



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2022



Dear Ones,

Wonderful news! Please join me in welcoming my beloved colleague Rev. John Gibbons home to Arlington Street! John is hilarious, brilliant, and deeply committed to social justice. Inspired by John Lewis of blessed memory — civil rights activist and United States Representative for Georgia’s 5th congressional district — I’ve invited him to serve as our Community Minister for Good Trouble. Here’s John Gibbons:

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I am thrilled to be asked to be the Community Minister for Good Trouble! at ASC. I grew up in Chicago but came to Boston in 1969 for the Unitarian Universalist Association’s historic and controversial General Assembly. When ASC’s minister Jack Mendelsohn led the infamous “walkout” of the Assembly, I joined with hundreds of others in support of Black Empowerment. Those who left the Assembly camped out at ASC. For me, it was life-changing. Youth were already housed in ASC’s Clarke Room and, in those hot summer days, I slept outdoors on the ASC roof overlooking Boylston Street. There are photos of me, as a teenager, speaking from the ASC pulpit before a ragtag group of those who had walked out of the GA. Eventually we returned, but our lives would never be the same.

I joined ASC in the early 70’s and, when I finished college, I worked with Community Minister-at-Large George Whitehouse when he and I were co-directors of Interfaith, a Back Bay community center supported by the UU Urban Ministry (then known as the Benevolent Fraternity of UU Churches). In 1979, George officiated at my wedding in the Hunnewell Chapel and I officiated at his and Gaby’s wedding in a bar in Prov-

idence, RI, as well as those of their children. I have many memories of close relationships with notable ASC parishioners such as James Luther Adams, as well as ministers Jack Mendelsohn, Mwalimu Imaru, and Victor Carpenter.

I was among the contenders for ASC's ministry in 1989 and it was a stroke of good fortune for Kim to be called to ASC and for me to be called to Bedford, Massachusetts. We both got lucky,

After 31 good years in Bedford, I remain their Minister Emeritus and I am most grateful that Kim has invited me to be ASC's Community Minister for Good Trouble! Savoring retirement, I am delighted to be aimless and I will not promptly jump in to ASC activities. Nonetheless, I will make myself available to support Kim's ministry and the historic mission of ASC to be an activist and progressive beacon in Boston. I'll do my best to make some good trouble.

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John joins our esteemed group of Community Ministers at Arlington Street: Ali Jablonsky (Chaplain, Tufts Medical Center); Dr. Arthur Judge (Chaplain, Brigham and Women's Hospital, retired); Rev. Erica Rose Long (Chaplain, Massachusetts General Hospital); Rev. Joanna Lubkin (Interim Minister, Theodore Parker Church West Roxbury); Rev. Vera O'Brien (Chaplain, South Shore Hospital); and Rev. Fred Small (Community Minister for Climate Justice). *Welcome, John!*

Tomorrow morning (come a little early on Sunday mornings to catch the prelude!), Cheng Cheng opens the service on piano, playing everything from a traditional Welsh air to Bob Marley, and closes the service playing Lefébure-Wély on organ. In between, Director of Music Mark David Buckles directs our quartet — Andrew Stack, Bek Zehr, Daniel Rosensweig, and Hannah Shanefield — in Arthur Foote's setting of I John 4:7-8 ("Beloved, let us love one another, for G\*d is love") and *He Ain't Heavy; He's My Brother*. Mark David will lead all of us in singing Snatam Kaur's *Love Everyone*, Joe Jenck's setting of *The Prayer of Saint Francis* ("Lord, make me an instrument of your peace), and the traditional Irish song, *Let the Life I Lead*. Mark David will also sing *Try a Little Kindness*, popularized by Glen Campbell (you can practice your back-up part [here!](#)). Our executive minister, Rev. Beth Robbins, joins me in the pulpit. The Sanskrit word *seva* means selfless service. My sermon is called *Seva is Love*.

As always, I'm looking forward to the lovefest!

*Faithfully yours, with love*  
*Kim*



Rev. John Gibbons speaking on the Boston Common at a Poor People's Campaign event, prior to being arrested in the Governor's office at the State House



Rev. John Gibbons fired off his streamer cannons following the Goodrich wedding in 2004



Rev. John Gibbons being arrested (in costume!) at the Kormann pipeline protest