



The Meeting House News

REVERIES

In the Middle

As an interim minister I accompany congregations through their middles. These are the times between ministries, between sizes, between buildings or identities. Middles are marked by change, an alteration, a variation, or modification that leaves something or someone different. Middles are usually not the most comfortable places to be whether we are there by choice or by chance. Human beings enjoy pre-

dictability, competence, clarity and closure, all of which are distinctly absent in most middles. This is what can make a middle feel bad. Being in a place that feels bad does not mean anyone did anything wrong. It does not mean we are incompetent. Middles are unpredictable and create a distinct lack of clarity — not exactly a feel-good kind of place.



Being in any middle requires patience, awareness and appreciation for not knowing. This is where I come in. I am here to walk with you, be your witness, your confidant, your cheerleader, and your advocate. I will not tell First Parish what to do. I will listen. I will offer feedback when asked.

I will be a resource and a comfort. I will probably tell you things you do not really want to hear. When I do you can trust that I have no agenda other than your success and well-being. Anything that I tell you is public information, while anything you tell me will be held in confidence unless you instruct me otherwise. The most important things to remember about our interim middle are:

- It absolutely feels like it will be like this forever.
- It absolutely will not.
- We have to be in the middle until we are not.

So, we begin. Like the cream in the Oreo, this is a very rich time. Sandwiched between a beginning and an ending, it comes, like most middles, with a wide range of individual and communal reactions. Together we will stay in the excitement, the disappointment, the anger, the confusion, the hurt and the hope, right smack in the middle, until you are not.

Much metta,

— *Elaine Peresluha*

SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

September 11
Elaine Peresluha preaching
9:00 & 11:00 – First Parish Choir

September 18
Elaine Peresluha preaching
9:00 – Elizabeth Norton, vocalist
11:00 – First Parish Choir

September 25
Elaine Peresluha preaching
9:00 & 11:00 – First Parish Choir

October 2
Elaine Peresluha preaching
9:00 – First Parish Choir and Children's Choirs
11:00 – TBA and Children's Choirs

Don't Miss...

HOME COMING SUNDAY

Sunday, September 11

Services at 9:00 and 11:00 o'clock

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- ◆ 375th Anniversary Memory Day Info
- ◆ 375th Anniversary Information
- ◆ Wright Tavern Center Courses
- ◆ Youth Group Retreat

The Meeting House News, the newsletter of First Parish in Concord, is published monthly — in print and online — September to June, to provide parishioners and friends with information about our congregation and our larger community.

Please send address changes to:
First Parish in Concord
20 Lexington Road
Concord, MA 01742

Noon Deadline

Friday, September 23
Friday, October 21
Friday, November 18

Newsletter items should be **brief, ideally limited to 100 words**, and may be delivered, faxed or e-mailed to the church office.

PARISH NOTES

You Can Sponsor the Flowers Any Sunday

If you would like to provide Sunday flowers for a memorial or celebration, please contact **Peg Hedstrom** at 978-369-1562.

Finding Your Interim Minister

Elaine, AKA **Rev. Dr. Elaine Beth Peresluha**, can be found in her office at 20 Lexington Road, Concord, Mass.; 978-369-9602, extension 411.

Tuesday 9:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday 9:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Thursday 9:00 to 5:00 p.m.

In addition to these regular office hours, Elaine makes appointments to see people at other times. Monday is her day off and Friday is her sermon writing day

Please appreciate that these hours are true except when they are not. Ministers are often called out and about for denominational and pastoral appointments. For the most satisfying results, please call ahead.

Gallery Good News

First Parish has restored the display surfaces in the stairwell outside the Sanctuary that is called the Suzanne Altshuler Gallery. There are now two designated display areas to the Gallery — Gallery A is in the stairwell and Gallery B is on the Parish Hall stage. **Doug Baker** presently has a display of his paintings mounted in Gallery A, and the 375th Celebration Committee has a display of historical documents in Gallery B. Both displays will be up until the first week in October and we welcome everyone to browse and enjoy. First Parish individuals and groups are invited to schedule and display their art, which may include paintings, drawings, photos or other art media. The galleries are intended to be noncompetitive and noncommercial. Contact **Doug Baker** to schedule an exhibit and to review the procedures and policies regarding a display.

Transcendentalism Council News

Inspired by our experiences in Italy and France, we are setting out to trace the steps of the Transcendentalists in England and Scotland in May 2012. We use travel as an “immersion learning” opportunity, a chance to delve more deeply into these spiritual ancestors of ours who helped to lay the foundations for the Unitarian Universalist faith we practice and depend on today. We form a community as we go, a spiritual community and also a community of learners, where all are students and all are teachers. We explore the difference between being a “tourist” and being a “pilgrim,” and are beginning to think more deeply about what “spiritual travel” might mean, how we might practice it as a Unitarian Universalist group.

We invite you to join us at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 2, in the Emerson Room, where we will share with you the details of this upcoming trip. If you are unable to attend this meeting but are interested in joining us, please contact **Steph Chiha** at stephchiha@gmail.com.

Parish Notes

continued on page 12

October Marks 375th Anniversary of First Parish A Community-Wide Celebration in Concord

October approaches and our grand celebration for First Parish's 375th Anniversary is quickly coming into view. A series of wonderful events is planned October 14-23, and we invite you all to attend! We hope the congregation comes out in full to honor the unique place that First Parish holds in American history.

All events are open to the public with the exception of Saturday evening, October 22, when the Grand Dinner for the First Parish community will take place, along with a wonderful retrospective of congregational stories that span the years 1940 to 1990. Get your tickets early! (**Attention!** If you are a member from these years, please read the 375th Memory insert in this newsletter with details about coming to church on September 23 to share your First Parish stories!)

We have a special website, www.fp375.firstparish.org, where you will find detailed information on events, speakers, tours, reservations and ticket information. Tickets will go on sale at coffee hour on Opening Sunday, September 11.

Also, please see the 375th program schedule in the insert at the end of this edition of *Meeting House News*.

We say thank-you in advance to the Concord organizations that are sponsoring 375th events with First Parish: Concord Free Public Library, Concord Museum, Emerson House, the Old Manse and the Thoreau Society. Special thanks also to First Parish sponsors, the Transcendentalism Council and the Women's Parish Association.

375th Program Highlights

October 1-23, Concord Free Public Library will host a display of First Parish historic documents and artifacts. October 14-23, Concord Museum is featuring an exhibit of rarely seen First Parish artifacts from the museum collection.

Events begin Friday evening, October 14, at the Concord Library with a keynote address from Concord resident and distinguished professor Ronald Bosco from SUNY Albany, N.Y., on the Puritan influence in the 1600's, when Concord and First Parish were founded.

Saturday, October 15, there are special guided tours of the Old Manse, Emerson House and Concord Museum. Saturday evening, Henry David Thoreau visits First Parish to deliver excerpts from three of his major anti-slavery speeches. Reenactor Professor Kevin Radaker, from Anderson University, presents Thoreau in dramatic monologue.

Thursday evening, October 20, there are two candlelight tours of the Old Manse, with special focus on Ezra Ripley's 63-year ministry at First Parish. A social hour follows at the Colonial Inn with Professor Robert Gross, from the University

of Connecticut, speaking on when Concord and First Parish were one in 1825, and the emerging new era of religious diversity and forthcoming schism.



Friday evening, October 21, at First Parish, the pace revs up with a delightful fashion tableaux, "No One Wore Prada: An Evening of Living History and Fashion." The event features a cavalcade of historical figures from First Parish's rich cultural past such as John Hancock, Sam Adams, Merry Merrick Brooks and Cynthia Thoreau — to name just a few.

Saturday, October 22, begins with a morning panel presentation led by **Rev. Jenny Rankin** of First Parish; Rev. Mark Harris of First Parish in Watertown, MA; and Prof. Ronald Bosco of SUNY, Albany, NY, followed by short sessions on our church's impact on American history, led by Tom Potter, President of the Thoreau Society, and other historians.

Saturday evening, October 22, is the Grand Dinner for First Parish members, families and children and a special program, "The Way We Were" — a 1940-1990 First Parish retrospective.

October 23, Sunday morning services at First Parish mark the close of our anniversary celebration, led by **Rev. Dr. Elaine Beth Peresluha** and **Rev. Jenny M. Rankin** on the meaning of our 375 years of history as we move forward as a congregation. There will be special music and a special story/activity for children.

Anne Fortier and **Bruce Blumberg** are chairs of the 375th Anniversary Committee. ♦

Two Additional 375th Notes

A Wright Tavern Course on the Puritans!

Just in time for our 375th Celebration! Linda K. Palmer, reenactor and university teacher at Tufts Life Long Learning Institute, will offer a 3-session class entitled Puritans: Saints or Scoundrels, September 20, 27, and October 4, 7:30 -8:30 p.m., \$50. To register, call the church office (978-369-9602). For course information, see this issue's insert or www.wrighttavern.org/cms/courses. A walking tour of Boston relating to the Puritans is also offered by Linda K. Palmer. Learn more at her website www.puritan-tour.com.

375th Anniversary Photo Display

The First Parish Photography Club will have a display relating to our 375th anniversary. See page 2, Gallery Good News.

MONEY MATTERS

The summer months are the time when the Business Office closes out the fiscal year and begins anew. We tidy our files, work through the stack of noncritical items that built up during April, May and June, and generally prepare for the coming church year.

Thank you all for your pledges and gifts toward the annual appeal! We ended our pledge drive with \$823,779 in pledges and gifts, including the gap appeal. The budget presented at the Annual Meeting included a \$7800 planned deficit; we received enough pledges after the Annual Meeting to both erase that planned deficit and allow us to do two additional things — not tap the special funds for \$7,000, and allocate funds to hire an Assistant to the Ministers.

This summer we also published our new Building Use Policy. If you haven't read it yet, you can find it under "Church Life" on the website. This policy represents the work of a group of staff members to create a simple and consistent set of guidelines for using our space.

Cassy Bosworth moved to the front office as the new office manager, and she has spent the summer learning the ropes of her new job. She and I have been working with our new database company to complete our data conversion. We had hoped to be up and running before the church year began, but that hope proved to be overly optimistic. We will continue working with our team from the new company, and in the meantime we will continue using the old database.

Finally, this summer, with the help of **Lillian Anderson**, I formed an Operations Committee. This committee will provide parishioner input on topics and issues that fall into my areas of responsibility. The committee members are **Gary Clayton, Jane Fisher, Russ Herndon, and Alane Wallis**. I am very grateful that they all agreed to serve on this new committee!

— *Melissa Perdue Gallo*

STANDING COMMITTEE

The Opening Retreat for Standing Committee is the evening of September 7 with Sue Philips from the Massachusetts Bay District. The next Standing Committee meeting will be held on Monday, September 12, location TBD. Please look for the monthly minutes online at first-parish.org under Church Life (you must log in) or on the church bulletin board. ♦

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Greetings and Welcome Back!

I am happy to be back at First Parish after summer hiatus, planning and coordinating programs and events for visitors, new members and established congregants.



This year looks to be very exciting, with **Rev. Elaine Peresluha** joining us as Interim Minister and the upcoming celebration of First Parish's 375th anniversary in October.

General Assembly Update

At General Assembly in Charlotte, N.C., in June, I was voted in as a Member-at-Large on the board of the newly created UU Association of Membership Professionals. This organization became an affiliated UUA organization after a year of work by a task group of Membership Professionals from across the country. I am excited to be part of this organization, and I am honored to represent First Parish in my capacity as a Member-at-Large of the UUAMP!

First Parish "Jump Start" Coming in October

Starting in October, and held on the first Sunday of each month from 10:15 to 10:45 a.m., a new offering will take place for visitors and newcomers. First Parish "Jump Start" is a program where attendees will learn and ask questions about Unitarian Universalism and First Parish. One of our ministers and I will be leading this meeting. It is the first step in our Pathway to Membership.

Speaking of Membership...

A new church year is a great time to consider where you are on your membership journey at First Parish. Membership is a dynamic process rather than a single act, beginning when one officially joins the congregation and lasting a lifetime. Where are you on your journey? Please talk with one of our ministers, a member of the Membership Committee or me if you wish to deepen your affiliation with First Parish.

Let Us Be Welcoming in Every Way

Welcoming comes in many forms. It can be a smile and nod, a handshake and a hello, or a long conversation filled with questions and understanding. However the welcome is extended, what is most important is that each of us be present to those among us. Remember to be welcoming to new people during coffee hour, especially those holding a red mug. Ask what brought them to First Parish. Tell them about your experience here. If they are interested in a program or event, steer them in the right direction. It is quite simple, this act of welcoming.

I look forward to another church year at First Parish!

— *Jane Foley*

Membership Director

PARTNER CHURCH COMMITTEE

Our fifth Youth Service Pilgrimage (YSP) to Székelykeresztúr, from July 6 to 19 was a spellbinding success with ten youths and five chaperones “going home” to a place that has become dear to an increasing number of First Parish hearts.

Starting in Budapest, where we were met by a contingent from Keresztúr, including Réka Gagyí, Réka Balogh and Sipos Laszlo, we toured the city and languished at the Gellert Spa before taking the long bus ride across the Great Hungarian Plain to the Romanian frontier and up into Transylvania. After spending the night in the city of Kolozsvár, we had a delightful meeting with Rev. Ferenc Bálint Benczédi, Bishop of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church.

From there we were Keresztúr-bound and, in typical fashion, were met at the steps of the new Friendship Community House by Rev. József Szombatfalvi and the Keresztúr Youth Group, who serenaded us with song. The next 12 days whizzed by in a flash, with (much appreciated) service work accomplished in the forests and fields, with long hikes and a camping trip in the hills, with area tours, and especially with numerous opportunities to bond with our Keresztúri brothers and sisters.

As has always been the case, there weren't many dry eyes when the time came to say good-bye. Please be sure to visit our YSP Photo Gallery at: <http://gallery.firstparish.org/gallery3/index.php/Partner-Church/YSP-2011>

We invite you to hear more about our adventure at this year's annual Transylvanian Thanksgiving Service, to be held on Sunday, September 25. And as always, we invite you to join us for our Partner Church Committee (supper) meetings. The next one will be held on Thursday, September 8, at the home of **Dana** and **Kathy Booth**. For further information, drop us a line; and for our all our latest PCC news and information, see:

<http://www.firstparish.org/cms/committees/partner-church>. ♦

Minden jót! “Best wishes!”

— **Winslow Pettingell**, PCC chair,
LondonSW11@comcast.net

PASTORAL CARE NEWS

Pastoral Care Continues under New Leadership

In the caring spirit of First Parish, the Pastoral Care program continues under the leadership of **Jenny Rankin** with the support of the Pastoral Care Advisory Council, the Lay Ministers and the Caring Connection. The Council and Lay Ministers are taking on some of the responsibilities that **Margie King Saphier** so ably performed. The ministers continue to offer counseling, hospital and home visits, and will respond to phone calls and e-mails. Please call the church office (978-369-9602) to schedule an appointment, or e-mail them directly: **Jenny Rankin** (jrankin@firstparish.org) or **Elaine Peresluha** (uurevdoc@gmail.com).

The Lay Ministers continue to companion parishioners in need of spiritual and emotional support during hospitalization, bereavement and long-term illness. They offer support for elders, caregivers and families in crisis. Call the church office or check the *Sunday News* to be connected to the lay minister of the month.

The Caring Connection continues support for parishioners by providing meals, delivery of food and writing notes. Also, the Women's Parish Association calls and writes to its members.

The Threshold Singers, under the direction of **Beth Norton**, will continue to provide pastoral care through life's transitions by singing for parishioners in their homes or at the hospital.

Additions have been made to the church's website under Pastoral Care, providing helpful pastoral resources in addition to a list of the books in the lending library. Information about Covenant Groups is also available, and **Jane Foley**, Membership Director, can be contacted.

Change is always difficult, but we will all do our best to continue pastoral care in the spirit of this loving and caring church.

—**Judy Dembsey**, Pastoral Care Advisory Council

Books Missing from the Pastoral Care Lending Library

The Pastoral Care Lending Library is missing some books. Please check your bookshelves and return any of our book(s) to the library. Some of these books have been missing for several years. Remember when borrowing books from the library, to be sure to fill out the borrower's card located inside the book. The missing books are: *What You Can Change and What You Can't* by Martin Seligman; *Learned Optimism* by Martin Seligman; *She Is Not There: A Life in Two Genders* by Jennifer Boylan; *Adopting in Massachusetts* by UMass Center of Adoption Research; *AIDS: Trading Fears* by Karen Hein; *Treating IBD* by Brandt, Steiner & Grossman; *The Anatomy of Hope: How People Prevail in the Face of Illness* by K. Loving; *Dr. Susan Love's Hormone Book* by Susan Love; *Cancer as a Turning Point* by Lawrence LeShan; *To Live Until We Say Good-bye* by Elisabeth Kuebler-Ross and *The Complete Guide to Mental Health* by Lauren Slater.

—**Ursula Kristoffy**, Pastoral Care Advisory Council

MUSINGS

This was an extraordinary summer. It was certainly not restful, but it was inspiring and energizing. I had the privilege of connecting with Unitarians and Unitarian Universalists from all over the world. I returned home with a fresh perspective on our faith and heritage.



Can it be only two months since General Assembly in Charlotte, North Carolina? This celebration of 50 years since the merger of the UUA and the AUA offered many opportunities for reflection on our history and future as a religious movement. It was delightful to share the experience with a number of Concord folks who had never attended GA. More of you should come! It was particularly moving to publicly honor **Gary Smith** on his retirement and to recognize **Gail Carey** as a Credentialed UU Music Leader.

Both Gail and I attended the July UU Musicians Network (UUMN) Conference in Arlington, Virginia — the annual infusion of inspiration and energy for UU musicians. I presented a workshop on Concord’s musical pilgrimages to Transylvania. There was keen interest in our experience and I was proud to share the programs that our Partner Church Committee has designed and supported over the years. Gail served as a panelist for a workshop on Children’s Choirs that was very well received.

During August I spent two wonderful weeks in Transylvania conducting the UU Partner Church Council Festival Choir — a totally new venture by the travel group of the UUPCC. It was a huge success. The choir was comprised of twenty-eight UU singers from all over the USA, plus six young basses from the choir of the Unitarian High School in Kolozsvár. Creating a choir and making music with this multigenerational and international group was deeply rewarding, as was experiencing Transylvania with a wide range of UU’s. I spent one lovely day in Székelykeresztúr visiting with the Szombatfalvis, the Demeters and the Mikos. I held beautiful new babies. I heard stories of our Youth Pilgrimage. I deepened my own knowledge of our Unitarian history and my connection to these dear friends on the other side of the world.

I return to Concord this fall with a wider vision and deeper understanding of our faith. I look forward to this period of interim ministry. May it be for our congregation a time of discovery that renews our commitment to and deepens our understanding of our place in the wider Unitarian Universalist movement. ♦

Blessings,

— *Beth Norton*

Music Director

Children’s Choir Begins September 7

Remember singing *Sources* at the First Church of Roxbury last year — joining voices with children from the Stand High Stand United program there, helping to raise \$7000 for the UU Urban



Ministry? Remember the power of our all-church choir good-bye anthem for **Gary Smith**, “For Good”?

Remember the simple beauty of our children sharing their voices and leading us in worship?

Now is the time to register children for children’s choir. All are welcome. Please check the church website for updated forms. They can

be mailed directly to the church and sent to my attention. Rehearsals will continue on Wednesday afternoons (see schedule on page 7). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly at 781-626-3043. Our first choir rehearsal is on Wednesday, September 7. There will be a brief meeting for all parents (of both choirs) between 5:00 and 5:15 p.m. on the 7th. See you then.

**New Singers Are Encouraged to Join!
No Singing Training Necessary —
Just a Love for Singing!**

In song,

— *Gail Carey*

First Parish Children’s Choir Director

Gospel Choir Returns September 18

This is the annual invitation to 7th through 12th graders to join Gospel Choir! We welcome new members with open arms and hope that you are ready to inspire and be inspired. For those of you who have simply taken a break, I would love for you to come back and join us. **Rob Castillo, Mark Weltner** and I are looking forward to working with each of you again. We will do some blues, gospel and a little contemporary gospel flair just to spice things up. Now, I know that many of you have friends who are good singers. Well, invite them to share their gifts and talents with people who will really enjoy and appreciate them! We will start on Sunday, September 18, meeting on the Wright Tavern porch. I will be waiting eagerly to welcome you back. We will start at 9:30 a.m. with refreshments and catching up. If you have any questions, please send me an e-mail at Forgiven2000@yahoo.com. Thanks and enjoy the rest of your summer.

Happily yours,

— *Anderson Manuel*

First Parish Gospel Choir Director

First Parish Choir — Open Rehearsals in September

The First Parish Choir begins each season with “open rehearsals” on Wednesday nights. This year, we start on September 7. Rehearsals are from 7:45 to 9:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Anyone interested in singing in the choir is invited to attend with no obligation during this time. Singers of all voice parts are welcome. The choir will sing in church for the first time on Sunday, September 11, at the 9:00 and 11:00 o’clock services. If you plan to attend a rehearsal, or have any questions, please contact **Beth Norton** at 978-369-9602, ext. 420, or e-mail Beth at music@firstparish.org.

Threshold Singers

On September 1, at 7:30 p.m. the First Parish Threshold Singers will begin a new season — with a new name and new energy. We have changed our name from “choir” to “singers” to emphasize the more informal and intimate nature of our singing together and with members of the community.

The Threshold Singers tap into an ancient tradition of singing at the bedside of people facing illness or approaching death. At our gatherings, singers learn simple songs to support one another and, when invited, to share with parishioners in need of healing. The group is open to any adult who loves to sing and longs to serve through music. We meet on the first and third Thursday of each month from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. For more information, contact **Beth Norton** at 978-369-9602 or music@firstparish.org.

Arts Council Meeting

The First Parish Arts Council will gather on Tuesday, September 27, at 7:30 p.m. to consider these questions: “What makes participation in the arts at First Parish different from other arts group in the wider community? What makes the arts a ministry for you (if it does)? How does your participation in the arts reflect your UU values? Our benediction? We will also share plans for projects and performances this year. The Arts Council welcomes anyone interested in participating to attend. The discussion will be led by **Beth Norton** and **Lillian Anderson**. For more information, contact **Lillian Anderson** at 978-369-1468 or Lillianand@comcast.net

PIPEWORK

Over the summer much progress has been made on the new organ. The remaining pipe chests for Great and Pedal organs have been installed and several ranks of pipes installed in those divisions. Extensive wiring to make these chests playable is now also nearly complete. On this day of writing, the first ranks of the Great division and the higher notes of the Pedal organ are being reracked and regulated. The trumpet pipes for the Great division may also be installed by opening Sunday, September 11.

Keep this information handy as you make plans for fall!
And consider joining a choir!

Choir Rehearsal Schedule – Fall 2011

Adult Choir

Wednesdays 7:45-9:30 p.m.

beginning Wednesday, September 7 in the Sanctuary

Beth Norton, Director

Gospel Choir

(Youth in grades 7-12)

Sundays 10:00-11:00 a.m.

beginning Sunday, September 18 in the Wright Tavern

Anderson Manuel, Director

Junior Choir

(Grades 1-3)

Wednesday from 4:30-5:00 p.m.

beginning Wednesday, September 7 in the Parish Hall

Gail Carey, Director

Chalice Choir

(Grades 4-6)

Wednesdays from 5:15-6:00 p.m.

beginning Wednesday, September 7 in the Parish Hall

Gail Carey, Director

For more information contact **Beth Norton** at 978-369-9602, ext. 420 or music@firstparish.org.

The exterior shape of the organ is now evident as the larger one-hundred-year-old pedal ranks of pipes from the old organ



flank and form the exterior of the new instrument. These pipes were first restored with dowels and inserts replacing and cracks, languids checked and then, completely cosmetically stripped of old stains and shellac and three new coats of shellac applied during the summer. So the inside and outside of the instrument is now equally pristine and ready for the next century. It's worth a look up close if you care to venture up the balcony stairs.

Creation of new and remanufactured pipes continues at a steady pace at the Russell shop in Vermont.

—*Eric Huenneke*

Parish Organist

Ferry Beach. Two words that mean so much to so many of us at First Parish. This summer, I had the privilege of attending RE Week at Ferry Beach. I didn't know what to expect, as it was my first time at Ferry Beach, but what I found was just what I needed — the ocean, the sun, resting, yoga on the beach, and a terrific workshop on unleashing the potential of youth ministry. To my surprise, this week was not just for Directors of Religious

Education. Instead, it was a week where many UU families from all over Massachusetts, New England and beyond formed a vacation-community that embodied Unitarian Universalism in its daily rhythm. People of all ages gathered together, played games, laughed, cried and displayed various levels of talent at the talent show. I enjoyed my time there with very dynamic people, but I missed all of you. While I know that many of you go to Ferry Beach on Memorial Day Weekend, I find myself wondering ... is that really enough? Two or three days? I found seven days too short! I am hoping that maybe a group of families can join me for a week at Ferry Beach next summer. The thought of making crafts, playing Zombie, singing and swimming together fills me with joy. If you are interested ... let me know and maybe we can start something that strengthens all we are as a true First Parish family. ♦



— Pam Howell

Director of Religious Education

Help Wanted: One Dedicated Head Elf!

Do you believe in the ministry we call the Holiday Craft Workshop? Do you believe in providing children the opportunity to make gifts for friends and family? Do you believe in traditions that bring many generations together in body and spirit? Do you believe in gathering as a faith community in the season of the holidays to experience the joy of connection during the darkest month of the year? Then yes, you may just be our next Head Elf. We have a dedicated crew of elves standing ready. We have a pretty organized set of supplies (although we could use some more help here!). What we need is someone to do the magic of making it all come together. The message is a simple one: if the Workshop is to happen this year, then there must be someone who believes. Please call me, soon!

September 2011 RE Calendar

- Sun., Sept. 11 Regular RE for Babies–4 years
Intergenerational Service for K–8th Grades
- Sun., Sept. 18 Regular RE for Babies–4 years
Regular RE for K–6th Grades (Emerson Room)
7th Art in Action at 11 a.m. (Brooks Room)
8th Dramatic Arts at 11 a.m. (Wright Tavern)
- Sun., Sept. 25 Regular RE for Babies–4 years
Regular RE for K–6th Grades
6th Grade in the Icy Cave, Trip to Cemetery
7th Art in Action 11 a.m. (Brooks Room and Trip to Garden)
8th Dramatic Arts at 11 a.m. (Wright Tavern)
- Sun., Oct. 2 Regular RE for Babies–4 years
Regular RE for K–5th Grades
6th Grade in the Icy Cave, Trip to Cemetery
7th Art in Action at 11 a.m. (Brooks Room)
8th Dramatic Arts at 11 a.m. (Wright Tavern)

Second–Fifth Grade Workshop Rotation — Fall Term Unitarian Universalism: Celebrating Our First Parish 375th Anniversary.

- Sep. 18 Opening Week: You are a UU? What does that mean?
- Sept. 25, Oct. 2 & 16 What our forefathers stood for — A heritage of people making a difference in the lives of others
 - Colonial Doll Craft Workshop
 - Leather and Metal Working
- Oct. 23 375th Anniversary Weekend — Tour of the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery
- Oct. 30 All Souls Day
- Nov. 6 Social Justice Work — Our Unitarian Universalist calling.

Sixth Grade Youth Group — Fall Term

This year, we are continuing a very successful program that began last winter. Our 6th graders will begin the year creating our Unitarian Universalist heritage. They will learn about important Unitarian Universalists and create an interactive tour that will be given to our community and to our 2nd-5th graders on October 23 for our 375th birthday celebration. During this term, our 6th graders will also be learning from the curriculum, Lessons of Loss, and taking a short field trip to Dee's Funeral Home for a tour. Mixing these lessons directly into an active project that honors past lives is a powerful way of exploring the lessons that death has to teach us about good living.

Seventh Grade Art in Action

This year, **Karen Economopolous** has returned to lead this popular and meaningful term that focuses on Social Action as a spiritual

RE News

continued on page 9

practice. The themes that will be explored this year revolve around Social Action in your Own Backyard. Our 7th graders will be staying close to home and directly connecting with those they serve. We will be working in the First Parish Garden, at Gaining Ground, creating a present for First Parish and celebrating the work of Andy Goldsworthy at the DeCordova. Each week, we will be getting our hands messy with the work of helping others and moving toward connecting to something larger than the self.

Eighth Grade Dramatic Arts

We are continuing the tradition of “The Best Christmas Pageant Ever” with our 8th graders, and we are thrilled that **Caroline** and **Jimmy McCloy** will be leading this dynamic group of 8th graders in this timeless play. At the end of the term, these 8th graders will put on this play for the entire RE program. Why drama in RE? Plays require commitment, accountability and presence. Theater allows our young teens to take safe risks. Theater also creates something unique and special among a group of people. We want our kids to be connected to each other, to caring adults and to our First Parish community. We feel dramatic arts accomplishes all this and more.

Ninth Grade Coming of Age

We are starting the year off well with great lay leadership for Coming of Age. **Heather Wilson** will be leading this year’s program with support from **Jane Barnes** (RE Council) and the help of mentor **Susan Ward**. We are fortunate to have such leadership for our young adults at First Parish. Their first meeting is on September 18 at 6:30 p.m., just after they return from the Youth Retreat at Ferry Beach.

Youth Group (9th through 12th Grades) Sunday Evenings from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

“But I’m already doing Coming of Age!” These are words many parents hear from their youth in response to attending youth group at First Parish. Youth Group is very different from COA. It is youth-led and much less structured. It is no longer formal RE. Instead, it is a chance for our teens to gather and do things they choose to do themselves — social action, camping, retreats, reflection, music. It really is whatever the teens want it to be. This is where our First Parish teens have an opportunity to develop leadership skills, make connections with older teens, advocate for themselves and others. COA is only one Sunday a month, at most. Youth Group is every Sunday, so COA teens can easily go to most of the meetings. We sincerely hope your teen makes the effort to come to First Parish every Sunday evening.

Our First Parish Community Garden

Thanks to the larger commitment of the Environmental Leadership Team, we have been able to continue our garden through the summer and it is still going strong. We meet each Thursday from 3 to 4 p.m. to work, pick food and deliver food to Open Table. This is a great way for our children (and

our adults) to learn how to grow food and help others. This is an intergenerational opportunity to get your body moving and your hands dirty.

The RE Council

Boy, are we lucky! Our Religious Education program has an amazing council. This council makes our program possible. They are involved with planning the curriculum, making decisions about our program and its mission, building community and supporting you, as parents. Most of us understand that we cannot raise a child alone, in isolation from a caring community of people. The council makes RE one of those truly caring communities for your child.

This year the council has two cochairs: **Kate Svrcek** and **Eric Moore**, and six members: **Jane Barnes, Lora Venesy, Patty Popov, Alyssa Bigay, Dawn Van Patton** and **Brad Hubbard Nelson**. Each has taken on a very supportive role in the RE Program. This new structure of support will better enable me to handle a very large RE program despite many cutbacks in the RE budget. I am deeply grateful for this team of very dedicated adults who realize how lucky we are to have such an amazing community of RE families.

Good News for YRUU, Our First Parish Youth Group for 9-12 Grades

We are thrilled to welcome **Avi Salloway** as our new Youth Program Director. Avi is a professional musician, activist and educator, and we are really excited to have him join the First Parish community! He recently returned from Israel and Palestine, where he was working with Arab and Jewish youth musicians to build mutual understanding through the creative process. He loves the outdoors, rocking out, and working with spirited youth. He has a lot of great ideas for the youth group and I think you will enjoy working with him.

Homecoming Sunday on September 11

Sunday, September 11, is Homecoming Sunday. We will have an Intergenerational Service. Please remember to bring a small amount of water from a special place for our Water Communion.

Wanted!

A small refrigerator for our RE Office ... do you have one hanging around? If so, let me know! Fpdre_pamhowell@mac.com

IMPORTANT! Please go to page 11 for the 2011-2012 Schedule for all RE Teacher and Leader orientaions.

SOCIAL ACTION COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENTS

Welcome back!

The summer has flown by as usual! The Social Action Community looks forward to working with our new interim minister, **Elaine Peresluha**, as we embark on another year of Social Action here at First Parish. Welcome, Elaine! The Social Action Community Board also wishes to thank retiring board members **Alec Walker, Claudia Nimar and Bob Andrews** and welcome new board members **Leslie Fisher, Cynthia Mousseau and Dan Geffken**. We all look forward to working with our new members! It is going to be another busy year at First Parish. The Social Action board is supporting a huge initiative led by board member **Jane Blumberg**, author and composer of “Chicken Man,” a musical play with an environmental theme. The play will be performed at First Parish in March, but the theme of the play resonates throughout our social action programs; and there will be a number of events and programs offered throughout the year that will make those connections for us. Stay tuned to learn more about these offerings — such as a children’s book reading day, an adult book group, a movie event, and a cooking class. SAC also is introducing a new program this year, Reverence for Life, a pilot program of the UUA; and **Craig Nowak** and I will be offering a Wright Tavern Center course connected to this subject. Please see our website, sac.firstparish.org, for information on our many programs and upcoming events. As always, please bring any ideas you have for new programs and events to me at fbade@firstparish.org. See you on Homecoming Sunday! ♦

— *Faith Bade*

Social Action Program Director

September 11 Is Homecoming Sunday

Look for some Social Action tables set up at coffee hour to give you information on the coming year. Also look for an insert highlighting upcoming Social Action events.

Thank you!

Thanks to all who have helped with the First Parish Community Garden over the summer. Special thanks to **Susan Ryan** and **Pam Howell** (as always). The garden is still producing, so please contact Pam if you are interested in helping out this September. Produce is donated to Open Table each Thursday.

First Parish 375th Anniversary Celebration October 21-23

Look for new information about Social Action at First Parish through a narrative researched and

written by FP member **John Lowe** and a new SAC video led by FP member **Dave Dawson**.

Green Notes

The Environmental Leadership Team at First Parish would like to welcome two new team members: **Gary Kleiman** and **Mike Jacobs**. Their new energy and ideas will make for a new and exciting year for the ELT and for First Parish.

Mindful Living Idea: Save the date of November 15 for America Recycles Day. You can now connect with America Recycles Day on Facebook and follow the ARD campaign on Twitter.

Social Action Reflection Group

Scott Russell Sanders once wrote that “the journey isn’t over until the story is told.” At First Parish there are so many Social Action journeys and so little time to hear all the stories. This fall, we would like to begin telling and hearing those stories in a Social Action Reflection Group. The group will meet once a month to simply reflect on the work that we do and how that impacts us spiritually. All are welcome. Our first meeting will be Sunday evening, September 11, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. For more information contact **Mark Richards** at marksrichards@comcast.net or 978-771-9823.

Children’s Environmental Read-Aloud

On Saturday morning, October 1, from 9 to 10:30 a.m., children ages 5-10 are invited to come hear some stories in the Parish Hall. Readers **John Esty, Dave Dawson, Dick Lowitt** and **Don Miller** will be reading from picture books that highlight the importance of trees and forests in our lives and in the world. Children will also leave with a handmade memento. This is the first SAC-sponsored event related to SAC’s production of “Chicken Man” in March 2012. Each participating family will be encouraged to make a \$5 donation to support the work of Mil Milagros and Camino Verde. (Information about these two organizations will be provided at the read-aloud.) For more information, please call **Jane Blumberg** at 978-369-8520.

School Supplies Needed

It’s “Back-to-School” time and surely we all recall the thrill of getting a new box of crayons, a fresh new notebook or a spiffy binder that, this time, we are going to keep neat and tidy! For the homeless children whose parents are struggling to fund the basic necessities, there is no fun back-to-school shopping trip, but we can help! Please help us collect school supplies to be given to the hundreds of

SAC News and Events

continued on page 11

Learn More about Social Action at First Parish

The First Parish Social Action Community (SAC) helps parishioners connect with a diverse and exciting range of social action projects. To find out more about what is going on, join our e-mail list by sending a blank e-mail to SAC-join@lists.firstparish.org; see our website, sac.firstparish.org/cms/sacemaillist; visit the Social Action bulletin board; or e-mail our Social Action Program Director, **Faith Bade**, at FBade@firstparish.org.



homeless children in Massachusetts. New or gently used backpacks are especially needed. Please place your donations in the marked box in the coatroom through September. Thank you! For more information, please call Jane Blumberg at 978-369-8520.

2011 Concord Area Crop Walk

The Concord Area Crop Walk for the Hungry will take place on Sunday, October 16, starting at First Parish; registration begins at 1:30 p.m., step-off is at 2:15. Funds raised go to support several local hunger relief organizations, and the global disaster relief and development projects of Church World Service. Please put this date on your calendar and plan to join the First Parish team, or sponsor a walker. This is a great social action project for families to participate in together. See www.concordcrop.org for more details, and look for the Crop table at coffee hours starting in mid-September.

Amnesty Group Returns to First Parish

Group 15, the Concord-area Amnesty International group, will once again hold its regular monthly meetings at First Parish, beginning on Tuesday, September 20, at 7 p.m. The group, which had held its meetings at the church for many years, has been meeting at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center, since First Parish began closing on Tuesdays last year. Current plans are for the church to close on Mondays instead of Tuesdays, beginning this fall. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month. The meeting will be held in the Greeley Room on the second floor rear of First Parish. All are welcome. For additional information, go to www.aigroup15.org or e-mail Lorraine Loviglio at loviglio@rcn.com.

SENIOR YOUTH NEWS

Greetings First Parish community! I am really excited to be joining you all as the new Youth Program Director. I am a professional musician, activist and educator, and I am sincerely looking forward to working with the spirited youth of First Parish.



On August 21, Sven and Janine Olson hosted our kick-off BBQ planning meeting and we developed some awesome ideas, goals and projects for the coming year. The big news is: the Youth Group is going to open its umbrella to include the diversified youth community at First Parish. We're brainstorming for a new name for the group.

Upcoming Dates:

- Sept. 11: YAC - Wright Tavern - 5:00 p.m.
Sept. 11: First Youth Group Meeting/Pizza Party - Wright Tavern - 6:30 p.m.
Sept. 16-18: The Retreat to Ferry Beach; Saco, Maine
Join us for a weekend on the beach with bonfire jams, camping, cooking, games, sharing and discussion! (See insert.)
Most important, the youth group is going to be an experience and expression of you, the youth of First Parish. We'll be making music, working on social action projects, practicing old traditions, and making new ones together. Come join the parade!

Yours truly,

—Avi Salloway

Youth Program Director

Orientation for Religious Education Teachers and Leaders for 2011-2012

Orientation Schedule for Babies-1st Grade Teachers in the Emerson Room:

Caregiving, Story Time and Spirit Play, Fall and Holiday Terms: Wed., Sept. 7, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Caregiving, Story Play and Spirit Play, Winter and Spring Terms: Wed., Jan. 18, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Orientation Schedule for Second-Sixth Grade Teachers in the Emerson Room:

- 2nd-6th Grade Fall Term #1: Wed., Sept. 14, 7:30-9:30 p.m.
2nd-6th Grade Holiday Term #2: Wed., Nov. 9, 7:30-9:30 p.m.
2nd-6th Grade Winter Term #3: Wed., Jan. 25, 7:30-9:30 p.m.
2nd-6th Grades Spring Term #4: Wed., Mar. 28, 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Orientation Schedule for 7th, 8th and 9th Grade Leaders:

- 7th Grade Neighboring Faiths Spring Term: Jan. 11, 7:30 p.m.
8th Grade Our Whole Lives (OWL): Wed., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m.
Mandatory OWL Parent Orientation: Wed. & Thu., Dec. 7 and 8, 7:30-9:30 p.m.
9th Grade Mentor Orientation: Sun., Sept. 11, 6:30-9:30 p.m. in the Wright Tavern
9th Grade COA Opening Reception for Parents and Teens: Sun., Sept. 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Jewish Awareness Affinity Group to Meet

We are UU's of First Parish who want to understand and celebrate Judaism and Jewish culture with lively conversation and UU respect for different opinions and attitudes. We usually meet the third Friday evening of the month at First Parish, light some candles, share some wine and food, and talk. At our September 16 meeting at First Parish, **Steph Chiha** will present a WGBH documentary about Gustav Mahler. This short film looks closely at the events in Mahler's life that shaped his personality and musical genius. Questions? Contact **Dana Snyder-Grant** at 978 266-9409 or danasg@newview.org. All welcome.

NEW! Church Building Is Closed on Mondays

Starting in the month of September, First Parish will be closed on Monday. The church office hours are Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Questions for You from the Arts Council

What makes participation in the arts at First Parish different from other arts group in the wider community? What makes the arts a ministry for you (if it does)? How does your participation in the arts reflect your UU values? Our benediction? The First Parish Arts Council welcomes anyone interested in participating to attend the Tuesday, September 27, meeting at 7:30 p.m. The discussion will be led by **Beth Norton** and **Lillian Anderson** and many others interested in the arts at First Parish. For more information, contact **Lillian Anderson** at 978-369-1468 or Lillianand@comcast.net.

WPA Luncheon — Tuesday, September 20

Join old and new friends at the Women's Parish Association luncheon on Tuesday, September 20. During the program, our interim minister, **Rev. Dr. Elaine Beth Peresluha**, will speak about her ministry here at First Parish. Social time at 11:30 a.m., with lunch at noon. Charge: Ten dollars. All men and women are cordially invited. Contact the office or **Dian Pekin** at pekincd@comcast.net by September 17 for reservations, and dietary and transportation requirements. Reservations are required. A brief annual meeting will be held after the program.

Artisans Fair — SAVE THE DATE — November 5

It's not too early to start thinking about our annual Holiday Artisans Fair. Over 50 artists and artisans will be showing and selling their latest works at this outstanding juried event. On Saturday, November 5, from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., every nook and cranny of First Parish will be filled with delightful gifts for your holiday shopping, and delicious food will be on sale throughout the day. Contact **Dian Pekin** at pekincd@comcast.net if you would like to volunteer to help at our very enjoyable and major fundraiser.

WOMEN'S NEWS

The Women's AM/PM Book Group— 2011-2012 Schedule — New Day!

Welcome to a new year of book discussions with the First Parish Women's AM/PM Book Group! Please note that we are always open for drop-ins and you don't need to sign up to attend. If you'd like to join the discussion one month, just come to either the morning or evening group. Meetings are held at First Parish, usually in the Brooks Room. You may check the schedule board when you arrive to make sure.

Meeting times are Sunday evenings (*Note new day!*) from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m and Tuesday mornings from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m., usually the last week of the month (4th or 5th Sunday and Tuesday), with a few exceptions as indicated in the date list below. The morning session is facilitated by **Darien Smith** and the evening by **Siri Smedvig**. All women of First Parish are warmly invited to read the current book and join one or both of these discussions. If you would like to be added to the Women's Book Group e-mail list, please contact **Darien Smith** at darien@smithquest.com or 978-369-1471.

Books and Dates for 2011-2012

- Sep. 25, 27 *The Forgotten Garden: A Novel*, by Kate Morton
- Oct. 30, Nov 1 *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts*, by Elise Virginia Lemire
- Dec. 4, 6 *Digging to America: A Novel*, by Anne Tyler
- Jan. 22, 24 *Barchester Towers*, by Anthony Trollope
- Feb. 26, 28 *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, by Rebecca Skloot
- Mar. 25, 27 *Room: A Novel*, by Emma Donoghue
- Apr. 22, 24 *Mary Todd Lincoln: A Biography*, by Jean H. Baker
- May 20, 22 *Bossypants*, by Tina Fey

CLASSIFIED

Piano and Violin Lessons

Siri Smedvig is taking on new students for violin and piano instruction. Please call 978-729-5014 for more information.

SEPTEMBER 2011 CALENDAR

*Listings in italics represent classes offered through
the Wright Tavern Center for Spiritual Renewal.*

Every Week...

Men's Group	Saturday	7:30 a.m.
Networking Group	Tuesday	9:00 a.m.
<i>Music Together</i>	Tuesday	9:30 a.m. (not 9/6)
<i>T'ai Chi and Qi Gong</i>	Tuesday	6:30 p.m. (not 9/6)
<i>Buddhist Group</i>	Wednesday	9:30 a.m.
Junior Choir	Wednesday	4:30 p.m. (not 9/7)
Chalice Choir	Wednesday	5:15 p.m. (not 9/7)
Transylvania Troubadours	Wednesday	6:15 p.m. (not 9/7)
Adult Choir	Wednesday	7:45 p.m.
<i>Music Together</i>	Thursday	9:30 a.m. (not 9/8)
<i>Stress Reduction and Relaxation</i>	Thursday	7:00 p.m. (starts 9/29)
<i>Buddhist Group</i>	Thursday	7:30 p.m.
<i>Music Together</i>	Friday	9:30 a.m. (not 9/9)
<i>Stress Reduction and Relaxation</i>	Friday	9:30 a.m. (starts 9/30)
Gospel Choir	Sunday	10:00 a.m. (not 9/4 and 9/11)
YRUU	Sunday	6:30 p.m. (not 9/4)
Men's Group	Sunday	7:30 p.m.

Wed Sep 7	6:30 Standing Committee Retreat	•	MON SEP 19	CHURCH CLOSED
	7:00 <i>Concord Area Humanists</i>	•	Tue Sep 20	11:30 WPA Luncheon
	7:00 Teacher Orientation, Babies to Grade 1	•		7:00 Amnesty Group 15
SUN SEP 11	HOMECOMING SUNDAY	•		7:00 <i>Puritans: Saints or Scoundrels</i>
	6:30 9th Grade Mentor Orientation	•		7:00 <i>Seeking Circles</i>
	6:30 Crop Walk Recruiters	•	Thu Sep 22	7:30 Fall Equinox Circle
	6:30 Coming of Age Mentor Orientation	•	Fri Sep 23	3:00 Invited Parishioners Stories and Tea
	7:00 Social Action Reflection Group	•		6:30 Potluck for Parishioners prior 1990
MON SEP 12	CHURCH CLOSED	•		7:30 <i>Rise Up Singing</i>
Tue Sep 13	9:00 WPA Board Meeting	•	Sun Sep 25	1:30 Dr. Melanie Joy on Ethical Eating
	7:30 <i>Every Day Enlightenment</i>	•		5:00 Sarasa Concert
Wed Sep 14	7:30 Teacher Orientation, Grades 2-6	•		7:30 Women's AM/PM Book Group
Thu Sep 15	7:15 Interim Support Team	•	MON SEP 26	CHURCH CLOSED
	7:30 375th Committee	•	Tue Sep 27	9:00 Catnip Balls Workshop
	7:30 Threshold Singers	•		9:30 Women's AM/PM Book Group
Fri Sep 16	12:30 <i>T'ai Ji</i>	•		7:00 <i>Puritans: Saints or Scoundrels</i>
	7:00 Jewish Awareness Group	•		7:30 Arts Council Meeting
	7:00 UUA Youth Ministry Advisory Committee	•	Thu Sep 29	7:15 Interim Support Team
Sat Sep 17	9:00 UUA Youth Advisory Committee	•	Sat Oct 1	9:00 "Chicken Man" Children's Book Group
Sun Sep 18	9:30 Gospel Choir	•		
	3:00 Needleworkers Affinity	•		
	7:00 Coming of Age Reception	•		

FROM THE INTERN MINISTER

Dear Friends,

How quickly three months pass! It seems just yesterday I was saying good-bye for the summer. I've spent much of the last three months with family and friends, traveling, and guest-preaching. I've also spent many hours this summer preparing for my appointment with the UUA's Ministerial Fellowship Committee at the end of September. And now, with September upon us, I'm preparing



for what promises to be another eventful and exciting year at First Parish. I'm pleased to share with you that I will be leading a monthly social action/justice-themed vespers service this year beginning in the fall, as well as offering a three-part Wright Tavern Center course on spirituality and social action. I hope you will join me. I look forward to another year together. ♦

Blessings,

—*Craig Nowak*

SEPTEMBER 2011 NEWSLETTER

The October Newsletter deadline is Friday, September 23, at noon.
The Newsletter will be published Tuesday, October 4.

Office Hours: Tuesday–Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 3 p.m.*

Phone: 978-369-9602

Fax: 978-369-8701

E-Mail: FPCConcord@firstparish.org

Website: www.firstparish.org

PLEASE NOTE: The office is CLOSED on Mondays.

Ministers' E-Mail:

Elaine Peresluha: uurevdoc@gmail.com

Jenny M. Rankin: jrankin@firstparish.org

Craig Nowak: cnowak@firstparish.org

First Parish in Concord • UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Staff

Elaine Beth Peresluha, Interim Senior Minister

Jenny M. Rankin, Minister

Melissa Perdue Gallo, Business Manager

Tina Storey, Assistant to the Business Manager

Faith Bade, Social Action Program Director

Jane Foley, Membership Director

Craig M. Nowak, Ministerial Intern

Becky Blodgett, Affiliate Minister for Pastoral Care

Pam Howell, Director of Religious Education

Lorrie Clark, Religious Education Administrator

Avi Salloway, Youth Program Director

Elizabeth Norton, Music Director

Eric Huenneke, Parish Organist

Anderson Manuel, Youth Gospel Choir Director

Gail Carey, Children's Choir Director

David Huston, Music Director Emeritus

Dan Holin, Jericho Road Executive Director

Leslie Koplrow, Operations Manager, Jericho Road

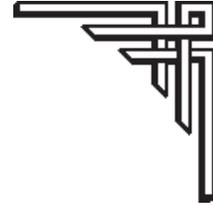
Douglas Baker, Sacristan and Curator

Cassy Bosworth, Office Manager

Peggy Gallo, Volunteer Collector

Kate Keleher, Volunteer Newsletter Editor

Kaye Harvie, Volunteer Newsletter Copy Editor



Attention!

**First Parish Members
from the 1940s through the 1960s!**

**And Members
from the 1970s up to and including 1990!**

Do You Remember First Parish Back When?

In preparation for the 375th All Parish Dinner on Saturday evening, October 22, we are gathering stories of First Parish congregational life from 1940 to 1990 as a way of celebrating our amazing history and honoring our long-term members, with special emphasis on those men and women who have been members for 50+ years.

On September 23, we invite these parishioners to come to church and tell their stories. This entertaining presentation will be entitled “The Way We Were — Snapshots from 1940 to 2000” and will be shown at the Grand Dinner.

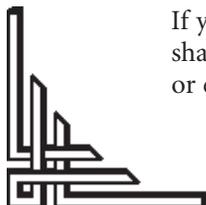
Come Share Your Stories!

On Friday, September 23, in Parish Hall, there will be two opportunities for members to participate by coming to church and collectively sharing First Parish memories so the stories can be told at the Grand Dinner.

At 3:00 p.m.: Tea in the Parlor for members who have memories of First Parish from the 1940’s through the 1960’s. What were the special events and people you remember? Please RSVP to the church office, 978-369-9602, to let us know you are coming and if you need transportation.

At 6:30 p.m.: Pot-luck Supper for members from 1970-1990. What was the church like then? Do you have photos, and/or *virtual* memories to contribute? Please plan to bring food to share and whatever you would like to drink. RSVP to the church office, 978-369-9602, or fpconcord@firstparish.org.

If you are unable to attend but would like to tell us your stories or share your photos, please contact **Margaret Stewart**, 978-369-6670 or e-mail mjs.ontheroad@gmail.com for more information.





First Parish in Concord invites you to join a gala celebration of our 375th anniversary on October 14 through 23, 2011. We have planned events to recognize our vibrant history as a faith community, to acknowledge First Parish's impact on the larger world, and to strengthen our ties with our Concord neighbors and with one another. We welcome all past and present parishioners, Concord-area residents, Unitarian Universalists, and everyone interested in the unique and dynamic place that First Parish holds in America's history.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

Bookmark
www.fp375.firstparish.org
for the latest information.

October 1–23: Exhibit of Historic First Parish Documents and Artifacts, Concord Free Public Library

October 14–23, Concord Museum: Exhibit of rarely-seen First Parish Artifacts from the Museum's collection. This exhibit can be viewed during the Museum's regular hours (Museum admission required), or as part of a guided tour at a reduced price on Saturday afternoon, Oct. 15. Details below.

Friday, October 14, 7:00 pm, Concord Free Public Library: Keynote Address, "The First Parish and Concord's 'Errand into the Wilderness'—and Beyond" by Ronald Bosco, Distinguished Professor, College of Arts and Sciences, SUNY, Albany, New York, Concord resident and author. This event is free and open to the public, but seating is limited, so please plan to arrive early. A reception follows. Co-sponsored by the Concord Free Public Library.

Saturday, October 15: 2:00 – 5:00 pm, Guided tours of The Old Manse, Emerson House and Concord Museum. Tickets available from First Parish in Concord. Ticket price to be announced.

Saturday, October 15, 7:30 pm, First Parish in Concord. Reenactor Kevin Radaker gives a dramatic portrayal of Henry David Thoreau delivering excerpts from his three major anti-slavery speeches: "On Resistance to Civil Government," "Slavery in Massachusetts," and "A Plea for Captain John Brown." Discussion follows. Radaker is a Professor of English at Anderson University, Indiana. This event is free and open to the public. Co-sponsored by The Thoreau Society and the Transcendentalism Council of First Parish in Concord.

Thursday, October 20: Candlelight Tours of The Old Manse starting at 5:30 pm and 6:30 pm, with a special focus on Ezra Ripley's 63-year ministry. Followed by a social hour at the Colonial Inn and "**The Faith Once Delivered to the Saints: Unitarians, Trinitarians, and the Legacy of Peter Bulkeley,**" a lecture by **Robert Gross,** James L. and Shirley A. Draper Professor of Early American History, University of Connecticut. Reservations required; tickets available from The Old Manse (978-369-3909) and from First Parish. \$15. Co-sponsored by The Old Manse.

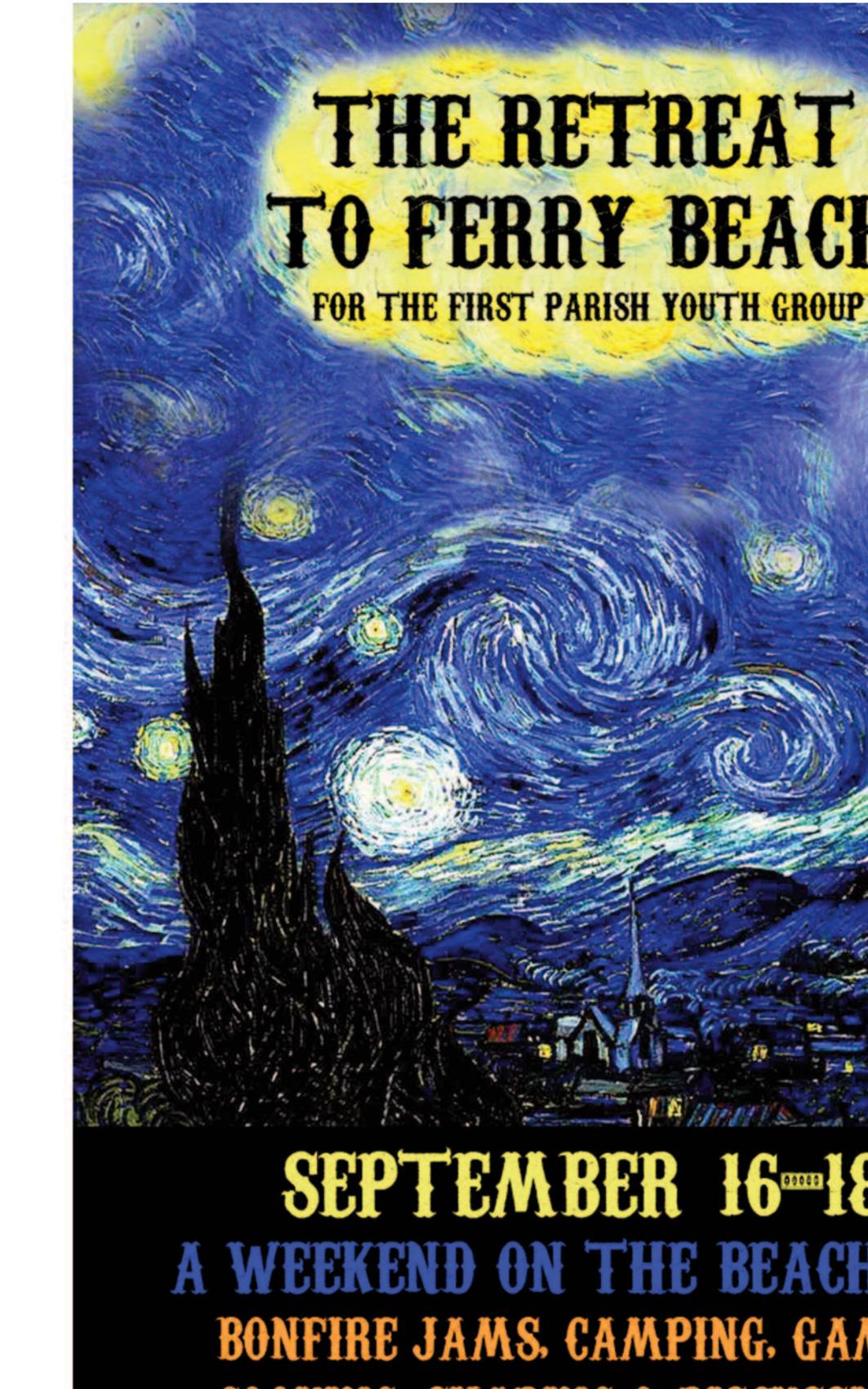
Friday, October 21, 7:00 pm at First Parish in Concord, "No One Wore Prada: An Evening of Living History and Fashion." Fashion tableaux of historical figures portraying the rich cultural heritage of First Parish through the ages. Tickets available from First Parish in Concord. Ticket price to be announced. A reception follows. Co-sponsored by the Women's Parish Association.

Saturday, October 22: 8:30 am to 1:00 pm, First Parish in Concord. Light breakfast. **Panel presentation,** led by Rev. Jenny Rankin of First Parish; Rev. Mark Harris of First Parish in Watertown, MA; and Prof. Ronald Bosco, SUNY, Albany, New York. Followed by **learning sessions on First Parish and its influences,** led by Tom Potter, President of The Thoreau Society, and other historians. Topics to include: First Parish and the American Revolution • The Abolitionists • Evolution of Religious Practice/Beliefs at The Meeting House • History of Women at First Parish • The Transcendentalists • Activists of the 20th Century • Illustrated History of The Meetinghouse. Tickets available from First Parish in Concord. \$10.

Saturday, October 22: 4:00 pm, Sleepy Hollow Cemetery Tours

Saturday, October 22: 5:00 pm, Grand Dinner for the First Parish Community. Tickets available from First Parish in Concord. Ticket price to be announced.

Sunday, October 23, 9:00 and 11:00 am, Services celebrating First Parish history and its meaning today.



THE RETREAT TO FERRY BEACH

FOR THE FIRST PARISH YOUTH GROUP

SEPTEMBER 16TH-18

A WEEKEND ON THE BEACH W/

BONFIRE JAMS, CAMPING, GAMES,

COOKING, SHARING & DISCUSSION

SACO, MAINE!

PLEASE RSVP TO AVI SALLOWAY: ASALLOWAY@FIRSTPARISH.ORG

*Thanks to Van Gogh for the inspiration



The Wright Tavern Center at First Parish in Concord

An Oasis in Our Busy Lives • September 2011

Welcome to the Wright Tavern Center. Online registration is available for all courses. Check our website at www.wrighttavern.org for schedule, course descriptions, presenter bios, registration information and policies. Questions? Contact Cassy Bosworth at cbosworth@firstparish.org or 978-369-9602. Please check the board in the lower church entryway for course locations.

I. Growing Your Spirit

Tibetan Buddhism

The Buddhist group will be meeting in the First Parish Chapel Wednesdays mornings and Thursdays evenings. These weekly sessions are open to all who are interested in transforming love, compassion and wisdom into action. You are welcome to share the spirit of community at these gatherings regardless of your familiarity with Tibetan Buddhism. Donations are gratefully accepted. Contact **Bill Seaver** at 978-369-7318 if you have any questions.

Wednesday: 9:30-11:00 a.m. Thursday: 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Concord Area Humanist Group (CAH)

We are a Concord area group welcoming you to two (normally) evening meetings each month with a Humanist perspective. The Wednesday meetings start with a social at 7:00 p.m., program at 7:30 p.m. We inclusively bring together the various non-supernatural life-stances that have the same emphasis on our being responsible for what happens around us, such as Buddhist-, Judaic-, Religious- and Secular-Humanism, Ethical Culture, Naturalism, and others that have a life-stance consistent with Humanism and its Aspirations — Humanist Manifesto III. Come and enjoy investigating with us the intersection of science and culture, ethics and social trends, books and ideas. Times and place of meetings may change, so please always check our latest announcements on www.MeetUp.com, and RSVP while you are there. Active links here, and in the program listings, will lead to further information. You may also e-mail **Patrick Everett** at pne@aol.com, or **Maria Greene** at maria@justmagicdesign.com. CAH is affiliated with the American Humanist Association and with the UU-HUmanists.

First Wednesday in September Dialog — Jonathan Figdor

“The Confessions of a Humanist Chaplain: Sex, Humanism and How to Win the War Against Conservative Religion.” Jonathan Figdor is the Assistant Chaplain at the Harvard Humanist Chaplaincy at Harvard University. He will talk about his pathway to Humanism, from his childhood in liberal, heavily Jewish New York, to his education at the most godless college in America, to his student career as the first Atheistic Humanist in Harvard Divinity School’s history, to his (not so secret) plans to establish other prestigious Humanist Chaplaincies built on the Harvard Humanist model.

Wednesday: Sept. 7 7:00-9:00 p.m.

- **Open Discussion Group** Subjects for discussion arise from members of the group. We expect also to discuss possibly setting up a website to collect our ideas. Possible topics for discussion include:

1. “Is the idea of God just a concept generated by a group to create an identity for the group?”
2. “Why does ‘The Battle Hymn of the Republic’ stir emotions even in atheists. What is the meaning of God in that hymn?”
3. “How do we deal with conflicts over ‘religious’ ideas, such as Creationism, or strong antiabortion beliefs, etc?”

Tuesday: Sept. 27 7:30-9:00 p.m. Trustees Room, Concord Library

T’ai Chi and Qi Gong

T’ai Chi is a gentle flowing exercise that will help you build and circulate energy. Based on teachings from China, we will do Qi Gong movements that help you retain flexibility in all your joints. Students will also learn the Hwa Yu T’ai Chi form, a series of connected movement that is like a slow-motion dance. Research shows that T’ai Chi and Qi Gong improve stability, improve immune function, and create many of the benefits of meditation. If you’ve tried meditation but find it hard to sit still, T’ai Chi and Qi Gong may be the way to give yourself those benefits while gently moving your body. No past experience is necessary. Wear comfortable clothing.

Instructor: **Sue Wood**

Tuesday: Sept. 13-Nov. 10 (no session Oct. 25) 6:30-8:00 p.m.
\$120/8 sessions

ABC Music Together (0-4)

Mixed-age classes offer an opportunity for children to participate at their own level, while the adults (no matter what their level of musical ability) and older children provide models for ways of music making they might want to try another time. Everyone in a mixed-age class benefits by experiencing the music making of those around them — some terrific teaching ideas come from very young children, who have a special originality and spontaneity in their approach to music.

Instructors: **Tom and Deb Foote**

Tuesday: Sept. 13-Nov. 9 9:30-10:30 a.m. or 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Thursday: Sept. 15-Nov. 10 9:30-10:30 a.m. or 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Friday: Sept. 17-Nov. 12 9:30-10:30 a.m. or 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Babies Music Together

Friday: Sept. 17-Oct. 28 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

For more information and to register, go to www.abcmusicitogether.com

Everyday Enlightenment

At the heart of the world's major faith traditions lies a set of universal teachings that are common to them all, teachings that inform us how to live with clarity, purpose and grace. Join us as we examine those teachings, and discuss incorporating them into our daily lives. Each session will open with a quote or short reading, and then go wherever the group takes it.

Instructors: **Jiffy Read** and **Eric Ruben**

Tuesday: Sept. 13, Oct. 4 & 18, Nov. 8 & 22, Dec. 6 7:30-9:00 p.m.
Fee: \$45/6 sessions

T'ai Ji

Being in touch with our own energy creates endless possibilities within ourselves. By combining music with qigong and the simple movement of T'ai Ji, we can release blocked energy, create wellness and bring our lives into balance. This class is geared to people of all ages. It offers gentle low-impact exercise to reduce stress, to enhance optimal health, and to simply create a sense of joy in our lives. Instructor: **Mae Pagan**

Friday: Sept. 16, Oct. 14, Nov. 18, Dec. 9, Jan. 13 12:30-1:30 p.m.
\$25/session

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program (MBSR)

Cultivating mindfulness, or awareness of the present moment, creates the framework for this popular course modeled after the internationally recognized program established by Jon Kabat-Zinn at UMass Medical School. Research continues to suggest positive benefits from the practice of mindfulness-based stress reduction to the immune system, chronic illness, hypertension and chronic pain, as well as to the daily stresses of our busy lives. This interactive course consists of eight weekly two-hour group classes where participants will be introduced to and practice guided mindfulness meditation, relaxation techniques, gentle yoga stretches, and self-inquiry exercises. Participants commonly report a reduction of stress-related symptoms, increased awareness and concentration, and improvement of positive coping skills at home and in the workplace. Enrollment is limited to 15. Instructor: **Pamela Katz Ressler, RN, MS, HN-BC**. Please contact Pam Ressler (pressler@stressresources.com or 978-369-5243) to register. Cost: Tuition is \$290, plus an additional \$85 materials fee (including text, CD's, and manual). Continuing Education for nurses and other health professionals available. Discount for Blue Cross/Blue Shield members.

Thursday: Sept. 29-Nov. 17 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Friday: Sept. 30-Dec 2 9:30-11:30 a.m. (no session on Nov. 11 or 25)

Rise Up Singing

This informal monthly musical gathering of adults and children provides participants with an opportunity to sing and share traditional and contemporary folk songs, spirituals, hymns, rounds and chants in fellowship. Singers of all ages and experience are welcome. Bring a copy of *Rise Up Singing* if you own one. Individuals are encouraged to bring instruments if they wish. Led by: **Beth Norton** and **Others**

Friday: Sept. 23, Oct. 28, Nov. 18, Dec. 16, Jan. 27, Feb. 24, Mar. 23, Apr. 27, May 18 7:30 p.m. Free: No registration required

The First Parish Women's AM/PM Book Group

Dates given are for Sunday evening, 7:30-9:00 p.m., and Tuesday morning, 9:30-11:00am. Sessions will be at First Parish.

Sept. 25, 27 *The Forgotten Garden: A Novel*, by Kate Morton

Oct. 30, Nov. 1 *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts**, by Elise Virginia Lemire

*All book group books except *Black Walden* will be available in paperback by the time we read them. Unfortunately, though *Black Walden* was published over two years ago, we can find no information indicating that it will be coming out in paperback anytime soon. Since it was the number one favorite in the voting for this year's choices, we have decided to go ahead with reading it this year. It is readily available in the library systems (Minuteman and Merrimack).

II. Sources of Unitarian Universalism

Puritans: Saints or Scoundrels?

The Puritans have enjoyed their ups and downs these past 400 years, dubbing themselves "saints," but not always living up to that reputation. We will weave in and out of their own and others' opinions of them, sometimes finding ourselves surprised at how some old stereotypes will be broken. Colorful slides will elicit class participation. Handouts will include English, colonial and modern essays, a bibliography of books, websites and historic places to visit, and a chronology of events in England and America from 1500 to 1700. The three-week course will cover the following topics — Class 1: Puritan Beginnings in England, Class 2: Puritans Leave Home, Class 3: Puritans in the New World. Instructor: **Linda K. Palmer**

Opportunities to present individual research on Concord's puritans are welcome. A "field trip" to Boston for the tour *Where Did the Puritans Go?* can be arranged afterward for an additional fee.

Tuesday: Sept. 20 & 27, Oct. 7 7:00-8:30 p.m.
Fee: \$50/3 sessions