



The Meeting House News

October 30, 2012
Volume 49, No. 3

IN THIS ISSUE

REVERIES

In muddled middles, these words by Mary Baker Eddy always remind me to sit still, be patient and appreciate the uncertainty. Something new is growing —

“.... This day is merely a step in infinite progress.

It is unfoldment not time.

It brings no belief of delay in success, no disappointment.

It adds no fear, no age, no deterioration, no decay, no sin, no materiality,

No belief in matter.

It only adds wisdom, power, dominion, law, and the presence of well done.

My treatment now establishes the law of this day,

And obliterates the supposition or belief in any other law.

Principle governs me and mine this day.

This day is unfoldment

In which every detail and incident is but an illustration

Of divine presence, power, and wisdom.”

Mary Baker Eddy was a path maker and visionary whose faith in what she believed launched a new religion. What I take away from Mrs. Eddy's thoughts on unfoldment is that intention and attention matter. They are the stuff of everyday magic and miracles. When we place our attention on what matters most to us, then fortify it with our hope and intention, miracles unfold. I do not mean the magic or miracles defined by the prophets of old, nor the smoke and mirrors sort of magic with which prestidigitators arouse shock and awe. No. The miraculous perfection Mrs. Eddy speaks of is an ongoing creation in which we each participate. When people decide together or alone what is important and, shoulder-to-shoulder, put their hearts, their minds and their muscle to the task, their best intentions unfold, like magic. Voila! A miracle.

First Parish has exceeded all of my expectations for mature attention and intentions. What you have come to depend upon has changed. Some have been rocked by pretty significant community tumult this fall, **Jenny Rankin's** resignation, my recommendations, staff changes and personal changes in members' lives. Many noticed, accepted and expressed minimal needs for reassurance before moving



REVERIES

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There are **FIVE** inserts at the end of this newsletter:

- ◆ First Parish Gives Thanks Potluck
- ◆ Sunday Forums for November
- ◆ Artisans Fair Announcement
- ◆ Photo Directory Information
- ◆ 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.

Let Us Celebrate Jenny!

Please save the date and mark your calendars for Friday, December 14, when we will gather in the Parish Hall to honor and celebrate **Jenny Rankin**'s ministry. The time is 5-7 p.m. Festive Dress. Details to follow! Watch for announcements online and on Sundays.

REVeries

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forward. Others directly expressed stronger needs, concerns, sadness or confusion. They have taken direct actions to resolve any institutional questions that linger for them. First Parish leadership has responded with integrity, adhering to policies and bylaws. Your governance, and congregational polity, are working, supporting your questions, and allowing considerations for change. This is the best of churching. It may not feel comfortable while the uncertainties, change and questions remain. This is institutional integrity at its best, a miracle of sorts.

We will continue to practice our best relational skills, as we enjoy community moments and informative conversations, and resolve the uncertainties. Together, we talk, we care, and we decide what matters most. Together, we are assuring the presence of well done, unfolding in time.

Much, much, metta,



Elaine Peresluha

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, November 16
Friday, December 14
Friday, January 18

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

WORSHIP SERVICES AT FIRST PARISH

Sunday, November 4

Size Matters — Rev. Stefan Jonassen

Stefan is the UUA's consultant to large congregations. Today he will share his thoughts on First Parish, its role in our denomination and the characteristics that shape our identity.

9:00 – First Parish Choir

11:00 – Gospel Choir

Sunday, November 11

Stars, Stripes and the End of Uncertainty — Tony Fisher and Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha

The election is over. Someone has won, someone has lost. Some are happy, some are not. Veterans are remembered and we begin the next chapter in our national story. Tony and Elaine will offer a conversation on what matters most, how and why a divided country unites for the greatest good.

9:00 – First Parish Choir

11:00 – TBA

Sunday, November 18

Graceful Gratitude — Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha

Turkey or Tofurky, friends, family, or alone, giving thanks is a national need. How is it we intentionally give thanks, and inspire grace? How can we capture the grace of one day and make it our own for a lifetime?

9:00 & 11:00 – First Parish Choir and Children's Choirs

Sunday, November 25

Welcome! Welcome! — Tony Fisher

It is the season when we welcome people into our homes and are welcomed by others. Come hear a few stories about welcoming and share a quiet, reflective service on the true gifts of the season.

One service at 10:00 – Pamela Schweppe, soprano



Save the Date(s)!

First Parish Auction Parties Continue through the Winter Months!

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

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.

Holiday Artisans Fair, Saturday, November 3

It's time to come to the annual Holiday Artisans Fair on Saturday, November 3, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. This is a major event that the Women's Parish Association organizes, and has been very popular for decades! Fifty artists and artisans will offer high-quality handmade items and food gift 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. Admission: threedollars for adults; one dollar for children. There is no charge for children under five years of age. Contact the church office or **Dian Pekin** at pekindc@comcast.net to volunteer your help during the fair.

Save the Date: December 11, Holiday Concert and Tea

The Women's Parish Association will hold its annual Holiday Concert and Tea on Tuesday, December 11. The concert will be held at 3 p.m. in the Sanctuary followed by a traditional tea in the Parlor and Parish Hall at 4 p.m. All First Parish members and friends are cordially invited. Further details will be announced in the next *Meeting House News*.

Exploring Pilgrimage with Jenny Rankin

Since ancient times, pilgrimage has been a spiritual practice in many of the world's religious traditions. Join **Rev. Jenny Rankin** and others as they create a "learning community" to explore this spiritual practice. Participants will be asked to do a small amount of reading and research so that each person in the class

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.

November 2 at 7:00 p.m. — Improv and Interplay Workshop led by **Kate Svrcek**, **CC King** and **Doug Hardy**. Contact katesvrcek@hotmail.com.

November 10 at 9:00 a.m. — Photo Club meeting

November 13-30 — All Parish Art Exhibit — Suzanne H. Altshuler Gallery

November 16 at 7:30 p.m. — Rise Up Singing, First Parish's monthly folk song circle open to singers and instrumentalists of all ages.

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.

contributes to the teaching and learning. Pilgrimage traditions in Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Judaism will be explored, with students being asked to choose the tradition that most interests them for further research and reflection. Jenny is interested in the possibilities of travel and pilgrimage as a way to engage spirit, learn about the world and other religions, and grow a soul.

Three Thursdays from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. — November 1, 8 and 15. Free to First Parish members and friends. \$25 per class for others.

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.

Humanism and Rev. Stefan Jonasson

Rev. Stefan Jonasson, Director for Large Congregations with the Unitarian Universalist Association, is coming to Concord in November. He is past president of HUUmanists and one of the original signers of Humanist Manifesto III. He is well-known and admired from his earlier visits. On Thursday, November 1, he will address Concord Area Humanists on "Reclaiming the Humanist Vision," in the Parish Hall — social at 7:00 p.m., program at 7:15 p.m., followed by discussion. On Sunday November 4, he will give the sermon at both services, and mingle with us during coffee hours.

Parish Notes

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Ivan Massar Photo Exhibit

Photographs by our own **Ivan Massar** are on exhibit in the gallery of Trinity Episcopal Church in Concord November 6 through January 9. While an art student in Paris in 1949 and 1950, he took to the streets with his camera and found great delight in documenting Parisians at work and play. The Paris pictures launched his lifetime career as a photojournalist, published both here and abroad.

New to Unitarian Universalism? New to First Parish in Concord? Considering Membership?

Come learn more about Unitarian Universalism, First Parish in Concord, and what it means to become a member, at two November workshops!

Saturday, November 17, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
New to Unitarian Universalism workshop followed by lunch.

Participants will learn about the rich history of our Unitarian Universalist faith, gain an understanding of congregational polity, and better understand the role of the UU principles and sources in our values-driven movement.

Sunday, November 18, 1:30-3:30 p.m.
New to First Parish in Concord workshop.

Participants will hear from the ministerial team, staff, and lay leaders, find out how to become engaged in congregational life at First Parish, and have the option to sign the membership book.

RSVP or address questions to **Rachel Baker**, Director of Congregational Life, at rbaker@firstpariah.org.

A Post-Service Reflection Time after the 11:00 A.M. SUNDAY Service

Have you ever wished for a time to reflect on your experience of the service before the rush of coffee hour or the rest of your day takes over? After any 11:00 a.m. service, starting November 11, come right over to the Wright Tavern sunporch. A few of us have been developing a simple and short "post-service reflection time" the last few Sundays, and we would love to have you join us. Come right after the service. We'll have snacks, coffee and water. We start with each person taking up to a minute to answer, "What stood out for you at the service today?" We end in 20 minutes or by 12:30 p.m., whichever comes first. If there is time, we have a discussion after the go-round. We close with a short silence. For more information, contact **Jim Snyder-Grant** at 508 572-2985 or jimsg@newview.org.

Concord CROP Walk Thanks

Many thanks to all who participated in the CROP Walk, including walkers, sponsors and volunteers. Walkers raised a preliminary total of over \$50,000, with the final total expected to go higher. Online donations to sponsor First Parish walkers may still be made at www.concordcrop.org. These funds support local food pantries and suppers, and global disaster relief and development projects of Church World Service. Walkers with outstanding pledges are asked to finish collecting and return them as soon as possible to the office. See the CROP Walk website for more info, and pictures of the 2012 Walk.

Give Thanks! November 10, from 5:30 to 9:00 P.M.

As we turn toward this time of Thanksgiving, join us to appreciate what makes us the community we are — ourselves! Gather for a potluck meal with old friends and new, and enjoy some entertaining and engaging activities. All ages are welcome. Bring your own beer or wine (don't forget a bottle opener!), and a dish you like and want to share (main, side, or dessert). Nonalcoholic refreshments will be available. This event is free. Volunteers are needed; please e-mail **Jiffy Read** at jifread@comcast.net if you would like to help out.

WPA Luncheon with Jenny, November 20

The Women's Parish Association luncheon on November 20 will give us the opportunity to break bread and socialize with our beloved **Jenny Rankin**, during which time Jenny will briefly reflect upon the history and importance of the WPA, which was founded and solidified over 130 years ago by such luminaries as Ellen Emerson and Louisa May Alcott. Join old and new friends as we celebrate Jenny's long and fruitful ministry with First Parish and thank her for her outstanding work among us. Social time will begin at 11:30 a.m., followed by lunch at noon. The cost is ten dollars. Reservations are required. All women and men are cordially invited. Please contact the office or **Dian Pekin** at pekindc@comcast.net by November 14 for reservations and dietary requirements.

Your LAST Chance!

Let's Put 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 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/firstparish-concord/index.php>.

September-October News and Notes

[This article was suspended last month because of the late-breaking news of Jenny Rankin's resignation. It's included here to report on the summertime activities of the Standing Committee.]

The Standing Committee (SC) has completed its first three monthly meetings in July, August, and September and has held its annual retreat in September.

Our regular work has included items from our year-long plan to review our governing policies (see September issue of the *Meeting House News* for the schedule). We have also established two working subcommittees to help with our governance issues.

- **Laurie Van Loon** is chairing the subcommittee on Congregational Discernment. This subcommittee will review our current governing policies on how we link to the congregation, and suggest ways to improve.
- **Andrea Siani** is chairing the subcommittee on Evaluation. This subcommittee will review our current governing policies on how we evaluate the performance of the senior minister and suggest ways to improve.

Our retreat this year allowed us to complete an every-four-year refresh of our First Parish Strategic Ends. The new strategic ends flowed from our new First Parish mission statement, adopted at the annual meeting in June:

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

Our New Strategic Ends are:

We at First Parish open our doors to everyone. We actively welcome one and all, enabling each person to find a place in our community.

- We at First Parish are visibly committed to our UU principles and to the larger UU community, and we honor our historical, intellectual and spiritual roots.
- We at First Parish come together to deepen spiritually through meaningful worship, mutual care, and opportunities for inspiring experiences.
- We at First Parish engage with and support one another through life's journey.
- We at First Parish work to make a positive difference in the world and are thereby transformed.

- **Organizational Structure Review Team Report.** We received a report we had requested from **Rev. Elaine Peresluha**. Her report presented the facts from her Organizational Structure Review Team (OSRT) and her three recommendations for a sustainable organization. We endorsed Elaine's recommendations and took no action to implement the recommendations except to explain them to the congregation. **Laurie Van Loon** and **Jake Nunes** headed the team to organize congregational "Listening Sessions" for both the Strategic Ends and these recommendations.

[As this September-October report was going to press, we received news of Jenny Rankin's resignation and we reorganized the Listening Sessions to accommodate this major event.]

October-November News and Notes

- Our six (6) listening sessions have just concluded, and all the comments from the congregation are being transcribed for study. An estimated total attendance of 144 discounted for repeat visitors becomes about 110. The responses covered a broad range of topics, including the Strategic Ends, **Elaine Peresluha's** recommendations for an improved structure, and, of course, **Jenny Rankin's** resignation.

- The Standing Committee and Elaine will both be assimilating the results over the next few months. My personal thanks to the many SC members, PIT facilitators, Reverend Elaine, and of course, interested parishioners, who made these sessions so rich.

- We on the Standing Committee hope we have begun a new tradition of twice-annual listening sessions that will strengthen the link between the congregation and the SC and deepen everyone's awareness of our UU heritage of Congregational Polity.

- Our October Standing Committee meeting first explored our SC-Head-of-Staff Governing Policy (a switch in topic from November, as published in the Annual Agenda of the September *Meeting House News*), and then went on to spend most of an hour editing and approving the final draft of the Employment Agreement for the new Senior Minister to be sent to the Ministerial Search Committee.

- A major news item was Elaine's announcement that generous contributors have closed the gap in the operating budget. Elaine expects to collect additional contributions to the "fund that will be matched." Please contribute if you can.

- November will see the fashioning of SC and Head-of-Staff goals for the rest of the year, a first look at our 2012-2013 budget, and continued work on our Governing Policies on Means for the operating staff (a switch in topic from October in the Annual Agenda).

PASTORAL CARE NEWS

The Advisory Council — Another Arm of Pastoral Care

You have read in this space during the last two months about what the Caring Connection and the Lay Ministers do. There is another arm of pastoral care which is the Pastoral Care Advisory Council (PCAC), whose mission is to offer advice to the ministers and to promote pastoral care in order to extend and strengthen its reach. The council meets every six to eight weeks and works in collaboration with the **Reverend Jenny M. Rankin**. Council members are: **Enid Boasberg, Irmie Doane, Sue Dobbie, Judy Dembsey, Berni Jenkins, Pam Ressler and Catilin Selle**.

Council members liaison with Religious Education, the Choir and the Women's Parish Association to see where there are pastoral needs. A Pastoral Care Handbook was created a number of years ago and is periodically updated to describe various aspects of pastoral care, including job descriptions to insure continuity in the program. A member of the council, during the past four years and currently, has taken on responsibility for the maintenance of the pastoral care library. It is located in the hallway just before the Brooks Room and is available to all parishioners with a self-serve checkout system. With **Doug Baker's** assistance, we see that a memorial wreath stands in the Sanctuary during December. Parishioners may attach ribbons to acknowledge a loved one who has died.

Last year, when the church no longer funded a Minister for Pastoral Care, the Advisory Council members took on additional responsibilities to ensure the continuity of some aspects of the pastoral care program. The

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

The Lay Minister for November is **Petra Betts** at petrajordan2002@msn.com or 978-897-8368.

Ministers: **Rev. Jenny Rankin** (jrankin@first-parish.org) and **Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha** (uuevdoc@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).

Pastoral Care brochure was revised in August to reflect changes in the program. The PCAC sees that pastoral care articles appear monthly in the *Meeting House News*. The bulletin board in the downstairs hallway now is maintained by a council member who also sees to the distribution of the Christmas and Easter flowers to those who have experienced some life difficulty.

Other activities occurred this past year. After being approached by one of the lay ministers expressing concern that more activities were needed for our senior members, 65 years of age and over, the "Tuesday Group" was formed. Additionally two programs were provided — "The Five Wishes" and "Women in Transition."

If you have concerns or suggestions in regard to pastoral care, please contact any of the council's members. We are here for you! — **Judy Dembsey**, Team Leader at dembsey@verizon.net.

Thanks to All for Creating Our Caring Connection Together

Thanks to the many people who help create the spirit of care and the Caring Connection at First Parish. With **Rev. Jenny Rankin's** leadership, the Caring Connection has been busier than ever over the past 18 months. Jenny encouraged us to reach out more, to expand care where we saw openings, and to think of even the smallest acts of care as essential to First Parish life. With Jenny's leadership we expanded the outreach of meals, cards and rides; started shawl ministries; and have had more than 100 people contributing to Caring Connection efforts. We are so grateful to Jenny for her vision, sense of gratitude, and encouragement of generosity.

Thanks to all the people on the "potential drivers" list who stand ready to help with providing rides to parishioners in need, and special thanks to **David and Beth Dawson, Joy Madden, Leslie Fisher and Lillian Braden**, who were able to help drive this month. **Kathleen Elcox** continues to provide beautiful cards for the Thinking of You table at coffee hour; thanks to her and to all those who write cards. We express appreciation to **Caitlin Selle** who has taken over creating the pastoral care bulletin board this year. We are grateful to the baby welcoming team, **Bridget Neale-Paris, Louisa Paushter and Jane Stewart**, for their work this fall. **Kitsy Rothermel** lovingly creates the baby welcoming blankets and we are grateful to her as well. Shawl Ministry volunteers created many shawls this summer and fall. We are so fortunate for the generosity of all those who help work on the shawls; they are given to parishioners needing the comfort and care of First Parish and mean so much. Thanks, too, to all those who are working to keep a history of the shawls. It can be good to have a record of these caring acts that build our community. (See photo on page 7.)

—**Tracey Hurd**, Caring Connection Team Leader

Pastoral Care News

continued on page 7

FROM THE MINISTERIAL INTERN

What a warm welcome I have received so far here at First Parish! Thank you! I arrived on your doorstep in September in the midst of much tumult and change and still you have greeted me with kindness, interest, and respect, and in doing so you have made it very easy to dive right in!

I do have to admit to taking a sneak peek at you all back at the end of March when **Elaine Peresluha** invited me to come and observe the Springing Forward weekend, and I haven't stopped talking

about you since. It was one of the most exciting church events I have ever witnessed and the energy and spirit that you generated when more than three hundred of you came together in that High School cafeteria was truly remarkable. I am grateful to be involved in such a vibrant community!



I look forward to getting to know each and every one of you over the next two years!

Blessings,

TONY

Tony

Pastoral Care News

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You're Invited to Come Cook — Friday, November 16, in the First Parish Kitchen

Help cook for the Caring Connection freezer on Friday, November 16, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon (or whatever portion of that time you can spare). It's fun and a great way to help out. The Caring Connection extends the arms of First Parish to parishioners who are experiencing life challenges or illness by offering wonderful, healthy frozen meals. We need to ensure that the freezer is stocked with healthy vegetarian and nonvegetarian soups and entrees. No skills or experience necessary. Come, enjoy coffee and morning snacks, join the fun, and contribute to this effort. Please RSVP to **Tracey Hurd** at thurd@aol.com or 978-369-2366 so that we have enough supplies.

Come Create Shawls!

Join us Wednesday, November 7 at 4 p.m. on the Wright Tavern sunporch. Come join the open and evolving group of people who knit, crochet, and together create shawls that are given as part of pastoral care outreach. If you are interested in working on a shawl or being part of this effort, contact **Regina Hugendubler** at ode2joy@usa.net.

MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) wants you to know what's happening in November and December. We have completed the online Congregational Record (CR) that ministers look at to determine whether they are interested in applying for a vacancy. During November, UUA ministers in search look over all the CR's published online by UUA and indicate which churches they are interested in. They indicate their interest directly to the UUA Transitions Office (headed by our ministerial settlement rep, Rev. Keith Kron).

On November 30, Keith will provide the MSC with a list of ministers who are interested in our Senior Minister vacancy. In December, we begin the process of reviewing ministerial records from those interested in First Parish. When we determine there is mutual interest, we then exchange packets containing much more information. Our packet is nearly complete and will take the form of a password-protected Website. Once the MSC reviews packets, we will conduct preliminary telephone interviews with the candidates that look best to us. And finally, near the end of December, we plan to have a list of our top three to four candidates. More on what's ahead in the December issue of the *Meeting House News*. ♦

Please feel free to contact the members of the Search Committee anytime:

John Boynton (jb@firehousecapital.com)

Terry Rothermel (terroth@verizon.net)

Caroline McCloy (cmccloy51@aol.com)

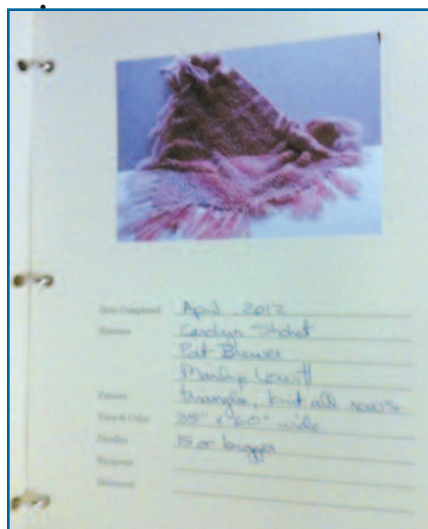
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Alec Walker (alecwalker@aol.com)



Page from the Shawl Ministry Notebook

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Recently, a friend held up a book to me and said, "I am so happy to have found this book!"

I looked at the book, passed a snap judgment, rolled my eyes, and snarled, "Ohhh, not *that* author!"

Though it is our congregations that covenant to affirm and promote our UU principles, as a member of a Unitarian Universalist congregation I try to live in a way that demonstrates the principles. It is a spiritual practice to consistently affirm that all people have inherent worth and dignity. It is a spiritual practice to respect the interdependent web of all existence.

In that moment when I snapped at my friend, I was not living out the UU principles. I was not living as though my friend had inherent worth and dignity. Because we are all a part of the interdependent web, when I scorned my friend's choice of reading material, I disrespected my choices as well. I disrupted our relationship because of my own dislike of a book he was looking forward to reading.

We may disrupt our relationships, we may break the covenant our congregations make with each other, and we can fall out of right relationship all the time. We are human and we make mistakes, but one of the amazing aspects of our Unitarian Universalist faith is that because we are a covenantal faith, we can try again. We can repair our ruptured relationships! We can listen deeply with compassion and loving kindness. We can apologize for our mistakes and misunderstandings. We can offer forgiveness.

When we slip up and snarl at those around us, we are breaking down relationships. When we ignore, brush off, or don't notice those around us, we prevent relationships. To build and strengthen our relationships, we may need to learn to step out of our snap judgments. We may need to be willing to practice affirming the inherent worth and dignity of all people. To do this, we may need to practice saying, "It is good to see you today!" And we may need to practice knowing and feeling deep in our hearts that indeed it is good!

I took a slow breath and asked myself, "Why are you being rude? You care about this person. Be kind. It is good to see him today. And it is good to see him happy to have found this book." I smiled, looked at my friend, and said, "I am sorry that I snapped at you. I am happy that you found the book you were looking for. I have not read that author; tell me a bit about her." And then I listened and found in my heart that it was true!

WOMEN'S NEWS

The Women's AM/PM Book Group

As usual, the Women's Book Group will discuss just one book for November and December, and the selection is *The Art of Racing in the Rain: A Novel*, by Garth Stein. The evening session will be Monday, December 4, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. at the home of **Steph Chiha** (472 Bedford Street, Concord). The morning session will be Tuesday, December 6, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. in the Brooks Room at First Parish. All women of First Parish are warmly invited to read the current book and join one or both 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:

November: No meeting (see above)

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

In an effort to live into the mission of First Parish, to seek to deepen spiritually and build community, I would like to invite everyone to engage with the following spiritual practice:

Each Sunday in November introduce yourself to three people you may not have spoken to before and greet them with, "It is good to see you this morning! I hope to see you again!" And find in your heart that these are true in that moment. Then ask, "What brought you here today?"

May you deepen spiritually, build community, and love to practice! ♦

In faith,

—Rachel Baker

Director of Congregational Life

"Vocal music is an attempt to take the whole human being and project it into space. It is the ultimate gesture of getting out of yourself. You take a part of you that is most private, most personal, most inward and you hurl it out into space — you project it as far as you can. That gesture of opening this whole region of the body results in an enormous spiritual release, and is felt by other people with tremendous impact."

— Peter Sellars



These words from Peter Sellars (the American director, not the British actor!) came across the "e-transom" from one of my UU music colleagues this fall. In my experience, words often fail when I'm trying to describe what music does or is. So when someone like

Peter Sellars gets it so right, I appreciate it! I received these words as a gift of grace — words that beautifully expressed what I have observed and experienced in this ministry of music.

For me, Sellars captures an essential truth about the beauty and the risk of singing. Hurling the whole human being into space. That sounds as dangerous as Felix Baumgartner's 22-mile "freefall." Yet we do this, in our own small way, when we take a breath, open our mouths and sing — no matter if we are "trained professionals" or shower singers.

And what is the "impact" of that freefall? An "enormous spiritual release." The power to unite and to touch and to share what is "most inward." With others, in community. This is how the By Your Side Singers gently hold people at bedsides. This is what our children offer, with their pure voices, when they lead us in worship. This is what we all may share when we sing together at Rise Up Singing and at choir rehearsals and in Sunday worship.

Hurling ourselves into space. A freefall. Who knew singing could be so risky? And so deeply fulfilling? ♦

Blessings,

— *Beth Norton*

Music Director

What Does the Partner Congregation Committee (PCC) Do?

The PCC serves as steward of the congregation-to-congregation partnership between FP and the Unitarian Church in Székelykeresztúr. I like to use the term "steward" because, although the PCC organizes the activities supporting the partnership (visits, fundraisers, communications, student scholarships, etc.), all of us at First Parish — not just the PCC — share the primary role of nurturing and growing the partnership.

The September Visit by Our Keresztúri Friends.

In September, the entire First Parish community experienced a wonderful visit with 12 travelers from Székelykeresztúr. During their 11-day stay, the Keresztúri visitors were welcomed into the homes and hearts of FP families, toured the Boston region, shared time with our youth during classes at CCHS and at their Ferry Beach retreat, visited with church leaders, and learned about our common Unitarian heritage. Many people worked hard to make sure that everyone in the FP community had a chance to experience our cherished relationship with Székelykeresztúr directly and in a very real way. On behalf of the PCC and the entire congregation, I want to thank everyone who donated time, talents and money to support this important visit!

July 2013 Family Pilgrimage. We now turn our attention to other activities, including next summer's Family Pilgrimage to Transylvania, intended for middle- and high-school-age youth and parents. This ten-day visit will take place in late July or early August, and will provide an unprecedented opportunity to get to know our Keresztúri brothers and sisters, while having a great time and cementing further our partnership. We were able to hold a couple of information sessions about the trip while our Keresztúri visitors were here, and we expect to have another session or two before the registration deadline on November 15. More details about the trip will be available soon. If you're interested in participating, please contact **Suzie Weaver** at skatesuzie@aol.com.

Join the PCC effort! For some of you, the visit by our friends from Székelykeresztúr (or perhaps other PCC activities) may have encouraged you to consider supporting the partnership more actively. If so, please consider joining us — there are ways to help, both big and small. The PCC meets monthly in members' homes on Thursdays, and I invite you to upcoming meetings on November 15 and December 20. ♦

Minden jól! "Best wishes!"

— **Ken Estabrook**, PCC Chair

ken.estabrook@gmail.com

Last Sunday was just a blur. SAC created worship around the theme of “The Bounty of the Harvest.” **Chris Randall** did the children’s message. Chris told the story of the buried treasure. In this story, the old father, on his deathbed, tells his sons there is buried treasure in the farmland. The sons dig and dig,

turning the soil, but finding nothing. Each year, after the soil has been turned and revitalized, the sons plant wheat in the freshly tilled soil. At the end of the season, they harvest its golden crop. Later, the sons realize that the treasure was the fertile soil itself.



We are that soil. This congregation is the fertile ground that has been tilled and revitalized. It is evident each Sunday in the blur of multiage activity: The Forum, choirs of all ages, CROP Walk, coffee hour with Bible stew and fresh bread, Coming of Age, graffiti on the Parish Hall floor, vegetables and flowers from our garden, the Labyrinth, quilting and Youth Group. We are all working together and preparing ourselves for a new ministry here. Our soil is ready as we begin this sacred and important search for our next minister. ♦

—*Pam Howell*

Director of Religious Education

Holiday Craft Workshop on December 1, 1:30 to 4:30 P.M.

Our Annual Elfin Event is already moving along. **Jan Goddard-Taylor** and **Marilyn Lowitt**, two crafty individuals, are once again pulling together all of our crafting elves with the help of RE Council member, **Patty Popov**, a chief elf herder. We have been looking at each craft, adding new ones and starting to look for elves to head each crafty activity.

Last year, we made the setup for the crafting especially fun. This year, we will do the same. While we were preparing for the event on Friday evening, we enjoyed a delicious meal. It was so nice to be able to sit down together and chat after our hard work.

Kristin Moore will be helping us do this again as all elves enjoy celebrating the holiday spirit together over good food. Want to help with the event or the meal? Please e-mail **Patty Popov** at PPopov@nichols-pratt.com.



November 2012 RE Calendar	
Sun., Nov. 4	Regular RE for Babies – 4 years Regular RE for K-5th Grades (Emerson Room) 6th/7th Grades Neighboring Activists (Brooks Room) 8th Grade Dramatic Arts at 4 p.m. (Parish Hall)
Sun., Nov. 11	Regular RE for Babies – 4 years No RE for K-12
Sun., Nov. 18	Regular RE for Babies – 4 years Regular RE for K-5th Grades (Emerson Room) 6th/7th Grades Neighboring Activists (Brooks Room) 8th Grade Dramatic Arts at 4 p.m. (Parish Hall) 9th Grade Coming of Age at 5 p.m. (Emerson Room)
Sun., Nov. 25	10 a.m. One Service Only Child Care for Babies – 4 years No RE for K-12

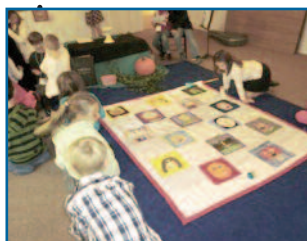
Sixth/Seventh Grade Neighboring Activists

We made a difference! Our 6th and 7th graders walked in the CROP Walk, picked pounds and pounds of food from our First Parish Garden, worked at Gaining Ground, and helped decorate our Parish Hall for the Bounty of the Harvest. Thanks to their leaders, this group is showing up each week and working in our community. Thank you for your service working in the dirt for those in need.



Eighth Grade Our Whole Lives — Important Date!

Parents! The dates for the **Mandatory Parent Orientation** are Wednesday, December 5, and Thursday, December 6, both at 7:30 p.m. Please mark your calendars!



Second–Fifth Grade Workshop Rotation

November 4 – Last Day of Fall Term: We will be closing our term, which focused on the Hebrew Scriptures.

RE News

continued on page 11

November 11 – Veterans' Day, NO RE

November 18 – First Day of Holiday Term – Earth-Centered Practices — Story: Thanksgiving and the Corn Goddess

November 25 – Thanksgiving Break, NO RE



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.

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.

SENIOR YOUTH NEWS: THE HEARD

Greetings Friends,

October was another great month for the Heard. Many good times shared on Sunday nights including an All Hallows ghost walk through Concord's historic haunts. Spooky!

Join us this month:

November 4 – Pizza and Brownie Making Party 6:30 p.m.

We'll be cooking together and rocking in the kitchen!

November 18 – WINK! 6:30 p.m.

This is a high-energy fun game., wear long pants and sleeves.

These are the only two meetings this month due to the holiday weekends. Don't miss the fun! ♦

Yours truly,

—*Avi Salloway*

Youth Program Director

I believe that transformation is at the heart of service. Serving others is an incredible act in itself. But imagining that we could be transformed by these experiences takes a deep commitment to personal growth.

I have reflected recently on the Standing Committee's charge to us to "make a positive difference in the world and [be] thereby transformed." I am convinced that our capacity to be transformed by our work outside First Parish is intrinsically linked to our ability to be transformed by worship and activities within our community. If we have an inclination to be transformed by interacting with someone who is not part of our community, can we come to worship expecting to be profoundly moved by the experience of worshipping with one another?

Can we approach committee meetings or community events with the anticipation that we will leave the meeting with a new perspective? If we support one another's preferences with compassion, I believe that our community can be transformed.

Here at First Parish, we have a wonderful opportunity in these moments of our history. The Social Action Community is seeking to be transformed. To do this, we are exploring new ways that our activities and programs can help us build community and deepen spiritually. The success of these initiatives depends on input from many voices and participation by individuals with varying degrees of experience in social action. We seek to engage with and learn from all members of First Parish so that our positive difference in the world can reverberate through our community and be felt by many, just like that earthquake a few weeks ago. We are not just a Social Action Community, we are *First Parish's* Social Action Community.

We do have opportunities for you to get involved right now! We are currently looking for volunteers to organize the Secret Santa and Guest at Your Table programs this year. These programs are both run during the holiday season. Please visit our website, www.sac.firstparish.org, to learn more about these programs. If you are interested, please contact me or find me at church. ♦

In faith,

—Bethany Lowe

blowe@firstparish.org



Alternative Worship Service on Tuesday, November 6, at 7:00 P.M.

Interested in deepening spiritually in an alternative worship? **Tony Fisher** (Intern Minister), **Rachel Baker** (Director of Congregational Life), and **Bethany Lowe** (Social Action Director) are collaborating to host a series of alternative worship services this church year. These worship services each will have a theme, and there will be opportunities for all participants to sing, share their reflections, and/or sit in silence, as she or he wishes. The theme of the first worship will be "What gifts do you bring to First Parish?" The worship will last no longer than 45 minutes. All are welcome! Please contact Tony, Rachel or Bethany for more information.

Amnesty International Monthly Meeting, November 20 at 7:00 P.M.

Group 15, the Concord-area chapter of Amnesty International, will hold its regular monthly meeting on November 20. All are welcome. Refreshments will be served. For more information, visit www.aigroup15.org or e-mail **Lorraine Loviglio** at loviglio@rcn.com.

Thank You's

Thank you to **Don Miller**, **Sara Ballard**, **Berni Jenkins** and **Jane Blumberg** for lighting the SAC candle in September and October!

Thank you to **Debbie Barr** and **Emily Wheeler** for presenting on the Concord Food Systems Assessment at the Forum on October 7!

Thank you to **Sara Ballard** for all her work to organize the CROP Walk! Many members of First Parish participated in this event, including **Rev. Jenny Rankin**, the Neighboring Activists (6th and 7th graders), and many others!

Thank you to the Environmental Leadership Team and all of their friends for helping with the SAC service on October 14 and hosting two fabulous coffee hours afterward!

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; or visit the Social Action bulletin board.



NOVEMBER 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 Activist	Sunday	9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
Gospel Choir	Sunday	10:00 a.m.
Forum	Sunday	10:30 a.m. (Not 11/11 or 11/25)
Youth Group: The Heard	Sunday	6:30 p.m. (Not 11/11 or 11/25)
<i>Music Together</i>	Tuesday	9:30 & 10:30 a.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. (Note: except <u>Tuesday</u> 11/20)
<i>Music Together</i>	Thursday	9:30 & 10:30 a.m.
<i>Buddhist Group</i>	Thursday	7:30 p.m.
<i>Music Together</i>	Friday	9:30 & 10:30 a.m.
Men's Group	Saturday	7:30 a.m.

Thu Nov 1	2:00	Photo Directory Sessions	•	6:30	Standing Committee Meeting
	6:30	Concord Area Humanists	•	Tue Nov 13	9:00 WPA Board Meeting
	7:00	<i>Pilgrimage</i>	•	Wed Nov 14	7:30 Orientation 2nd-5th Grade
	7:00	<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>	•	Thu Nov 15	7:00 <i>Pilgrimage</i>
	7:30	By Your Side Singers	•		7:30 By Your Side Singers
Fri Nov 2	9:30	<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>	•	Fri Nov 16	9:00 Caring Connection Cooking
	2:00	Photo Directory Sessions	•		7:00 Theatre Workshop
	7:00	Theatre Workshop	•		7:30 <i>Rise Up Singing</i>
Sat Nov 3	10:00	Artisans Fair	•	Sat Nov 17	8:00 SAC Grant Application Review
	10:00	Photo Directory Sessions	•		10:00 New UU Class
Sun Nov 4	4:00	8th Grade Dramatics	•	Sun Nov 18	12:10 Reflection Group
	7:00	Environmental Leadership Team	•		12:30 Trustees Meeting
	6:30	YRUU: The Heard	•		1:30 New to First Parish Class
Tue Nov 6	7:00	Alternative Worship	•		3:00 Needleworkers
Wed Nov 7	4:00	Shawl Ministry	•		5:00 Coming of Age
	6:00	Arts Council Meeting	•		8:30 Youth Advisory Council
	7:30	Orientation for 6th and 7th Grade	•		6:30 YRUU: The Heard
Thu Nov 8	7:00	<i>Pilgrimage</i>	•	Tue Nov 20	11:30 WPA Luncheon
	7:00	<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>	•		7:00 Amnesty Group
	7:15	PIT Meeting	•	Wed Nov 21	<u>First Parish Closes at Noon</u>
Fri Nov 9	9:00	Caring Connection Cooking	•	Thu Nov 22	Thanksgiving — <u>First Parish Closed</u>
	9:30	<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>	•	Fri Nov 23	<u>First Parish Closed</u>
	12:30	<i>T'ai Ji</i>	•	Sun Nov 25	10:00 <u>One Service</u>
Sat Nov 10	9:00	Photography Club	•		12:30 Ministerial Intern Committee
	5:30	First Parish Gives Thanks Potluck	•	Wed Nov 28	7:30 Orientation for OWL
Sun Nov 11	12:10	Reflection Group	•	Thu Nov 29	6:30 <i>Heartsong Collage</i>
	12:30	Communications Team	•		

Understanding Both Congregational Polity and Policy Governance, as They Operate within the Democratic Process at First Parish

As we move through this period of transition and ministerial search, several members of the congregation feel that now is the time to address the process issues that have occurred during the past several years which have caused many of us to feel disengaged from major decision making. We have petitioned the Standing Committee to call a congregational meeting for such purpose. We are in the process of working with the Standing Committee and other groups in the congregation who have been investigating governance to decide the best approach for further discussion of these very important issues.

We want to assure the congregation that our intent is inclusion, education, transparency and a focus on process, enabling us to understand our current governance and agree

on a structure in which we can participate. Please feel free to contact any of us either at coffee hour or by e-mail for more information.

Lillian Anderson
Lillian Braden
Steph Chiha
Dave Dawson
Cynthia Ellis
Rob Galford
Jennifer Johnston
John Lang

Virginia Lang
Rodger Mattlage
Dian Pekin
Donna Peterson
Polly Peterson
Kitsy Rothermel
Margaret Stewart
Dianne Weiss

NOVEMBER 2012 NEWSLETTER

The December Newsletter deadline is Friday, November 16, at noon.
The Newsletter will be published Tuesday, November 27.

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

Ministers' E-Mail:

Elaine Beth Peresluha: uurevdoc@gmail.com

Jenny M. Rankin: jrankin@firstparish.org

Tony Fisher: tfisher@firstparish.org

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

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, RE 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

FIRST PARISH GIVES THANKS **and We are First Parish**



**Saturday, November 10
5:30–9:00 pm**

**Join us for an old-fashioned church potluck
and an evening of lively conversation, singing
and games. There may even be a surprise or
two. All ages welcome!**

**Potluck—Bring something you like and want to
share (main dish, side dish, dessert).
Bring your own wine or beer (and an opener).
Soft drinks will be provided.**



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, food gift items, 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



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



Exciting products turn your portraits into cherished memories

Products may vary

SUNDAY FORUM

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

November 4th:

Tammie Foote:

“A Personal Window Into Tibet”

In 2011, we spent more than 5 weeks in Tibet, staying with a family in Lhasa, and experiencing Tibet through their eyes. We were included in a family pilgrimage, traveling 2,000 km across the plateau to spend a week in and around Xining. We spent another week traveling SW from Lhasa towards the border with India and back. Representing a not-for-profit organization, we visited orphanages, a medical clinic, community center and medical school. We saw a Tibet the tourist never knows is there. These are the photos, stories and observations of our experience of Tibet.

November 11th:

Due to a recent cancellation, we have not yet found a speaker for this date. Please check the “Sunday News” and the Sunday Forum Poster for updates.

November 18th:

Eric Chaisson:

“Energy, Ethics, and the Far Future: An Astrophysicist Speculates on Global Warming.”

Humans are now the only species on Earth able both to communicate culturally and to construct technologically. We are the only ones capable of knowing our past and worrying about our future. Just how wise we are, however, is an issue of considerable uncertainty.

This illustrated talk and discussion will explore the subject of energy, notably humankind’s use and abuse of it, as well as our future reliance upon it. Energy helped bring us forth, it now maintains our well being, and it will likely determine our destiny.

All things considered, within just a few centuries our civilization may find itself up against a fundamental limit to growth—an energy challenge that both drives growth yet checks growth. Ironically, humankind could soon be awash in too much energy--and with it inevitable heating and degradation of our planet. There is only one way out of this global paradox.

November 25th:

There will be only one service, so there is no Sunday Forum.

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: 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: Nov. 29 6:30–9:30 p.m. Fee: \$10/class/1 session

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 the benefits of meditation. 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 wisdom 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 one 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

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: Nov. 16, Dec. 21, Jan. 25 7:30 p.m.
- No fee required — just come and sing!

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: Nov. 9, Dec. 14 12:30–1:30 p.m. Fee: \$25 per class

Concord Area Humanists (CAH)

Rev. Stefan Jonasson to Speak Thursday, November 1

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 **Patrick Everett** at pne@aol.com.

Thursday November 1, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., Parish Hall
Social time at 7:00 p.m.; program begins at 7:15 p.m.

Future Speaker Meetings at First Parish

Wednesday, December 5 — Harvard Astrophysicist Dr. Eric J. Chaisson: “Cosmic Evolution and the Arrow of Time”

Wednesday, January 2, 2013 — Arlene Germaine: “Nursing Home Reform”

Wednesday, February 6, 2013 — Movie Night: *Creation* (tentative)

Future Discussion Meetings at Free Concord Library

Tuesday, November 18; Tuesday, December 18; Tuesday, January 15, 2013, and Tuesday, February 19, 2013 — meet at 7:00 p.m. in the Trustees Room. Hosted by **Paul Jameson** and **Maria Greene**. Enquiries, please, to pne@aol.com.

• 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 the 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).

• 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

• 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)

• 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.