete our tasks, admit our mistakes, praise each other's successes, and say "thank you."

Ask for help when needed and give help as able.

Assume the good intentions of others.

Adopted by vote of the congregation - June 6, 2010

Covenant of the Standing Committee of First Parish Cambridge

Communication

We listen attentively, valuing all perspectives.

We recognize that conflict is normal in healthy relationships.

We approach disagreements constructively by talking to the person with whom we disagree, not with a third person.

Process

We step up to contribute.

We step back to allow others to contribute.

We help one another focus on our priorities.

We assume good intentions.

Commitments

We prepare for meetings.

We follow through on individual responsibilities.

We support all final decisions as one body.

We are mindful of our responsibility to the larger mission of our community, which is greater than that of any single individual.

Spirit

We remember that this is spiritual work.

We honor our connection to a spiritual community.

Committee Structure

The elected **Standing Committee** authorizes the creation of all committees of the Parish. Each committee has a statement of purpose, a list of major tasks, and a structure which includes number of members, length and number of terms for members and the chair, frequency of meetings, and any other structural characteristics appropriate for that committee. Committee chairs and new members need to be approved by Standing Committee.

Leadership Development Team members are elected by the Congregation and serve as the nominating committee for elected positions including Standing Committee, Deacons and delegates for UUA related responsibilities.

Transformation Team is a committee that is charged with leading the congregation through the process of becoming a multi-cultural, multi-racial congregation.

The **Social Justice Council** consists of 3-5 at large members and representatives of each Social Justice Task Force. They coordinate social justice activities and support the Task Forces elected by the congregation. The selection of Task Forces occurs annually at the Spring Semi-Annual Meeting.

Transformation Team and Social Justice Council work closely with the ministers and Standing Committee to coordinate activities throughout the congregation and our relationships with the larger community. They provide support to committees, groups and task forces.

Program Council meets three times a year and provides a venue for group leaders, task force leaders, and committee chairs to share information, coordinate activities, negotiate meeting space and time, and improve communication. Program Council is coordinated by the Vice-Chair of Standing Committee.

Denominational Action consists of the delegates to UUA related groups and General Assembly. They coordinate closely with Social Justice Council and encourage congregational involvement in the larger UUA movement.

Committees

The committees of First Parish are divided into three groups:

Ministry Committees are focused on Sunday Worship and supporting our shared ministry. These committees include Committee on Ministry, Deacons, Intern Committee, Music Committee, Pastoral Care Associates, Sunday Morning Welcome Team and Worship Associates. Deacons are elected by the congregation and work closely with the Worship Associates and the Sunday Morning Welcome Team. First Parish has a joint Committee on Ministry that supports both called ministers.

Relationship Building Committees are focused on strengthening our community and our spiritual growth. Committees include Abilities and Access, Community Auction, Hospitality, Membership, and Religious Education. The Community Auction and Concert Committees are active for short periods of time for specific tasks.

Operations Committees are focused on the financial, physical and infrastructure work of our congregation. Committees include Buildings and Grounds, Finance, Investment, Personnel and Stewardship.

Social Justice Task Forces and Program Groups

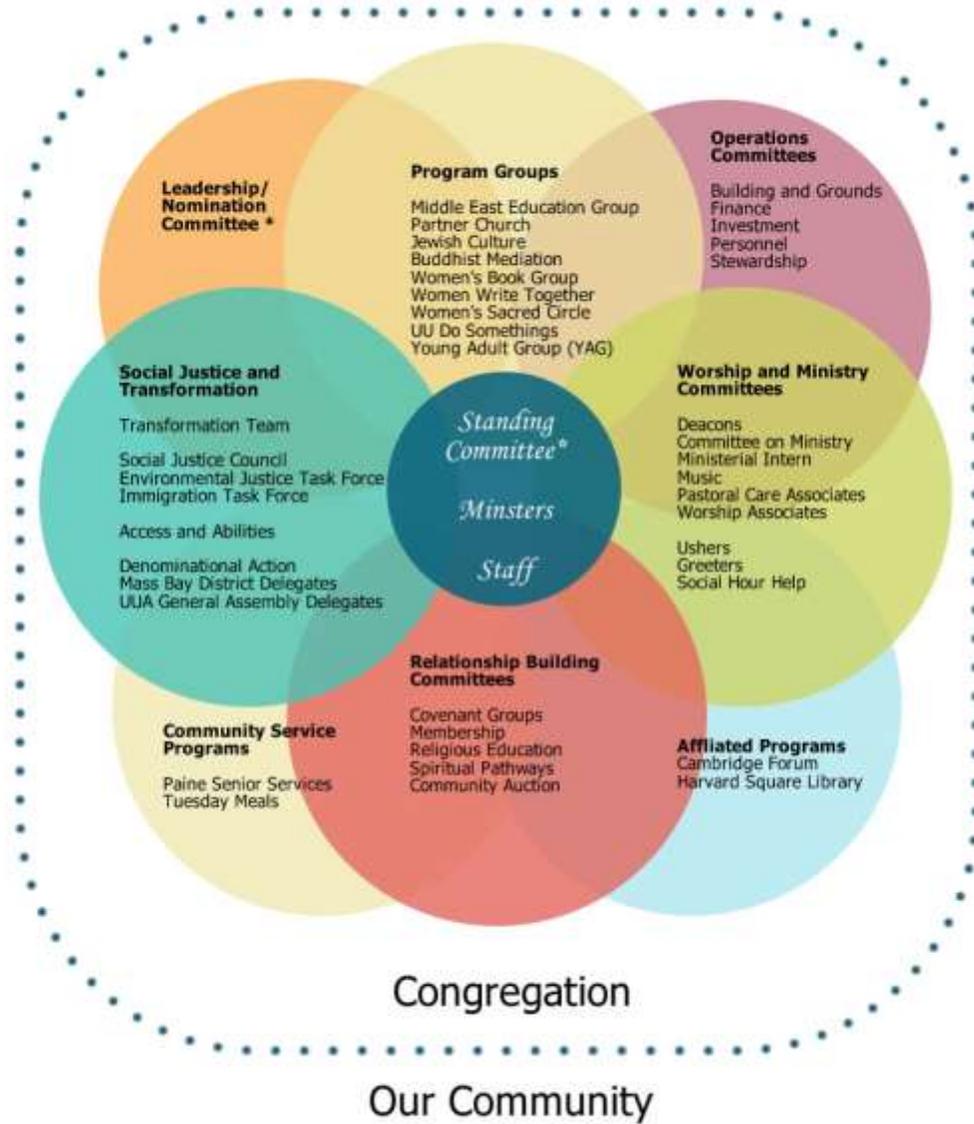
In 2014-2015, there are two Social Justice Task Forces: **Environmental Justice and Beyond Borders/Sin Fronteras**. Task Forces are voted on by the congregation at the June semi-annual meeting and are the priorities for the Congregation's social justice work during the year. Task Forces need to have at least 5 organizers and 5 supporters who are voting members of the congregation.

Program Groups are organized by members – each group needs to have at least 4 voting members participating and groups are approved annually by Standing Committee.

First Parish has two **Community Service Programs** – Paine Senior Services and the Tuesday Meals Program. These programs have paid staff and Advisory Boards appointed by Standing Committee.

First Parish has two **Affiliated Organizations** – Cambridge Forum and Harvard Square Library. Both of these organizations are 501(c)3 organizations with Boards of Directors. The Standing Committee serves as the members of the Corporation for both organizations and approves members of the Boards of Directors.

The Interconnected Web at First Parish



* Elected

Committee Resources

The First Parish website (<http://firstparishcambridge.org>) is a significant resource. Spend some time becoming familiar with the website so you can easily find information you need about First Parish.

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) provides resources and consultation to local UU congregations. Resources are available at <http://www.uua.org/leaders/index.shtml>

- *Interconnections* is an e-newsletter and resource library for leaders. Don't re-invent the wheel. Learn from other churches' experiences. You can sign up to have the e-newsletter sent to you. There is an extensive search function to find articles on many topics.
- A variety of resource manuals are available including the Effective Congregational Committees manual which lists resources for typical church committees.
- Email listservs are available so you can share ideas with UUs around the country who are working on similar issues.

The New England Region is our regional chapter of the UUA. This office offers learning and leadership development programs for leaders. For more information, go to <http://newenglanduua.org>.

Questions? Concerns? Talk with Standing Committee members, Nominating Committee members, Ministers or Staff.

Questions for Committees to consider each September

- Is the committee description up-to-date?
- What is our role in furthering the vision and mission of our congregation?
- What are our goals for this year? How will we know that we have accomplished our purpose?
- How can we incorporate anti-oppression work into our committee work?
- Who has led this committee in the past? Are those people available to advise or consult?
- Do we have enough committee members to accomplish our goals?
- Do we have a budget? How much? Are there any restrictions on spending it? Is it more or less than in the past? Does it seem reasonable? If not, are there additional sources of funding?
- What type of interaction should our committee expect to have with Standing Committee, ministers and/or staff? What support do we need?
- Are committee members familiar with resources such as the First Parish Handbook?

Developing Effective Committee Meetings

- Reserve space for meeting in advance by contacting the Church office.
- Have a clear process for committee members to add items to the agenda.
- Develop an agenda for the meeting and share it in advance with participants.
- Ask that reports be prepared in writing and in advance. If the business of the meeting becomes too extensive, written reports can help reduce the time needed for meetings.
- Schedule important items early in the meeting. Participants are usually fresh when you address these issues.
- Arrive early to make sure everything is set up when people arrive.
- Greet people as they arrive and help new people feel part of the group.
- Respect time – begin and end on time. Pay attention to transportation needs.
- Begin with a centering reading, song or meditation.
- Build in time for a “check in” – it helps members transition into the meeting as well as build connections between members.
- Facilitate the discussion but do not dominate.
- Pay attention to group dynamics and make sure everyone has a chance to participate in the meeting.
- Invite reticent members to participate and perhaps more importantly, invite reticent members to take responsibility for being sure that they receive a fair hearing.
- Be sensitive to the needs of committee members. Are all committee members able to contribute to the work of the committee? Is the workload distributed fairly?
- Consider your committee's needs for greater flexibility or greater structure. Is your committee hindered by too strict adherence to formal procedures or would greater attention to formalized procedures make it healthier and more productive?
- When a decision needs to be made, ask whose responsibility it is to make the decision. Is this question best decided by the whole committee, by a subcommittee, by another committee or by ministers or staff? If the committee, is it sufficiently weighty to require consensus? Will voting do? Is a formal vote needed to achieve validity, even if consensus has been reached?
- Set/confirm the time and date of the next meeting before the meeting ends.
- Express appreciation to committee members.

Use technology wisely. Email should be used to set meeting times and share simple information, agendas and minutes. Complex discussions and decisions should usually not be made by email.

Telephone conference calls may be convenient at times but all committees need some face-to-face interaction to build community.

Examples of chalice lightings or opening words for committee meetings

At times our own light goes out
and is rekindled by a spark from another person.
Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude
of those who have lighted the flame within us.

Albert Schweitzer

We gather this hour as people of faith
With joys and sorrows, gifts and needs.
We light this beacon of hope,
Sign of our quest for truth and meaning,
In celebration of the life we share together.

Christine Robinson

We light our chalice
To illuminate the world we seek,
In the search for truth, may we be just;
In the search for justice, may we be loving;
And, in loving, may we find peace.

Elizabeth McMaster

We light this chalice as a symbol of the creativity of our liberal faith:
The creativity to explore new avenues of religious insight;
The creativity to develop a caring community;
The creativity to envision a world of peace and freedom.

William Gardner

We light this chalice in memory of those who have been persistent seekers.
Those whose desire to search together gave us this building;
Those whose search for truth shaped this questing religion;
Whose perspectives on freedom created more justice among peoples.
Our presence here this morning is lit by their dreams and deeds.

Emily Lou Belcher

The choice to bless the world can take you into solitude to search for the sources
of power and grace, native wisdom, healing and liberation. More, the choice will
draw you into community, the endeavor shared, the heritage passed on, the
companionship of struggle, the importance of keeping faith, the life of ritual and
praise, the comfort of human friendship, the company of earth, its chorus of life
welcoming you. None of us alone can save the world. Together – that is another
possibility waiting.

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker

Considerations for Committee Membership

“As Unitarian Universalists, we share a desire to be an open, welcoming, and inclusive community. Our effort towards dismantling oppression is tremendously important, yet easy to stumble over. Committees have an opportunity to address oppression in two major ways: first, in their internal workings, and second, in the viewpoint they bring to their work on behalf of the congregation.” (p 5 of the UUA “Effective Congregational Committees” manual)

Ideally, committees represent the composition of the congregation and include the fullest possible spectrum of voices and views. It is important that committee members not be drawn from the same small group of people. Ideally, as many people as possible participate in committees and leadership rotates.

People volunteer or agree to serve on committees for many reasons including: to serve the congregation; to get to know more people; to share skills and talents; to learn new skills and develop talents; to grow spiritually or to be a steward of the church. Serving on committees provides opportunities to get to know each other better, to work towards common goals and to grow as human beings. Most of us have a mix of motivations and our motivations change over time.

“Working to prevent burnout may be the single greatest gift committee members can give one another. Pay attention to how the workload is being distributed.” (p. 10 of the UUA “Effective Congregational Committees” manual) Leaders and ministers need to make sure that leadership rotates and that talented leaders are not over-tapped. Special attention should be paid to members who represent small pools of demographics within the church and making sure our desire for representation does not lead to these people feeling stretched too thin.

Committee chairs should be voting members. Committee members should be voting members at First Parish. Standing Committee may make an exception if prospective committee members make a commitment to fulfill membership requirements. Non-members who pledge may be considered for committee membership if no voting members are able to serve.

As a general rule, it is preferred that couples or members of the same household do not serve on the same committee. Members of ministers families should not serve on ministry committees. Standing Committee has discretion to make exceptions.

Committee members are encouraged to pledge at a stewardship level (% of income, not amount of money), attend semi-annual meetings and be active in congregational life. Committee members are also encouraged to remain knowledgeable about congregational life by reading the weekly announcements and Meetinghouse News. If you miss Sunday worship, you may want to visit the First Parish website to read or listen to the sermon.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

The Nominating Committee consists of six members who will be responsible for selecting a slate of candidates to run for open seats on the Standing Committee, the Nominating Committee, and among the Deacons. They shall nominate one or more candidates for each position to be filled by election at the next Spring Semi-Annual Meeting. This includes the Officers, two members-at-large of the Standing Committee, and members of the Nominating Committee for terms that are expiring, plus any elective positions in which a vacancy occurred during the previous year. In making nominations, the Nominating Committee shall strive for broad representation from the First Parish congregation in leadership positions, mindful of the congregational commitment to a build a multicultural community.

The first meeting of the Nominating Committee shall take place no later than December. At its first meeting, the committee shall elect a Chair.

The Nominating Committee shall welcome and encourage nominations and self-nominations from the congregation. It is suggested that Nominating Committee personally solicit nominations from a broad variety of groups, individuals, and leaders in the congregation, including the Standing Committee Chair and Senior Deacon, as well as the First Parish ministers. The Nominating Committee shall widely publicize every stage of the nominating and election process.

The Nominating Committee shall meet with all candidates, including petition nominees, shall ascertain that all candidates are fully informed of the duties of the position and able to commit to service. The Nominating Committee shall collect candidate statements that include basic biographical information and information about the candidates' previous volunteer experience at First Parish for inclusion in its final report to the Standing Committee and for distribution to the congregation. All candidates must be voting members of the First Parish in Cambridge.

The Committee shall submit its list of nominees and candidate statements to the Standing Committee in time for its April meeting.

The day following the meeting of the Standing Committee at which the list of nominees is submitted, the list and candidate statements shall be presented to the voting members of the Church electronically, and shall be presented in writing at the next Sunday worship following the Standing Committee meeting.

Nominations may be made by petition of 15 or more voting members. Petitions and candidate statements must be submitted to the Nominating Committee by May 14.

The Chair of the Nominating Committee shall present the slate and candidate statements at the Spring Semi-Annual Meeting. The final ballot shall include a list of all offices for which elections are to be held, and a list of all candidates for each office drawn at random at a meeting of the Nominating Committee. The ballot shall provide an opportunity to cast an explicit "nay" vote against any candidate running unopposed. No absentee or early ballots shall be accepted. Voters must be present for the Chair's presentation of the slate, and any ensuing discussion.

What to Do With a Good Idea

These guidelines are meant to help someone wondering what to do with a good idea for First Parish. We hope you will use this guidance to turn your ideas into action. We value and need your participation. Since our structure may vary from other churches or institutions, keep two key background points in mind.

- First, our UU church is congregationally oriented which means major decisions happen through a democratic process within the governing structure of the congregation. So, every project or program needs to be “owned” by the appropriate committee or group. Decisions are usually based on a fit with the congregation’s priorities and available resources. To start a new program or social justice project, there needs to be a small group willing to work on the project. Within the committee structure, the elected Standing Committee has the role of lay administrative leadership including fiduciary responsibility.
- Second, the role of ministry is to provide spiritual leadership and direction. The ministers can be sounding boards, help sharpen ideas and give advice on how to advance an idea. However, they cannot be expected to do the homework, to steer an idea through the system or make it happen (unless it is their own idea).

Do the Homework

Do you have a good idea for First Parish? Talk about it with others to see if there is support and how the idea fits with the priorities and resources of the congregation. By talking to people you can learn if your idea is already in place, is in the process of being implemented or has been tried before. The idea may fit with an existing group. For example, a social justice idea should be discussed with the Social Justice Council or an idea for Sunday worship should be discussed with the Worship Associates. Information about current programs as well as policies and procedures are available at our website: www.firstparishcambridge.org. Past records, such as annual reports, may be available to help shape the project. There may be relevant policies to take into consideration. Depending on the scope of the idea, an answer may come from one committee or the answer may require a congregational vote.

Some questions to ask:

- Is there an existing group or committee working on this issue?
- How does the idea fit with the congregation’s priorities and resources?
- How does it fit into the congregation’s calendar and other scheduled activities?
- Who will participate? Are others enthusiastic?
- How much time am I willing to commit to the idea?
- What church staff or minister support is needed?
- Are there funds available?
- Will this idea impact the current or planned work of other groups/committees?

Resources including policies, building use procedures, financial information, committee descriptions and staff responsibilities are located elsewhere in this handbook. If you can't find the information you need, talk to a minister, staff or a standing committee member.

Does your idea fit into the work being done by an existing committee or group? Look at the congregational map and look at the committee and group descriptions in the Handbook (brief committee descriptions and group descriptions are also available in the Community Guide). If the answer is not clear, ask a member of Standing Committee or another church leader for advice.

- If your idea fits into an existing committee, contact the committee chair. For example, if you have a suggestion for a social justice project, contact the chair of Social Justice Council.
- If your idea is to start a new group and it appears that a similar group does not exist, contact the Vice Chair of Standing Committee to discuss your idea and get advice on how to proceed. A new group form is available on the website.
- Some ideas or projects don't fit into the existing structure. For example, in the fall of 2009, Standing Committee formed a team to make recommendations for a new sound system for the Meetinghouse. Since this crosses over multiple committees (Music, Worship, Buildings and Grounds, Finance), a temporary team is formed for a specific task.

Making it Happen

If your idea fits within an existing committee/group, you might share your idea and the committee/group may take it on. Or the group/committee, might suggest you to join the group or committee and organize the idea within their structure.

If your project requires the formation of a new program group, you need to follow the steps in the program form. This includes having at least four members of the congregation willing to work on the program and sign the Program Group application as active participants. Completed program forms need to be approved by Standing Committee. The Vice Chair of Standing Committee can assist you with the process.

If your project involves a social justice action, than you need to work with the Social Justice Council. The congregation votes on Task Forces each spring and these are the priority actions for the year. However, the SJC may take on small additional projects especially in response to an urgent need. If you want to form a Task Force for the next year, the SJC can assist you with this process. In all cases of public witness, congregational vote is needed.

If the idea doesn't fit into existing structures, the Standing Committee may form a new committee or a temporary team to deal with the issue. This would require a vote by Standing Committee. To begin this process, speak with the Standing Committee chair or vice chair. In some cases, a vote may be required by the congregation.

SOCIAL JUSTICE TASK FORCES

Each spring, the Social Justice Council coordinates a process whereby First Parish members identify and prioritize justice concerns; and then vote to commission Task Forces to act on our behalf. In advance of an open meeting of the congregation in May, Task Forces must complete a Task Force Application that includes a written statement of its goals and objectives as well as the signatures of 5 "organizers" and 5 "supporters".

At the Spring Semi-Annual Meeting, the congregation selects a Social Justice agenda for the forthcoming church year.

- The advocate(s) may speak at the meeting for no longer than five minutes about why the congregation should approve the task force.
- There is a brief discussion for clarification.
- SJC recommends the number of task forces the congregation will approve, based on their assessment of the level of activity we can sustain. The congregation votes whether to accept (or change) the recommendation.
- The ballots will list task forces separately without the option of voting for the entire slate. The leading choices are adopted up to the number of task forces established (e.g. if the congregation says it can support two task forces and there are nine proposals, the top two in the process of setting priorities are adopted).
- A 2/3 majority vote of the congregation is required to approve a Social Justice Task Force or to approve public witness on behalf of the congregation
- Members of the selected task forces and a member of the SJC have a brief organizational meeting to elect a chair and choose a meeting time. The chair (or designee) is required to attend SJC meetings. If there are co-chairs, one chair must be designated the member of the SJC and the contact person for the office.

Task Forces are authorized to work for one year, and authorization may be renewed by repeating the above procedure.

Task forces are encouraged to meet over the summer to develop the issue by educating themselves about the problem, stating goals and objectives for planned actions, and developing strategies for engaging the congregation in the coming months.

The SJC monitors and advises the task forces. Task forces are entitled to privileges:

- May reserve meeting rooms at First Parish and appear on our website calendar.
- May speak on behalf of " _____ Task Force of the First Parish in Cambridge UU"
- Request funding from the SJC budget (if there is any).
- Conduct fundraisers in accordance with the fundraising policy.
- Suggest service projects to covenant groups.
- Voting privileges at Program Council.
- Access to the Meetinghouse News, First Parish listserv, Parish Announcements, website, and other communication tools.
- The Task Forces' issues will be priorities for the Worship Committee.
- In coordination with the staff in the church office, may reserve a table or organize at Social Hour.

The Task Forces report regularly to the Standing Committee and congregation.

First Parish Cambridge TASK FORCE APPLICATION FORM

Task Force Name:	
Lead organizer's name:	Phone:
	Email:
Primary purpose/mission of TF (describe the <i>Issue, definition of social problem, religious values involved</i>):	
TF Objectives for church year 2014-2015	
Possible strategies, activities or events planned for church year 2014-2015:	
<i>Organizers</i> commit to serving on the task force and actively working on this issue.	
Identify Organizers:	Signatures:
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
<i>Supporters</i> agree to participate in activities of the task force.	
Identify Supporters:	Signatures:
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Program Group Formation and Renewal

Vibrant program groups are a critical part of our church community. Program groups allow members to form connections and build community. In order for the larger church to be healthy, it is important that program groups remain connected to the larger community and that new people are welcomed into them.

The following guidelines are meant to foster healthy community within program groups and within the larger First Parish community. Groups need to apply annually to Standing Committee to ensure that they are meeting the criteria.

Applications to form a new group or to renew a group must be submitted to the Vice Chair of Standing Committee in May or June to ensure groups are considered active for the September start of the church year. Groups that are not approved will not have the privileges of active groups. Applications for new groups can be submitted to Standing Committee throughout the year. The application can be accessed through the First Parish website. Email the application to Standingcommittee@firstparishcambridge.org.

Criteria for Program Groups:

- Alignment with First Parish Mission and the Covenant
- Willingness to contribute to Transformation goals of building a multiracial and multicultural congregation through awareness and action
- Willingness to address accessibility accommodations as needed
- Group members are familiar with the Covenant of Right Relations and willing to make use of it in group and individual communications
- Potential to meet congregational needs or interests not being met by other groups/committees
- Likelihood to engage members of the congregation
- Availability of at least four voting members that want to participate in the group
- Identify a voting member to serve as the official leader for the group. The leader is responsible for submitting an annual summary of group activities for the Annual Report. If the group needs a key, the leader serves as the "key holder".
- Either the leader or representative attends the Program Council meetings three times a year to ensure coordination among groups and committees.
- All groups are encouraged to participate as a group in at least two congregational service activities (example: sponsor auction item, host social hour, host new member breakfast, etc.) and one community service activity that ideally is coordinated with Social Justice Council.

Steps for Program Group Formation or Renewal

1. If you want to form new group, discuss the concept with a Minister (reflect on above criteria)
2. Complete the Program Group Application form.
3. Submit proposal to Standing Committee for approval.

Privileges of Active Groups

- Free space use * **
- Free publicity in internal communications such as weekly announcements, Meetinghouse News, First Parish listserv and website.
- Ability to sponsor events with outside groups or organizations (consistent with group sponsorship policy)**
- Ability to fundraise (consistent with fundraising policy)
- Possibility of coordinating a Sunday lay-led worship service with approval of ministers and Worship Committee
- Financial resources (depending on budget and priorities of the congregation)
- A program group cannot speak on behalf of First Parish

*Space is available if groups follow the proper scheduling process. Conflicts between groups will be resolved at Program Council.

** Events that are open to the public require a sexton, and arrangements need to be made by in advance. The cost of the sexton will need to be paid to First Parish by the group.

Program Group Application - Questions and Answers

Why is this policy necessary?

As the church has grown, it has been challenging to keep track of which groups are active. The application serves as a way to confirm which groups plan to be active in September so that our materials are up to date for the beginning of the church year. It is very disappointing to newcomers and visitors to contact groups only to discover that the group is no longer active. This policy also ensures that building space isn't held for groups that don't plan to use it.

Which groups need to submit an application?

All program groups need to submit an annual application. Program groups are groups that are organized for spiritual practice, discussion, arts, social, or affinity reasons. Current examples include Women's Book Group, Women's Sacred Circle, Women's Writing Group and Young Adult Group (YAG). New groups are encouraged to form and can also submit applications.

What if a current group doesn't submit an application?

Groups that do not submit an application by August 1 will not be considered active in September. The group will not be included in materials such as the community guide or website. The group will not be able to reserve space or make announcements about activities in the Meetinghouse News, weekly announcements, listserv etc. Groups can submit an application later in the year to become active and will be included in materials when materials are updated.

Can a social justice or environmental issue become a program group?

Social justice and environmental issue groups are encouraged to participate in the Social Justice Council process and form a task force. If a group is not able to become an official task force, it can become a program group. Program groups do not have the privileges of Social Justice Task Forces. Program groups usually focus on building community within First Parish.

What if we don't have four voting members for our group?

Talk to a minister or the Standing Committee Vice-Chair for ideas on how to recruit additional members. Standing Committee does have discretion to make exceptions to the policy requiring four voting members. The goal of the policy is to make sure that the group will be active.

The other option is to not be a program group but rather gather on a more temporary basis as Spiritual Pathways program. The Associate Minister works with the Spiritual Pathways Committee and can assist you in developing your idea into a class or series of classes. Many successful groups at First Parish began as Spiritual Pathways (Adult Spiritual Education) classes.

Who is considered a voting member?

Voting members have submitted an application for membership, been voted into membership by Standing Committee and have made a financial contribution in the past year. To confirm your membership status, check with the Congregational Administrator.

First Parish Cambridge Program Group Application

Thank you for your interest in leading a First Parish Program Group! Program Groups are a vital part of welcoming all people into congregational life at First Parish. Please answer all questions as thoroughly as possible.

Group name: _____

Renewal _____ or New _____ Date: _____

Leader and contact for the group (must be voting member of First Parish)

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

1. Briefly describe how this group aligns with First Parish Mission and Covenant and how it will contribute to transformation goals:

2. Briefly describe how this group will meet congregational needs/interests and the plan for engaging members of the congregation in the group:

3. Provide a 1-2 sentence description of the group that could be used on the First Parish website/community guide:

4. Detail the anticipated frequency and times of meetings/events:

5. List any First Parish resources required (space, financial, publicity, other):

6. Identify any organizational affiliations or partnerships with groups outside of First Parish:

7. If inviting the public to events, please describe the activities, publicity plans and the intended audience:

8. Do planned activities involve fundraising? YES____ or NO____

If yes: please confirm you have read the First Parish Fund Raising Policy ____ (initial) and provide details of your fundraising plans:

9. Although not required, all groups are encouraged to participate as a group in at least two congregational service activities (example: sponsor auction item, host social hour, host new member breakfast, etc.) and one community service activity that ideally is coordinated with Social Justice Council. If approved, what service activities will this group try to do?

10. Obtain the signatures of at least four voting members who are participating in this group and will contribute to the organization of activities:

Member 1: _____ Signature _____ Print

Member 2: _____ Signature _____ Print

Member 3: _____ Signature _____ Print

Member 4: _____ Signature _____ Print

11. List all additional group participants:

12. If known, please describe any group member accessibility accommodations required for participation in the group:

If you have any need assistance with challenges in your group or any problems with resources, please contact a member of Standing Committee or the church office.

SUBMITTED BY: _____ Signature _____ Print

DATE: _____

Communications

In our efforts to be green, efficient and to save postage, First Parish tries to limit our paper mailings. You will only receive a few mailings a year such as warrants for congregational meetings and quarterly pledge updates. We are using electronic communication more frequently including for our monthly newsletter. If you do not have access to a computer or you do not use email, we will mail you a printed copy of our newsletter, the Meetinghouse News. If you need a printed copy of the newsletter and do not currently receive it, please call the office at 617-876-7772 to request to be put on the mailing list.

Methods of Communication

- **First Parish email list**

Weekly announcements, the monthly newsletter and occasional official church communications are sent via email "blast". There is also a separate email list for families in the Religious Education Program. To be added to the email list contact the Church Office at 617-876-7772 or office@firstparishcambridge.org

- **First Parish Yahoo Group E-list (moderated)**

Share announcements about church activities and UU-related announcements. Includes updates on life transitions of members. To join the First Parish list, please send a blank e-mail to:

first-parish-cambridge-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

- **First Parish Website** – www.firstparishcambridge.org
- **Facebook** – <http://facebook.com/firstparishcambridge>
- **Twitter**- <http://twitter.com/fpcambridge>

We are continually working on improving communication strategies. Updates about improvements will be in the Meetinghouse News and the weekly announcements. Contact the Congregational Administrator (office@firstparishcambridge.org) or Standing Committee Chair (standingcommittee@firstparishcambridge.org) if you have suggestions or concerns.

Basic organizing tips

- When you hold an event or a meeting, be sure to get names, phone numbers and emails from participants.
- If new people attend your meeting or event, follow up after the meeting. Find out what people are interested in and encourage future participation.
- Contact people who attended prior events or meetings and personally invite them to future meetings or events. Consider emails, facebook messages, phone calls and/or text messages.
- A few groups have used Evite for RSVP and/or planning potluck menus. This can be successful but be sure to provide an alternative for members not comfortable with Evite.
- Consider hosting a "theme" social hour to promote your group or taskforce.
- Remember to use multiple communication channels!

How to Publicize Your Activities at First Parish

If your activity is happening at First Parish, the first step is to reserve space by contacting the church office at office@firstparishcambridge.org or 617-876-7772. Please do not publicize activities until you have confirmed the space is available! Once you reserve space, your event is added to the official calendar and will appear on the website calendar as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to publicize your event. You are encouraged to use multiple communication channels. Be aware of generational differences/preferences for communication.

Sunday Announcements

Announcements submitted in writing to the office (office@firstparishcambridge.org) by 8:00 am Thursday will be printed in the order of worship and distributed via email. Printed announcements can be up to 125 words in length. If you'd like your announcement considered for oral delivery, please provide a 65-word version, as well. Key announcements will be delivered by one of the ministers during the service.

Most Sundays, up to one spotlight announcement may also be made. A spotlight announcement is an oral announcement up to three minutes long presented by one or more representatives of your group. Songs and/or skits are welcome! A spotlight announcement slot may be reserved on a first-come first-served basis by contacting the Congregational Administrator at office@firstparishcambridge.org or 617-876-7772.

Inserts in the Order of Service.

To reduce waste of paper and foster a worshipful atmosphere as congregants enter the meetinghouse, the Worship Committee discourages inserts in the order of worship. If you feel yours is essential, please submit it by 4:00pm on Wednesday to office@firstparishcambridge.org for review by the Senior Minister.

Members of First Parish groups can stand at the doors and hand out flyers for official First Parish activities at the **end** of the service as people are leaving.

Tables during social hour

Sign up through the church office at office@firstparishcambridge.org to reserve a table in social hour. Please sign up in advance! Space in the parlor is limited and on certain dates, tables are not permitted or are limited (semi-annual meetings, auction etc). Make your table interesting to encourage people to come talk to you – consider displays, photos or props. Be sure to have a sign-up sheet for people who want more information.

Meetinghouse News

Send articles to office@firstparishcambridge.org. Please send articles as attachments (in Microsoft Word or PDF format); do not put the articles into the body of an email.

- Deadline is usually the 25th of the month.

Announcements on First Parish Yahoo! Listserv.

The general First Parish announcements group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/first-parish-cambridge> is moderated. Members of this group can post an announcement by sending a message to first-parish-cambridge@yahogroups.com. Messages need to be approved by a moderator before they are sent to the entire group. Please be aware that approval of posts in the evening and weekends may be delayed. Contact office@firstparishcambridge.org if you need assistance. Activities must be official First Parish events.

Announcements about community events cannot be posted on the listserv unless a First Parish group or minister is actively participating in the event. If your group is participating in a community event, please provide specific information in your announcement about where First Parish members are meeting or a contact for day of the event.

Facebook Page

The goal of the Facebook Page is to increase involvement of current members and promote First Parish to potential visitors. The Facebook Page is administered by staff and members that represent Standing Committee, Transformation Team, Social Justice Council and Worship Associates. Announcements posted by an Administrator appear on the "walls" of everyone who "likes" the Facebook Page. Anyone who likes the page can post a message on the page or comment on a post.

If you would like a Facebook Administrator to post something, contact a representative or socialmedia@firstparishcambridge.org. Posts to be sent out by a Facebook Administrator are limited to 420 characters (with spaces). Since only the beginning of the post is visible, make the beginning as catchy and interesting as possible.

If you do have an event posted, be sure to comment on the post or "like" the post to spread the word about your event. Encourage others in your committee or group to also comment or "like" post – this spreads the word through their social networks. We also maintain photo albums on the Facebook page. When photos are added, those can also be sent out to raise awareness of an issue or event.

Website – www.firstparishcambridge.org

The website is updated based on information submitted through other communication channels and through requests from groups. Specific details about events you would like promoted on the website and the website calendar should be submitted to office@firstparishcambridge.org. If you have questions about the website, contact the Congregational Administrator at office@firstparishcambridge.org

Doors/Windows

The Worship Associates post information about Sunday Worship at the 1 Church Street and 3 Church Street entrances. Any other posting on doors or windows needs to be done by office staff. If you have an event open to the public and want to post information, please leave the posters with our office staff. Only events meant to attract a significant public audience will be posted on the doors/windows.

Policy for Posting on First Parish Listserve

The First Parish Yahoo Group is a moderated listserv that all First Parish members can use to communicate important information to the congregation and to publicize activities at First Parish.

Anyone who has filled out a Newcomer Card or Membership form will receive and invitation to the Yahoo group to receive Listserv announcements and will be able to post messages to the group.

The following are appropriate announcements for the First Parish List serve

- 1) Information important to congregational life
- 2) Activities that are sponsored by First Parish members and groups.
- 3) Activities of First Parish affiliates-Cambridge Forum, Tuesday Meals, Paine Senior Services, and Harvard Square Library
- 4) UUA announcements and activities that are pertinent to the congregation
- 5) Activities sponsored by our Community Partners and Sunday Shared Offering organizations that First Parish members are participating in.
- 6) Community Events that a First Parish Group and/or staff are participating in.

The following are inappropriate

- 1) Community events unrelated to First Parish (These can be posted on the Bulletin Board)
- 2) Replies to the Listserv announcement. (Reply to the contact person directly)
- 3) Personal announcements and opinions
- 4) Newsletters from community groups even if they are partners or Sunday Shared Offering recipients

Procedures

An individual who wishes to post sends the announcement directly to first-parish-cambridge@yahoogroups.com. They should not ask the Congregational Administrator to post for them. The primary moderators who will consider the messages are the Congregational Administrator and/or the Chair of the Standing Committee. Backup moderators are the Vice Chair and the Clerk of Standing Committee.

Posts must be sent during regular business hours Monday thru Friday to guarantee that they will be posted in 24 hours. However, the moderators may view posts and approve them at other times. If a post contains information that is urgent, the individual sending it should be in touch with one of the moderators personally to be sure that it will be posted in a timely fashion.

Announcements should be as concise as possible. If they call for a response, contact information should be included. If an activity is announced, a description as well as time, place, and contact person is needed. If this is a community activity that a First Parish group participating in, specific information about where First Parish members are meeting and a contact person for the day of the event should be included.

Facebook Policy - Adopted 07-20-10

First Parish may delete any inappropriate content from this page, including but not limited to content that is hateful, irrelevant, attacks an individual or group, solicits for money, endorses a political candidate or party or violates Facebook's terms of use, code of conduct or other policies.

Photos of children shall not be posted without the written permission of their parents or guardians.

Other photos and videos may be posted consistent with First Parish policies available at <http://www.firstparishcambridge.org>.

Communication on-line and off-line should be consistent with First Parish's Covenant of Right Relations.

Church Street Television Policy – App. 01-13-08

The primary function of the television located at 1 Church Street is to inform the public of the First Parish programs, activities, and the character of our liberal religious community. Emphasis will be allocated according to the following priorities:

- Information about Sunday services
- Information about lifespan religious education
- Communications from the ministers
- Information about Unitarian Universalism
- Compelling and timely information about the variety and extent of church programs and events, and community life.

The Standing Committee is responsible for setting policy. The Communications Committee is responsible for developing video content.

The Communications Committee will consult with the Religious Education Committee Chair before displaying any images of children on the 1 Church Street monitor. The RE committee is charged with proper implementation of Safe Congregation guidelines with respect to images of children.

Policy for Photography, Filming and Media – App. 10-19-10

In order to balance individual privacy concerns and the desire to promote First Parish activities, Standing Committee has developed this policy. This is a work in progress and feedback is welcome.

During Worship

1. Filming or photography during worship may take place only with advance approval by Standing Committee, or the Standing Committee Executive Committee, should Standing Committee not be able to consider the request.
2. If a group or individual wishes to film or photograph the Sunday worship service, the person(s) should begin by speaking with the minister in charge of the service to discuss any concerns of the minister. If the person(s) still wishes to film, a written request should be submitted to the chair of Standing Committee at standingcommittee@firstparishcambridge.org
3. Standing Committee will discuss the request or, at the discretion of the chair, the request may be referred to the Standing Committee Executive Committee for approval. A decision will be made using the normal Standing Committee decision making processes. Depending on the nature of the request, Standing Committee may consult with other committees such as Worship or RE or consult with Deacons prior to making a decision.
4. If filming or photography during worship is approved, notification of the filming must be given to the congregation prior to the Sunday on which it will take place, in as timely a manner as possible. Such notification should be through the oral announcements on the previous Sunday (if time permits) and/or through the First Parish email list-serv. Notification to the congregation would be sent out by a member of the Standing Committee Executive Committee. Individual notice to worship participants who may be filmed or photographed is given by the Worship Committee and/or ministers in advance.
5. On the day of the filming or photography, a written and oral announcement regarding the filming or photography should be included in the announcements.
6. Close ups of individuals shall not be used on the First Parish website or Facebook page or other public use without written permission from the individuals.
7. Exceptions to this policy exist for individuals who are participating in a ceremony such as a child dedication or coming of age to be photographed by family and/or friends.

During Social Hour

The same policy applies as during worship. Exceptions to this policy also exist for people to take photos or film friends or relatives for private use.

During Programs or Events

1. Filming or photography during programs or events may take place only with advance approval by the program organizer or event organizer.
2. If filming or photography during a program or an event is approved, notification of the filming must be given verbally at the start of the meeting or event. A written notice should also be placed on the door of the program or event. Both announcements should clearly state the purpose of the photographs or filming.
3. Close ups of individuals shall not be used on the First Parish website or Facebook page or other public use without written permission from the individuals.
4. If a member participates in an event such as joining a photo-op on the church steps or posing with a First Parish group behind a church banner, it is assumed that the individual is willing to have the photo posted on the First Parish website or Facebook page.

Media Requests

Approved 11-17-09

1. The only individuals who have permission to speak officially on behalf of First Parish are the called ministers and the Chair and Vice-Chair of Standing Committee. Others may speak to the media if they identify themselves as expressing their personal opinions or representing a specific committee, taskforce or program group.
2. If a media call is received at the office, the call should be referred to the Business Administrator who will find out what the press request is and refer to the appropriate spokesperson.
3. If a member of the media makes an advance request to be present at a worship or program, an announcement will be made to let participants know that a member of the media is present. All reasonable attempts will be made to identify the member of the media to the congregation. The policies on filming and photography apply.

First Parish in Cambridge Photograph & Video Release Form

_____ (“Grantor”) hereby grants to First Parish Unitarian Universalist in Cambridge, MA (“First Parish”), a Massachusetts church, permission to use the image, likeness, voice and words of the Grantor (“Content”) as recorded and memorialized for the _____ project (the “Project”) on photographs, audio or video tape, or other media (“Recordings”) prepared by or on behalf of First Parish or delivered by Grantor to First Parish, without payment or any other consideration, to further the nonprofit purposes of First Parish. Grantor shall have the right to review the Recordings within a period of two days after they are produced, and may at that time require that they be withdrawn and destroyed. Otherwise, the Grantor understands and agrees that the Recordings may be reasonably edited, copied, combined with other materials, exhibited, published or distributed for the Project and Grantor waives the right to inspect or approve the finished products incorporating any of the Content. Grantor waives any right to royalties or other compensation from First Parish arising from or related to the use of the Content for the Project.

There is no time limit on the validity of this Release, nor is there any geographic limitation on where the Content may be displayed or distributed. Grantor understands that the Content may be used in diverse educational, informational and marketing settings worldwide to promote First Parish. First Parish may use the Recordings covered by this Release in private or public settings related to the Project including the following:

- brochures and other external or internal documents
- First Parish website or other websites
- emails
- videos
- presentations

First Parish cannot prevent the Content from being copied or modified by others and will not be held liable for such actions. Grantor hereby releases any and all claims against First Parish arising from its use of the Content and Recordings for the Project.

If Grantor signs on behalf of a minor below, Grantor represents that Grantor is the parent or guardian of said minor.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, Grantor has executed this Agreement as of the day and year written below.

<p>Grantor</p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>On Behalf of Minor Child</p> <p>Child’s Name: _____</p>

BUILDING USE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

BUILDING SECURITY: Please be sensitive to the fact that we are a large urban church with a great deal of programming. We count on you to be conscious of the security of the building, and take care of the needs of your meeting/event. Please take this responsibility seriously for the safety of the church building and all who enter our doors.

When you arrive, if necessary, unlock the outer door to the church and leave the inner door closed (it is always locked). Do not leave it propped open. The outer door may already be unlocked if there is another group using the space.

Check the Room Assignment board to review the schedule for the day and confirm your room assignment. Check to see who else is scheduled to use the building and which group will be the last group to leave. When you prepare to leave the building, check on other groups using the building and make sure you know if anyone is still in the building. The last group using the building is responsible for completing the closing building checklist. If you are in doubt as to whether you are the last one out of the building, assume you are and be sure lights are shut off and doors are locked. A copy of the checklist is on the Room Assignment Board.

Remain at the door to let group members into the building or assign a greeter to be at the door for the first 10-15 minutes.

Do not let people other than your meeting/event members into the building. If another group or event is going on there should be a greeter present from that group to admit its participants.

Do not allow anyone into the building unless you are willing to take responsibility for that person. It is acceptable to tell the public that the building is closed to the public.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES IS ANY OUTER DOOR TO BE PROPPED OPEN AND LEFT UNATTENDED!!!! If you find a door in such a state, please close it for the safety of your group and your belongings.

If someone needs the accessible entrance, the phone near the stairs will ring. Answer the phone and inform the person that you will be down to open the door. Take the elevator down one level and open the door at 1 Church Street. Return the same way.

ELEVATOR REMINDERS

Please do not use the elevator to haul freight without prior permission from staff. Children under the age of ten always should be accompanied by an adult. Please be patient – this is an accessible elevator that is “patient” for the entrance of slower persons and the door takes longer to close than you may be used to in a commercial elevator. *Do not repeatedly pound the buttons.*

ELEVATOR PROBLEMS

If the elevator door does not open when you are in it, stop pushing buttons. Wait for a minute. Push the button for A (bottom floor). See if the elevator goes to A and the door opens. Someone *outside* the elevator can also see if the elevator will respond.

If a person is trapped in the elevator after these steps, they should use the phone in the elevator, which calls our emergency dispatch service. They should ask the dispatch service to send an elevator repair person from our repair service (they have all the info on file). A key holder **needs to remain in the building to provide access for the elevator repair person from Delta Beckwith.**

Unless it is a true (medical, etc.) emergency, *do not have them call the fire dept first.* The fire dept. will break open the door, which will be a \$3000 repair, plus no elevator for a lengthy period of time.

EMERGENCIES

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS are visibly located throughout the building. However, the first response in case of fire should be to notify others in the building, evacuate and call 911. Fire extinguishers may be used if you have been trained in their use.

FIRST AID KITS are located in the kitchen, on the hallway wall on the mezzanine level and on the wall outside the elevator on the second floor.

IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG WITH THE BUILDING and requires immediate attention, a list of emergency numbers is located on the wall outside the main office. Please call someone on the emergency building team to assist you. Items that require immediate attention are ones that impact security of the building (a broken window or door that won't lock) or could cause damage (water leak.)

If something goes wrong or something unusual happens that does not require immediate attention, please complete the Building Log form provided outside the office.

Please note that if you notice a blinking light or beeping in the foyer alarm panel, this is not an emergency. It is due to heat and humidity. There is a “signal silence” button that may be pushed if it continues. If the fire alarm is activated *very loud horns* – (remember school fire drills) will sound. Leave the building immediately.

CLOSING CHECK LIST FOR ROOMS:

1. Return the meeting room to its original condition -- chairs, tables, etc. back as you found them.
2. Dispose of all food in the covered trashcans, which may be in a hall outside the room. We do not want to attract rodents - do not put food waste or food papers in waste baskets in other areas. If you used the kitchen, make sure all items, including dishes are clean and food waste is in the covered trash can. We have no staff person who is paid to wash dishes.
3. Check to make sure windows are closed and locked. Turn off the lights.
4. Lock all of the doors to the room in which you held your meeting.
5. If something unusual has happened or you notice something broken in our building, please complete the Building Log form available outside the office. Please be specific about the location of the problem (*which* bathroom, door, etc.) and provide contact information.

If another group is still using the building, you are done after you close your room. If you are the last group, you are responsible for closing the building utilizing the closing check list for the building.

CLOSING CHECK LIST FOR BUILDING:

1. Check the schedule on the bulletin board. If everyone else has left, you are responsible for closing the building. If you're not sure if you're the last group in the building, assume you are and lock the doors.
2. Ask another member of your group to remain with you. For safety reasons, no one should close the building alone. If you have a cell phone, carry it with you while you close the building. Do not use the elevator if you are the only person in the building.
3. Check to make sure that the following doors are locked and lights in rooms are turned off:
 - ✓ **Main floor** – doors to library, chapel (from kitchen), office and doors to the Meetinghouse should all be closed and locked. Lights to all rooms including the parlor and kitchen should be off. The light outside the elevator is permanently on. Check all three restrooms to make sure no one is remaining in the restroom. **The white door between the church office and the Meetinghouse is a metal fire prevention door. It must be closed when you leave the building.**
 - ✓ Double check the door in the library leading to the burial ground. Pull the door tightly to make sure it is securely closed.
 - ✓ **2nd floor** – doors to classroom, barn room and nursery should be closed and locked. Hallway and room lights should be off. Check both restrooms on the stair level to make sure no one is remaining in the restrooms.
 - ✓ **Mezzanine level** – If you use a mezzanine room, check the door at the gallery end, exit at the elevator end. If you did not use a room in the mezzanine hallway just check to make sure the door to the mezzanine corridor is closed. Check the restroom to make sure no one is remaining in the restroom. Post the restroom door open. One light at each elevator entrance is permanently on.
4. If something unusual has happened or you notice something broken in our building, please complete the Building Log form located outside the office. Please be specific about the location of the problem (*which* bathroom, door, etc.) and provide contact information.
5. Exit the Parish House building using the 3 Church Street door. When you exit the building, please lock the dead bolt with your key. The outer door to 3 Church Street should be locked so no one can enter the vestibule. If you are the last person out and for some reason do not have a key, please lock the door with the pushbutton on the edge of the door.

Building Use Pledge and Key Form

As a leader of a group at First Parish, I am accepting responsibility for my group's use of our building. I will be mindful of the security of our building and safety of staff, members and friends of First Parish. I will follow the attached building security and safe community guidelines at all times. I understand that the last group to use our building must complete the "Building Closing Checklist" and assure that the building is secure.

I have completed an orientation of the First Parish building and understand my responsibilities as a key holder to our building. I understand the key(s) is issued strictly for use for the group/task listed.

Under no circumstances may I make copies of this key(s) **or turn it over to another individual.** I agree to return the key(s) upon completion of my event or my tenure with the above listed group.

Name	Signature	
Group representing Date		

KEY SIGN OUT

Name _____ SS# _____

Address _____

Group _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone or Alternate Phone _____

Space scheduled _____

Key(s) Issued _____

Issued by: _____

Key(s) Returned _____

First Parish Policy Regarding Use of the Old Burying Ground

The Old Burying Ground is not the property of First Parish. It is the property of the city of Cambridge and is overseen by the Cambridge Historical Commission. It is expected that First Parish members and friends follow the posted guidelines regarding appropriate behavior in The Old Burying Ground. It is requested that no one sits or stands on gravestones. Activities occur in The Old Burying Ground in the evening that can result in dangerous trash such as used syringes, broken bottles and used condoms.

Formal Use of the Old Burying Ground

Any all-church event that occurs in The Old Burying Ground needs approval of the Standing Committee and a permit from the Cambridge Department of Public Works. The city of Cambridge has a park and public area policy and allows events that are "small and controlled" in the Old Burying Ground. A permit currently costs \$25. The sponsoring committee or group is responsible for planning the event, identifying individuals to clean The Old Burying Ground before and after the event, submitting a proposal to Standing Committee for approval and applying for the permit. Cost of the permit is the responsibility of the sponsoring committee or group. Events should have a spiritual or historical component that is appropriate for The Burying Ground such as the annual Easter Egg Hunt. Events that are purely social will not be approved.

Small Group Use of the Burying Ground

With prior permission from a Minister or the Director of Religious Education, a small group or RE class can use The Old Burying Ground for a meeting or class. Groups should have an organized plan that involves using The Old Burying Ground in a respectful manner.

Individual Use of the Old Burying Ground

Like any member of the public, individuals are welcome to spend time in The Old Burying Ground. Children should be accompanied by parents or a responsible adult.

Overnights at First Parish

The following policies are established to maintain the safety of individuals and the security of the building.

In order to have an Overnight approved, the organizer needs to check with the Congregational Administrator for availability of the space including potential morning conflicts. Requests for space for sleeping, meeting, and eating meals need to be identified as well as use of the kitchen. Groups are reminded that there are no available showers. As a general rule, Overnights are not approved for Saturday nights because they disrupt normal Sunday activities. The RE program may request an annual overnight on a Saturday as long as the kitchen and ground-floor restrooms are not used after 8:15am so the sexton has time to prepare the space for Sunday activities.

Once the space is confirmed as available, the organizer needs to write a memo outlining how the applicable policies will apply and identify specific voting members who are responsible. The memo is submitted to the Congregational Administrator who will bring the Overnight Request to the weekly staff meeting for discussion and approval by the Senior Minister.

Overnights by First Parish adult church groups

- Three voting members need to be identified as responsible for the group. These members need to be present for the entire event, be familiar with First Parish Safe Congregation Principles, be familiar with fire safety procedures and at least one member needs to be a building key-holder.
- Group members attending need to register in advance. This list should be submitted to the Office Coordinator before the event. An attendance list should be kept to verify who attended the event.
- Event participants need to agree to a policy of no alcohol, tobacco, illegal drug use or sexual activity during the event.
- Event participants need to agree to behavior consistent with First Parish Safe Congregation Principles.
- The doors must be locked at a specified time in the evening and participants agree not to leave until the specified time in the morning.
- Space use is limited to space requested in the memo.
- The Meetinghouse cannot be used for Overnight activities.
- The First Parish policy on use of the Old Burying Grounds needs to be followed.

Overnights by First Parish youth and RE classes

- There will always be a minimum of three adults during sleeping hours regardless of the numbers of children/youth. The adults need to be staff or voting members who have been at First Parish for at least one year and have completed a CORI check. At least two adults needs to be awake, through-out the night – it is suggested that adults rotate shifts so all adults can get some sleep. During a sleepover at First Parish, there should be a minimum ratio of one adult to eight children/youth.
- One adult may be briefly alone with a group when the other must leave as dictated by common sense and necessity for such purposes as bathroom breaks and escorting individual children/youth away from the group.
- Registration for the event must occur in advance to assure the proper ratio of adults and children.
- An attendance list from the event must be maintained and given to the DRE after the event.
- All outside doors are locked, once the last youth arrives and the doors are not un-locked until parents arrive.
- Space use is limited to space requested in the memo.
- The Meetinghouse cannot be used for overnight activities.
- The First Parish policy on use of the Old Burying Grounds needs to be followed.
- Parents must sign a consent form for youth and children to participate.
- The DRE will work with the organizers to develop an age-appropriate “code of ethics” for participants to sign – this would include guidelines for respecting each other, reporting any problems to an adult, no use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs and safety issues.

Overnights by Outside groups

Outside groups need to be sponsored by an official group or committee. Two voting members of First Parish need to be willing to spend the night with the group and ensure the age-appropriate procedures are followed. Outside groups need to follow the same procedures as First Parish groups depending on if adults or youth. If youth under the age of 18, the two voting members of First Parish need to have completed a CORI check. First Parish needs assurance that the adult chaperones accompanying the youth have CORI checks completed by their organization/church. A combination of the First Parish members and accompanying chaperones can be used to reach the required number of adults present.

Policy for Co-Sponsoring Events with Non-First Parish Groups

First Parish's covenant calls us to "nourish and serve each other, our community and our world." As part of our commitment to be a multi-cultural, justice-seeking congregation we partner with community groups and advocate for change. We need to balance our desire to nourish the community with our fiscal responsibilities. First Parish relies on rental income for 15% of our annual income. This money supports staff salaries and benefits; building maintenance and program expenses. Every use of the building has an impact on the building and associated costs.

First Parish receives requests from non-profit groups that want to work with us on an issue or want free or reduced space for an event. If a non-profit group does not have an existing relationship with First Parish, they can provide the Congregational Administrator with a brief description of their request and it can be sent to the Chair of Program Council who will make a decision about how to triage the information.

Any activity involving a community group or legislative action occurring at First Parish (table during coffee-hour, signature collection, educational event) needs to be sponsored by an official First Parish committee, program group or social justice taskforce. Two voting members need to take responsibility for the event and at least one voting member needs to be present at the event. It does not involve rental fees if the event is only for First Parish members and friends. In this case, no publicity occurs outside of the church.

Events open to the public need a sexton to be present to assure building security. As a result, First Parish is unable to offer free space to community groups. First Parish offers a reduced rental fee to non-profit groups. A further reduction is available for groups that are co-sponsored by an official First Parish committee, program group or social justice taskforce. A co-sponsorship of an event should occur when there is an existing partnership between the non-profit and First Parish. Two voting members need to take responsibility for the event and both need to be present at the event. If there is no existing relationship, the non-profit can submit a written request to Standing Committee for the co-sponsorship rate. It will be rare that Standing Committee will approve a co-sponsorship rate without an existing partnership.

Committees, program groups and social justice taskforces are encouraged to build partnerships with non-profits in a mindful way. Developing a genuine relationship takes time and resources. Realistically, only a few partnerships are possible for each committee, program group and social justice taskforces. These partnerships should be beneficial to both the community group and to First Parish.

Each committee, program group or social justice taskforce is limited to one opportunity annually to co-sponsor an event in the meetinghouse. These requests need to be submitted to the office coordinator and be approved at staff meeting. If there are concerns about the request, the staff may consult with Standing Committee, the Transformation Team, the Social Justice Council, the Program Council or other groups. Any additional requests for the co-sponsorship rate in the meetinghouse need to be submitted to Standing Committee for approval. It will be rare that Standing Committee will approve additional events in the meetinghouse. The First Parish group takes responsibility for getting space approval, ensuring space is used properly and ensuring that the activity is in compliance with First Parish policies. Two voting members need to take responsibility for the event and coordinating with the staff.

Events that are totally organized by a First Parish committee, program group or social justice taskforce and are publicized to the general public must pay for a sexton. The fee is \$30 per hour with a minimum of 3 hours. Additional hours may be required depending on the planned event.

Due to our tax exempt status, no activities can occur that support individual candidates for public office or political parties. However, the building may be used for free and open, non-partisan discussion of political issues. Examples: a debate between candidates is allowed; a rally for one candidate is not allowed; a non-partisan voter registration is allowed; a meeting for a specific political party is not allowed.

FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Organization of Finances

Overview

The goal of this section is to provide an overview description of the First Parish organization of finances. This includes the relationship of the finances of affiliated organizations and community service programs.

The First Parish financial activities are planned and carried out within a *fiscal* or financial year which starts July 1 and ends on June 30 of the following calendar year. Thus, our financial year is in synchronization with our church year.

The finances of First Parish itself are composed of three distinct divisions:

- ◆ The general fund
- ◆ The special accounts
- ◆ The endowment.

The General Fund

The normal Parish income and expenses are received and dispensed from the Parish General Fund. The annual budget approved by the congregation is a forecast of the income and expenses of the general fund for the fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). This is prepared prior to the beginning of the fiscal year based on the priorities and resources of the congregation. Primary sources of income include the Annual Fund (Stewardship Campaign), income from the Endowment and income from facility rentals.

The Special Accounts

The special accounts are composed of four types of funds which include:

- Separate funds for special programs not in the general fund because of the need for special accounting
- Reserve accounts to save for larger expenditures such as painting reserves or
- In/Out accounts to handle non-Parish funds. Also known as revolving accounts or equity accounts. Also used for gifts to Endowment prior to funds being transferred.
- Treasurer's operating reserve which is the accumulated surplus/(deficit) over the years.

The Endowment

The endowment is composed of the invested funds from which the Parish draws income each year. These funds were given to First Parish by bequest over the past many years. Per by-law amendment passed on June 2003, any bequests to First Parish not specified for a specific purpose shall be added to the endowment. The endowment is professionally managed and overseen by the Investment Committee.

Finances of Community Service Programs

Paine Senior Services - This organization, a First Parish outreach program with its own advisory board, is funded primarily by income from their own endowment and by fees. Its endowment is managed by the First Parish Investment Committee along with the First Parish endowment. Paine Senior Services has their financial accounting separate from the Parish; their financial results do not appear on the Parish financial statement. Yet, Paine Social Services operates under the auspices of First Parish, meaning that the First Parish and its governing body, the Standing Committee, are ultimately responsible for the Paine Senior Services finances. The Parish by-laws give the responsibility of review of Paine Senior Services income and expenses to the Investment Committee.

Tuesday Meals Program - This organization, a First Parish outreach program, is funded primarily through an anonymous donation of \$22,000. Additional funding is from the Cambridge Economic Opportunity Council and local businesses. The TMP is also an active participant in Food for Free and the Greater Boston Food Bank. Beginning with fiscal year 2010-2011, the detailed budget of TMP is part of the First Parish budget. An endowment has been established for Tuesday Meals and is managed by the First Parish Investment Committee along with the First Parish endowment.

Finances of Affiliated Organizations

Cambridge Forum - This organization, a former Parish program, is a 501(c)3 with its own board of directors. It maintains its own financial books. Members can support the Cambridge Forum by becoming a "friend of the Forum" and making an annual gift.

Harvard Square Library - This organization, a former Parish program, is a 501(c)3 with its own board of directors. It maintains its own financial books.

Fundraising Policy

Fundraisers are an important part of active congregational life, providing opportunities for our members to strengthen their commitment and contribution to First Parish as well as providing funds for our groups, programs, and charitable causes.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for fundraisers and fundraising activities proposed by First Parish groups for any purpose, by any means, and at any location. A "group" is recognized in First Parish bylaws or by the Standing Committee.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that our fundraising activities are consistent with our not-for-profit status, to avoid overburdening the congregation with requests for money, and to ensure that our resources are focused on highest priority needs and consistent with the approved budget.

Individuals with fundraiser proposals must find a group to sponsor the idea. No proposals from individuals will be considered, and especially no proposals that would financially benefit the individual. Those who wish to offer gifts in kind, for sale to the parish community, are encouraged to participate in the annual auction fundraiser. If you want to organize a fundraiser for a worthy cause, and no group is interested in your proposal, then contact the office about renting space.

Scope

This policy applies to all First Parish groups. Guidelines for outside groups proposing a fundraisers on First Parish property, and seeking special financial consideration, are covered a separate rental policy.

Review Process

First contact the First Parish office to find a potential time and space for your event.

All fundraisers over \$250 must be approved by the Chair of the Standing Committee. Fundraisers expected to raise less than \$250 must be approved by the Congregational Administrator.

A First Parish member must submit a request for approval on behalf of any group seeking to engage in fundraising activity. The request must certify

- The timing and logistical arrangements of the fundraiser are appropriately coordinated with other scheduled activities at First Parish according to the following guidelines.
- Space use request forms have been completed and included in the application.
- The activity complies with the legal requirements of our church's tax-exempt status.

Guidelines

- All First Parish fundraisers identified as income sources in the annual budget will have top priority and first choice of fundraising dates on the yearly calendar, i.e. Annual Stewardship Campaign and the Auction.
- All other fundraisers, large or small, will be scheduled so as not to significantly impact the above fundraisers and according to these criteria:
 - No more than three fundraising events are in any given month:
 - No more than one large fundraisers of any kind are in a single month. Large event fundraisers are scheduled around a specific event and/or anticipate raising more than \$250.
 - **No more than one small fundraiser of any kind each week. Small fundraisers are not scheduled around a specific event and often raise smaller amounts of money, less than \$250. These include, but are not limited to, the types of fundraisers that typically happen during social hour.**
- The Administrator may approve, without further review, applications for fundraising activities that are reasonably expected to raise less than \$250 (net). The Administrator will provide a monthly report to the Finance Committee of all such requests.
- Exceptions to these fundraising guidelines may be granted by the Finance Committee, with oversight from the Standing Committee, if sufficient reasons exist to do so. Organizations or individuals that believe they have sufficient reasons must contact the Finance Committee. Please request an exception as far in advance of the proposed fundraiser as possible.
- All income from fundraisers of any kind must be reported to the congregation's Treasurer, along with a detailed accounting of how the money was raised and spent. This information may be delivered directly to the church office staff.

Sharing Net Proceeds

In recognition of our interdependence within the broader life of the congregation, the Stewardship Team strongly encourages all groups who conduct fundraising activities aimed at supporting internal programs to make a voluntary contribution of at least 5% of their net proceeds to the Annual Fund. This contribution is in addition to, and not in substitution for, any facilities or other space use, parking, or custodial fees that may apply to the event.

If a group is raising funds to support an external commitment (e.g., the UU Urban Ministry or the Harvard Square Homeless Shelter), then the 5% voluntary contribution may not be appropriate.

Financial Procedures

Think of the In/Out Accounts as groups having their own "cookie jar" account for funds raised, and an expense line for costs/reimbursement which is balanced against their "cookie jar". Most groups have an in/out or revolving account. If your group or committee does not have one, it can be established.

It is important that we have records of all money raised and all expenses involved in fundraising or events. If you are planning a fundraiser or raising funds for an event such as a retreat, contact the Congregational Administrator to notify her of your plans. She can confirm your account number and provide you with a plastic envelope.

Cash Handling

All funds raised should be placed in the plastic envelope provided to you and the envelope should be left in the beige locked drop box outside of the main office. **Cash and checks should not leave the building.** A small cashbox is available if needed.

A cash advance for funds to make change can be arranged if necessary. Please contact the Congregational Administrator at least two weeks prior to needing the cash advance. If you use your own cash for change, please note how much money you used and remove that same amount at the end.

There should be no "I took my expenses from the cash". All cash should be put in the plastic envelope and go into the drop box. Reimbursements should be submitted for expenses.

Reimbursement for Expenses

Reimbursement forms are in the plastic holder near the locked drop box. Receipts for expenses must be turned in within three weeks/same month of the expense using the reimbursement form. Reimbursement forms should be left in the Administrator's mailbox in the office or put in a regular envelope in the drop box. Failure to submit receipts within 3 weeks creates extra accounting work for staff and the volunteer treasurer and it is unnecessarily time consuming. Checks are normally cut mid-week and will be mailed to your home address. If you would prefer to pick up your check, contact the office to make arrangements. Expenses over \$100.00 to be paid to outside vendors should be invoiced to First Parish. We can make those arrangements with the vendor if we/they have the contact information and our tax exempt information. Contact the Congregational Administrator to discuss your plans and needs. Sales tax can be eliminated from costs by using the church's tax exempt form/number.

Beloved Community Fund of First Parish in Cambridge

The Beloved Community Fund supports diversity and accessibility at First Parish in Cambridge.

Money from the Fund may be spent for this purpose at the discretion of the Senior Minister with the approval of the Standing Committee Chair.

Approved by the Standing Committee April 21, 2009.

Petty Cash Policy

The First Parish office maintains a petty cash fund of \$200 to meet the occasional need to make cash purchases (ie: hospitality items, RE supplies, postage). A signed voucher (see below) must be submitted for each disbursement from petty cash. A detailed sales receipt should also be provided.

The petty cash fund will be secured in the main office lockbox. Disbursements from petty cash may only be made by an authorized First Parish staff member. The petty cash fund will be reconciled on a monthly basis by the Office Assistant and reviewed by the Congregational Administrator. The Treasurer will review the petty cash reconciliation and receipts on a quarterly basis.

Petty Cash should not be used for expenses which can be billed directly to the church or for purchases that can be paid for using regular check request guidelines.

Petty Cash Voucher

Date _____ Amount _____

Disbursed to: _____

Disbursed by _____

Reason: _____

Budget Account _____

Approved by _____

Fees and Instructor Compensation for Workshops and Classes

Workshops and classes are provided by First Parish as a way to minister to groups of people with similar interests and needs. They are an important part of the church's spiritual offerings.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for charging fees for workshops and classes and/or compensating members or friends for providing instructions.

Scope

This policy applies to workshop and classes provided through the Spiritual Pathways Committee, Transformation Team, and other committees and groups at First Parish. It does not apply to Religious Education programs. This policy does not refer to a member initiating a request to use First Parish space for his or her own professional activities. In that situation, the person should go through the usual decision-making process and pay rents. See website for information. <http://firstparishcambridge.org/node/325/>

Guidelines

As a general rule, classes and workshops at First Parish are to be offered free of charge. Teachers and leaders volunteer their services as part of their commitment to First Parish. Asking participants to purchase materials for class is allowed with a procedure for covering the cost if a participant is unable to do so.

However, if a committee feels that a fee is essential to creating the classes or increasing commitment, they can request approval from the Standing Committee. There should always be a mechanism provided for reducing or waiving the fee for those who require financial assistance.

In the rare instance where a committee is creating a program that is likely to require paying a professional and there is a qualified member or friend available to do the work, the committee can request approval from the Standing Committee to pay the member or friend. Before deciding to make such a request, the committee should carefully consider the inherent potential for conflicts.

Review Process

Committees requesting approval to charge a fee and/or compensate a member or friend must present the request in writing to the chair of Standing Committee. The Standing Committee will then discuss and vote on the request. The written request should address the following:

Fees

- Why is the fee necessary and/or desirable?
- How will the class be made available to all, including those who cannot afford to pay?

Compensating a Member/Friend

- Why is it necessary and/or desirable to pay a professional?
- How have the qualifications of the member/friend been vetted?
- How will any conflicts be resolved?

SAFE CONGREGATION POLICIES

At First Parish we covenant to welcome all people to the table, to nourish and serve each other and to respect and honor the inherent worth and dignity of every person. To achieve these goals it is essential that we maintain a safe environment that protects children and adults from harm while fostering their spiritual growth. **A Safe Congregation Policy was adopted by the Standing Committee in May 2011.** The policies that are described in this manual are designed to make sure that all feel safe and free to follow their own spiritual paths in an atmosphere of respect and mutual support. We encourage anyone who has witnessed or experienced verbal, sexual or physical abuse at First Parish to contact the appropriate team:

SafeCongregation@firstparishcambridge.org(for issues involving adults)

safechildren@firstparishcambridge.org (for issues involving those under 18)

You can find the complete Safe Sanctuary Policy on the website.

CORI Policy for Volunteers and Staff

As mandated by law, First Parish checks Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) as part of a general background check for employment or volunteer work purposes. The following practices and procedures will generally be followed in such instances.

- I. CORI checks will only be conducted as authorized by the Criminal History State Board (CHSB). All applicants will be notified that a CORI check will be conducted. If requested, the applicant will be provided with a copy of the CORI policy.
- II. An informed review of a criminal record requires adequate training. Accordingly, all personnel authorized to review CORI in the decision-making process will be thoroughly familiar with the educational materials made available by CHSB.
- III. Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, determination of suitability based on CORI checks will be made consistent with this policy and any applicable law or regulations.
- IV. If a criminal record is received from CHSB, the authorized individual will closely compare the record provided by CHSB with the information on the CORI request form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant, to ensure the record relates to the applicant. The applicant shall be provided with a copy of the criminal record and a copy of both CHSB's Information ***Concerning the Process of Correcting Criminal Record and Information on How to Establish Yourself as a Victim of Identity Theft.***
- V. If First Parish is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of the CORI check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The applicant shall be provided with a copy of the First Parish CORI policy, advised of the part(s) of the record that make the individual unsuitable for the position, and given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the CORI record.
- VI. If the CORI record provided does not exactly match the identification information provided by the applicant, First Parish will make a determination based on a comparison of the CORI record and documents provided by the applicant.

VII. If First Parish reasonably believes the record belongs to the applicant and is accurate, based on the information as provided in section IV on this policy, then the determination of suitability for the position will be made. Unless otherwise provided by law, factors considered in determining suitability may include, but not limited to the following:

- (a) Relevance of the crime to the position sought;
- (b) The nature of the work to be performed;
- (c) Time since the conviction;
- (d) Age of the candidate at the time of the offense;
- (e) Seriousness and specific circumstances of the offense;
- (f) The number of offenses;
- (g) Whether the applicant has pending charges;
- (h) Any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof;
- (i) Any other relevant information, including information submitted by the candidate or requested by the hiring authority

VIII. First Parish will notify the applicant of the decision and the basis of the decision in a timely manner.

OTHER POLICIES

Child Dedication and Child Blessing

A **Child Dedication** welcomes and blesses the child of a voting member of the congregation. The Child Dedication ceremony occurs during Sunday worship and includes a covenant by the congregation to support the parents in raising the child. This covenant lacks meaning, if the neither parent has covenanted to be part of the First Parish community. The Senior Minister has discretion to dedicate a child without a voting member parent if the Senior Minister is satisfied that a parent is on the path to voting membership. There are no costs for this ceremony. The Dummer Bowl will no longer be used during Child Dedication ceremonies due to security concerns and a significant burden on the volunteer Deacons. A new bowl will be obtained to be used for Child Dedications and other worship purposes.

A **Child Blessing** is available to anyone who requests it. A Child Blessing occurs in the Chapel at a time convenient for the presiding minister or intern and the family. It is free of charge for families with at least one voting member. Others will be charged \$100 for use of the Chapel and \$100 for ministerial services (\$200 total).

Inclement Weather Policy

First Parish intends to hold Sunday worship services at 10:30 am without exception. If weather conditions cause us to cancel or delay Sunday worship, we will update the greeting on the church voice mail (617-876-7772). We will also announce delays or cancellations on the WBZ Storm Center at AM radio 1030, WBZ-TV channel 4, and online at wbz.com.

The Senior Minister will decide whether services are cancelled. In the Senior Minister's absence, the Chair of the Standing Committee will decide. If both the Senior Minister and the Standing Committee Chair are absent, the Standing Committee Vice-Chair will make the decision.

Sponsoring Candidates for the Unitarian Universalist Ministry: Guidelines for First Parish in Cambridge

All persons preparing for fellowship as Unitarian Universalist ministers, whether pursuing parish ministry or community ministry, are required to obtain sponsorship by a Unitarian Universalist congregation. The purpose of sponsorship is to ensure new ministers are familiar with UU congregational life, and also to encourage congregations to take a responsible role in the recruitment, preparation, and assessment of our future ministers.

A person should request sponsorship from First Parish in Cambridge when they have been granted Candidate Status by the Regional Sub-Committee on Candidacy (RSCC) – sometimes called a “green light” -- and not before. The UUA’s Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) thinks it best that the RSCC to make the first official decision regarding a person's fitness for ministry.

Sponsorship does not entail a financial commitment, nor does it imply an intention to ordain the minister when the time comes. Congregational sponsorship indicates our confidence in the person's potential suitability for UU ministry. By sponsoring someone, we are not saying the person is presently ready for ministry; we are saying that with further education he or she has a good chance of developing the traits necessary for successful ministry. The final decision to grant fellowship to a candidate is made by the MFC after careful consideration of written materials, evaluations, and a personal interview.

Although the UUA guidelines indicate that Standing Committee can vote to sponsor a candidate, we prefer a more collaborative process. Since our congregation deeply values our role in shaping future ministers, the whole congregation should be aware and involved in this important step in a minister’s career. It is customary for the Denominational Action Committee to deliver a recommendation to Standing Committee, for Standing Committee to recommend sponsorship at a congregational meeting, and for the membership ultimately to vote.

Following are specific guidelines for sponsoring a ministerial candidate at First Parish in Cambridge:

Criteria for sponsoring a candidate

1. The candidate is member in good standing (i.e., be a member who has signed the book, made a pledge, made payments on the pledge).
2. The candidate writes a letter with the request for sponsorship to the Standing Committee and the Denominational Action Committee. This letter should: mention some of their involvement at First Parish, and a brief timeline of their upcoming plans.
3. Once approved by the Standing Committee, sponsorship should also be approved at a congregational meeting, so candidates should keep this timeline in mind when requesting sponsorship.

Expectations of a sponsored candidate

1. Candidates remain a member in good standing during sponsorship
2. Candidates are in touch at least bi-monthly with a member of the Denominational Action Committee (assuming they are away at internship or school).
3. The candidate writes a column for the *Meeting House News* at least annually informing the congregation of their progress and plans
4. The candidate apprises the Denominational Action Committee and Standing Committee when they have met with the MFC.
5. The candidate takes opportunities to lead worship, lead RE classes or worship and serve on committees at First Parish when available and practical.

What sponsored candidates need from us

1. Information about our criteria and expectations for sponsored candidates.
2. The Standing Committee chair's signature on the UUA's required form, attesting that we voted to sponsor the candidate
3. At least bi-monthly contact from a member of the Denominational Action Committee.
4. The opportunity to meet with the professional ministers for support or advice when needed
5. The opportunity to lead worship, lead RE and serve on committees at FP when available and practical.

Finally, we would only sponsor student interns under rare circumstances. Generally, students seek sponsorship from their home congregation. Sponsoring a student and supervising an intern are two distinct roles and should not be combined except in rare cases. Since the ministers are the direct supervisors of the interns, these circumstances should be left mostly up to them.

Weddings – Voting Members

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding!

We look forward to assisting you with your wedding plans. First Parish in Cambridge's historic meetinghouse has been the site of many beautiful weddings. We also have a chapel for a more intimate ceremony and reception space for rent. All weddings at First Parish in Cambridge must be conducted by one of the congregation's ministers, or by a guest clergyperson approved in advance by First Parish in Cambridge.

If you are a voting member of First Parish, one of the benefits of membership is that fees for the minister and rental space for the ceremony are waived for voting members. Donations to the Ministers Discretionary Fund are welcome. Reception space is available at reduced costs – see member rental fees.

If you wish to be married at First Parish and you are a voting member of the congregation, contact one of the ministers to discuss your plans.

All requests to reserve space in the church for the wedding, rehearsal, and reception dates must be made through the Congregational Administrator at office@firstparishcambridge.org

Music Fees

Organist for a Wedding Ceremony: \$250 (includes a one-hour consultation)

There is a \$50 additional charge per 15 minute increments for ceremonies beginning more than 10 minutes past the scheduled time.

Wedding Rehearsal: \$75

Rehearsal with soloist or instrumentalist: \$60 (per hour or fraction thereof)

Organ music for weddings at the church is provided by the First Parish organist. If you prefer to engage a guest organist, you must get the approval of the First Parish organist. If the guest organist is approved, the First Parish organist will be paid a bench fee of \$50 for instructing the guest organist on the use of the instrument. To arrange for the services of Jonathan Barnhart, the Church organist, or to discuss approval of a guest organist, you may phone him at 617-524-2447. You are permitted to engage other instrumentalists at will. Approval is not required for a pianist or other instrumentalists. However, if you want the piano tuned before your wedding, it costs \$135. Tuning the piano is optional. There is no charge to members for using the piano without a tuning.

Fees for Sexton

A minimum fee of \$120 for the first four hours (rehearsal and ceremony combined), and \$30 for each additional hour or part thereof. The sexton is required for weddings larger than 20 participants/ guests combined or if a non-staff clergy person is performing the ceremony.