



The Meeting House News

October 2, 2012
Volume 49, No. 2

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REVERIES

I want to thank Jenny, the staff, the Standing Committee, and all who have received Jenny's letter of resignation, for their honest and direct expressions of their feelings. I so appreciate that this is a huge moment of loss, uncertainty and change for Jenny, the staff, and members and friends of First Parish to navigate and integrate.

Any change, especially one of this magnitude, holds uncertainty in it, and human beings do not like uncertainty. Dr. Henry S. Lodge believes human beings are hard-wired, neurologically, to make rapid decisions in response to the discomfort or anxiety of uncertainty. "When there is not hard information, we choose the fastest route to decision — any decision — to end the panic of uncertainty. You can measure this in the lab, and experimental psychologists have shown over and over again that humans will reliably make blatantly bad decisions to end the feeling of uncertainty."

We may all be feeling a wide range of emotions, or discomfort. Those feelings may prompt a wide variety of behaviors: fatigue, judgment, increased effort, decreased effort, or withdrawal. For some, any decision is better than no decision because of the anxiety or panic response to not knowing what to do. That is not what has been or will be the intention of the staff or leadership of First Parish.

Jenny, the Standing Committee, the PIT and FP members and friends have all worked with appreciation this last year. We have attended listening sessions and the Springing Forward retreat, worked on governance, worship and belonging initiatives, practicing relational language and creativity to explore institutional options. We have continued and will continue to choose to sustain relationships, and stay in conversation about what we are experiencing. This may not always be the most comfortable option. This is an opportunity to continue to strengthen relationships, and sustain community. We all need to continue to choose and model how to be in relationship, instead of choosing to be right, as we continue to have courage, hold on to what is good, let go of what has been dear, and begin again in love.

Much, much, metta,

Elaine Peresluha

There are FIVE inserts at the end of this newsletter:

- ◆ Sunday Forums for October
- ◆ Thoreau Author Information
- ◆ Photo Directory Information
- ◆ Concord-Area Humanist Speaker
- ◆ Wright Tavern Center Programs

First Parish in Concord

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Gathered in 1636

First Parish in Concord is a welcoming Unitarian Universalist congregation that seeks ways to deepen spiritually, build community, and make a positive difference in the world.

First Parish Arts Corner — Fostering Community through the Arts

Each month, in this “corner,” the First Parish Arts Council highlights events in the upcoming month that offer opportunities to participate in the ministry of the arts at First Parish. Unless otherwise noted, questions may be directed to music@firstparish.org.

October 5 at 7:00 p.m. – Improv and Interplay workshop led by **Kate Svrcek**, **CC King** and **Doug Hardy**. Contact katesvrcek@hotmail.com.

October 13 at 9:00 a.m. – Photo Club meeting

October 13 at 7:30 p.m. – UU Choir Festival Concert

October 26 at 7:30 p.m. – Rise Up Singing, First Parish’s monthly folk song circle, open to singers and instrumentalists of all ages.

October 27 at 7:30 p.m. – Klezmir Concert, sponsored by the Music Events Committee

October 28 at 7:30 p.m. – Sarasa Chamber Music Concert, sponsored by the Music Events Committee

For up-to-date information on these events, watch FP Announce and the *Sunday News*.

The purpose of the First Parish Arts Council is to further the mission of First Parish through facilitating, promoting, and coordinating a diverse arts ministry that inspires and celebrates creativity and connection.

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, October 19
- Friday, November 16
- Friday, December 14

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

• **Sunday, October 7**
• *Connections* — **Tony Fisher, Ministerial Intern**
• There is a latent power in this community, a power that springs from connections we make, the collective hope that we share, the communal narrative that we write, the tapestry that we weave as a multigenerational community of faith. The power is reinforced and transformed again and again by our felt experience of those connections, and so it builds.
• **9:00 & 11:00 – First Parish Choir; Gail Carey, Guest Director**

• **Sunday, October 14**
• *The Bounty of Our Earth* — **Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha**
• This Sunday we celebrate the harvest, our commitment to the CROP WALK, and the threads of service that weave together the mission and identity of First Parish.
• **9:00 & 11:00 – Choirs of Jefferson Unitarian Church and First Parish in Concord**
• Selections from *Missa Gaia*

• **Sunday, October 21**
• *Beyond Categorical Thinking* — **Keith Kron, UUA Transitions Office**
• Rev. Keith Kron is the director of the UUA’s Transitions Department. He manages the settling of all the interim and called ministries for our member congregations. It is important for First Parish to reflect on the wide range of possibilities for Senior Minister of First Parish and to know what you do not know, and appreciate what is possible.
• **9:00 & 11:00 – Gospel Choir; Anderson Manuel, Director**

• **Sunday, October 28**
• *Remembering All Souls* — **Rev. Jenny Rankin**
• This Sunday we will share in our traditional remembrance of All Souls.
• **9:00 & 11:00 – Handbell Choir, Martha Goodman, Director**

Save the Date!
First Parish Gives Thanks
November 10 ♦ 6:00–10:00 P.M.
Come gather in celebration
of our vibrant community.

PARISH NOTES

Finding Your Interim Minister

Elaine Peresluha's hours are

- Tuesday 9:00 to 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday 9:00 to 5:00 p.m.
- Thursday 9:00 to 5:00 p.m.

You may contact Elaine at uurevdoc@gmail.com, or at 20 Lexington Road, Concord, MA, 978-369-9602, extension 411.

In addition to regular office hours, Elaine makes appointments to meet with people at other times. Please e-mail our ministerial assistant, **Christy McKellips**, cmckellips@firstparish.org, to schedule an appointment.

Elaine is unavailable except for emergencies on Monday, her day off, and Friday, her sermon-writing day.

FPC Beliefs — Theological Complexity

On September 16, we invited those in worship to think about what they believe. We offered a very simple survey of beliefs* to begin our thinking about First Parish beliefs and how to become faithful to them. There are so many more questions, perspectives and beliefs for us to share. Please let **Rachel Baker** know if you would be interested in an ongoing discussion, gatherings and connections around beliefs. The survey results are below if you are curious. This does not include the show of hands in the service, only those who chose to turn in their surveys.

— Much metta, Elaine

OPTIONS	HOW MANY	OPTIONS	HOW MANY
1	2+	3+5	10+
1 + 2	1+	2+3+4	11+
2	13+	2+3+5	1+
1+2+3	4	2+3+4+5	2+
2+3	14+	1+2+3+4	3+
2+4	1	1+2+3+4+5	1+
2+5	1+	1+3+4	1
3	28+	3+4+5+6	1+
3+4	24+	6 (none)	5+
4	22+	Other	4+
3+4+5	11+	Total	191
4+5	11+	(+ indicate written responses included below)	
5	20+		

(Survey as it appeared in the Order of Service on September 16, 2012)

*First Parish Belief Survey

What First Parish members think about the concept of “God” is an important aspect of congregational identity. There is, of course no “right” response, and we celebrate our differences. So please make a thoughtful choice among the oversimplified statements below.

(Circle the one or more that comes closest to your belief.)

1. I believe in an all-powerful God who oversees people's lives.
2. I believe in a loving living God, who sent teachers such as Jesus Christ to establish moral principles.
3. I believe that “God” is simply the Love we feel for our fellow humans, the world and its creatures.
4. I believe there is no way of knowing if “God” exists, so that I now decide ethical questions for myself.
5. I believe that “god” does not exist. We humans must therefore take full responsibility for our actions.

Written responses

- I believe in an all-powerful God who lives and loves through people's lives.
- Number 1, but it isn't that simple.
- Numbers 1 and 2 and other teachers.
- Number 3, and we humans must therefore take full responsibility for our actions.
- Number 3, and the duality and diversity of the Lord and Lady, and we humans must therefore take full responsibility for our actions.
- Number 3 and lots more.
- Number 3, and actually, I still haven't really decided.
- Numbers 3 and 5, and it has lots of energy we can use.
- Numbers 3 and 4, and on some days.
- Numbers 3 and 4. This is the closest, but I think that there may well be a level of sacredness beyond what I can feel, believe or know. And number 4, this is less central to my beliefs.
- Numbers 3 and 4, and I believe that “Chi” is simply a universal life force of energy including compassion... driving our evolution.
- Numbers 4 and 5. Four as is then we humans must take full responsibility for our actions.
- Number 4, but I do believe there is a god.

Parish Notes

continued on page 6

October 1, 2012

Dear Members and Friends of First Parish:

By now, you will have received in the mail my letter telling you of my decision to resign as Minister, effective December 31, 2012. In an effort to communicate thoroughly, I am including the essence of that message here in the newsletter.

I have loved being your minister. The last fifteen years have been an extraordinary opportunity for me to grow and learn as I have served this large and vibrant congregation. Building a ministry team with Gary, being part of a strong staff, partnering with you to bring exciting projects to fruition: all that and more has made it a ministry I will always treasure. Most of all, I appreciate the personal relationships with you.

I have thought long and hard about this decision. The events of the last two years, coupled with the congregation's growing concern over financial sustainability, have affected me. I pondered what was best for the congregation and for me. With the church's leadership examining (and approving) restructuring, I gained clarity. In these years with you, I have grown and changed and become a senior leader. I look forward to a ministry where I can exercise that leadership in ways that will help me keep growing, learning and contributing.

It will not be easy for us to say goodbye. Fifteen years is a long time, and you have invited me into your lives. The honor of walking that journey with you — in all its joy and sorrow — is beyond telling. But I also have an excitement and curiosity about the next chapter in my life. I look forward to exploring new paths and possibilities. And I look forward to hearing about your new chapter as you call a Senior Minister.

You are a strong community, capable of becoming even more so in the years ahead. You have so many gifts to give the world — as individuals and as a collective — and this beautiful and broken world so needs the blessing of the energy, love and light you can give to it.

I trust in the next months we will have the opportunity to visit in person and say goodbye. I will always cherish you and the ministry we have shared together.

With all good wishes,

Rev. Jenny M. Rankin

September 24, 2012

Dear Members and Friends of First Parish:

We have received Jenny's letter of resignation as Minister, effective December 31, 2012. With much thought and sadness we have accepted Jenny's decision. We sincerely thank her for her service to First Parish in Concord over the last 15 years.

We understand that this announcement will be an emotional surprise for many First Parishioners. We know many of you will have questions and the need to process this news. We know you'll want to discuss how this change will affect our mission, our church community and the search for a new senior minister. We are committed to listening and responding to all as we help the whole Parish move forward.

As we've already announced, we will reschedule the September listening sessions. The previously-scheduled October sessions (11, 13 and 14) are still scheduled. If we can schedule new sessions before that, we will be in touch.

Above all, we look forward to working with Jenny this fall, as we move into this transition, and honor her time with us.

With respect and appreciation,

Jack Nevison

Chair

Standing Committee, First Parish in Concord

- Numbers 3, 4 and 5, and God is simply the relationship we feel and I believe God may not exist.
- Numbers 4 and half of 5, and I am agnostic: any discussion about whether “god” or “God” exists is futile.
- Numbers 2, 3, 4, and I believe God is a powerful metaphor [*illegible*] is unknowable... unites us and speaks to our best selves.
- Numbers 2 and 3, and a response more along the lines of the transcendentalists would fit me.
- “The love we feel for our fellow humans, the world and unites creatures is important. We humans must therefore take full responsibility for our actions are important. I believe that God is the total interconnected web of all existence with which we are all one.
- Number 6, and 3 is close, but I believe that there is some connective energy, closest description is the spirit in all things, neither loving nor unloving, not a giver of morality, but a fundamental interconnected “spiritual” energy, without creed but for us at least (humans) an energy that calls on us to be loving and to treat other as we would...”
- I allow for the possibility of some collection of souls of the departed combined like drops in an ocean and exuding goodwill, love to Gaia and humankind.
- Number 2, I believe in a loving God, and teachers such as JC to help us... We humans must therefore take full responsibility for our actions.
- I do not believe in a personal god, but some force beyond our reckoning.
- Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and kind of and I believe god is the sense of wonder that comes from paying attention to the love we feel for the beauty of the world and magic of its creatures.
- God has no relevance to me.
- Meaningless question. “God” is a word construct. This is a non sequitur.
- I do not believe in the supernatural. To me god(s) is a meaningless concept. And we humans must therefore take full responsibility for our actions.
- My actions and my understanding reflect each of these [*five answers*] — sometimes at the same time, sometimes not.
- Number 2 is metaphorical. A personal God does not exist literally ... You did not mention the creative power in the cosmos that brought this amazing world into being and continues its creative processes (evolution) today. If given the opportunity I would have voted for the power of love and the creative processes already mentioned [*in the 5 choices*]. A religious naturalist.
- Spirit instead of God. I don’t like the word *God*.
- I recoil when a minister preaches numbers 1 and 2.
- The notion of God is a man-made concept that is not useful to me.
- It is complicated.
- There are many teachers and many prophets; they articulate moral principles.
- I believe in letting people determine what their beliefs are and not necessarily fitting into any of the above categories.
- None of the above. None of these is really it; 3-5 are close but not right on.
- I believe that God is simply the love we feel for our fellow humans, the world (not creatures).
- Jesus of Nazareth (not Christ) is not the teacher, but the faith statement of a belief that Jesus is with God or is God or something like this!
- ... God is the Love {it is not simple} and I now decide ethical questions for myself based on Love and teachings from #2.
- I believe in a loving, living God who inspired teachers such as JC and all the world’s masters, saints and prophets, known and unknown, to embody and convey moral principles for the betterment of humankind and the planet. Number and an all pervading reality, stripped of the veils of meaning and limited attachment. Ineffable — beyond understanding.
- I find this question to be prejudicial and proposed answers close-ended and even insulting to the theological views of FP members. Asking what we think about “the concept” of God poses that God is a concept. It reflects the ignorance of people who do not understand the language of faith. Secondly, the theological orientation of a UU parish is not a popularity contest. The multiple choice answers are remarkably shallow and dualistic. God is not a proposition to which we all-knowing humans deign to give or withhold our ascent. As UU’s, we believe that no person who can read or think could believe that God is “all powerful” and “oversees” people’s lives, unless he thought that God was wicked or cruel. But the Universalist side of our tradition holds just the opposite. That it was included reflects how superficial and boilerplate this survey is.

Richardson Lecture on Thoreau on Autumn

On Tuesday, October 9, at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary, First Parish will host a lecture by acclaimed scholar Robert D. Richardson on Thoreau’s *October, or Autumnal Tints* .

The Lay Ministry, a Personal Touch of Pastoral Care

The ministers are assisted by the Pastoral Care lay ministers, who are here for you in times of need, sickness or distress. We work closely with both **Jenny Rankin** and **Elaine Peresluha**, and under their direction making home and hospital visits, writing notes and acknowledging the anniversaries of loss. Our ministry group is selected by the ministers and receives significant training, meeting every six weeks for supervision, reflection and support.

Each month, one of the Lay Ministers is on call and you are welcome to call or write to her. Contact information is listed in both the *Meeting House News* and the *Sunday News*. As our benediction says, our mission is “to strengthen the fainthearted” in times of need. One of the important strengths of First Parish is being there for each other. Look for our green name tags or contact us anytime. — **Diane Clapp**, Team Leader for the Pastoral Care Lay Ministers

Caring Connection Thanks

Sincere thanks to **Kathleen Elcox** for the beautiful new photographs for the “thinking of you” cards. She teams

with **Tracey Hurd**, who cuts and pastes them, readying them for note writing by parishioners at coffee hour. Thanks to all those who write notes; they mean so much to recipients. We are grateful to **Rhoda Miller, Berni Jenkins, Kathleen Elcox, Petra Betts, Pam Howell, Cassy Bosworth, Pat Ellis**, and **Marshall Farms** for making or contributing to our first-ever, end-of-summer harvest soup. All-Concord-grown vegetable soup is now in our Caring Connection freezer.



Four of Kathleen’s photo cards

er! Thirty containers of all local, vegan, gluten-free, low-salt soup will be shared with others through the Caring Connection meal deliveries. Thanks, too, to **Carolyn Shohet** for baking delicious chocolate/zucchini cakes for the freezer. Many will enjoy these reminders of summer goodness.



Rhoda and Petra cooking up end-of-summer harvest soup.

Caring Connection Cooking Coming!

Look for announcements of our October Caring Connection cooking morning in the *Sunday News*. Many hands are needed. It’s fun and a great way to help out. Contact **Tracey Hurd** thurd@aol.com if you are not already on the e-mail list of possible caring connection kitchen helpers, but would like to be. And THANKS for caring.

Shawl Ministries Monthly Gathering

Come join with others to create shawls (knitted, crocheted, etc) that are given to parishioners who are experiencing moments of difficulty or loss. The shawls are collaboratively created and stored until they are given to those in need of care by the ministers or lay ministers. The open shawl ministries group meets on the first Wednesday of each month on the sunporch of the Wright Tavern. The next meeting is Wednesday, October 3, 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. All are welcome. Questions? Please contact **Regina Hugendubler** at ode2joy@usa.net.

The Pastoral Care Team at First Parish Walking with One Another through the Changes Life Brings

The Lay Minister for September is **Sue Dobbie** at SusanDobbie@gmail.com, or 978-456-8432.

Ministers: **Rev. Jenny Rankin** (revjenny@comcast.net) and **Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha** (uurevdoc@gmail.com) Or call 978-369-9602.

Lay Ministers: Contact **Diane Clapp** (d.clapp@comcast.net)

Caring Connection: Contact **Tracey Hurd** (thurd@aol.com) for meals or rides.

Pastoral Care Advisory Council: Contact **Judy Dembsey** (dembsey@verizon.net).

STANDING COMMITTEE

We, the Standing Committee, would like to take this opportunity to communicate our appreciation for your patience and deep regret for any inconvenience caused by our abrupt cancellation of the September listening sessions. We learned of **Rev. Jenny Rankin**'s decision to resign her position as Minister on the afternoon of the first scheduled session. We felt it was important to postpone these sessions so that Jenny could inform the congregation as she felt best, and so that we could have time to integrate this new information into our presentations. We also wanted to allow for the emphasis of these days to be on our Transylvania Partner Congregation visitors.

We will offer our first listening session on Sunday September 30, at 7:00 p.m., beginning in the Sanctuary, and will offer additional listening sessions at the dates and times listed below. We will present the Standing Committee's new strategic ends as well as **Rev. Elaine Peresluha**'s response to the Standing Committee's Organizational Structure Review charge. That charge requested her recommendations of how best to move forward, based on our mission and our budget. The Standing Committee endorsed her recommendations on Monday, September 17. Now we want you to have the opportunity to hear these important initiatives, and understand the process of moving from mission, to strategic ends, to recommendations. We will appreciate your feedback and discussion when we break into smaller groups after the presentation. Members of the Parish Interim Team (PIT) will help to facilitate. ♦

Schedule of Listening Sessions:

- Sunday, September 30, at 7:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 2, at 3:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 2, at 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, October 11, at 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, October 13, at 3:00 p.m.
- Sunday, October 14, at 12:30 p.m.

MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

October is another busy month for the Ministerial Search Committee. We will finalize and publish materials to prospective ministers, create a list of interview questions, and assemble an introductory video.

On Sunday, October 21, from 1 to 4 p.m., we hope to see you all at our Beyond Categorical Thinking Workshop. Child care will be provided. The head of the UUA's Transitions Office, Rev. Keith Kron, will facilitate. He will also preach that morning. This workshop is a required and essential part of our search process and something ministerial candidates look at closely. We need substantial participation to make our church look its best! The BCT workshop gives us a valuable opportunity to explore new ways of making First Parish even more welcoming, while enhancing our own sense of belonging. It will also be fun!

Terms you may hear:

Congregational Record: An online form, available only to ministers and UUA staff, which describes who we are and what we are looking for in our next Senior Minister. This is the first information interested candidates see. If they are interested in applying, they then ask the Search Committee to exchange packets.

Ministerial Record: An online form, available only to churches in search and the UUA staff, completed by ministers in search that describes who they are and what they are looking for in their next position. The Search Committee will review these records and, if interested in a candidate, ask to exchange packets.

Packet: Supplemental, more detailed information about the church or candidate that is exchanged after an initial indication of mutual interest. Ours will take the form of a password-protected website where candidates will access documents, photos and a video.

Please remember that for our committee to do our best job, we need to know what you're thinking. Please contact any of us at any time. If you don't know who we are, we have photos, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers posted on our bulletin board outside the main church office and on our Web page:

www.firstparish.org/cms/about-first-parish/transition/ministerial-search-committee. This link is also the best place to get the latest information about what we're doing. If you'd like to share your ideas on our Online Search Forum, just e-mail **Toby Smith Ropeik** at tsr@tobyasmith.com. ♦

MUSINGS

The weekend of October 12-14, we will be welcoming the Choir of Jefferson Unitarian Church in Golden, Colorado, to First Parish. With their director, my colleague and dear friend Dr. Keith Arnold, 26 singers will visit Boston, Lexington and Concord on a Unitarian history and heritage tour — and sing a concert here at First Parish!

Thanks in advance to those parishioners who have offered home hospitality to some of the Colorado singers, and to the choir members who are helping to organize the events of the weekend. On Saturday night,



October 13, at 7:30 p.m., the Jefferson Unitarian and First Parish choirs will be joined by singers from other Unitarian choirs in the Boston area for a festive evening concert that is open to all. We'll have a chance to share our music with one another and to sing familiar pieces together, joining our voices to "make a noise greater than ourselves," as the poet Kathleen Norris so wonderfully puts it.

And then on Sunday morning, October 14, at both services, the Jefferson Unitarian and First Parish choirs will combine again to sing selections from the *Missa Gaia*, a favorite piece that both choirs have had the joy of performing in the last few years. This deeply reverent, sometimes whimsical modern mass (after all, it features real animal songs!) celebrates Gaia — the earth, and supports the environmental theme that will be the focus of our worship. We will be accompanied by **Grace Choi**, our Wednesday night choir rehearsal pianist, who, coincidentally, played for the Jefferson Unitarian Choir when she lived in Colorado and served as interim choir director at First Parish in Lexington. So many connections and reunions!

In addition to sharing music, we look forward to sharing the unique history of our town and Meeting House. One of the unexpected gifts of offering hospitality is the new perspective guests give us on our everyday lives. Sometimes I take our deep connection to American and Unitarian Universalist history for granted. It will be a pleasure to see Concord through the eyes of these visitors from Colorado.

So get ready for more company! And please plan to join us for the concert on Saturday night, October 13 — and then at worship on Sunday morning, October 14. With luck, the New England foliage will be at peak. A wonderful weekend to celebrate our UU heritage and Gaia — our mother earth. ♦

Blessings,

— *Beth Norton*

Music Director

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

It is an honor to join the staff at First Parish in Concord!

I have begun my time with you by listening. I have begun to meet with lay leaders, members and friends to begin to learn about the organizational structures related to membership, communications and the sense of belonging. I am impressed with the soul searching work that First Parish has been doing during this interim period. The congregation is growing and stretching and learning new ways to be together. I admire the hard work you are doing as a religious community and as individuals. I understand that the transition of my role from Membership Director into Director of Congregational Life is part of this process.

I am inspired by Paula Cole Jones, one of the anti-racism, antioppression, multiculturalism consultants who work with the Unitarian Universalist Association. When addressing the Unitarian Universalist decision to become an antiracist organization, she proposes that we must move the Beloved Community to the center of our attention. Beloved Community becomes the goal for all the individuals involved. What is life affirming for the Beloved Community takes precedence over what I want. I believe this is true when we consider belonging and membership. I look forward to getting to know you individually and communally as the weeks go by! Please feel free to stop by the Quad to introduce yourself. ♦

In faith,

— *Rachel Baker*

Director of Congregational Life

Updated Photo Directory!

Putting Our Best Face(s) Forward for Our Newly-Called Senior Minister

The 2012 First Parish Photo Directory will be an important resource for the Senior Minister as he/she begins to put faces to names!

Don't be left out; schedule your photo session today. Photo session dates are October 9, 10, 12, 13, 17, 18 and November 1, 2

and 3. There are day- and night-time slots so we can include everyone.

Schedule online or call the office at 978-369-9602.

Link is <https://www.securedata-trans14.com/ap/first-parishconcord/index.php>.



Last Sunday night, our teens went on a Trust Walk with one another. The Trust Walk is a yearly ritual led by our high school seniors. The seniors have really stepped up into a leadership role in our youth group, and they were tight as they led this walk in the dark through the back roads of Concord. What is a trust walk? It is this: each kid wears a blindfold and then puts her hands on the shoulders of the blindfolded person in front of her. The line of blindfolded kids is led by one, sighted, senior youth. Thirty-five youth walk this way for over an hour. They are also shuffled from line to line, so they don't know whose shoulder they are relying upon. There are noises, dogs barking, branches, sandy sidewalks and giant steps to avoid the unknown. Afterwards, we all sit in the darkness and talk about what it felt like. There is laughter and friendship. For this moment, the texting stops. For this moment, the real connection is the friend sitting right next to you in the darkness, and we remember what it means to feel human. ♦



— Pam Howell

Director of Religious Education

**Second–Fifth Grade Workshop Rotation
Our Judeo-Christian Teachings**

This term has focused on the Hebrew Scriptures and some of the fundamental stories of the Bible. We started with Adam and Eve on the first week and had a lively discussion about temptation. We will explore Noah's Ark and the Tower of Babel. In October, we will learn about the brothers Jacob and Esau, Jacob's Ladder and the stories of Jacob. We will build towers, and Welcome Gates and make a pen pal face quilt together.



On All Souls Sunday, we will remember our losses, which have become an important ritual in our Sunday morning gathering on October 28. Photos and small objects of remembrance are always welcome for this important Sunday.

Our mission statement calls us all to deepen spiritually and build community. Middle RE does just that every Sunday through worship, projects and making friendships.

October 2012 RE Calendar

- Fri., Oct. 5 Coming of Age Retreat
- Sun., Oct. 7 Regular RE for Babies–4 years
Columbus Day – No RE for K–12th
- Sun., Oct. 14 Regular RE for Babies–4 years
Regular RE for K-5th Grades (Emerson Room)
6th/7th Grade Neighboring Activists: CROP WALK
8th Grade Dramatic Arts, 4 p.m. (Wright Tavern)
9th Grade Coming of Age, 5 p.m. (Emerson Room)
- Sun., Oct. 21 Regular RE for Babies–4 years
Regular RE for K-5th Grades
6th/7th Grade Neighboring Activists:
Gaining Ground, 9:30 to 12:30 p.m.
8th Grade Dramatic Arts, 4 p.m. (Wright Tavern)
9th Grade Leaf Swap at Youth Group, 6:30 p.m.
- Sun., Oct. 28 Regular RE for Babies–4 years
Regular RE for K-5th Grades
6th/7th Grade Neighboring Activists:
Day of the Dead
8th Grade Dramatic Arts, 4 p.m. (Wright Tavern)
9th Grade Coming of Age, 5 p.m. (Emerson Room)

Sixth/Seventh Grade Neighboring Activists

Our 6th and 7th graders will continue to get dirty this month working on organizing for the CROP WALK on October 14. They will also help garden at Gaining Ground in Concord on October 21, and carry sand for the winter to our Senior Citizens in Concord on November 4. Our leaders, **Stuart Johnstone**, **Marcia Spivey**, **Lindsay Kafka** and **Roberto Rodriguez** are doing a great job of organizing each of these mini-mission trips for our younger teens. We have a lot of 6th and 7th graders attending this class. Keeping this age involved in the life of our congregation is important if we want to keep our denomination strong in future years. We hope that programs like this physically instill our values in our teens, so these values become part of who they will become as Unitarian Universalist adults. This program is great practice for that last directive in our First Parish Mission Statement: make a positive difference in the world!

Eighth Grade Dramatic Arts

We have gotten off to a great start with the play this year, thanks to **Alyssa Bigay**, **Caroline McCloy**, **Jimmy McCloy** and **Madzie Burnham**. The play brings our 8th graders together by asking them to perform this traditional seasonal play for our First Parish Sunday School program. By the end, these kids will know and trust one another. They will have served our parish by giving a performance to our entire RE program and will have served as

RE News

continued on page 11

role models for our younger kids. These are important steps toward becoming responsible young adults in our congregational community.

This program supports our mission by both building community and making a positive difference in the world.

Ninth Grade Coming of Age

On October 5, our 9th graders will go on retreat with their mentors to Camp Takodah. They will be challenged physically and mentally. They will begin their masks and share stories. They will become a group. On October 14, we are so fortunate that **Tom Bird** will lead an interactive discussion about our values and how they affect our decisions. This is a great group of mentors and kids. We are fortunate that so many adults in our congregation step up to listen to our youth and take the time to build meaningful and lasting relationships with our teens. We are also fortunate that so many of our youth remain engaged in our First Parish community. A congregation needs youth energy to remain connected to the inner stirrings of the world. Youth are wise in an unfiltered way, and it is exciting to be with them on this journey.

October 28 is one of the most important Sundays of COA — Climbing the Family Tree. On this Sunday, our COA parents write a letter to their young adult. This letter becomes part of that teen’s life’s story. This is a very special session where parents express how they see their teen, and the importance of their teen in their family tree.

Our Coming of Age supports our mission by deepening spiritually, building community and making a positive difference in the world.

Youth Group: Ninth–Twelfth Grades Meets Sunday Evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 in the Wright Tavern

Our seniors are really making a difference in youth group this year. **Julia Reynolds, Robbie Ringwall, Acadia Moyersoms, Cam Villain, Nico Calabria** and **Tommy Wilson** have worked closely with **Avi Salloway**, our amazing Youth Director, to make sure our youth group is youth-led. Our Sunday night youth group is all about fun. Youth can express their Unitarian Universalist spirit in many ways here at First Parish — Transylvania, El Salvador, Gospel Choir, Teen Assistants in RE and YAC (Youth Advisory Council), but Youth Group on Sunday Nights brings all of our youth together in the spirit of friendship and kicking back. It is just a joy to be a part of this energy.

We also have excellent adult presence this year assisting Avi in leading on Sunday nights: **David Ropeik, Mark Howell, Cynthia Mousseau** and **Jim Reynolds**. Believe me, these adults are with our teens because it

is fun for them too. We have amazing youth; and when they show up together, they can’t help but have a great time.

Our First Parish Community Garden

We are about to do the work of putting our garden to sleep for the winter, but not before it gives even more. Its flowers were used to decorate the Sanctuary, and we continue to use its produce and seeds and dried herbs in our RE program. Its generous tomatoes went into Caring Connection meals, thanks to **Tracey Hurd**.



The garden brings us in touch with the changing seasons and our own need to experience some dormancy as the colder weather approaches. We are grateful for all of the hands, and especially the 6th and 7th grade ones that have kept this ministry growing (so to speak).

RE “Little Ones”

Our Teen Assistants are in force and growing. We have **Edye Benedict, Lily Wallace** and **Lilly Jimenez** so far. We really appreciate their service and willingness to give back to our parish in this important way. A special thanks to **Kim** and **Jeff Brainerd**, too, who are there to welcome new families and be of any assistance to our teachers on Sunday mornings. In this congregation, we help each other. We help each other learn and grow and become attached to this deeply spiritual place where love grows. Our children see us; and when they see adults and teens and kids all helping each other, they learn to trust and count on one another. Religious Education is different from education. In religious education, we tend to souls as well as minds.

Orientation for Religious Education Teachers for 2012–2013

Orientations for Little Folks’ RE Teachers (0 years–1st Grade) in the Emerson Room:

Caregiving, Story Time and Spirit Play, Winter and Spring Terms: Saturday, January 12, 9:30–11:00 a.m.

Orientation Schedule for Middle RE (2nd–5th Grades) Teachers in the Emerson Room:

Holiday Term #2: Wednesday, November 14, 7:30–9:00 p.m.

Winter Term #3: Wednesday, January 23, 7:30–9:00 p.m.

Spring Term #4: Wednesday, April 3, 7:30–9:00 p.m.

Orientation Schedule for Teen RE — 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th Grade Leaders

6th/7th Grade Neighboring Activists, Holiday Term: Wednesday, November 7, 7:30 p.m.

NOTE: More Teacher Orientation Info on page 13



During my first week at First Parish, I have been frequently reminded of one fact: the heart of the Social Action Community at First Parish in Concord beats loud and strong! In my rounds at coffee hour, I have enjoyed hearing about many of your involvements in the Social Action Community's programs. I am steadily putting together the pieces of the Social Action Community and First Parish puzzles and starting to remember names!

The name *Social Action Community* makes me smile every time I write, say, or type it. Many outside of First Parish in Concord might guess that the C in SAC stands for "council" or "committee." First Parish in Concord breaks these assumptions. We have a Social Action Community, a community where persons of all ages do service; a community that is open, affirming and inclusive, just like our faith. You had built a tradition of Social Action Community before I came, and I look forward to continuing in this tradition and contributing to this Social Action Community's journey.

I hope to continue meeting new people and am eager to learn about the variety of ways that First Parish in Concord serves the local, national and international community. I am here to serve you so that we can all serve together. ♦

It is a blessing to be here.

— *Bethany Lowe*

blowe@firstparish.org

Concord CROP WALK for the Hungry, October 14

The Concord CROP WALK will take place after the SAC Sunday service, "Bounty of the Earth." Registration at 1:30 p.m., step-off at 2:15 p.m. from First Parish. Funds raised go to several local area food pantries and suppers, and to the Church World Service, to use for disaster relief and development projects around the globe. **Elaine Peresluha** and **Jenny Rankin** will be walking and invite others to join them; this is a great event for the whole family. Congregants may pick up sponsor forms or make a donation to sponsor our ministers at coffee hour. Online pledging is available; see www.concordcrop.org to find out how to join the First Parish team, or sponsor the team members. Contact **Sara Ballard** at sara@sb.org for more information.

Grant Applications Due October 15

Each year, First Parish allocates 7.5 percent of annual pledge income to Social Action Grants. Twice a year, in the fall and spring, the Social Action Grants Committee distributes this grant money to local, national, and international organizations. The committee actively encourages social entrepreneurship and gives extra weight to Grant Requests that provide seed money for a specified and limited time period to "incubate" new ideas. Grant

award priority is given to these new concepts and ventures. Please keep in mind that grant applications must be sponsored by a First Parish pledging member. Further details on the grant application process, policies and requirements can be found at <http://sac.firstparish.org/cms/grants> or by contacting **Wendy Holt** at wendyholt48@yahoo.com.

Concord-Area Amnesty Group, October 16, 7:00 p.m.

Group 15, the Concord-area chapter of Amnesty International, will hold its regular monthly meeting in the Greeley Room. Refreshments will be served, and newcomers are cordially invited to attend. For more information, visit www.aigroup15.org, or e-mail **Lorraine Loviglio** at Loviglio@rcn.com.

Mil Milagros Celebration/Fundraiser, October 3 6:00 p.m. in Boston

The Social Action Community's Guatemala Recovery Project regularly works with Mil Milagros, a children's policy and advocacy organization that supports the health and education of Mayan children. Mil Milagros now reaches 1000 children, empowering families and schools to improve health care, education and nutrition. The need is great — Mayan children have worse nutrition than any place in the West — including Haiti. Less than 15 percent of Mayan children finish 6th grade. Mil Milagros has already made impressive improvements in the lives of Mayan children. To attend, call **Steve Cadwell** at 617-320-2512. To donate, go to <http://milmilagros.org/donate-now>.

Reproductive Justice: An Open Working Group

Last month a group gathered to hear a report by **Margaret Stewart** about the UUA action endorsing Reproductive Justice. The group, including lay leaders from Religious Education/OWL, Social Action, the Women's Circle, and Pastoral Care pondered these questions: Is reproductive justice a part of First Parish now? What are some visions for affirming and supporting reproductive justice in our congregation and beyond? The group generated many possibilities for next steps. Another meeting is being planned — watch the *Sunday News* for details. All are welcome! If you have ideas or want to connect, contact **Lora Venesy** at venesy@comcast.net.

GREEN NOTES

Mindful Living Tip: To save water, keep a pitcher of water in the fridge so you don't have to run the tap until water is cool.

Mindful Living Statistic: A leaky toilet can waste 200 gallons a day. To test your toilet, put a few drops of food coloring in the tank. If the color appears in the toilet bowl after a few minutes, you have a leak.

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/sacemallist; or visit the Social Action bulletin board.

WOMEN'S NEWS

The Women's AM/PM Book Group

The October selection for the Women's AM/PM Book Group is *The 19th Wife: A Novel*, by David Ebershoff. The evening discussion will be on Monday, October 29 from 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the home of **Steph Chiha**. The morning discussion will be Tuesday, October 30, from 9:30-11:00 a.m. at First Parish. 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 2012-2013 are as follows:*

Dec. 3, 4 *The Art of Racing in the Rain: A Novel*,
by Garth Stein

Jan. 28, 29 *The Unlikely Disciple: A Sinner's Semester
at America's Holiest University*,
by Kevin Roose

Feb. 25, 26 *State of Wonder: A Novel*, by Ann Patchett

Mar. 25, 26 *Parallel Lives: Five Victorian Marriages*,
by Phyllis Rose

Apr. 22, 23 *Denial: A Memoir*, by Jessica Stern

May 20, 21 *Caleb's Crossing*, by Geraldine Brooks

*NOTE: No November meeting.

SENIOR YOUTH NEWS: THE HEARD

Shabuya!

It's been so great to see everybody this year, old friends and new. The Heard is filled with good energy and there's a lot of excitement, with big numbers showing up to be a part of our youth group. September highlights include the Homecoming Hang, Senior-Led Trust Walk, and the Retreat to Ferry Beach. Oh Ferry Beach! The stars, the bonfires, the games, the jams, the ghost stories, the Gulyás! We enjoyed a beautiful cultural exchange with the



Transylvania youth from Keresztúr and we will be staying in touch with the group. Check out the pictures on the Heard's page: facebook.com/firstparishyouthgroup

Come join the Heard for many good times ahead. We'll be meeting every Sunday in October 6:30-8:30p.m., except Columbus Day weekend. The El Salvador group will be gathering on October 21 at 5 p.m.

Be well and inspired, and see you soon! ♦

Yours truly,

—*Avi Salloway*

Youth Program Director

RE News

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Teacher Orientation Info, continued

6th Grades Winter Term, Race to Justice: Wednesday, January 23, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

6th Grades Spring Term, First Parish Garden: Wednesday, April 3, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

7th Grade Neighboring Faiths Winter Term: January 9, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

7th Grade Neighboring Faiths Spring Term: March 20, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

8th Grade Our Whole Lives (OWL) Leader Orientation: Wednesday, November 28, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Richardson will speak about the events and relationships influencing Thoreau's philosophy, and the new, beautifully illustrated edition of Thoreau's lecture, *October, or Autumnal Tints*, for which he has written the introduction. A book signing will follow. This event is sponsored by the Thoreau Society, the William Munroe Special Collections of the Concord Free Public Library, and the Transcendentalism Council of First Parish in Concord.

Auction Party in November!

PARTY! Saturday, November 3, 7:30 p.m. at **Darien Smith's**.

A festive evening of song, good company and delicious dessert buffet, featuring entertainment by the popular local a capella group The Poppas and Mommas. Hosted by **Darien Smith, Val and Biff Holt, Sarah and Stoney Ballard**. \$25/per person. Ticket sales soon!



Save the Date!

More First Parish Auction Parties Through the Winter!

December 1: Show Tunes Party

January 12: Cocktail Party at the Waters' Home

February 3: Intergenerational Winter Tea for Ladies (ages five and up!)

February 9: Beatles Night with **Rob Hamilton** and **Rob Castillo**

Calling All First Parish Artists

If you have a painting, pastel, drawing or print work you would like to display in an "All-Parish Art Display," please contact **Doug Baker** at the Meeting House. The exhibit will be mounted during the week of November 12, and will remain up until the week of December 10. The exhibit will be in both Gallery A (outside the Sanctuary in the stairwell) and Gallery B (on the Parish Hall stage). All displays at the Meeting House are noncompetitive and noncommercial. Depending upon the size of your artwork and the number of people who submit, we may be able to mount more than one of everyone's work. **Doug Baker**, Sacristan and Curator, can be reached at 978-369-9602, ext. 419, or at dbaker@firstparish.org.

Intergenerational Fabric Arts Circle

We had a great kick off on Friday, September 21 and 28, for our Fabric Arts Circle. This is a sewing, felting, knitting, collaging circle for all ages! Please come and join us on Friday evenings for sewing, conversation, tea and cookies.

We will meet on October 12 and October 19 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. If people want to continue this gathering, we can discuss it at our meeting.

We will be continuing work on our group project as a present for our Transylvania Partner Congregation. Our RE children are making a pen pal quilt of a patchwork of their faces. This quilt will serve as a carrier for pen pal letters between our children and those of our partner congregation. This project is an extension of our work in our Sunday RE class. Questions? Please ask **Susan Nash** at 781-697-0008. All ages are welcome!

The October WPA Luncheon Program: "Who Will Win the 2012 Presidential Election?"

Nine states ("toss-ups") are likely to determine the outcome of the race between President Obama and Mitt Romney. At the October 23 luncheon organized by the Women's Parish Association, **Rick Frese** of First Parish will give a presentation, looking at recent past election trends, examining polls in battleground states and mapping political geography. During the presentation, audience members will engage in an interactive exercise (electoral game) predicting the outcome of the election. Rick is a professor of Government and Sociology at Bentley University. He has taught courses in American and international politics, developed courses in sociology and enjoyed administrative positions during his 30 years at the university; and has moderated congressional, senatorial, gubernatorial and state legislative debates in both political parties. Join old and new friends at this luncheon and very timely program. Date: Tuesday, October 23. Time: Social time at 11:30 a.m. Lunch at noon followed by the presentation at 12:45 p.m. Reservations are required. Please contact the church office or **Dian Pekin** at pekindc@comcast.net by Thursday, October 18, to make reservations, indicate dietary restrictions or arrange for child care or transportation.

Holiday Artisans Fair, Saturday, November 3

Get ready for the annual Holiday Artisans Fair on Saturday, November 3, 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. This is a major fundraiser that the Women's Parish Association organizes; it has been a very popular event for decades. Fifty artists and artisans will offer high quality handmade items for sale throughout our church facilities. The WPA will have its own boutique at which knitted ruffle scarves, unique aprons and novelty bags, and of course the famous catnip balls will be sold. There will be a door prize and raffle items from the artists and artisans. Delicious breakfast, lunch and snack foods will be sold throughout the day. Bring your family and friends and get a good head start on your holiday shopping, and socialize over lunch and snacks. Contact the church office or **Dian Pekin** at pekindc@comcast.net to volunteer your help during the fair.

**Klezmer Music Concert!
Saturday, October 27, 7:30 p.m.**

Northampton-based “Klezmir” is coming to First Parish, performing traditional and contemporary klezmer music in our own Parish Hall. New England’s dynamic roots-rockin’ klezmer band extraordinaire serves up traditional Jewish favorites as well as original Klezmer barn burners. Tell or bring a friend — this should be a very entertaining evening. Multi-instrumentalists Jim Armenti — clarinet, mandolin and guitar — and Amy Rose — flute, piano and accordion — are backed up by Keith “Klezmer Drums of Passion” Leverault and “Downtown Joe” Blumenthal on the bass and nose flute. Presented by First Parish Music Events Committee, tickets are \$20 at the First Parish Office, at upcoming coffee hours, and at the door. For more information about Klezmir, visit www.klezmir.com.

**Sarasa Chamber Ensemble Performance
Sunday, October 28, 7:30 p.m.**

We’re very fortunate to host another season of performances by the Sarasa Chamber Ensemble at First Parish. The first of these concerts will be held in the Parish Hall on the evening of Sunday, October 28. From the SarasaMusic.org website: “Sarasa is a collective group of international instrumentalists and vocalists who perform classical music of outstanding quality, and bring this music to diverse communities. Through the ensemble’s outreach program in adolescent detention facilities, it is dedicated to bridging cultural, aesthetic, and economic barriers and providing incarcerated teenagers with opportunities for growth and enrichment through music. Hosted by First Parish Music Events Committee, tickets are \$24 general, \$20 for seniors, or \$12 for students. (Children under 12 are free.) Tickets may be purchased online via the SarasaMusic.org website or at the door. Note that season subscription discounts are also available For more information about Sarasa, visit www.sarasamusic.org.

Humanist Council Presents Stefan Jonasson

Many parishioners have met Rev. Stefan Jonasson and enjoyed interacting with him and hearing him talk on various topics in the past. We would like to bring to your attention that he will be visiting Concord in early November. One opportunity to meet him will be when he addresses a Concord Area Humanist meeting on Thursday,

November 1, in our Parish Hall, starting with a social at 7:00 p.m., and the program starting at 7:15 p.m. The topic is still to be determined, but certain to be interesting. He is a Unitarian Universalist minister, historian and organizational development consultant based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. He is the Unitarian Universalist Association’s (UUA’s) Director for Large Congregations. He is also a past president of the UUA Humanist Association. Go to <http://members.shaw.ca/smjonasson/> to learn more. Enquiries to **Patrick Everett** at pne@aol.com.

Spring Musical — Save the Date!

We are pleased to announce that First Parish will present a musical production on March 15 and 16, 2013, filled with Broadway songs dealing with all aspects of family life and directed by **Tom** and **Sue Beck**. Ranging in mood from funny to poignant, the songs will be instantly meaningful to anyone who has ever been part of a family. All interested folks will be cast in the show, and we are seeking all ages, from youngsters to oldsters, so please mark the dates. There will be a range of numbers from ensembles to duets to solos. Our first meetings will be on December 7 and 9, and rehearsals will begin in earnest on January 4. We rehearse Friday and Sunday evenings, but extra meetings may be scheduled during the week (with special arrangement for youngsters). For more information, contact **Sue Beck** at sbeck345@comcast.net.

Calling All Knitters

Catnip ball covers knitters needed for WPA Artisans Fair project to be sold at November 3 event. Workshops will be held in October. Look for dates in the *Sunday News*. Please contact **Becky Blodgett** for directions or questions at 978-369-2564 or becky.blodgett@verizon.net.

You Can Sponsor the Sunday Flowers

If you would like to provide Sunday flowers for a memorial or a life celebration, please contact **Barbara Wheeler** at 978-369-9518.

OCTOBER 2012 CALENDAR

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

Every Week...

Ministerial Search Committee	Sunday	8:00 a.m.
Neighboring Activists	Sunday	9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
Gospel Choir	Sunday	10:00 a.m.
Forum	Sunday	10:30 a.m.
Reflection Group	Sunday	12:10 p.m.
Bell Choir	Sunday	1:00 p.m.
YRUU/The Heard	Sunday	6:30 p.m. (not October 7)
<i>Music Together</i>	Tuesday	9:30 a.m.
<i>Yoga Class</i>	Tuesday	12:00 p.m.
<i>Tai chi</i>	Tuesday	6:30 p.m.
<i>Buddhist Group</i>	Wednesday	9:30 a.m.
Junior Choir	Wednesday	4:30 p.m.
Chalice Choir	Wednesday	5:15 p.m.
Adult Choir	Wednesday	7:45 p.m.
<i>Music Together</i>	Thursday	9:30 a.m.
<i>Seasoned Soul</i>	Thursday	12:00 p.m.
<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program</i>	Thursday	7:00 p.m.
<i>Spiritual Autobiography</i>	Thursday	7:00 p.m.
<i>Buddhist Group</i>	Thursday	7:30 p.m.
<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program</i>	Friday	9:30 a.m.
<i>Music Together</i>	Friday	9:30 a.m.
Men's Group	Saturday	7:30 a.m.

Tue Oct 2	1:30	First Tuesday Group	•	6:30	Standing Committee Meeting
Wed Oct 3	4:00	Shawl Ministry	•	Tue Oct 16	7:00 Amnesty Group
	6:00	Arts Council Meeting	•		7:00 <i>Spirit in Practice</i>
	6:30	Concord Area Humanists	•	Thu Oct 18	9:00 Catnip Balls Workshop
Thu Oct 4	12:00	<i>Seasoned Soul</i>	•		2:00 Photo Directory Sessions
	7:30	By Your Side Singers	•		7:30 By Your Side Singers
Fri Oct 5	7:00	Theatre Workshop	•	Fri Oct 19	7:00 Intergenerational Sewing Circle
Sun Oct 7	7:00	Environmental Leadership Team	•	Sun Oct 21	1:00 Keith Kron Workshop
Tue Oct 9	9:00	WPA Board Meeting	•		3:00 Needleworkers Affinity Group
	2:00	Photo Directory Sessions	•		4:00 <i>Living Beyond Illness</i>
	7:00	Richardson Lecture and Discussion	•		8:30 YAC
Wed Oct 10	2:00	Photo Directory Sessions	•	Tue Oct 23	11:30 WPA Luncheon
	6:30	<i>Concord Area Humanists</i>	•	Wed Oct 24	10:30 Pastoral Care Advisory Council
	7:00	<i>Mid-Life Moms</i>	•	Thu Oct 25	9:00 Catnip Balls Workshop
Thu Oct 11	12:00	<i>A Seasoned Soul</i>	•		6:30 <i>Heartsong Collage</i>
	7:00	Listening Sessions	•	Fri Oct 26	7:30 <i>Rise Up Singing</i>
Fri Oct 12	12:30	<i>T'ai Chi</i>	•		7:30 Klezmir Concert
	2:30	Photo Directory Sessions	•	Sun Oct 28	12:30 Ministerial Intern Committee
	5:00	Jefferson UU Choir Dinner	•		12:30 Belonging Team
	7:00	Intergenerational Sewing Circle	•		4:00 <i>Living Beyond Illness</i>
Sat Oct 13	9:00	Photography Club	•		7:30 Sarasa Concert
	2:00	Listening Sessions	•	Tue Oct 30	9:00 <i>Women's Book Group</i>
	7:30	Jefferson UU Choir	•	Wed Oct 31	1:00 Pastoral Care Lay Ministers
Sun Oct 14	12:30	Communications Team	•	Thu Nov 1	2:00 Photo Directory Sessions
	12:30	Listening Sessions	•		7:00 <i>Pilgrimage</i>
	1:30	CROP WALK	•		7:30 By Your Side Singers
	4:00	<i>Living Beyond Illness</i>	•	Fri Nov 2	7:00 Theatre Workshop
	5:00	Coming of Age	•	Sat Nov 3	10:00 Artisans Fair

PARTNER CONGREGATION COMMITTEE

Our Guests from Székelykeresztúr

Once again our dear guests have come and gone. Together we sang and ate and toured and laughed. We extended our connections and deepened our friendships while strengthening the foundations for future visits between our two communities.

With tours of Concord and Boston and Plimouth Plantation, the special delegation from our partner congregation in Székelykeresztúr got to experience our New England home. And with a Youth Retreat at Ferry Beach, a Barn Dance, Potluck Supper and two Sunday Services (including a special one for Transylvanian Thanksgiving), they got to experience our First Parish home as well.

But none of these events, nor our numerous other activities, would have been possible without the efforts of far too many people to mention individually. We are immensely grateful to our planners and coordinators, to the kind host

- families and munificent donors who underwrote all major
- expenses (including travel), to our ministers and staff, to
- those who provided essential support for our many out-
- ings. Thank you to everyone who extended hands, hearts
- and homes to give our visitors a warm and loving experi-
- ence.

- For pictures and memories, be sure to visit our PCC site at <http://bit.ly/xZwDwA>.

- For those who are interested in sponsoring a Keresztúr stu-
- dent, there are still a few student sponsorships available.
- Please contact our Student Sponsorship program coordina-
- tor, **Dana Booth**, at dana.a.booth@gmail.com or by phone
- at 978-369-5702. We are grateful for your support.

- As always we invite you to join us at our next Partner
- Congregation Committee supper meeting, For further
- information, drop us a line. ♦

Minden jót! “Best wishes!”

— **Ken Estabrook**, PCC Chair

ken.estabrook@gmail.com

OCTOBER 2012 NEWSLETTER

The November Newsletter deadline is Friday, October 19, at noon.
The Newsletter will be published Tuesday, October 30.

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

Phone: 978-369-9602

Fax: 978-369-8701

E-Mail: FPConcord@firstparish.org

Website: www.firstparish.org

* **PLEASE NOTE:** The office is CLOSED on Mondays.

Ministers' E-Mail:

Elaine Beth Peresluha: uurevdoc@gmail.com

Jenny M. Rankin: jrankin@firstparish.org

Tony Fisher: tfisher@firstparish.org

First Parish in Concord • UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Staff

Elaine Beth Peresluha, Interim Senior Minister

Jenny M. Rankin, Minister

Melissa Perdue Gallo, Business Manager

Tony Fisher, Intern Minister

Bethany Lowe, Director of Social Action

Rachel Baker, Director of Congregational Life

Gary E. Smith, Minister Emeritus

Christy McKellips, Assistant to the Ministers

Tina Storey, Assistant to the Business Manager

Becky Blodgett, Affiliate Minister for Pastoral Care

Pam Howell, Director of Religious Education

Emily Wheeler, Religious Education Administrative Assistant

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

Douglas Baker, Sacristan and Curator

Cassy Bosworth, Office Manager

Peggy Gallo, Volunteer Collector

Kate Keleher, Volunteer Newsletter Editor

Kaye Harvie, Volunteer Copy Editor

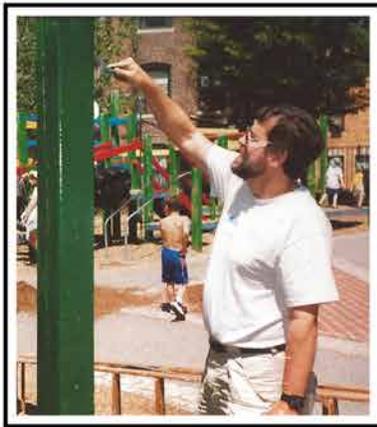
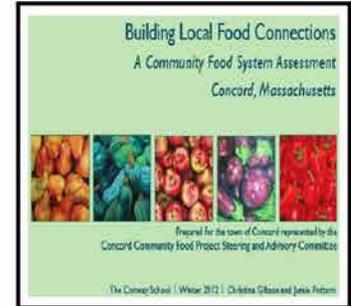
SUNDAY FORUM

10:30 - Noon in the Chapel
First Parish Church, Concord, Massachusetts

October 7th:

"Building Local Food Community"

Debbie Barr, Brooke Redmond and Emily Wheeler, will describe how 30 Concord citizens, Town officials, and local experts came together in 2011 to discuss ways to promote a sustainable food system in Concord. A professionally designed assessment of the existing system was then carried out. The assessment report includes a road map for a more sustainable future for food and agriculture in our community. In the forum, we will talk about what you and First Parish can do together to build a healthy, humane food system.



October 14th:

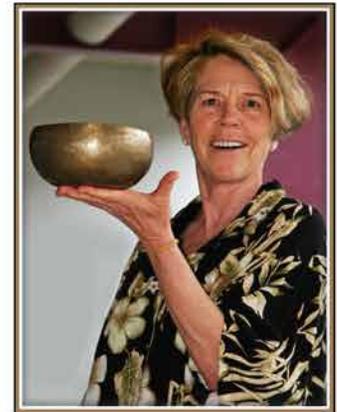
"The Rafael Hernandez School"

First Parish's involvement in the growth of Friends of the Hernandez School began over a decade ago when a group from First Parish came to the school to help improve the building and grounds. From a 25-student after school program to a comprehensive set of activities, the Friends of the Rafael Hernandez School has grown dramatically. With the recent passing of its two founding leaders, Margarita Muniz and Ken Larson, the organization is now engaged in setting new goals. The Forum presents the opportunity for First Parish to respond to and help shape the dramatic changes proposed for the school.

October 21st:

"Humans and Uncertainty"

Human beings do not like uncertainty. Dr. Henry S. Lodge believes human beings are hard wired, neurologically, to escape the discomfort or anxiety of uncertainty. "...We choose the fastest route to a decision - any decision - to end the panic of uncertainty... over and over again humans will reliably make blatantly bad decisions to end the feeling of uncertainty." Ministers are called, often, to provide an answer, i.e.: relief from discomfort. Ministers are rewarded, and appreciated, based directly on their ability to ameliorate congregational uncertainty. In today's forum, Elaine engages us in the opportunity, and the discomfort of uncertainty.



October 28th

"Alternatives to Violence"

Carolyn Shohet and Mark Richards: In 1975 prisoners at Greenhaven Correctional Center in New York asked local Quakers for help in designing a workshop for local youth visiting the prison. The result was the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), an experience designed to help participants explore their own relationships to violence, to build community from a violent environment, to communicate effectively, and to resolve conflict without violence. Today AVP is offered nationally in over 100 prisons and globally in dozens of communities seeking to reconcile violent pasts. This Forum will

offer a taste of the work that Carolyn and Mark do behind the walls of Massachusetts prisons.

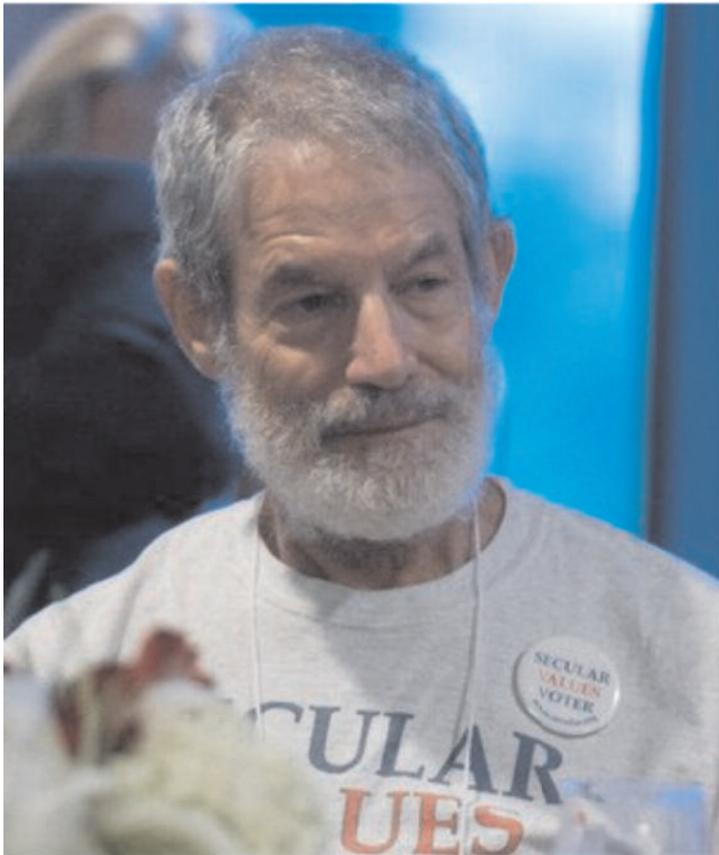
Concord Area Humanists

Herb Silverman, "Candidate Without a Prayer"
Wednesday, October 10, 2012. 7:00 PM. In Parish Hall

The meeting will start at 7:00 with socializing and a few announcements. The program will start at 7:15, after which we will have open discussion with the presenter followed by more socializing. At 9:00 we usually have an open steering committee meeting which anyone is invited to attend.

Herb Silverman is founder and president of the Secular Coalition for America. He will be speaking to us about his new book *Candidate Without a Prayer*.

Silverman is a national public spokesperson for the rights of nonbelievers as president of the Secular Coalition for America and a board member of the American Humanist Association. *Candidate Without a Prayer* details his upbringing (raised by Orthodox Jews as a “liberal, Yankee, Jew atheist with four strikes against me”), studying to become a professor in mathematics (“Part of the beauty of mathematics is seeing the strange and mysterious places that apparently simple and innocuous assumptions may lead”), and his run for the governorship of South Carolina to challenge the state constitution that stated “No person shall be eligible for the office of governor who denies the existence of the Supreme Being.”



While his bid for governor failed, Silverman continued to challenge the law by applying to be a notary public—a legal battle that lasted six years and led to his notoriety growing from Charleston’s “most famous atheist” to South Carolina’s “most famous atheist.” His exposure included a televised gubernatorial debate with two other candidates. “A year later there was one objective measure for determining the winner,” Silverman notes about his performance. “Of the three candidates in the debate, I was the *only* one not in prison.”

Silverman says his book is for “apathetic atheists, who I hope will become motivated to get off their apathy,” adding that he also “offers constructive approaches for dealing with family conflicts over religious differences. In other words, I guess this book is for just about everyone.”

For more on the author: http://www.americanhumanist.org/system/storage/63/fb/4/2964/About_the_Author.pdf

Enquiries please to pne@aol.com



Join us as we CONNECT our families

Please be a part of our new family directory program—we need YOU to make our new family album complete!

Let's put names with faces. We have chosen to partner with Lifetouch for professional photography that will connect our members and tell our story.

Convenient

Lifetouch will photograph at our location.

In your one-hour session you will:

- Check-in
- Be professionally photographed
- Immediately view your portraits
- Have an opportunity to purchase additional portraits

When was the last time you or your family had a professional portrait taken?

Portraits are valued family keepsakes. Watch for more information coming soon about the opportunity to schedule your portrait session.

We look forward to seeing you!

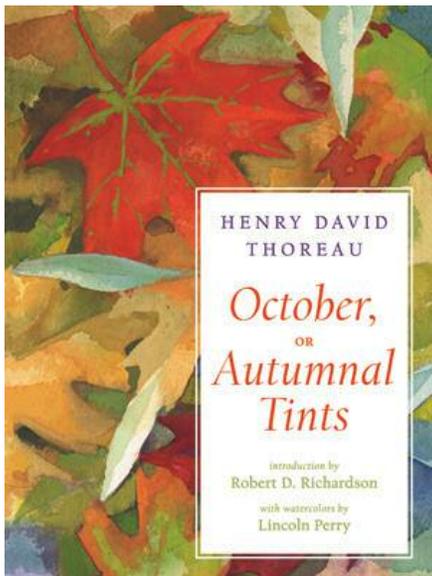


Each family will receive a complimentary 8x10 portrait and directory for participating



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OCTOBER

Or Autumnal Tints

By Henry David Thoreau

Introduction by Robert D. Richardson
Illustrations by Lincoln Perry

Originally delivered as a lecture shortly before the writer's own death, Henry David Thoreau's classic "Autumnal Tints" is an ode to autumn not as the season of death and decay, but of ripeness, fullness, and maturity. It is perhaps the best piece ever written on the subject of the fall color of the changing leaves. Thoreau hoped one day to turn it into an illustrated book called "October, or Autumnal Tints."

Thoreau's astute meditations are framed by a biographical essay by acclaimed scholar Robert D. Richardson that delves into the events and relationships influencing Thoreau's philosophy. Sensuous watercolors by Lincoln Perry bring to life the fall colors described so ecstatically by Thoreau, allowing longtime Thoreau fans and leaf-peepers alike to feel as though they are walking among the falling leaves alongside one of our best observers of the natural world.

LECTURE AND BOOK SIGNING WITH ROBERT D. RICHARDSON

Tuesday, October 9, 7:30 PM

**First Parish in Concord, Unitarian Universalist
20 Lexington Road, Concord, MA 01742**

**This event is free and open to the public.
A book signing will follow the lecture.**

**For information, please contact:
First Parish in Concord, Unitarian Universalist
Phone: 978-369-9602,
Email: FPConcord@firstparish.org**

**CO-SPONSORED BY
Concord Free Public Library
The Thoreau Society
Transcendentalism Council of First Parish in Concord**



Holiday Artisans Fair

Café: Lunch and Snacks All Day

50 Juried Artists & Artisans showing and selling latest works. Outstanding collection of handmade glass items, ceramics, jewelry, textiles, clothing, art prints, cards, photography, woodworking items, children's items, home decorations and more. Knitted scarves, catnip balls, craft items. Door prize and many raffle items.

Saturday, November 3, 2012
10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Bring your family members and friends for a fun-filled day of browsing, shopping, eating delicious food and socializing.

Admission: \$3. Children, \$1. Children Under 5, Free.

First Parish in Concord, 20 Lexington Road.
Concord, MA

(978) 369-9602 - Wheelchair Accessible



for **Spiritual** Renewal

The Wright Tavern Center at First Parish in Concord

An Oasis in Our Busy Lives • Fall 2012

The Wright Tavern Center is pleased to offer a variety of meaningful, thought-provoking and creative courses that provide for our infinite spiritual curiosity and development. Brief course descriptions are listed by day of the week. Please see the WTC website (www.wrighttavern.org/cms/courses) for full course details and facilitator bios. To register, contact Christy McKellips at 978-369-9602, ext.412, unless a different registration contact is listed with the course description..

NEW COURSE OFFERINGS

Spirit in Practice

This class explores practices undertaken for the purpose of connecting with the sacred ground of being. Eight spheres of practice will be considered: personal spiritual and communal worship practice; spiritual partnerships; and mind, body, soul, life and justice practices, within a forum for learning, sharing, and growth that can enrich faith journeys along many paths.

Instructors: **Tony Fisher** and **Debra Dunnington**

Tuesday: Oct. 2, 16; Nov. 6, 20; Dec. 4, 18 7:00–9:00 p.m.
2013 dates to come Fee: \$40/10 sessions

Pilgrimage

Since ancient times, pilgrimage has been a spiritual practice in many of the world's religious traditions. Explore the spiritual practice of pilgrimage as practiced in Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Judaism. Participants will be asked to do a small amount of reading about the tradition that most interests them, and contribute to the exploration in a collaborative learning community. Instructor: **Rev. Jenny Rankin**

Thursday: Nov. 1, 8, 15 7:00–9:00 p.m. Fee: free to First Parish members and friends; others, \$25/session

Heartsong Collage

A creative and satisfying process of art and self-discovery. Select images that resonate strongly and combine them to create uniquely significant personal collages. Then use these creations for reflection, to intuitively explore life's questions. Instructor:

Tamasin Foote

Thursday: Oct. 25, Nov. 29 6:30–9:30 p.m.
Fee: \$10/class/2 sessions

Sick of It! Living beyond Illness

Join others and give voice to the illness experience in a new way. Explore universal existential issues — letting go, accepting limitations, and living with uncertainty. Journaling, reading and discussion will help participants navigate and make meaning of the spiritual journey of illness. Instructor:

Dana Snyder-Grant, LICSW

Sunday: Oct. 14, 21, 28 4:00–6:00 p.m. Fee: \$20/3 sessions

Gentle Yoga to Energize and Heal Your Total Self — Mind, Spirit and Soul

In this mid-level class, be open to move, breathe deeply, meditate and relax. Exercises may be done on a chair rather than the

- floor. Bring: yoga mat, meditation cushion, blanket and water.
- There will be no scented candles. Instructor: **Jai Kaur**
- **Annamaria San Antonio**

Tuesday: Sept. 25–Dec. 11 12:00–1:30 p.m. Fee: \$18 drop-in or \$15 paid in advance for full 12 sessions

Mid-Life Moms: Creating Your Future "...your one wild and precious life..." — Mary Oliver

- Reenergize the spirit through time and support to focus on the question, "What do I want the next phase of my life to be about?" Through exercises, writing and sharing, explore circumstances, transitions and opportunities typical at this life stage.
- Consider where you are now, where you want to be, and the strategies and resources to inspire and take you there in a variety of collaborative activities. Instructor: **Kate Kavanagh, M.Ed.**

Wednesday: Oct. 10 7:00–9:00 p.m. Fee: \$19

How to Become a Seasoned Soul

- The goals of this course are to gain resilience and to embrace the spiritual aspects of growing older, through reconnection with the life-giving experiences, wisdom and relationships gained over time. Themes include how to heal relationships, bear change, grieve, deepen relationships, take risks that will help complete life, and serve others with joy and fulfillment, and of course mortality. Instructor: **Eliza Blanchard**

Thursday: Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25; Nov. 1 12:00–2:00 p.m.
Fee: \$150/5 sessions; plus \$12 for book if desired

CONTINUING OR REPEATING COURSES

T'ai Chi and Qi Gong

- T'ai Chi and Qi Gong improve stability and immune function, and create many of the benefits of meditation. Learn a series of connected movements that create movement similar to a slow-motion dance. If you've tried meditation, but find it hard to sit still, gently moving your body with this practice may be the way to give yourself those benefits. No experience is necessary. Wear comfortable clothing. Instructor: **Sue Wood**

Tuesday: Oct. 2–Nov. 13 6:30–8:00 p.m. Fee: \$120/9 sessions

Tibetan Buddhism

- The Buddhist group meets in the First Parish Chapel Wednesdays mornings and Thursdays evenings to accommodate various schedules. These weekly sessions are open to all who are interested in transforming love, compassion and wis-

dom into action, regardless of familiarity with Tibetan Buddhism. Contact: **Bill Seaver**

Wednesday: 9:30–11:00 a.m. Thursday: 7:30–9:00 p.m.
Donations gratefully accepted

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. Participants in this interactive course will be introduced to and practice guided mindfulness meditation, relaxation techniques, gentle yoga stretches, and self-inquiry exercises. To register, contact Pam Ressler, pressler@stressresources.com or 978-369-5243. Instructor: **Pam Katz Ressler, RN, MS, HN-BC**

Choose session: Thursday: 7:00–9:00 p.m. Sept. 20–Nov. 8
or Friday: 9:30–11:30 a.m. Sept. 21–Nov. 9
Fee: \$290, plus \$85 materials fee

NOTE: *Continuing Ed Units for nurses and other health professionals; discount for Blue Cross Blue Shield members*

Concord Area Humanists (CAH)

Herb Silverman will speak in the Parish Hall on his book *Candidate Without a Prayer*. Social time: 7 p.m.; program at 7:15 p.m.

Herb is founder and president of the Secular Coalition for America. He is a national public spokesperson for the rights of nonbelievers. His book details his upbringing (raised by Orthodox Jews as a “liberal, Yankee, Jew atheist with four strikes against me”), his studying to become a professor of mathematics (“Part of the beauty of mathematics is seeing the strange and mysterious places that apparently simple and innocuous assumptions may lead”), and his run for the governorship of South Carolina to challenge the state constitution that stated “No person shall be eligible for the office of governor who denies the existence of the Supreme Being.” These meetings always finish with a discussion. Read more at link Herb Silverman. Enquiries to pne@aol.com.

Wednesday, October 10, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Small Open Discussion Group at the Concord Public Library, led by Paul Jameson. For details on this and other CAH programs, click on CAH web site and then on blue “events” button near top left. RSVP on that site is desirable.

Tuesday, October 16, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Rev. Stefan Jonasson will speak in the Parish Hall on a topic to be determined. Social time: 7:00 p.m.; program 7:15 p.m.

Rev. Stefan Jonasson is a Unitarian Universalist minister, historian and organizational development consultant based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. He is always an informed and

- excellent speaker, and is well-known to many of our parishioners. Do come and enjoy him. The topic is still to be determined. Nearer the time, please click on CAH website and then on blue “events” button for more information. Enquiries to pne@aol.com.

Thursday, November 1, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

T'ai Ji and Qi Gong

- By combining music with Qi Gong and the simple movement of T'ai Ji, blocked energy is released to create wellness and bring life into balance. This class is geared to people of all ages. It offers gentle low-impact exercise to reduce stress, enhance optimal health and simply create a sense of joy in our lives.

Instructor: **Mae Pagan**

Friday: Oct. 12, Nov. 9, Dec. 14 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Fee: \$25 per class

The First Parish Women's AM/PM Book Group

- Once again the Women's Book Group selections are diverse, ambitious and thought-provoking, and provide opportunity to reflect upon the meaning of life. Share discussion, responses and insights to this year's readings. See below for next two month's selection and find the entire book list at www.wright-tavern.org/cms/courses. Choose either the Monday evening or Tuesday morning group session (there is no fee).

Oct. 29, 30: *The 19th Wife: A Novel*, by David Ebershoff

Dec. 3, 4: *The Art of Racing in the Rain: A Novel*, by Garth Stein

Monday: 7:30–9:00 p.m. (offsite: contact First Parish for directions to this session). Tuesday: 9:30–11:00 a.m. (at First Parish)

Rise Up Singing

- This informal monthly musical gathering of adults and children is 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 instruments if you wish. Leader: **Beth Norton** and **Others**

Friday: Oct. 26, Nov. 16, Dec. 21, Jan. 25 7:30 p.m.

No fee required — just come and sing!

ABC Music Together (Ages 0-4 years)

- 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. Everyone in a mixed-age class benefits by experiencing the music-making of those around them — children, who have a special originality and spontaneity in their approach to music. Instructors: **Deb** and **Tom Foote**. To register, go to www.abcmusictogether.com. Visit Tom's site at <http://www.rhythmkids.com/>.

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:30–10:30 a.m. 10:30–11:30 a.m.