



The Meeting House News

January 2, 2013
Volume 49, No. 5

REVERIES

In ancient Hebrew villages, wealthy landowners would open their fields to the people of the village after the crops were gathered. The entire community would walk the fields together, gathering up the grains spilled or overlooked by harvesters. The grains collected in this second harvest were known as “gleanings.” For those villagers who scoured the fields with persistence and patience, enough gleanings were discovered to sustain them for the coming winter.

Every year, January transitions us between the past and the future, offering both the opportunity to walk through another year completed, gleaning wisdom for the new year offering physical, emotional, spiritual and communal growth. Two thousand and twelve lies behind us, tilled, frozen, strewn with the spillage of labors, loss, blessings and imperfections. A new year stretches out before us, full of promise, unblemished by our errors, and not yet diminished by disappointments. Two thousand and thirteen lies perfect in its anticipation. When we take the time to review the past without judgment, intent on discovery rather than judgment, we prepare the soil of a new year for greater yield. First Parish has accomplished so much in 2012. You have faced loss. You have celebrated births. You have struggled with change, responded to needs, shared labor, and confronted difficult decisions. You have successfully drawn together to share an inter-im ministry and create your vision for the future. I am in awe of all you have managed and achieved. We have worked intentionally to arrive at this New Year, and its important preparations for your future.

As we move deeper into 2013, may our gleanings from the past inspire our eyes and strengthen our feet for mindful, forward motion. May our work and worship be informed by the past, but fresh for the future so that we continue to open hearts and minds to new possibility and greater appreciation. As we join hands in celebration of a new year, may we offer and receive comfort as well. May 2013 find us all stronger, more confident and compassionate, capable of renewing hope and sustaining faith.

Happy New Year,

Elaine

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- ◆ Forum Speaker Information
- ◆ Humanists Speaker 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.

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 bnorton@firstparish.org.

January – Fridays evenings at 7:00 and Sunday evenings at 7:30 – rehearsals for “The Family Way.”

January 12 at 9:00 a.m. – Photo Club

January 13 at 7:00 p.m. – Sarasa Chamber Music Ensemble

January 25 at 7:30 p.m. – Rise Up Singing, First Parish’s monthly song circle, open to singers, instrumentalists and listeners 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.

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

February: Friday, January 18
March: Friday, February 15
April: Friday, March 22

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

Editor’s Note: *We are delighted that writers are so enthusiastic, but gently suggest using fewer exclamation marks. A former editor’s rule was to use an exclamation mark only to announce the Second Coming — and only if He actually did come. Thanks.*

WORSHIP SERVICES AT FIRST PARISH

Sunday, January 6

***We Are All One* — Rev. Dr. Stephan Papa**

To feel a part of something larger than ourselves is empowering and spiritually fulfilling as individuals. As member congregations of an association, we can have that experience by feeling a part of the larger UU movement. First Parish congregation has an awesome record of providing leadership to our association of congregations. What does our relationship with the UUA do for us? What is the UUA doing for others? What will make our connection more effective and fulfilling? Our guest speaker is the Rev. Dr. Stephan Papa, a longtime parish minister, who now serves the UUA as Special Assistant to the President for Growth Funding.

9:00 & 11:00 – First Parish Choir

Sunday, January 13

***The Breath of Life* — Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha**

How did it get to be 2013 so fast? Are you like me — a bit breathless from the speed with which life spins us around? Today, we begin the year with a breath, a breath for life. Whether we practice pranayama, chant OM, tone or honor Ruah, in and out our lungs fill and empty. All we ever need to know about being alive, slowing down, or engaging can be captured in the simplicity of one mindful breath.

9:00 – First Parish Choir

11:00 – By Your Side Singers

Sunday, January 20

Happy Birthday Dr. —Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha

Each year, we are given a national holiday to remember and reflect on the work of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This year that holiday auspiciously coincides with the inauguration of President Barack Obama and the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. As we prepare to inaugurate a black president for a second term, it is time for both celebrating how far we have come, and acknowledging the work still left for us to continue.

One service at 10:00 a.m.

First Parish Choir, Children’s Choirs and Gospel Choir

Sunday, January 27

***Reproductive Justice: Expanding Our Social Justice Calling* — Tony Fisher**

Unitarian Universalists share a deep reverence for life in its complexity and diversity. And while we don’t agree on all the issues, we do affirm our commitment to the well-being of women and others, and their interest in requiring a public policy that reflects the breadth and depth of human experience. We begin our exploration of this 2012-2016 UUA Study/Action Issue by weaving together story, history and our theological callings.

9:00 – Lillian Braden, violin

11:00 – First Parish Choir

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, 978-369-9602, ext. 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.

Our Whole Congregation (OWC) Update

Thanks to all who participated in any of the meetings on November 4 and 18 and December 2. Our goal has been, and continues to be, to raise awareness of the importance of increasing the level of congregational participation in major decision making, and recognizing that regular congregational communication needs to become an integral part of our overall governance model.

One of our hopes is that informational materials pertaining to important issues that will be discussed at meetings in the future will always be made available to the congregation prior to the meeting date. We believe that making information available to the majority prior to meetings leading to major decisions is a positive governance model that builds trust and avoids frustration. The OWC is reviewing the questions raised at all three meetings and is committed to generating a comprehensive list of questions and suggestions that can be used by our governance groups to lead to better communication. We hope you will plan to attend the January 13 meeting at 12:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary, which will be led by the Governance Group.

OWC members: **Lillian Anderson, Lillian Braden, Steph Chiha, Dave Dawson, Cynthia Ellis, Val Holt, Jennifer Johnston, Ginger Lang, Rodger Mattlage, Dian Pekin, Donna Peterson, Polly Peterson, Kitsy Rothermel, Margaret Stewart, Dianne Weiss**

News from the Labyrinth Committee



At long last, the Labyrinth Committee is very happy to report that we are in final preparations for installing the new Labyrinth this coming spring! Following the open information session that we held in February of 2011, we did more research and have made adjustments to the design and materials; and have a new plan that we are very excited

about. Last year, we also worked with the Executive Team and the Standing Committee and obtained clear authority to go forward with the project. This fall, we obtained approval from both the Historic District Commission and the Natural Resources Commission for our planned spring installation. So, we are now in the process of developing the final specs and bid documents and hope to obtain bids early in the New Year. Stay tuned! Questions? Contact **Darien Smith** at 978-369-1471 or darien@smithquest.com.

Rev. Dr. Stephan Papa Leading January 6 Service

Our guest speaker, Rev. Dr. Stephan Papa, serves as Special Assistant to the President of the UUA for Growth Funding. Prior to assuming his current position, he served as the Senior Minister of the Main Line Unitarian Church in Devon, Pennsylvania, for five years, and the First Universalist Church in Denver for nineteen years. He also served congregations in Fort Lauderdale and Buffalo. He is a graduate of our Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago, and received his undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He organized and led extension committees for the Florida, Mountain/Desert and Joseph Priestley districts, and has helped sponsor three new UU congregations. He served on our Moderator's Congregations Come First Task Force, the UU Fund for a Just Society, the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, and in various roles in UU Ministers' Association chapters. He is the author of *The Last Man Jailed for Blasphemy*, a history of the Universalist minister Abner Kneeland. Stephan lives in Denver, Colorado, with his wife, Patty Prevost, who works as a gift officer. Their daughter Alexandra also lives in Metro-Denver and is a school counselor.

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.

Women's Retreats 2013 Registration

All First Parish women are invited to one of the three winter weekend Women's Retreats: two traditional "away" retreats the weekends of January 25-27 and February 1-3 at Senexet House in Connecticut, and a shorter retreat here at First Parish on the evening of March 1 and during the day of March 2 if there is enough interest. Registration forms are available in the church office or for download from www.firstparish.org/forms; or register at coffee hour on January 6. Please note that space is limited and retreats may fill before the registration deadline of January 6. Questions? Contact **Bozena Smith** at bozenasmith@mindspring.com.

WPA Luncheon Meeting — January 22

The Women's Parish Association Luncheon will be held on Tuesday, January 22. During the program, Ivan Massar of First Parish will give a slide show and talk about some of his photographs. Ivan has had a distinguished career as a photo-journalist and has photographed many of the famous and

Parish Notes

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infamous — from Mickey Mantle, Robert Frost, Martin Luther King and John Updike to George Lincoln Rockwell, head of the American Nazi Party. Additionally, he has a wonderful collection of photographs of Transylvania. 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. Contact the office or **Dian Pekin** at pekinc@comcast.net by January 18 for reservations and dietary requirements.



Beatles Night at First Parish! Saturday, February 9, 7:00 to 11:00 p.m.

Join **Robert Castillo** and **Rob Hamilton** for a fab evening of Beatles music. (This is the last 2012 First Parish Auction party.) Relive Beatlemania!

Twist and Shout the night away in the Parish Hall. Come enjoy the music, and sing and dance, as Rob and Rob and friends play your favorite Beatles songs.

Bring your instrument — sit in with the band!

Tickets are \$25/person (proceeds go to First Parish) and will be on sale soon in the church office.

Bring the Bouillon to Sunday Morning!

Be part of the team that cooks up the irresistible First Parish Bouillon! We need a crew at 9:00 to set up/serve and a crew at 11:00 to serve/clean up. Share a morning in the kitchen with friends and help to bring this traditional First Parish treat to warm the chilly days of January and February. Contact **Richard Keleher** at 978-944-2734 or kel@rkeleher.com.

Covenant of Right Relations for First Parish

Developing a Covenant of Right Relations is an important step in clarifying expectations and creating a safe environment for congregations.

—UUA website

A subcommittee of the Communication Initiative has formed to explore and develop a Covenant of Right Relations for First Parish. This covenant will articulate how we expect to behave toward each other in all of our personal interactions. The committee will investigate available models, offer workshops to First Parish

Gallery Display Coordinator Named

First Parish is happy to announce that **Marcia Schloss** will be taking over the responsibility of booking exhibits in the Sue Altshuler Art Galleries. All parishioners who are actively working with painting, photography, drawing, pastels or printmaking are encouraged to display their work at First Parish. All exhibits are noncompetitive and noncommercial. Exhibits are usually up for about a month, and there are actually two galleries available. The display area outside the Sanctuary and in the stairwell is Gallery A, and the area on the stage is Gallery B. You may request to display in only one or both of the galleries as they become available. Under certain circumstances, non-parishioners may also exhibit in the galleries, but the exhibits have to remain noncommercial.

Displays in the galleries are not necessarily limited to only artwork. There will eventually be a display about the progress of rebuilding the church's organ from its beginning to the completion. And pilgrimage trips by youth or adult groups to Transylvania or El Salvador may also be displayed in the galleries.

Please feel free to contact **Marcia Schloss** about the galleries at 978-371-2751 or marcialou@gmail.com.

groups, and seek input from all parishioners. Our objective is to offer a Covenant of Right Relations to a future Annual Meeting for adoption. If you would like to join us in this important work, please contact **Mark Richards** or **Lou Fackert**.

General Assembly Is June 19-23, 2013

It's not too early to start thinking about General Assembly, which will be held June 19-23 this year in Louisville, Kentucky. Plan a family vacation around the trip and leave extra travel time to visit the Muhammad Ali Center, Thomas Edison's house, the African American Heritage Center or maybe the Louisville Slugger Bat factory, or stroll through the largest Victorian neighborhood in the United States. Louisville is known as Possibility City and was declared a Compassionate City in 2012 for its community commitment to living out the Golden Rule. This GA is an opportunity for UU's to gather in ways to support our UU principles and to worship, witness, learn and work together. This is an opportunity for everyone to grow and experience Unitarian Universalism in ways that we do only when we're together in one large body. If you are interested in being a delegate at this GA from First Parish in Concord, contact **Dian Pekin** at pekinc@comcast.net.

FROM THE MINISTERIAL INTERN

What does the sacred look like to me?

Someone at divinity school asked me this questions recently and I'll admit to being a little slow on my feet in coming up with something that felt even remotely original. Of course after the conversation I thought of so many things, yet when I wrote them down they still seemed almost too trite.

I think of the first light in the morning when I open my eyes; the reds, pinks or yellows of the morning sky that I can see as I lie in bed. Even the darkness of really early morning or the grey of a November day can call forth the spirit.

I think of a particular stand of birches that I pass on my daily walk and how they change with each day and each season.

I think about spying on my grandfather when I was young and watching him in deep concentration as he worked over his potter's wheel.

I think of the birth of my sons and the vision of them in their mother's arms. I see the embracing circle of candlelight that we would have at our family meals.

I see the faces in my worship community raised in song or hope, or bowed in prayer or sorrow.

I see the faces of the children in rapt attention during a children's message.

I think of an all-church retreat where parishioners were paired up with someone they didn't know well and were spread around the church building talking in two's about their passion for the church.

Or the incredible vision the next day of almost 20 small groups working in total silence to create art sculptures out of recycled materials.

These things may be trite, but it is the particular light, angle, combination of colors or expressions that catch me by surprise and lead me outside of myself toward something much greater.

What does the sacred look like, or sound like, or feel like to you? ♦

Blessings for a Happy New Year!


Tony

MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

• We are SO excited despite working long hours. As you know, the Ministerial Search Committee is now operating in confidential mode, which continues until the spring. We do this to protect the integrity of our process and the identities of ministers who may not have told their current congregations that they are in search. However, we are eager to share with you what is going on!

• We have now completed review of all the ministerial records and packets and conducted initial interviews via Skype with the most promising candidates. During the months of January and February members of the committee host pre-candidate weekends, when we meet some of these candidates face-to-face, have in-depth conversations, show them around the area, and see each one preach in a neutral pulpit. This is the time for us to get to know each candidate well and for each of them to get to know us. We have met some truly wonderful ministers, and it's a gift to see so much talent in our denomination. ♦

• **John Boynton** (jb@firehousecapital.com)

• **Terry Rothermel** (terroth@verizon.net)

• **Caroline McCloy** (cmccloy51@aol.com)

• **Mary-Wren vanderWilden** (vanderwilden@verizon.net)

• **Rhoda Miller** (rhodamill@aol.com)

• **Fred Van Deusen** (fredvandeu@aol.com)

• **Toby Smith Ropeik** (tsr@tobyasmith.com)

• **Alec Walker** (alecwalker@aol.com)

PASTORAL CARE NEWS

From the Lay Ministers

As the New Year begins and we say goodbye to the holiday busyness and feel the absence of **Jenny Rankin's** caring energy, some of you may feel a bit lost or sad. Remember that the Pastoral Care Lay Ministers are willing and able to drop by for a visit or take a walk with you. Contact **Diane Clapp**, team leader of Lay Ministers at (d.clapp@comcast.net) or 781-257-5025.

Women Growing Older — It's Not Easy or So They Say

The Pastoral Care Council is sponsoring a new program for women over sixty-five who are exploring this part of their life's journey. We will come together in an attitude of openness — not knowing quite what will happen, yet daring to welcome new ideas and new experiences, and to offer support for one other. This program is limited to 10 participants who can commit to six sessions.

Beginning January 8, the sessions will meet every second and fourth Tuesday from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. in the Emerson Room at First Parish. Please sign up in advance by contacting Pastoral Care Advisory Council member **Berni Jenkins** at berni.jenkins@verizon.net, or **Sue Dobbie** at susandobbie@gmail.com.

First Tuesday Group

Pastoral Care has been mainly for parishioners who could benefit from a kind listening ear, food, transportation or other forms of personal and parish care. In late 2011, a group of people came together for several visioning sessions to brainstorm ways to meet the needs of the well but underserved parishioners,

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

The Lay Minister for December is **Diane Clapp** at d.clapp@comcast.net or 781-257-5025.

Ministers: **Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha** (uurevdoc@gmail.com) and ministerial intern **Tony Fisher** (tfisher@firstparish.org). Or call 978-369-9602.

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

Caring Connection: for meals or rides.

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

primarily older people who are more isolated or unable to participate in all the programs available at First Parish.

Invitations were mailed to the 150-plus parishioners over the age of sixty-five. Fifty-seven people came to the first gathering in April 2012. After a time to socialize and catch up with each other, the people met in small listening groups as part of a church-wide process. This gave many people an opportunity to be heard and their needs made known to the Parish Interim Team (PIT). A second meeting brought people together to make a list of programs and services they would like to see offered. The First Tuesday Group was formed with the assistance of **Rev. Jenny Rankin, Pat Ellis, Dave and Beth Dawson, Becky Blodgett, Berni Jenkins** and **Mary and David Clark**.

Programs have included a video and memories of the Coconut Grove fire, and a group of seniors shared their personal World War II experiences. After a summer hiatus, the group watched the movie *Chariots of Fire* and enjoyed a special performance of "A Child's Christmas in Wales," beautifully read by **Bill Maxwell**. All seniors are invited to the next meeting on February 5 to learn about housing options and visiting with one another.

— **Berni Jenkins**, Pastoral Care Advisory Council

SENIOR YOUTH NEWS: THE HEARD

Happy New Year mi amigos! 2012 was a big building year for the Heard community and it has been a pleasure to grow with you all. We are moving into this new year with good energy and a vibrant youth group. The Heard wrapped up 2012 with "The Mayan End of the World Lock-In Alumni Party." We sang some Native American chants, ran wild around the church and celebrated being alive together in good spirit.



I want to thank all the great chaperones who have supported the group this year. Your involvement is very much appreciated!

As many of you know I am working hard with Heartbeat on the Israeli-Palestinian Youth Music Movement. I greatly appreciate the support from the First Parish community with this mission and I am honored to receive a SAC Grant to help bring Heartbeat to Concord on February 23. Heartbeat empowers Arab and Jewish artists and the world around them by exemplifying the strength of our human voice and creative collaboration in the face of adversity. Can't wait to bring Heartbeat to Concord!

May we carry the light with us everyday and sing loud and often! ♦

Yours truly,

— *Avi Salloway*

Youth Program Director

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Hand to Hand: Belonging, Membership, and Building the Beloved Community

During this transitional time in the life of First Parish, we are trying new and different ways of being in community together. At each step along the way we pause and consider how we want to be together. We consider whether the changes or adaptations are working to fulfill the mission of the congregation.

One change came at the request of the worship planning team: I was asked to open Sunday worship services with a warm welcome and encouraged to streamline the announcements and invitations. For a couple of months now I have greeted you each Sunday. It warms my heart to look around the Sanctuary and see you. It is a joy to be part of this congregation! Last week the worship planning team and I discussed skipping the verbal invitations altogether. We wondered how that would work. One benefit of this change was that no other part of the worship service was rushed or condensed. Both the 9:00 and 11:00 o'clock services ended on time, allowing parents and children to arrive in the Parish Hall closer to the same time, and the post-worship reflection group had a few more minutes to share.

The Congregational Life Council (CLC) is up and running. The CLC is open to anyone, and is the fluid go-to group for community building. It acts as a sounding board for ideas to build community, assist event planning as needed, and maintain a wide view of congregational life at First Parish. The council will help with scheduling. The council works from a set agenda in order to balance theoretical discussion with action plans, and will happily add agenda items a couple of days before a planned meeting. The CLC meets on the second Tuesday of each month, from 6:15 to 8:00 p.m. The next meeting will be held on January 8. Please contact **Kate Svrcek** at katesvrcek@hotmail.com, or **Twinkle Manning** at twinklemanning@gmail.com, for the address of the off-site, child-friendly meeting location or to be added to the agenda.

Questions and Answers

At the end of the New to Unitarian Universalism class offered in November I asked the participants to anonymously write out a couple of questions on index cards. I promised to answer the questions here. However, I passed a couple of the social action questions on to **Bethany Lowe**, Director of Social Action.

Where does the name "First Parish" come from? The answer to this question may be found on the website: <http://www.firstparish.org/cms/about-first-parish/history-of-fp>. Someone on the Archives Committee might be able to answer this question as well: <http://www.firstparish.org/cms/committees>.

Can you be an atheist and still be a Unitarian? Yes, absolutely! Perhaps you might like to attend a Sunday Forum or event sponsored by the Humanist Council. Or begin a spiritual affinity group with other people who identify as atheists.

Are the Transylvanian Unitarian churches more theistic than the Unitarian Universalist congregations in America? I do not know, but perhaps someone on the Partner Church Committee can answer this question: <http://www.firstparish.org/cms/committees/partner-congregation>.

Are some UU churches in the United States more traditionally Christian than First Parish in Concord seems to be? Yes, there is great diversity among congregations.

How does this congregation act out its heterodox beliefs in the secular world? (Send your answers to this question to me at rbaker@firstparish.org for inclusion in the next Meeting House News.)

I am available if you have thoughts, questions or feedback. ♦

In faith,
—Rachel Baker

Director of Congregational Life

Congregational Life Events

Each month in this box, the Congregational Life Council will list events in the upcoming month that offer opportunities to participate in the ministry of building beloved community. Unless otherwise noted, questions may be directed to rbaker@firstparish.org.

January 12 – Multigenerational First Parish Square Dance — Coming very soon to the Parish Hall near you! Dance! Celebrate! Laugh! Bring a dessert and beverage to share! Look for e-mailed announcements and the yellow *Sunday News* for more information.

Every Sunday – Post-Worship Reflection Time — Right Balcony in the Sanctuary — after the 11:00 o'clock worship service is a wonderful opportunity to meet with a small group of people for deep conversation. The discussion ends at 12:30 p.m. For more information, contact **Jim Snyder-Grant** at jimsg@newview.org.

The Congregational Life Council and its meetings are open to all members and friends of the First Parish community. If you would like to add a discussion or action item or event suggestion to the next meeting agenda, please send your request to **Kate Svrcek** at katesvrcek@hotmail.com or **Twinkle Manning** at twinklemanning@gmail.com.

MUSINGS

*Yonder come day, day is a breakin'
Yonder come day, o my soul.
Yonder come day, day is a breakin'
Sun is a risin' in my soul.*

These words, greeting the dawn of a new year, are sung on Watch Night, a New Year's Eve religious tradition in some African American communities. This tradition may have roots as early as the 15th century with the Moravian Church, in what is now the Czech Republic. For those

ancient people of faith, Watch Night was an opportunity to renew their covenant with God at the turning of the year. It was a ritual of repentance and renewal, reminiscent of the liturgy of Rosh Hashanah in the Jewish tradition.

Through the Moravian's missionary activities in the 18th century, Watch Night spread to the Methodist church and, after a schism over racial discrimination, to the African

Methodist Episcopal denomination, a sect founded by freed slaves in Philadelphia. The tradition of Watch Night continued into the 19th century in African American communities, both free and enslaved.

Among slave communities in the American south, Watch Night had a particularly somber meaning. Customarily, white property owners gathered on the last day of the calendar year, anticipating payment of debts and redistribution of property on January 1. For slave families this presented the very real prospect of separation from spouses and children on the first day of the New Year.

However, the tone of the Watch Night observance transformed on the eve of January 1, 1863, the day the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect. Tradition tells us that faithful people of African descent gathered that night, waiting out the night between bondage and freedom in prayer and in gratitude. *Yonder Come Day*, was chanted while the congregation waited for the sun to rise in the New Year and freedom. The chant has been preserved in what is thought to be an authentic version by the community of the Georgia Sea Islands. An arrangement by Clif Hardin for four-part choir is a favorite of the First Parish Choir.

January 1, 2013 marks the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. On our first Sunday gathered as a community, January 6, the choir will sing *Yonder Come Day* to celebrate the dawn of the New Year, and the potential for renewal it holds for this congregation. We will also sing it to honor this anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation and the path toward racial equity upon which it set this nation.

Day is a breakin' in our souls. Happy New Year. ♦

— *Beth Norton*

Music Director

PARTNER CONGREGATION COMMITTEE

July 2013 Family Pilgrimage to Székelykeresztúr. With the holiday season behind us and next summer racing toward us, planning for the July 2013 Family Pilgrimage to Transylvania begins in earnest. This ten-day visit promises to be a great opportunity to get to know the members of our Keresztúri partner congregation, see interesting cultural and historical sites, and cement further our partnership with the Unitarian congregation in Székelykeresztúr. We'll soon start holding monthly meetings to help us prepare for the trip, bond as a group, explore Transylvanian history and culture, and learn Hungarian.

It's not too late to join us! There is still some space available for families of middle and high school youth, as well as high school teens sponsored to travel with another family. Tentative dates for the trip are approximately July 18 to July 29, and the cost per traveler will be about \$1800-\$2000 (including airfare, ground transportation, lodging, and most meals). So far, several families have committed to the trip — including both previous travelers (**Rodger Mattlage** and **Cam Vilain**) and new travelers (**Suzie Weaver** and **Pam Howell**) — so this will be a diverse group of travelers! For more information or to register, please contact **Suzie Weaver** at skatesuzie@aol.com (those registering are asked to provide a deposit of \$100 per person).

Student Sponsorship Program. For many years, we at First Parish have provided support to our partner congregation by sponsoring students of financial need at the Unitarian high school in Székelykeresztúr. A few hundred dollars makes a big difference in the education of a Keresztúri youth, and we have 15 new students beginning this year! For more information, please contact **Dana Booth**, our Student Sponsorship program coordinator, at dana.a.booth@gmail.com or by phone at 978-369-5702.

Wanted: Laptops! If you (or someone you know) has a laptop that is no longer being used, please consider donating it to the PCC so that we can pass it on to the Unitarian high school in Székelykeresztúr. These laptops are refurbished by Ed Sterling (ed@edsterling.com) before they're delivered, so the donated laptops can be outdated or even no longer working!

Join the PCC effort! We encourage you to join us as we meet each month on a Thursday evening over dinner in member homes. Our next meeting is January 10 at 6:30 p.m.; please call me for details. ♦

Boldog új évet! "Best wishes in the New Year!"

— **Ken Estabrook**, PCC Chair
ken.estabrook@gmail.com

STANDING COMMITTEE NEWS AND NOTES

Published on January 2, this newsletter marks the start of a new calendar year and the start of the exact second half of our church year. Halfway means that the Standing Committee (SC) has held six of its twelve scheduled monthly meetings. Time to look backward and forward.

Looking backward:

In July and August, before the September start of the church year, the SC launched a new series of year-round meetings that it had previously committed to in 2011-12. We added a “governing policy” discussion to each month’s agenda. (See August newsletter for details.)

In September, in addition to its regular monthly meeting, the SC met twice to complete its every-four-year task of refreshing our Strategic Ends. In two more meetings, we absorbed **Elaine Peresluha**’s response to our May charge to create a plan for a revised organizational structure that would allow the church to live within its means. (See the November newsletter for details.)

Starting in September, the SC held six listening sessions to present these ends, to present an analysis of important data related to church finance and structure, and to begin to process **Rev. Jenny Rankin**’s resignation, which caught many by surprise. (See the website for details.)

In October, **Rev. Elaine Peresluha** and **Melissa Gallo**, with the help of several generous parishioners and a matching-funds program, closed the gap in the church’s June 2012 approved budget.

In November, we began making decisions to adopt some of the organizational structure recommendations. (See the December newsletter for details.)

In November and December, many members of the committee attended three, 1.5-hour congregational discussions to address concerns about governance, transparency, and decision making: one with Stefan Jonasson from the UUA, and two organized by an ad hoc group calling itself “Our Whole Congregation.”

In December, **Rev. Elaine Peresluha** outlined the organizational changes she hopes to accomplish by June of this year, in preparation for a new minister’s arrival. These goals are congruent with First Parish’s new Mission and Strategic Ends, especially the church’s strategic realignment to its financial realities. (Again, see the December newsletter for details.)

Looking ahead:

At the January meeting, the SC will formalize its own goals for this June and will also begin to consider its goals for June of 2014.

In January, February and March, we are looking forward to continued congregational discussions that will involve the SC and parishioners who have been exploring governance. The SC is developing a plan to hold listening sessions twice a year to discuss issues of importance to the congregation.

Also, from January to March, budget planning and the annual campaign will be unfolding.

The SC is looking forward, with the rest of the congregation, to meeting a candidate to become our new senior minister during a week of events from April 28 through May 5. (Mark your calendars.)

The SC’s goal is to have the June meeting warrant available in early May. Some warrant articles may lead to additional meetings to discuss and explain important topics before the June meeting.

Ongoing news:

As always, the monthly Standing Committee meetings are open to all First Parish members. We meet on the second Sunday of the month from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. at First Parish. Most SC members participate in other activities at First Parish. Please share your opinions as we try to represent you in formulating church governing policy.

The SC looks forward to a year of continued change and healthy growth.

—**Jack Nevison**, Chair of the Standing Committee

We can be reached at: **Suzie Weaver**, skatesuzie@aol.com, **Jake Nunes**, jake_nunes@shs.org, **Mark Russell Prior**, mark.russell.prior@comcast.net, **Suzanne Lowe**, slowe@expertisemarketing.com, **Kate Crosby**, kate_crosby@newview.org, **Andrea Siani**, Andrea.Siani@gmail.com, **Alec Walker**, alecwalker@aol.com, **Gretchen Nelson**, ghnelson@me.com, **Patty Popov**, PPopov@nichols-pratt.com, **John Nevison**, jmn@newleafpm.com.

In December, our Coming of Age group went to Boston to experience CityReach. CityReach is part of Ecclesiastic Ministries, and it connects those of us who are sheltered with those who are homeless. It is like Reality TV without the TV part. As part of their Coming of Age experience, our teens practice social justice work. They collected clothing and food and underwear and brought it to the city. In return, they gathered stories and insight into what it means to be homeless. This is not something they see on the streets of Concord.

The next evening, I greeted them when they returned to First Parish. They piled out of cars in the damp, late afternoon. Now, teens have a way of hiding. Hiding in hoods. Hiding behind hair. Hiding in video games. But not this night. These teens were alive. They were shining. They actually sounded like children again. These kids were not sullen and dark, but instead awake and full of energy. They were telling stories of things that were real. They had seen real people living without homes. They had cared for them, fed them, provided clothing for them. These teens experienced the power of letting go of the self, and reaching for something bigger, something real. Suddenly, each teen seemed free of worrying about fitting in. Instead, they all “fit in” because they were all doing the work of social justice together. They, in fact, were ministering to people who needed them. They were listening to the homeless tell their stories. They were feeling compassion. They were present. They felt needed.

Not just the ordained minister. We all minister when we are present for one another. And when we are, we feel alive. These teens were glowing, not hiding. I believe they were glowing because they felt the power of ministry and it was in their own backyard. ♦

—Pam Howell

Director of Religious Education

Thank You to All of the Holiday Craft Elves!

The Holiday Craft Workshop was a huge success! Special thanks go out to **Marilyn Lowitt, Jan Goddard-Taylor and Patty Popov**. They organized, communicated



January 2013 RE Calendar

Sun., Jan. 6	Little RE – Regular RE for Babies–4 years Spirit Play RE – K–1st Grade Middle RE – 2nd–5th Grades (Emerson Room) 6th/7th Neighboring Activists (Brooks Room) 9th Coming of Age, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.
Sun., Jan. 13	Little RE – Regular RE for Babies–4 years Spirit Play – RE K–1st Grades (Lower Level) Middle RE – 2nd–5th Grades (Emerson Room) 6th/7th Neighboring Activists (Brooks Room) 9th Coming of Age at 5 p.m.
Sun. Jan. 20	Little RE – Regular RE for Babies–4 years <u>Intergenerational Service at 10 a.m. ONLY</u>
Sun., Jan. 27	Little RE – Regular RE for Babies–4 years Spirit Play RE – K–1st Grade Middle RE – 2nd–5th Grades (Emerson Room) 6th Neighboring Activists (Brooks Room) 7th Neighboring Faiths (Brooks Room) 9th Coming of Age, 11a.m.–2 p.m.

and crafted their way through October and November, and it showed. This event is just what our faith community needed during this interim time. Everyone showed up: kids, babies, teens, parents, college students, college grads, young adults, old(er) adults ... ALL of us. It was beautiful.

Second to Fifth Grade Workshop Rotation

This term we have been exploring wintry earth-centered traditions. It has been beautiful, with candles, corn goddesses, Yule logs, dreidels and baking cookies. It all happened here. In January, we will delve into hibernation and making cozy habitats for animals. We will also be exploring such places for our spiritual selves. Places where we keep wonder, awe and beauty alive and well.

During the Winter Term, we will be exploring several of the world’s great religions — Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism. We will be looking at these religious practices through the lens of diet. Why do certain religions restrict or promote certain ways of eating? This will be a very interesting approach toward understanding other faith traditions, while inspiring us, as Unitarian Universalists, to be aware of our own bodies and how we can keep them healthy so they can house our souls for as long as possible.

RE News

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January 6 – Week 6 of the Holiday Term: Earth-Centered Practices

January 13 – Week 7 of the Holiday Term: Earth-Centered Practices

January 20 – Intergenerational Worship – ONE Grand Service at 10 a.m.

January 27 – Week 1 of the Winter Term: Wisdom from the World's Religions

February 3 – Week 2 of the Winter Term: Wisdom from the World's Religions

Seventh Grade Neighboring Faiths

We are excited to begin a new term of our important Neighboring Faiths program. This year, this program will unfold under the leadership of **Jan Power** and teachers **Rena Hedeman, Alane Wallis, John Petersen, and Amy Capofreddi** for the Winter Term.

This program is not about “shopping for a new faith,” but rather strengthening our understanding of Unitarian Universalism by understanding neighboring faith traditions. By growing our appreciation of others' faiths, we can better compare and contrast our own. What makes us unique? Are we a religion? Do we exclude? How do we include? What is the critical essence of being a Unitarian Universalist in today's world? These are big questions; and by making visits to our neighbors, we begin the work of making our world a place of peaceful tolerance and loving appreciation.

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:

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 Grades Winter Term, Animals: Wednesday, January 16, 7:30–9:00 p.m.

6th Grades Spring Term, Mud: 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.

WOMEN'S NEWS

Rise Up and Call Her Name Course Begins in January

In January 2013, **Bozena Smith** and “**Twinkle**” **Marie Manning** will begin cofacilitating “Rise Up and Call Her Name: A Woman-Honoring Journey into Global Earth-based Spirituality.”

Those with strong feelings in favor of environmental activism, women's rights and gender justice, as well as a thirst to deepen their understanding of ancient history, will resonate with this course offering created by Unitarian Universalist author Liz Fisher. Participants explore stories, legends and folklore from various cultures. The interactive exploration begins in the Middle East, and follows on to the Mediterranean (Pre-Hellenic Region), Africa (Sub-Saharan, Egypt and West Africa), African American,



MesoAmerican, Native American, China, Japan, Pacific Islands and India. This journey of cultural awareness and personal spiritual development also includes music, dance and craft making.

The “Rise Up and Call Her Name” course takes place at the Wright Tavern on Wednesday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon, from January 9 to April 17 (includes a snow date), with a \$40 fee for materials. All interested persons should RSVP immediately, as space is limited. E-mail: BozenaSmith@mindspring.com or TwinkleManning@gmail.com.

The Women's AM/PM Book Group

The first book of the New Year for the Women's AM/PM Book Group is *The Unlikely Disciple: A Sinner's Semester at America's Holiest University* by Kevin Roose. The evening session will be Monday, January 28, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. at the home of **Steph Chiha** (472 Bedford Street, Concord). The morning session will be Tuesday, January 29, 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.

Other books and dates for 2013 are as follows:

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 October, my colleague, **Rachel Baker** collected questions from participants in her New to UU class. One of the questions she received was “Does Unitarian Universalism provide a sufficient sense of identity (social identity) to organize and motivate people?”

This is a great question! One that I can only attempt to answer here.

Our faith calls us to follow a path that meets our individual spiritual needs. Yet I believe we are all seeking the same truth. We have a common vision that drives our actions. To me, the statement that best captures this common vision is the idea that we are all living, acting, and worshipping “on the side of love.” This phrase is borrowed from a song in our teal hymnal, *Singing the Journey*, and the Unitarian Universalist Association’s public advocacy movement, “Standing on the Side of Love.” I believe that this movement is forming a UU social identity — not just for advocacy work, but for everything we do.

A few years ago, I attended a large Standing on the Side of Love rally. My friend Nancy came to the rally with a big yellow campaign sign on which she had crossed out the word “Standing” and written “Wheeling” above it. She was beaming the whole day as she strolled through the streets of Boston in her wheelchair, “Wheeling on the Side of Love” sign in hand.

Is the phrase “Standing on the Side of Love” perfect? No. Does the message of this advocacy movement reflect a social identity that sufficiently defines Unitarian Universalists? I think so. ♦

In faith,

—*Bethany Lowe*

blowe@firstparish.org

Presentation on International UU Communities — January 15 at 7:00 p.m.

Rev. Eric Cherry, the International Office director at the UUA, will be coming to First Parish to speak on some of the international UU communities and opportunities for engagement. The UUA’s International Office works with UU communities and organizations in over 20 countries around the world. Come join us to learn about these exciting programs!

Save the Date of February 1: “Why Fracking for Natural Gas Must Be Stopped”

Sociologist and organic farmer Dr. Stephen Cleghorn will speak at First Parish in Concord on Friday, February 1, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.. Cleghorn runs a certified organic farm and goat dairy in Jefferson County, Pennsylvania, which sits above the huge Marcellus Shale formation targeted for drilling for natural gas. Because his farm might be directly impacted by hydraulic fracking, he has researched the topic extensively. Cleghorn is a dynamic speaker and a well-informed critic of the industry. Come hear about what fracking is, how it affects the surrounding area and communities, and the arguments for and against it. A discussion and reception will follow the talk. This event is hosted by the Environmental Leadership Team at First Parish and cosponsored by ConcordCAN! and other local organizations. Save the date now, and stay tuned for further details.

March 3 Homelessness Forum — Save the Date

The Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness is pleased to announce that its annual forum on ending homelessness will be held at First Parish on Sunday, March 3, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. This year’s topic is “How Homelessness and Housing Insecurity Affect the Neurological and Overall Development of Young Children.” The keynote speaker will be Christina Murphy from the National Center on Family Homelessness. Ms. Murphy directs the organization’s policy and communications efforts and oversees the Campaign to End Child Homelessness. Additional speakers from state agencies are currently being approached. There will be break-out sessions with state legislators. For additional information, or to assist in planning for the forum, please contact **Jane Blumberg** at 978-369-8520.

Amnesty Meeting Topics to Include Guantanamo Anniversary

The 11th anniversary of the opening of the prison at Guantanamo Bay will be among subjects discussed at the regular monthly meeting of Group 15, the Concord-area Amnesty group, on Tuesday, January 15, at 7 p.m., in the Greeley Room. A range of other human rights issues will also be discussed, and preprinted letters on behalf of prisoners of conscience will be signed and addressed. All are welcome. For more information, visit www.aigroup15.org or e-mail **Lorraine Loviglio** at loviglio@rcn.com.

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.



JANUARY 2013 CALENDAR

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

Every Week...

Gospel Choir	Sunday	10:00 a.m.
Forum	Sunday	10:30 a.m.
Reflection Group	Sunday	12:10 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>Buddhist Group</i>	Thursday	7:30 p.m.
Men's Group	Saturday	7:30 a.m.

Wed Jan 2	4:00	Shawl Ministry	Wed Jan 16	9:30	<i>Rise Up and Call Her Name</i>
	6:00	Arts Council	Thu Jan 17	9:30	<i>Music Together</i>
Thu Jan 3	7:30	By Your Side Singers		7:30	By Your Side Singers
Fri Jan 4	7:30	Play Rehearsal	•	Fri Jan 18	9:30 <i>Music Together</i>
Sun Jan 6	4:00	Spring Show	•		7:00 Jewish Awareness Group
	7:00	Environmental Leadership Team	•		7:30 Play Rehearsal
	7:00	Play Rehearsal	•	Sun Jan 20	12:30 Trustee Meeting
Tue Jan 8	9:00	WPA Board Meeting	•		3:00 Needle Workers Group
	1:30	Women Growing Older	•		7:00 Play Rehearsal
	6:30	<i>T'ai Chi</i>	•	Tue Jan 22	9:30 <i>Music Together</i>
	7:00	Alternative Worship Service	•		11:30 WPA Luncheon
Wed Jan 9	9:30	<i>Rise Up and Call Her Name</i>	•		1:30 Women Growing Older
	12:00	Pastoral Care Advisory Council	•		6:30 <i>T'ai Chi</i>
	1:30	Pastoral Care Lay Ministers	•	Wed Jan 23	9:30 <i>Rise Up and Call Her Name</i>
	6:30	Concord Area Humanists	•	Thu Jan 24	9:30 <i>Music Together</i>
Thu Jan 10	9:30	<i>Music Together</i>	•		7:00 <i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>
Fri Jan 11	9:30	<i>Music Together</i>	•	Fri Jan 25	9:30 <i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>
	7:30	Play Rehearsal	•		9:30 <i>Music Together</i>
Sat Jan 12		Photography Club	•		First Women's Retreat – off-site
Sun Jan 13	12:30	Communications Team	•		7:30 <i>Rise Up Singing</i>
	12:30	Governance Discussion	•		7:30 Play Rehearsal
	5:30	Sarasa	•	Sun Jan 27	7:00 Play Rehearsal
	6:30	Standing Committee	•	Tue Jan 29	9:30 <i>Women's Book Group</i>
	7:00	Play Rehearsal	•		9:30 <i>Music Together</i>
Tue Jan 15	9:30	<i>Music Together</i>	•		6:30 <i>T'ai Chi</i>
	6:30	<i>T'ai Chi</i>	•	Wed Jan 30	9:30 <i>Rise Up and Call Her Name</i>
	7:00	Amnesty Group	•	Thu Jan 31	7:00 <i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>
	7:00	International UU Communities	•		
			•		
			•		

JANUARY 2013 NEWSLETTER

The February Newsletter deadline is Friday, January 18, at noon.
The Newsletter will be published Wednesday, January 29.

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

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
Melissa Perdue Gallo, Business Manager

Tony Fisher, Intern Minister

Rachel Baker, Director of Congregational Life
Bethany Lowe, Director of Social Action

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 Administrator

Avi Salloway, Youth Program Director

Elizabeth Norton, Music Director

Eric Huenneke, Parish Organist

Anderson Manuel, Youth Gospel Choir Director

Gail Carey, Children's Choir Director

David Huston, Music Director Emeritus

Dan Holin, Jericho Road Executive Director

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 in Concord, Concord, Massachusetts

January 13th, 10:30 – Noon:

Mark Howell:

Concord's Municipal Fiber Network; Smart Grid and Broadband

“What would you do if you had a gigabit of Internet speed in your home? Would it change the way you live or work?” These are the questions that Google's Fiber Project is exploring. But did you know that the Town of Concord has a network that is capable of delivering similar levels of performance?

Mark Howell is Chief Information Officer for the Town of Concord. He has responsibility for the the Town's Information Systems which includes the Fiber Optic network and Smart Grid applications. Mark has over 30 years of experience in the Information Systems management. He has worked with and for leading technology companies such as IBM, Lotus, CNBC and Disney.



The Town, through the Concord Municipal Light Plant (CMLP), recently completed construction of a town wide fiber optic network. This network is already in use for Smart Grid. Its high capacity opens up a wide range of opportunities for conservation, managing resources such as electricity and water, creating competition in the local broadband market and spurring innovation in our community. This presentation and demonstration will include the latest news on the Smart Grid project and will provide an opportunity for discussion about possibilities for the present and future of Concord as a connected community.

February 3rd, 10:30 – Noon:

Stephen Cleghorn:

“Moral Dimensions of America’s Commitment to Fossil Fuels.”

Dr. Cleghorn, worked for many years as a sociologist in non-profit organizations. For the past seven years, he has owned and operated an organic farm and goat dairy in Jefferson County, Pennsylvania that sits above the huge Marcellus Shale formation targeted for drilling for natural gas. He has become a passionate advocate for stopping hydraulic fracking, which he regards as “a corporate-sponsored form of organized crime perpetrated upon the people and democracy of Pennsylvania.” He will be speaking at First Parish on that topic on Friday evening, February 1st. On Sunday morning, he will broaden his scope to how the whole fossil fuel



industry controls American energy policy, resulting in unthinkable damage to the planet. He will challenge us to express our moral values by joining a movement designed to get us off of fossil fuels.

Upcoming Sunday Forum Topics:

2/10/12	Jill Colpak:	Travels in Africa
2/24/12	Kathleen Elcox:	Eldercare 24/7
3/3/12	Morgan Thompson:	"What's in Your Genes?: Making Sense of Genetic Information."
3/10/12	Peter Mitchell:	First Parish Governance

Concord Area Humanists (CAH)

Arlene Germaine, " Nursing Home Reform, Grassroots Activism for Human Values"

Wednesday, January 9, 2013. 7:00 to 8:45 PM in Parish Hall

Arlene Germain, President of the Mass. Advocates for Nursing Home Reform, will discuss promising initiatives bringing major improvements to nursing homes across the nation and throughout Mass.

Improvements that are moving nursing homes to the kind of places where people want to live and to work. Arlene will talk about grassroots opportunities to have a voice in these changes that incorporate Humanistic values.



The topic is valuable--and difficult--for all of us who may have a parent in a nursing home or where we might go in our later years.

Arlene's message is that life in nursing homes is changing, and there's much you can do to take control!

Arlene Germaine is co-founder and President of the Mass. Advocates for Nursing Home Reform

(MANHR.org). Founded in 2000, it is the sole statewide consumer group that works to improve the quality of care and quality of life for Mass. nursing home residents.

ALSO: CAH Discussion group will meet in Concord Public Library 7:00 PM on Tuesday January 15, 2013. Subject TBD.

All are welcome - Inquiries to pne@aol.com.



for Spiritual Renewal

The Wright Tavern Center at First Parish in Concord

An Oasis in Our Busy Lives • January 2013

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..

WINTER/SPRING 2013 COURSE BEGINNING NOW REGISTER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Rise Up and Call Her Name

“Rise Up and Call Her Name” presents a textured spiritual inquiry focused on the Sacred Feminine. Join in this woman-honoring journey into global Earth-based spirituality to learn about goddesses from a variety of traditions, hear and tell personal stories, create sacred art, participate in rituals, discuss questions in feminist spirituality, and engage in personal discovery together. Needs 14 participants, so please express an interest ASAP. Instructors: **Twinkle Manning** and **Bozena Smith**

Wednesdays: Jan. 9–April 17 (includes a snow date)
9:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m. \$40 fee for materials

Hatha Yoga

This series offers a combination of gentle movement and deepening poses to relax mind, body and spirit. Focus on alignment and go at your own pace. For experienced yogis or the brand new learner who would like to experience yoga. Instructor: **Natalie Bartlett**

4 Sundays: Jan. 13, 27; Feb. 3 4:00–5:00 p.m. Fee: \$60

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**

3 Sundays: April 21, 28; May 5 4:00–6:00 p.m. Fee: \$20

How To Become a Seasoned Soul

Gain resilience and embrace the spiritual aspects of growing older through reconnection with the life-giving experiences, wisdom and relationships gained over time. Themes include how to bear change, grieve, deepen relationships, take risks, and serve others with joy and fulfillment — and of course, mortality. Instructor: **Eliza Blanchard**

4 Tuesdays: March 5, 12, 19, 26 12:00–2:00 p.m. Fee: \$135; plus \$12 for book if desired

Bringing Forth Joy: Somatic

Somatic Education in the tradition of Thomas Hanna is a natural, gentle way to end chronic pain, relieve stress, and restore freedom of movement. A system of neuromuscular education (mind/body awareness), somatic movement enables deep muscle relaxation, freedom from pain, and more comfortable movement. Instructor: **Nadine Kraman**

8 Wednesdays: March 20–May 8 7:30 – 8:30 p.m. Fee: \$120

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. (If there is not sufficient pre-registration, class may be cancelled. Please call ahead if you plan to drop in.) Instructor: **Jai Kaur Annamaria San Antonio**

12 Thursdays: Jan. 24–April 12 12:00–1:15 p.m. Fee: \$180 for full series \$18/session drop-in

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. Use these creations for reflection, to intuitively explore life's questions. Register for all 4 classes or individually. Instructor: **Tamasin Foote**

4 Thursdays: Jan. 17, Feb. 21, Mar. 21, Apr. 18 6:30–9:30 p.m.,
Fee: \$10 per class

The Artists Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity

This inspiring series is based on the principles and practices of the classic work by Julia Cameron. This is a class for anyone who wants to live more creatively — no artistic experience required or expected. Clarify passions and engage in a spirited, creative process. Instructor: **Kim Childs**

4 Thursdays: Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Fee: \$130

CONTINUING OR REPEATING COURSES

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**

Wednesdays: 9:30–11:00 a.m. Thursdays: 7:30–9:00 p.m.

Donations gratefully accepted

T'ai Chi and Qi Gong

T'ai chi is a gentle flowing exercise that will help you build and circulate energy. Based on teachings from China, we will do Qi Gong movements that help you retain flexibility in all your joints. Students will also learn the Hwa Yu tai chi form, a series of connected movements that is like a slow-motion dance.

Research shows that tai chi and qi gong improve stability, improve immune function, and create many of the benefits of meditation. If you've tried meditation, but find it hard to sit still, tai chi and qi gong may be the way to give yourself those benefits while gently moving your body. No experience is necessary. Wear comfortable clothing. Instructor: **Sue Wood**. Sue has been practicing Hwa Yu t'ai chi since 1984. She was taught by David Zucker. She currently continues her t'ai chi and qi gong study with Dr. Yang Yang of the Center for Tai Chi Studies (<http://www.chentaiji.com/>).

8 Tuesdays: Session 1: Jan. 8, 15, 22, 29; Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26

Session 2: March 5, 12, 19, 26; April 2, 9, 23, 30 Cost: \$120

Session 3: May 7, 14, 21, 28 Cost: \$60 6:30–8:00 p.m.

Rise Up Singing

This informal monthly musical gathering of adults and children provides participants with an opportunity to sing and share traditional and contemporary folk songs, spirituals, hymns, rounds and chants in fellowship. Singers of all ages and experience are welcome. Bring a copy of *Rise Up Singing* if you own one.

Individuals are encouraged to bring instruments if they wish.

Led by: **Beth Norton** and **Others**.

Beth believes in the power of music to express what is beyond words, to deepen our spiritual experience and to build community. As a singer, conductor, violinist and folk musician, Beth enjoys making music in a wide variety of styles with people of all ages and abilities. No fee required — just come and sing!

Fridays: Jan. 25, Feb. 22, March 22, April 26, May 31, June 28
7:30 p.m.

T'ai Ji and Qi Gong

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

- Fridays: Jan. 4–25 12:30–1:30 p.m. Fee: \$25 per class

The First Parish Women's AM/PM Book Group

- The dates below are for Monday evening, 7:30–9:00 p.m. and Tuesday morning, 9:30–11:00 a.m. There is no fee for either group.

- **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

- **March 25, 26:** *Parallel Lives: Five Victorian Marriages*, by Phyllis Rose

- **April 22, 23:** *Denial: A Memoir*, by Jessica Stern

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

- **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)

Concord Area Humanists (CAH)

- **Wednesday, January 9, 2013** Please note that this is not our usual Wednesday Concord Area Humanists in the Parish Hall.

- Arlene Germain, president of the Mass. Advocates for Nursing Home Reform, will discuss promising initiatives that are bringing major improvements to nursing homes across the nation and throughout Mass. — improvements that are moving nursing homes to the kind of places where people want to live and to work in.

- **Social 7:00 p.m., Program 7:15 p.m.**

- Ms. Germain will talk about grassroots opportunities to have a voice in these changes that incorporate Humanistic values.
- Culture Change, a national movement that's transforming long term care from an institutionalized to a person-centered model, bringing fundamental changes in philosophy and attitudes that create a more meaningful quality of life for residents, caregivers and family members; Mass. Dementia Special Care Unit Law, regulations setting safety and quality standards for nursing home residents with dementia; Personal Needs Allowance and Bed Holds, two Mass. budget items affecting MassHealth nursing home residents; and OASIS, initiative to reduce the inappropriate use of antipsychotics in Mass. nursing homes. The topic is valuable — and difficult — for all of us who may have a parent in a nursing home or where we might go in our later years.
- Arlene's message is that life in nursing homes is changing, and there's much you can do to take control.

Speaker: Arlene Germain is cofounder and president of the Massachusetts Advocates for Nursing Home Reform (MANHR.org). MANHR, founded in 2000, is the sole statewide consumer group that works to improve the quality of care and quality of life for Mass. nursing home residents. MANHR is an all-volunteer organization. As MANHR's president, Arlene is active in numerous coalitions and committees, including: Mass. Culture Change Coalition, Mass. Elder Advocacy Coalition, Coalition of Organizations to Reform Eldercare, and Massachusetts Senior Care Antipsychotic Initiative Advisory Board, and others. Germain has also been active in long-term care advocacy on a national level. She served on the board of the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (2005-07) and has been a participating member since 1997. Arlene began her elder advocacy efforts 15 years ago when her mother entered a nursing home; and over these years, Arlene has been involved in the care of eight loved ones in 7 Mass. facilities. Arlene has more than 35 years of experience in the accounting field, and her last position was controller of a prestigious venture capital firm. Arlene retired from her accounting career in 2011 and now devotes the majority of her time to MANHR and renovations of kitchens and decks. Nearer the date, please click on the CAH website and then on blue "events" button for more information. Inquiries to pne@aol.com.

Future "Speaker" Meetings at First Parish in Concord:

Wed., Feb. 6, 2013: Movie Night — "Creation" (tentative)

Future "Discussion" Meetings at Free Concord Library:

Tues., Jan. 15, 2013; Tues., Feb. 19, 2013

Meet at 7:00 p.m. in the Trustees Room. Hosted by Paul Jameson and Maria Greene. Inquiries please to pne@aol.com.

ABC Music Together (0-4)

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

Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays 9:30-10:30 a.m. 10:30-11:30 a.m.

• Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program (MBSR)

- Cultivating mindfulness, or awareness of the present moment, creates the framework for this popular course modeled after the internationally recognized program established by Jon Kabat-Zinn at UMass Medical School. Research continues to suggest positive benefits from the practice of mindfulness-based stress reduction to the immune system, chronic illness, hypertension and chronic pain, as well as to the daily stresses of our busy lives. This interactive course consists of eight weekly two-hour group classes where participants will be introduced to and practice guided mindfulness meditation, relaxation techniques, gentle yoga stretches and self-inquiry exercises. Participants commonly report a reduction of stress-related symptoms, increased awareness and concentration, and improvement of positive coping skills at home and in the workplace.

- Instructor: **Pamela Katz Ressler, RN, MS, HN-BC**. Pam is a board-certified holistic nurse and stress management specialist. Pam is the founder and president of Stress Resources, LLC, in Concord and provides stress management programming and consulting nationally. Additionally, she is an adjunct faculty member at both Tufts University School of Medicine and UMass/Boston's College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Pam serves on the board of directors of the nonprofit organization the Integrative Medicine Alliance. Pam and her family are active members of First Parish in Concord. Enrollment in each class is limited to 15.

- Fee: Tuition is \$290, plus an additional \$85 materials fee (including text, CD's, and manual). Continuing Education Units for nurses and other health professionals available. Discount for Blue Cross Blue Shield members. For more information about the MBSR program, visit www.stressresources.com. To register, contact Pam Ressler (pressler@stressresources.com or 978-369-5243).

• Choose either:

- Thursdays: Jan. 24–March 21 7:00–9:00 p.m. (no class 2/21)
- Fridays: Jan. 25–March 22 9:30–11:30 a.m. (no class 2/22)