



The Meeting House News

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REVERIES

February is heart month, including Valentine's Day, National Heart Awareness Month, and African American History month. Hearts matter. The human heart beats an average of 103, 680 times a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, for every year we are alive. Without holidays, lunch breaks, or comp time, our hearts pump life through our veins; nourishing cells, delivering oxygen, removing CO², and distributing the mail. Every other human organ depends upon the heart to do its job. When we need to run to catch a plane or climb a flight of stairs, we depend upon our hearts to pump a little faster. When the day draws to an end and we finally lie down to sleep, without any instruction, our hearts slow down to support relaxation and renewal. With very little care, and sometimes in spite of a lot of abuse, hearts continue steadfastly, consistently, predictably and dependably doing what they are supposed to do.



This year the United States celebrates the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, an initiative at the heart of civil rights in the United States. Let each Valentine you encounter open your heart to a new awareness and deeper appreciation of African-American history, the people, and communities steadfastly, consistently and dependably pumping life into the veins of a nation. During February, watch for the names of heroes and heroines who gave their lives to sit down and stand up; who used force and used their

voices to help create a more just society. Marcus Garvey, the fervent Black Nationalist leader, inspired black people throughout the world with pride in their African heritage. Mary Mahoney was a pioneer in nursing, and Rogers Albert was one of the first slaves to go to college. Alain Locke, a Harvard graduate and a Rhodes scholar, was one of several black academics who promoted African-American and African culture in the twenties. Henry S. McAlpin was the first African American to be accredited to attend White House press conferences.

First Parish in Concord grows and our nation grows when African-American history is taught in our schools, displayed in our libraries, and honored in our culture, not just in February but throughout the year. This February let the abundance of everywhere hearts remind you of the heart of black people in our nation. In your own heart remember to celebrate the dignity and worth of every person. Keep your heart song strong, full and open, continually pumping love.

Much metta,

Elaine

There are four inserts at the end of this newsletter:

- ◆ Forum Speaker Information
- ◆ Heartbeat Information
- ◆ Family (Broad) Way 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.



Don't Miss ... The Fab Four at First Parish!

On Saturday, February 9 from 7 to 11, it is Beatles Night in the Parish Hall!

Come out of the cold and relive Beatlemania!

Enjoy the amazing music of John, Paul, George and Ringo.

You know the songs! Come sing and dance as **Rob Castillo** and **Rob Hamilton** and friends play all your favorites.

Lyrics and chords will be available. Bring your instrument (and mop top!), sit in with the band, and Twist and Shout the night away!

Tickets are on sale at coffee hours and in the church office during the week: \$25/person (checks, please) with proceeds of this Auction Party going to First Parish. (complimentary light snacks, BYOB!)

WORSHIP SERVICES AT FIRST PARISH

Sunday, February 3

How Do We Feed One Another? — Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha

We will feed the dragon this week, talking about coffee hour, conflict, and the elements of behavior that hold us all in right relationship. Have you experienced disappointment, confusion or hurt, confusion in engaging difficult conversations with family, friends, First Parish members or staff? How can we feel “fed” by all we share, safe to challenge and be challenged? Come to break bread with one another.

9:00 – Peter Norton, trombone

11:00 – First Parish Choir

Sunday, February 10

Coming of Age

On this Sunday our Coming of Age youth will lead us in their discovery and creativity, the unfolding of their faith. Always an inspiring worship as we affirm our commitment to growing the spirit of our young people.

9:00 & 11:00 – Coming of Age Service

Sunday, February 17

Tony Fisher

One Service at 10 a.m.

Nancy Ackerman, clarinet

Tuesday, February 19, 7:00–8:00 p.m.

Taizé-style Vespers Service

Join **Beth Norton, Tony Fisher, Bethany Lowe** and **Rachel Baker** for a contemplative, candlelit worship service of songs, poetry, scripture and silence in the Taizé tradition. Taizé is an ecumenical monastic community in the south of France that was established in the 1940's. With a ministry especially focused on young adults, the Taizé community draws pilgrims from all over the world for week-long retreats. Through a contemplative worship practice, in which meditative singing plays a major role, participants seek to deepen the relationship between faith and action. Come experience an hour of contemplative worship in the Taizé tradition. May it help us to deepen spiritually, build community, and make a positive difference in the world.

Sunday, February 24

At the Heart of Justice — Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha

Heartbeat is a music group that combines the voices and talents of Israeli and Palestinian youth. Together they inspire us to understand what collaborative justice, and inclusive dialogues across difference, can yield. With music and integrity we will look at the complicated possibility for hope and peace in the Middle East.

9:00 – First Parish Choir

11:00 – Heartbeat

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

March: Friday, February 15

April: Friday, March 22

May: Friday, April 19

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.*

Finding Your Interim Minister

Elaine Peresluha will be traveling some this month. February 5 to 7, she will be at an Alban conference with **Bethany Lowe** and **Rachel Baker**. February 11 to 17, she will be taking a week of study leave.

Other than those dates, Elaine’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.

BYSS Brochure Available

The By Your Side Singers is First Parish’s pastoral care choir. Through gentle singing they offer a musical presence to people seeking comfort and support during illness or transition. When invited to parishioners’ homes or hospital rooms, they come in groups of three or four to share soft, soothing songs.

To help you consider their services and discuss with family, they are excited to offer their new brochure, available in the leaflet rack. To arrange a visit or to answer any questions, please contact a minister, a pastoral care lay minister, or our Music Director **Beth Norton** at music@firstparish.org.

Sponsor the Sunday Flowers

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

A Reminder — Sermon Copies Available

Printed copies of Sunday’s sermons are available outside the office and in the wooden brochure holder in the foyer to the Sanctuary.

Downloadable PDF’s are available here: <http://www.firstparish.org/cms/about-first-parish/hours-directions-services/sermons>.

Podcasts of the sermons are available on the website at this link: <http://www.firstparish.org/cms/about-first-parish/hours-directions-services/sermons/podcasts>.

CD’s of the sermons can be signed out of the podcast library on the windowsill to the right of the fireplace in the Parlor.

Concord Area Humanists (CAH) Present “Creation”

On Wednesday, February 6, at 7:00 p.m., the CAH will present a movie, “Creation.” Social time will begin at 7:15 p.m. with the program to follow in the Parish Hall. Too controversial for American audiences according to its British producer, “Creation” details Darwin’s “struggle between faith and reason” as he wrote *Origin of Species*. It depicts him losing faith in God following the death of his beloved ten-year-old daughter Annie. This movie has sparked fierce debate on American Christian websites, with typical comment dismissing evolution as “a silly theory with serious lack of evidence to support it despite over a century of trying.” Refreshments provided. Five dollar donation welcomed. For more information, go to www.ConcordAreaHumanists.org and click on “Events.” All welcome. Inquiries to pne@aol.com.

Play Reading Group to Meet

The pleasure of reading plays aloud with a group is happening this spring. All are welcome. The group gathers the first Friday of each month beginning in March. Contact **Linda Hardiman** at lmhardiman@gmail.com or 617-909-1196, call or text.

Friday, March 1, 7-10 p.m., “August Osage County”

A woman poet addicted to pills and alcohol is beyond the glory of her life. The play tracks her life across the month of August while she lives in Oklahoma. While making funeral arrangements, each family member has personal difficulties that he or she is unable to resolve.

Friday, April 5, 7-10 p.m., “Driving Miss Daisy”

A widowed Jewish woman is deemed too old to drive, her son hires an African-American man to serve as her chauffeur. A troubled and hostile pairing blossoms into a profound, life-altering friendship that transcends all the societal boundaries placed between them.

Friday, May 3, 7-10 p.m., “Good People”

In South Boston, a sharp-tongued single-mom is let go from another job. Scrambling to make ends meet, she looks up an old flame, hoping he’ll help her make a fresh start.

Broadway Review on March 15 and 16

You won’t want to miss “The Family Way,” a Broadway review of songs dealing with all aspects of family life. Twenty-seven cast members will take you on a musical journey that starts with wedding bells and ends with grandparenting, providing commentaries on all sorts of family relationships that will make you laugh and cry. There will be two evening performances and a Saturday matinee. Tickets will be on sale in February. For more information, contact **Sue Beck** at sbeck345@comcast.net.

World Day of Prayer on March 1

Friday, March 1, is World Day of Prayer. Women, men and children in more than 170 countries and regions will celebrate World Day of Prayer this year. Women of France have written the service around the theme “I Was a Stranger and

You Welcomed Me.” We will stand in solidarity with immigrants in France and throughout the world as we engage in prayers and songs for their health and wholeness and for a world of peace and justice. This year, West Concord Union Church will host Concord’s World Day of Prayer Service at 11 a.m., followed by a festive luncheon program that will celebrate French culture and the cultures of immigrants in France. If anyone has art objects, decorative items, photographs, books, ethnic clothing, etc., depicting various French and France’s immigrant cultures that the planning committee could borrow for the day, please contact **Dian Pekin** at pekinc@comcast.net as soon as possible. There is no charge for the luncheon and reservations are not necessary.

First Parish Jewish Awareness Group Meets

First Parish’s Jewish Awareness group will meet on Friday evening, February 15, at 6 p.m. (note time change) to discuss Ursula Duba’s book, *Tales from a Child of the Enemy*, a “powerful and moving book of poetry which compels the reader to think the unthinkable.” For questions or more information, contact **Dana Snyder-Grant** at danasn@newview.org or 978-266-9409.

“Art Seek” Program Offered

Because many artists feel their work is closely tied to an outside driving force, be it a “Life Purpose” or “Higher Power,” we can feel a spiritual connection to what we want to produce.

Years ago when **Twinkle Manning** started exploring cultural spiritual history, embracing metaphysical science and natural healing, one of the books that joined her journey was Elizabeth Lesser’s *The Seeker’s Guide: Making Your Life a Spiritual Adventure*. Among other valuable tools this book offers, as it draws from the wisdom of psychology and mythology, is the understanding of sacredness: “What Is Sacred? Everything is sacred — your body, mind, psyche, heart, and soul. The world is sacred, too, with all of its light and darkness. Bring the exiled and unloved parts of yourself back into the fold.”

Inspired by two books, “Art Seek” is where *The Artist’s Way* meets *The Seeker’s Guide*. Together we will write “morning pages,” go on “artist’s dates,” and explore the inner reaches of our hearts to discover what we may have sheltered there for safekeeping. Join us. All are welcome. For more information or questions about the program, contact “**Twinkle**” **Marie Manning** at TwinkleManning@gmail.com.

10:00 a.m.–noon, Wednesdays, February 13 and 27

Put Some Zing in Your Spring — Get in the Swing!

The sound of handbells will ring through the halls of First Parish once more. **Martha Goodman** returns to

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.

February – Friday evenings at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m., rehearsals for “The Family (Broad)Way.”

February 9 at 9:00 a.m. – The Photo Club.

February 9 at 7:00 p.m. – “It’s Been a Hard Day’s Night” — Beatles sing-along.

February 10 at 4:00 p.m. – “Hope Out Loud II” concert at UU Urban Ministry in Roxbury.

February 13 and 27 at 9:30 a.m. – “Art Seek.”

February 22 at 7:30 p.m. – Rise Up Singing, First Parish’s monthly song circle open to singers, instrumentalists and listeners of all ages.

February 23 at 7:00 p.m. – “Heartbeat” concert. Israeli and Palestinian youth musicians perform and share their message of cooperation and understanding. Open to all ages.

For more information on these events, check the *Meetinghouse News*, 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 council is open to all interested parishioners. Contact **Lillian Anderson**, chair, for more information: lillianand@comcast.net.

direct six weekly rehearsals, leading to participation in both Sunday services on March 17.

Rehearsals will be on Thursday evenings (February 7, 14, 21, and 28, March 7 and 14) in the Chapel, 7–9 p.m. Rehearsals for previous units were on Sunday afternoons, and longer ago the year-round group met on Wednesday afternoons; both times proved unworkable for many. If you have always wanted to try bells but couldn’t attend afternoon rehearsals, the new evening schedule is the opportunity for you!

For successful participation, you should: (1.) be able to count to four, tell your left hand from your right, and identify a whole, half and quarter note; (2.) be able and willing to commit to attending most — if not all — rehearsals. For more information, or to reserve a place at the handbell tables, contact **Martha Goodman** no later than Thursday, January 31. You can phone her at 508-928-2078 or e-mail her at mgtrek@earthlink.net.

WPA Luncheon Meeting — February 26

The Women's Parish Association luncheon will be held on Tuesday, February 26. **John Lang** will give a presentation about the latest developments of the Saturday Men's Group's work on gun control. Their intent is to draw up a petition addressed to both houses of Congress and President Obama urging action on the issue of gun control this year. They are urging all faith communities in Concord to join First Parish in this effort or to initiate their own. 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 pekinc@comcast.net by February 22 for reservations and dietary requirements.

Our Whole Congregation (OWC) Update

The OWC continues to meet regularly to work on the issues of communication, transparency and education at First Parish. During the past month, we drafted a set of communication suggestions and sent them to the Standing Committee (SC) with the following preamble:

“In an effort to increase communication and transparency, the OWC has several suggestions for SC procedures going forward. Our philosophy has been, and is, that communication and transparency lead to trust, so these suggestions seem appropriate. The congregation at Annual Meeting duly elects the SC members who then serve as our governing representatives. Consequently, the interests and concerns of the congregation need to be an integral part of the workings of the SC.”

The Governance Taskforce held an excellent meeting on January 13, and the OWC hopes to continue working toward fully understanding how First Parish functions. We understand that the Standing Committee has asked Stefan Jonasson to return on February 3 to continue the discussion begun in November about governance. We know that we have much to understand and improve in order to create a working governance structure that involves all of us in our shared journey of commitment to our UU values of trust, transparency and communication.

Women's "Mini-Retreat" at First Parish

Registration is still open for the new Women's "Mini-Retreat." It will be held at First Parish and begins the evening of Friday, March 1, continuing for the day on Saturday (approximately 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.). The theme will be the same as the recent traditional "away" retreats: "Living in the Wow — the Magic Is Now! Celebrating the Present." To register, please contact **Darien Smith** (darien@smithquest.org or 978-369-1471).

Photo Exhibit by Pierre Chiha in the Sue Altshuler Galleries: Environmental Portraits and Portraits of the Environment.

Pierre's current passion is to incorporate more of the environment in his portraits, making the landscape or place, the dominant part of the photograph, while the focus is still on

the people he is capturing. This collection represents a series of photos in which the environment is the focus. The portraits combine a sense of lighting, composition, graphical elements, color and space.

Pierre Chiha has been a portraitist for many years. He photographs children, high school seniors, families, and professionals on location or in his studio at Emerson Umbrella in Concord. He also photographs special events, such as weddings and Bar and Bat Mitzvahs.

Join in with Hope Out Loud II — UU Urban Ministry Concert

Sunday, February 10 at 4:00 p.m.

Come join First Parish Choirs at the UU Urban Ministry in Boston for another collaborative interfaith concert on Sunday, February 10 — Hope Out Loud II. At this midwinter celebration of song, dance and spoken word, we remember Martin Luther King Jr.'s prophetic words from his World House speech: "The large house in which we live demands that we transform this world-wide neighborhood into a world-wide family-hood." Our First Parish in Concord choirs will be joining forces with area groups — including the Boston Community Choir, the Radical Praise Children's Choir from Boston, the UU Children's Choir from First Parish Church of Groton and the UU Urban Ministry Choir (led by **Gail Carey**, our children's choir director). The much admired Union Methodist Liturgical Dance Teams are returning. Other guests include master drummer Matt Meyer, spoken word artists Sam Williams and Kemi Alabi, and youth from the Roxbury Youth Program. Door-to-door bus service will be available for a small contribution. This is a great opportunity to show our ongoing support for the good work of the UU Urban Ministry, our faith ministry that serves the needs of inner city children and families at risk. The concert is free of charge and open to all. There will be lots of group singing so bring your voice and help us make HOPE come alive! Contact **Beth Norton** for more information.

General Assembly, June 19-23, 2013

Start making your travel and hotel plans for General Assembly(GA), which will be held June 19 to 23 this year in Louisville, Kentucky. You can plan an interesting family vacation around GA. It's important to note that hotel reservations open up on March 1, and the best rooms go pretty quickly. Go to the UUA website to get more information about the various programs and ways to register for the hotels, programs and plenary sessions. This is an opportunity for everyone to grow and experience Unitarian Universalism in ways that we only do when we're together in one large body. There are still opportunities to become a delegate from our congregation. If you are interested in being a delegate at this GA, contact **Dian Pekin** at pekinc@comcast.net as soon as possible.

FROM THE MINISTERIAL INTERN

Back in October, I traveled to the west coast for a meeting and a brief visit with my sister and brother-in-law. Traveling on the cheap sometimes means you take circuitous routes to get to where you want to go, and so it was that I found myself getting on a plane in Los Angeles for the last leg of my journey to San Francisco. Just as the doors were about to be closed, a harried-looking woman rushed on board, hustled down the aisle, and plunked herself down in the seat next to me. She heaved an audible sigh, closed her eyes and took two deep breaths.

I had been looking through a book titled *The Zen of Listening* and was about to open it up again, but decided that rather than read I would act. I asked the woman if she'd had a tough travel day and then encouraged her by giving her my real attention. For some reason I felt invested in



finding out about this person, this human being who was, by pure chance, forced to share a flight with me. I have to tell you, and I'm a bit ashamed to say, that I learned more about this stranger than I have about many of the acquaintances I've known for years. I learned about her husband and her son and daughter, 15 and 12 respectively. I learned about her work in computer software sales. I learned she researched and implemented some tools that enhanced her company's Internet marketing capabilities. I learned she worked too hard and that she longed someday to enter a field where she could help people more directly. I learned she wished for some spiritual connections, perhaps even a spiritual community; but due to his experiences with religion in childhood, her husband is resistant. After hearing a little about what spirituality meant to her, I offered my only real contribution to the conversation by telling her a little about Unitarian Universalism, about which she seemed genuinely interested. Other than that, I stifled every urge to insert myself into the conversation and say, "Oh, I know about that ...," or "Have you ever thought about doing this...?" In the end she said that she'd had a great flight, and I know she got up with more energy than when she sat down. I'm also sure she felt as though she'd had the unusual opportunity to be truly heard.

This ability to listen deeply, to encourage another person's creative fountain is in us all. From our own experience we know that when people really listen to us, with quiet, fascinated attention, that the little creative fountain begins to work again in us, to accelerate in the most surprising way. Listening can be a marvelous gift of pure love.

So as writer/journalist Barbara Ueland once urged: "Try listening. Listen to your wife, your husband, your father, your mother, your children, your friends; to those who love you and those who don't, to those who bore you, to your enemies. It will work a small miracle. And perhaps a great one." ♦

Blessings,

Tony

MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

- The full congregational vote to call a Senior Minister takes place Sunday, May 5, 2013 at 12:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. **To participate, you must be a signed member of First Parish for at least 30 days before that date.** Please mark your calendars NOW to participate in this once-in-a-generation vote.
- Many parishioners have asked us, "What happens if First Parish doesn't vote to call the candidate the Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) nominates for Senior Minister?" The answer is simple. The Standing Committee (SC) would immediately set up a sub-committee to hire a NEW Interim Minister for the 2013-2014 church year. The SC would also seek out volunteers and nominations for a NEW search committee. Members of this NEW search committee would have to be approved by the full congregation (probably at June's Annual Meeting). Once approved, that committee would then launch a new search during the 2013-2014 church year.
- The members of our Ministerial Search Committee want to express their deep gratitude to the UUA, Rev. Keith Kron (head of the UUA Transitions Office and our ministerial settlement representative), and **Elaine Peresluha** for their thoughtful guidance in the challenging work of seeking a new minister. The written materials, including the UUA Settlement Handbook, and Elaine and Keith's availability and advice have made us all value the wisdom of the search process laid out by the UUA and have made our work easier. During this ministerial transition, we should all be appreciative that we can draw on the experience of our larger denomination. ♦
- If you have questions, please contact any member of the MSC:
 - **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

Pastoral Care Workshop

On December 2, 2012, members of the Pastoral Care Team attended a workshop on Creating and Supporting Lay Pastoral Care Teams. Attending were Ministerial Intern, **Tony Fisher**; Lay Ministers, **Diane Clapp**, **Sue Dobbie** and **Dana Snyder-Grant**; and Advisory Council member **Berni Jenkins**.

I think we all came away realizing we have a good program with a great team here at First Parish. The emphasis on defining our goals in pastoral care is important. I loved this quote from the workshop: "One friend, one person who truly understands, who takes the trouble to listen to us as we talk about our problem, can change our whole outlook on life."
—**Diane Clapp**, Team Leader Lay Ministers

Holiday Plant Delivery

Thank you, **Caitlin Selle**, for organizing the distribution of the Christmas poinsettias to those on the pastoral care list. The efforts of all the flower deliverers is very much appreciated: **Caitlin Selle**, **Dawn Van Patten**, **Joan Wesolowski**, **Lois Whitney**, **Patty Keane**, **Pat Simon** and **Liz Reilly**. Another thank you to **Caitlin Selle** for keeping up the pastoral care bulletin board.

Shawl Ministry

Thank you to Shawl Ministry volunteers who have created many shawls this winter. 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 to **Kate Keleher** who created beautiful note cards that will accompany the shawls.

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

The Lay Minister for February is **Bev Bringle** at bevbringle@yahoo.com or 978-369-4793.

Minister, **Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha** (uurevdoc@gmail.com) and Ministerial Intern, **Tony Fisher** (tfisher@firstparish.org). Or call the church office at 978-369-9602.

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

Caring Connection, for meals or rides: Contact **Tony Fisher** (tfisher@firstparish.org) or call the office at 978-369-9602.

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

Sunday Note Cards

Thanks to **Kathleen Elcox** for the poinsettia note cards and photos for the Sunday note cards, and thanks to **Leslie Fisher**, who keeps the Caring Connection cards well stocked for parishioners to use on Sunday morning when they write to those on the pastoral list.

The Caring Connection Is Here for You!

Ministerial Intern **Tony Fisher** (tfisher@firstparish.org) is now shepherding the Caring Connection. All are welcome to contact Tony for help or to volunteer. Contact **Bev Bringle** (bevbringle@gmail.com) about meals; **Suzanne Hogan** (suzanne.hogan@comcast.net) about rides. For more information about the Caring Connection, check the First Parish website under Pastoral Care.

SENIOR YOUTH NEWS: THE HEARD

Seasons greetings! January was a momentous month as we swore in Barack Obama for a new term and celebrated the life of Dr. Martin Luther King. We are moving forward, my friends — continuing to learn, play, venture, and work toward creating the world we want to be a part of.

This month I will embark on a 15-date tour with Heartbeat, the Israeli-Palestinian youth music collective. The group will be coming to First Parish on February 23 to give a unique performance and workshop on music's power to transform conflict. The event is open to all ages and I encourage you to join us. The Heard will be helping to organize a reception following the performance, and this will be an opportunity to meet these heroic musical leaders from the Middle East. Heartbeat will also be participating in the 11:00 o'clock worship service on February 24. More info can be found at <http://www.heartbeat.fm/ustour/>.

This will be a light month for The Heard because of school vacation and the Super Bowl. We will be meeting February 10 and 23 for the Heartbeat program. ♦

May the force be with you!

Shalom-Salam!

—*Avi Salloway*

Youth Program Director



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

Spring is approaching fast. And with the spring comes the announcement from the Ministerial Search Committee of the candidate for First Parish's next settled senior minister.

Signed Members Only Will Call Our Next Senior Minister:

In preparation for the annual congregational meeting and vote to call the candidate, I would like to invite friends, regular visitors, and those considering membership to step onto the path to membership now. *Only people who have become a member by signing the membership book in the presence of a minister 30 days in advance may vote for the new minister on May 5, 2013.* April 5 will be the last day to sign the membership book in order to vote. Because April 5 is a Friday and March 31 is Easter Sunday, I encourage everyone who intends to become a member to sign the book on March 24 or before.

Membership Information, Workshops and Orientations:

The next series of orientations for people new to Unitarian Universalism and new to First Parish in Concord will be held the second week of March. The New to Unitarian Universalism Workshop will be held on Saturday, March 9, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. 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. The New to First Parish class will be held Sunday, March 10, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. 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. If you would like to sign up for the orientations, please contact me at rbaker@firstparish.org.

The Meaning of Membership: Joining a spiritual community is an important decision, one that calls for personal discernment, willingness and commitment. When we become members, we covenant to walk with one another in faith, committing ourselves to deepen spiritually, and to go out into the world to make a positive difference. While there is no one creed that unites us, members are joined together in community through several common expectations: Spirituality, Service, and Stewardship.

Membership at First Parish does not end when you sign the membership book; rather, it is an ongoing journey, full of discovery and connection. Members are encouraged to develop a strong UU and First Parish identity through regular worship attendance, participation in programs and special events, serving in leadership positions, and financial and physical stewardship of the First Parish community and the larger world around us. Our hope is that members will use the resources available at First Parish to attend to their own spiritual growth and well-being, and support the growth and well-being of others.

Congregational Life Events

Each month in this box, the Congregational Life Council will list events for 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.

Saturday, February 9, 7:00-9:00 p.m. — Beatles Night at First Parish.

A Fabulous Fab Four auction party, hosted by First Parish musicians **Rob Castillo** and **Rob Hamilton** and friends. Relive Beatlemania! Sing, dance away the evening! Tickets are on sale for \$25/person (checks, please) at coffee hour and the church office during the week.

Tuesday, February 19, 7:00-8:00 p.m. — Taizé-style Vespers Service.

Join **Beth Norton** and others for a contemplative, candlelit worship service of songs, poetry, scripture and silence in the Taizé tradition.

Saturday, February 23 — Heartbeat North American Tour

Heartbeat creates opportunities and spaces for young Israeli and Palestinian musicians to work together, hear each other, and amplify their voices to influence the world around them. For more information, contact **Avi Salloway**, Youth Program Director, at avifirstparish@gmail.com, like their Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/heartbeatjerusalem>, or look for more information on the bulletin boards in the coming weeks.

Every Sunday — Post-Worship Reflection Time — After the 11:00 a.m. worship service, come up to the balcony and share what stood out for you at worship. This 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.

Tuesdays in March — Terrific Tuesday Dinner and Vespers

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.

Members Are Encouraged to:

- ◆ Participate in activities to enrich and deepen spiritually. Opportunities include Sunday worship, alternative worship services, Covenant Groups, classes and

Congregational Life

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programs through the Wright Tavern Center for Spiritual Renewal, and Forum presentations.

- ◆ Practice deepening interpersonal relationships through compassion, appreciative inquiry, being curious, and encouraging creativity.
- ◆ Contribute time and talent by participating in the functioning of the congregation. Opportunities include both ongoing efforts and short-term commitments, such as being committee members or leaders, teachers, welcomers, singers, organizers or caregivers.
- ◆ Contribute financially to the health of First Parish through regular pledging. Unitarian Universalist congregations are self-sustaining institutions. First Parish depends on pledge dollars for over 80 percent of its budget. We encourage members and friends to generously support the efforts of this community. When considering your pledge — we encourage you to reflect upon the role First Parish plays in your life; we invite you to think about your guiding principles and the values expressed within this congregation; and we ask that you then contribute an amount that expresses a true statement of your commitment to the congregation.

Our annual pledge drive runs from March through May of each year although we welcome contributions at any time. Feel free to contact **Melissa Perdue Gallo** (mpgallo@firstparish.org) if you have questions about the pledge process, the overall financial picture, or our goals for sustaining our dreams and our work at First Parish. Members are welcome to consult with the minister if contributing is a concern.

If you would like to learn more about becoming a member, please feel free to contact me. ◆

In faith,
— *Rachel Baker*

Director of Congregational Life

PARTNER CONGREGATION COMMITTEE

What are your plans this summer? The Partner Congregation Committee (PCC) continues its planning and preparations for this summer’s Family Pilgrimage to Székelykeresztúr. Our ten-day visit is intended for middle- and high-school-age youth and their parents. It provides an opportunity to enjoy the warm hospitality of our partner Unitarian congregation in Székelykeresztúr and to see interesting cultural and historical sites across Transylvania. Ask previous travelers, and they’ll tell you that the food, the sights and sounds, and the welcome and generosity of our Keresztúri hosts will be remembered for years to come.

Tentative dates for the trip are July 17 to July 29, and the cost per traveler will be about \$1800-\$2000 (including airfare, ground transportation, lodging, and most meals). To date, several families have committed to the trip, including both previous and new travelers. We are beginning to meet as a group, prepare for the trip, learn Hungarian, and study Transylvanian history and culture.

If you are interested in joining the trip, there are still a few spaces available for families of middle or high school youth, as well as for high school teens to be sponsored to travel with another family. To register or get answers to questions, please contact **Suzie Weaver** at skatesuzie@aol.com. (Interested families should provide a deposit of \$100 per person.) We’re on Facebook! Please visit (and “like”) the “Concord Székelykeresztúr Partnership” page. You can view pictures and news about our partnership (or post your own).

Student Sponsorship Program. For many years, First Parishioners have provided support to our partner congregation by sponsoring students of financial need at the Unitarian high school in Székelykeresztúr. 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), so the donated laptops can be outdated or even no longer working.

Join the PCC effort. There are many ways — big and small — to support First Parish’s relationship with our partner Unitarian congregation in Székelykeresztúr. The PCC meets monthly on a Thursday evening over dinner in a member’s home, and we invite you to join us (our next meeting is on February 14). ◆

Minden jót! “Best wishes!”

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

The Women's AM/PM Book Group

The February selection for the Women's AM/PM Book Group is State of Wonder: A Novel, by Ann Patchett. The evening session will be Monday, February 25, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. at the home of Steph Chiha. (Note: We may need to change the site this month, and if so, will send an update to the e-mail list). The morning session will be Tuesday, February 26, 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:

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

Rise Up and Call Her Name Now Monthly

The "Rise Up and Call Her Name" class will be meeting one Wednesday morning a month. The next two meetings are February 6 and March 6. Come join this ongoing woman-honoring journey into global earth-based spiritualities. For more information, please contact Bozena Smith at bozena-smith@mindspring.com or Twinkle Manning at twinklemanning@gmail.com.

She restores my soul,
She rights my wrongs,
She leads me in the path of good things,
She fills my heart with songs.

— Bobby McFerrin, "The Twenty-Third Psalm"

I had an epiphany one Sunday morning. It came without warning. It was specific, and at the same time universal. And like the best epiphanies, it came through music.

For more than a decade, the First Parish choir has sung Bobby McFerrin's lovely setting of "The Twenty-Third Psalm." Subtitled "dedicated to my mother," McFerrin's psalm addresses the feminine Divine. The musical setting is in the style of Anglican Chant — freely sung in the rhythm of the text, but in four-part jazz harmony.

It looks so simple. It is surprisingly difficult to sing well.

And yet, this is one of those pieces that the choir can brush up in one rehearsal. Over the years it has settled into our collective bones. Many choir members have it memorized and don't even look at the music.

Through regular repetition, the harmonies, words and phrases have become second nature.

But for a new choir member, this piece is terrifying! Though the notes are simple, there are multiple opportunities for mistakes — a word in the wrong place, a note at the wrong time. Blending in is a challenge. Singers must pay close attention to the unfamiliar text and the motions of the conductor. One needs to listen oh-so-carefully and follow the group in order to learn.

I also notice that when the conductor makes even a subtle change to a pattern that has become ingrained in our interpretation, it causes anxiety among those who know it best. It takes trust and attention to make these changes. For the leader, it takes confidence and clear communication. Also, patience and understanding: not everyone will catch on right away.

So there it was at the 8:15 a.m. choir warm-up on a Sunday morning — a metaphor for our congregation. Over our long history, we have developed patterns of worship, governance and communication that are automatic. Some of these patterns serve us well; others do not.

Dedicated ministers, staff and lay leaders have led us through subtle and dramatic changes. As we move into our future with a new senior minister and new members, we will recognize aspects of our community that have settled into our bones and may be challenging to — or challenged by — newcomers. We will be called upon to make changes, both large and small. At the same time, we will also celebrate our strong tradition.

To paraphrase Bobby McFerrin's psalm, may we be led "in the path of good things." And may we walk that path together with trust, clear communication and commitment, as well as patience and understanding. ♦

Blessings,

— Beth Norton

Music Director



STANDING COMMITTEE NEWS AND NOTES

The January 13 Standing Committee meeting saw an interesting mix of old and new issues discussed and decided upon.

In our monthly discussion of governing policy this month, the Standing Committee (SC) and the Executive Team (ET) focused on a draft set of annual goals and decided that the draft goals were sometimes too general and sometimes too specific. The SC set up a subcommittee, chaired by **Gretchen Nelson**, to look at developing guidelines for writing future goals to be put in place by the July meeting, where the tentative goals for the 2013-2014 year can be formulated, with room for the newly hired minister to have a hand in their final form. **Jack Nevison** will assemble a set of current goals for approval at the next meeting.

The SC heard reports from **Alec Walker** about the Ministerial Search Committee, from **Melissa Gallo** and **Gretchen Nelson** about the **Jenny Rankin** celebration, and from **Suzanne Lowe**, **Mark Russell Prior** and **Melissa Gallo** about **Patrick Everett**'s suggested membership statistics for our upcoming report of members and pledging to the UUA .

The SC discussed ways to improve communications with the congregation, including:

- ◆ A February 3, 12:30–2:00 p.m. Congregational Discussion on Governance with Stefan Jonasson, our large-church consultant.
- ◆ A written response to the various suggestions of the congregational groups on governance including the remarkable January presentation of the Spring Ahead Governance Assessment Task Force (GAT). The anticipated SC Governance report will discuss the SC's short- and long-term responses and will be made available well in advance of a congregational discussion to consider it.
- ◆ A late-February or early-March congregational meeting to wind up this year's discussion of governance.

After over a year's discussion on the topic of retained earnings, the SC carefully considered a presentation by

our Business Manager, **Melissa Gallo**, and our Treasurer, **Suzanne Lowe**, and voted to update our 2004 financial policy on the required amount of retained earnings from 20% to 10%. (Records of the past eight years indicate that the church has always retained much more than the newly approved 10%.)

The SC appointed **Tom Wilson** to fill out the annual term of Moderator, and appointed **Shawna Reid** to a three-year term on the Nominating Committee.

We look forward to a congregational vote to call our new minister on May 5, 2013. **Patty Popov** reported that publicity efforts are under way to inform anyone not currently a member who wishes to vote on May 5 that they must sign the membership book before April 5, 2013.

As February unfolds, we continue to look forward to completing a year of healthy growth and meaningful change.

As always, you can find copies of the approved SC meeting minutes in the member section of the First Parish website. You may also find recent postings on the SC bulletin board in the first floor hallway. ◆

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

Stay in touch with us 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.

It is very common for our kids (and adults!) to focus on how they do *not* fit in. They focus on how they are different from their peers and where their perceived shortcomings are compared to peers. This is normal, but not always healthy.

One of our goals in our religious education program is to enable our kids to understand that they do fit in and they do belong. Through our education programs, they begin to understand that they have more in common with their peers than they have differences. Feeling different and excluded is isolating. Feeling connected and part of something bigger than the self is what community is all about.

I believe community and “being known” are both remedies to a culture that often separates and isolates all of us. “i-Life” sounds promising, but “we-Life” is socially, emotionally and intellectually more healthy for all of us. I believe that by binding together in a faith community — which is the root of religious work — we move beyond virtual connection and



enter beloved community. Further, through the grace of such authentic community, we bend away from disconnected individualism and toward connected wholeness. I do have faith that such connections through authentic community will lead to the reduction of violence in our society. ♦

— Pam Howell

Director of Religious Education

Second to Fifth Grade Workshop Rotation — Eat, Pray, Love

This term, we are learning wisdom from the World’s major religions — Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. For each faith, we will be learning about food restrictions and how these restrictions relate to that particular faith’s fundamental beliefs. We will also



be practicing the different ways people pray and how all of these spiritual practices move toward creating more peace and more love in the world. Each week we will also experience some food from the

February 2013 RE Calendar

- Sun., Feb. 3 Little RE – Regular RE for Babies–4 years
Regular RE for 2-5th Grades (Emerson Room)
6th Grade, 9 a.m. and 11a.m.
7th Neighboring Faiths (Holy Family, 11 a.m.)
8th OWL at 4 p.m. (Emerson Room)
9th COA at 5 p.m. (Chapel)
- Sat., Feb. 9 9th COA at 1 p.m. (Sanctuary)
- Sun., Feb. 10 Little RE – Regular RE for Babies–4 years
Regular RE for 2-5th Grades (Emerson Room)
6th Grade 9 & 11a.m. – Coming of Age Service
7th Neighboring Faiths – 10 a.m. attend COA service at 11a.m.
8th OWL at 4 p.m. (Emerson Room)
- Sun., Feb. 17 Little RE – Regular RE for Babies–4 years
- Sun., Feb. 24 Little RE – Regular RE for Babies–4 years
- Sun., Mar. 3 Little RE – Regular RE for Babies–4 years
Regular RE for 2-5th Grades (Emerson Room)
6th Grade 9 a.m. – Field Trip to Jiffy Read’s
7th Neighboring Faiths. 10 a.m. (Grace Chapel)
8th OWL at 4 p.m. (Emerson Room)

region of each religion. This should be a calming, centering and tasty term.

January 27: Week 1 of the Winter Term — Hinduism, Yoga and The Body as Temple of the Soul

February 3: March 3, Week 2–4 of the Winter Term: 2nd and 3rd Graders will explore Islam.

February 3: March 3, Week 2–4 of the Winter Term: 4th and 5th Graders will explore Buddhism.

February 17: Vacation – No RE

February 24: Vacation – No RE

Seventh Grade Neighboring Faiths

We are off! Year after year, both parents and kids say what an important program this was for their religious education. While it takes several very committed adults to make this program happen, it is always executed with such grace.

This year, **Jan Power** has put her heart and soul into revamping and reenergizing this program. Jan has researched each faith and has taken the time to reflect on what it is we want our 7th graders to learn from this important curriculum. Jan did the work of understanding the spiritual needs of a 7th grader and mapping this back to the curriculum. We will not only be learning about each faith community, but we will also be using that

RE News

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knowledge to help our 7th graders gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for their own faith tradition.

In addition to Jan, we have four other committed adults to this inspiring program for the Winter Term — **Rena Hedeman, John Petersen, Alane Wallis and Amy Capofreddi.**

We look forward to seeing your child each Sunday as he or she travel to neighboring faith communities.

Eighth Grade Drama and owl

Our 8th graders put on a wonderful and surprising performance of “The Best Christmas Pageant Ever.” Every year, something happens in a play that somehow makes 20 individual kids into one team. This year I was worried it wouldn’t happen — that ONE BIG moment. But ... then

it did. Before our very eyes, our K-7th graders watched as somehow the Herdmans accidentally pulled too hard on the baby and Jesus’ head popped off. Well ... it was a moment, and it will be a long time before I ever forget it. I think the same will

be true for all of our 8th graders too. Thank you, **Caroline and Jimmy McCloy, Alyssa Bigay,** and curtain managers: **Sue Ryan, Patty Popov and Jan Power.**

And now that our 8th graders are really a “team,” OWL will begin. This year, we have four excellent leaders: **Gianna Drew, Lora Venesy, Jeff Brainerd and David McGaffin.** Please take a moment to thank all of these leaders for their service to the ministry of religious education.

Ninth Grade Coming of Age Service

Our 9th Graders will be delivering their credos on February 10. They have been working hard since September to determine what they believe and how to articulate that belief statement to you, their parish. This is hard to do, but each year, they rise to the occasion.

It is challenging work, figuring out where you stand on a broad belief spectrum. We have spent years opening them up to wonder and mystery. We have challenged them to go out into the world and work with the homeless. We have made opportunities to experience the world and its needs in a safe and loving way. I look forward to this service because it gives me great hope. I look at these kids and know they are carrying our Unitarian Universalist values out into the world. We need them out there, carrying our faith boldly into the future.



Jenny’s Departure

Many things had to happen in the month of November and December to say good-bye to **Jenny Rankin** in a special way. I want to take a moment to thank **Sarah Sharpe** for all of her work toward making a beautiful clay mobile — made by the hands of our children — for Jenny. This art project took many hours of thinking, planning and artistic skill to create.

Also, **Suzanne Hogan** and all of the 8th Grade parents did a wonderful job hosting a special coffee hour reception for Jenny. It was a lot of work during a busy time of year, and everyone appreciated it.

Lastly, thank you to all those who helped me cut out hundreds of cloth hearts and fabric tape, and the ushers and children who helped make it all happen.

This parish can get a lot done when it puts its hearts and minds into it. Thank you!

The Chinese Lions Are Coming Back!

We are so lucky to have our own Chinese Lion Dance in our Sanctuary on Sunday, February 3, at the 9 a.m. and 11a.m. services. Our own **Andrea Sheffield** of Wah Lum Kung Fu will be coming with her lions, drums and spirit for this earth-centered lunar tradition. Don’t miss this amazing dance of good fortune.

Orientation for Religious Education Teachers for Spring 2013

Orientations for Little RE Teachers (Babies – 1st Grade) Emerson Room:

Caregiving, Story Time, Spring Term – Saturday, March 24, 9:30–11:00 a.m.

Spirit Play, Spring Term – Saturday, March 24, 11:00 a.m.–12 p.m.

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

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 Spring Term, Mud: First Parish Garden: Wednesday, April 3, 7:30–9:00 p.m.

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



SOCIAL ACTION COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENTS

Two thousand thirteen has already been full of social action activity at First Parish in Concord. We hosted a talk on international Unitarian Universalism, a lecture about the impact of Guantanamo being open for 11 years, a vegan potluck dinner, and other events.

Did you know that there is a UU United Nations Office? Many of those who attended the talk by Rev. Eric Cherry from the International Office of the Unitarian

Universalist Association had not heard of this organization before. The UU United Nations Office is considered a leader in the fight for rights for LGBTQ persons, among other worthy causes, at the United Nations.

Knowing about the work of the UU United Nations Office — and other internationally focused UU organizations — will give us a broader perspective on the impact of UU values in the larger world. To learn

more about what Rev. Eric Cherry shared, or if you have ideas about how to make First Parish in Concord more involved with UU-based international engagement, please contact me.

In addition to this, SAC leadership is currently looking for input from *you*. We want to know how you're involved in social action, if you're involved in social action, and what causes inspire you. Give this input online at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9ZY7BQY>. We'll be planning an informational event in the spring based on the feedback we get from this survey. Please keep an eye out for that if you are interested.

Hope to see you all in February at one of the following events. ♦

In faith,

— *Bethany Lowe*

blowe@firstparish.org

Fracking Our Farmlands — A Talk by Dr. Stephen Cleghorn

**Friday, February 1, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
in the Sanctuary**

The Environmental Leadership Team is sponsoring Dr. Stephen Cleghorn to come and speak at First Parish about hydraulic fracking. Dr. Cleghorn is a sociologist, organic farmer, and environmental activist. He runs a

certified organic farm and goat dairy in Jefferson County, Pennsylvania, that sits above the huge Marcellus Shale formation targeted for drilling for natural gas. Because his farm may be directly affected by fracking, and because he now perceives fracking as a serious threat to the global environment, he has become a well-informed critic of the natural gas industry. Come hear about fracking, how it affects the surrounding area and communities and all living beings, and the arguments for and against it. A discussion and reception will follow the talk.

Funderburg Scholars Dinner

Saturday, February 2, at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall

Join us for the Funderburg Scholars fundraising dinner at First Parish. Help Roxbury youth apply to and graduate from college — while you enjoy a nice meal with great company! Meet some Roxbury students and learn more about the program. No fixed “price” — donate what feels right to you at the dinner. Reserve your place at dinner by calling **Loretta Ho Sherblom** 978-369-4325 or by e-mailing her at Loretta@LHSBenefits.com. Join us for wine and cheese at 6:30 p.m., dinner at 7:15 p.m.

Home Drop-Off Day, Saturday, February 9 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Drop-Off your gently used children's items or volunteer to help with the collection. The Home Drop-Off Day will be focused on collecting gently used baby and children's items for Cradles to Crayons. Children's items include boys and girls clothing, winter coats, hats, gloves, pajamas, shoes, baby equipment, board books and baby toys. All donations must be free from rips and stains and in usable condition, please.

This is a FUN, interactive morning of service for families to do together. With the help of your hands, we will bring children in the Greater Boston Area the essentials they require to thrive — to feel safe, warm, ready to learn, and valued. E-mail abbygwhite@comcast.net to volunteer or inquire about the event.

SAC News and Events

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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.



The Adverse Effects of Housing Insecurity on Children’s Health, Mental Health and Overall Development

Sunday, March 3, 3:00–5:00 p.m.

- There are 50,000 units of affordable housing in Massachusetts, and there are 200,000 families whose incomes qualify them for assistance.
- Between 2008 and 2012, the number of Massachusetts families living in motels and shelters paid for by the state increased 46 percent, with the numbers in motels increasing by 145 percent.
- The barrage of stressful and traumatic experiences on homeless children has profound long-term effects on brain development and the ability to learn.
- It is state policy to deny teenage boys the right to join their families in shelters.

Learn about state programs such as HomeBASE and the Unaccompanied Youth Bill, and how you can focus your advocacy efforts to have the greatest impact.

Keynote speaker: Christina Murphy from The National Center on Family Homelessness. Additional speakers from state government and small group discussions with area legislators will round out this program. The forum, organized by the Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness, is free and open to all. Contact **Jane Blumberg** for more information: jane_blumberg@mac.com.

Heifer Card Sales

Heifer card sales amounted to \$1,460 in December. Thanks to all who supported the project from the team of **Dave** and **Diane Clapp**, **Patty Keane**, **Mary Lou Toussaint** and **Heather Packard**.

Saturday Morning Men’s Group Initiates Interfaith Discussion on Gun Control
Sunday, February 10, from 2:00–4:00 p.m.

The Saturday Morning Men’s Group has taken on the subject of gun control. Encouraged by the groundswell of public reaction to the grisly incidents by gun-wielding persons, we sponsored a Forum on Sunday, January 6, as a means to open a dialogue on gun control at First Parish. We invited all points of view. Forty-three attended and a lively discussion ensued.

Our intent is to draw up a petition addressed to both houses of Congress and to President Obama urging action on the issue of gun control this calendar year. Also, we are planning an event for clergy and laity of all the Concord houses of worship to urge them to join us or initiate their own movements. As many voices (and signatures) as we can muster will send a more potent message.

FEBRUARY 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.
Play Rehearsal	Sunday	7:00 p.m.
<i>Tai Chi</i>	Tuesday	6:30 p.m.
<i>Buddhist Group</i>	Wednesday	9:30 a.m.
Junior Choir	Wednesday	4:30 p.m.
Chalice Choir	Wednesday	5:15 p.m.
Adult Choir	Wednesday	7:45 p.m.
<i>Gentle Yoga</i>	Thursday	12:00 p.m.
Handbell Rehearsal	Thursday	7:00 p.m.
<i>Buddhist Group</i>	Thursday	7:30 p.m.
Play Rehearsal	Friday	7:30 p.m.
Men's Group	Saturday	7:30 a.m.

Fri Feb 1	9:30	<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>	•	Thu Feb 14	9:30	<i>Music Together</i>
	9:30	<i>Music Together</i>	•		7:00	<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>
	7:30	Fracking Our Farmlands	•		7:00	<i>The Artist's Way</i>
Sat Feb 2	8:00	Social Action Planning and Policy	•	Fri Feb 15	9:30	<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>
	6:30	Funderburg Dinner	•		9:30	<i>Music Together</i>
Sun Feb 3	12:30	Governance Conversation	•		12:30	<i>Tai Chi</i>
	1:30	WPA Intergenerational Winter Tea	•		7:00	Jewish Awareness Group
	7:00	Environmental Leadership Team	•	Sun Feb 17	10:00	<u>ONE SERVICE ONLY</u>
Tue Feb 5	1:30	First Tuesday Group	•		12:30	Trustees Meeting
	7:00	Women's Retreat Committee	•		3:00	Needleworkers
Wed Feb 6	9:30	<i>Rise Up and Call Her Name</i>	•		8:30	Youth Advisory Council
	4:00	Shawl Ministry	•	Tue Feb 19	7:00	Taizé-style Vespers Service
	6:00	Arts Council	•		7:00	Amnesty Group
	6:30	<i>Concord Area Humanists</i>	•	Thu Feb 21	6:30	<i>Heartsong Collage</i>
Thu Feb 7	7:00	<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>	•		7:00	<i>The Artist's Way</i>
	7:00	<i>The Artist's Way</i>	•		7:30	By Your Side Singers
	7:30	By Your Side Singers	•	Fri Feb 22	7:30	<i>Rise Up Singing</i>
Fri Feb 8	9:30	<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>	•	Sat Feb 23	7:00	Heartbeat Concert
	9:30	<i>Music Together</i>	•	Tue Feb 26	9:30	<i>Women's Book Group</i>
Sat Feb 9	9:00	SAC Home Drop-Off Day	•		11:30	WPA Luncheon
	9:00	Photography Club	•		1:30	Women Growing Older
	7:00	"It's Been a Hard Day's Night" Beatles Night	•	Wed Feb 27	9:30	Art Seek
Sun Feb 10	12:30	Communications Team	•	Thu Feb 28	7:00	<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>
	2:00	Gun Control Discussion	•		7:00	<i>The Artist's Way</i>
	6:30	Standing Committee Meeting	•	Fri Mar 1	9:30	<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>
Tue Feb 12	9:00	WPA Board Meeting	•		9:30	<i>Music Together</i>
	1:30	Women Growing Older	•	Sun Mar 3	2:00	Family Homelessness
Wed Feb 13	1:30	Pastoral Care Lay Ministers	•		7:00	Environmental Leadership Team

COMMUNITY NEWS

Job Seeker Networking Group Meets Weekly

Carlisle Resilience is an informal networking and support group for people who are unemployed, underemployed, changing careers or starting new ventures. The group meets weekly Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m. at the First Religious Society in Carlisle, 27 School Street. Use the side entrance on Church Street. The group is open to all; no fee. Hot coffee provided.

Mountains and Music Weekend

Two- to Three-day Weekend in Hancock/Peterborough, NH February 15-18

Our own **Beth Norton** will conduct the choir at this weekend and will be singing the Brahms Requiem. Singers of all parts are welcomed. The orchestra piece and conductor will

be announced soon and welcome all types of instrumental players. Informal chamber music and orchestral playing is all part of the weekend. Listeners welcome also! The location features 20 miles of trails for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing; also there is on-site tubing and nearby alpine skiing.

Cost for the two-day package is \$177 for AMC members, \$197 nonmembers, \$100 child; Friday afternoon-Sunday after lunch (2 dinners, 2 lunches, 2 breakfasts). Three-day package cost is \$226 for AMC members, \$246 nonmembers, \$150 child; Friday afternoon-Monday after lunch (3 dinners, 3 lunches, 3 breakfasts). Downloadable registration available at www.amcboston.org/music. Call **Patty Keane** at 978-758-1832 with any questions (or e-mail her at pgkeane@hotmail.com)

FEBRUARY 2013 NEWSLETTER

The March Newsletter deadline is Friday, February 15, at noon.
The Newsletter will be published Tuesday, February 26.

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

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Fax: 978-369-8701

E-Mail: FPConcord@firstparish.org

Website: www.firstparish.org

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

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Ministerial Intern's E-Mail:

Tony Fisher: tfisher@firstparish.org

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

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 fracturing, which he regards as “an extreme and dangerous form of fossil fuel extraction.” 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.



February 10th, 20:30 – Noon:

Jill Colpak:

“Travels in Africa”

Jill Colpak retired from the position of Head Librarian at Acton-Boxborough Regional High School in 2004. She always enjoyed traveling and has been able to do a lot more of that in the past eight years. In the fall of 2010 she spent a month in Africa combining safaris with cultural and city activities and visiting Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia. Her presentation at First Parish will highlight the safari activities [Serengeti, Ngorongoro in Tanzania; Kruger in S. Africa; Etosha in Namibia] with a few detours to other sights such as the tall, orange-hued sand dunes of Namibia and the waters of Victoria Falls.



February 24th, 10:30 – Noon:

Dr. Kathleen Elcox & Nancy Beeuwkes:

“The Caregiver 24/7”

Becoming a caregiver may come upon you suddenly and unexpectedly. You may or may not see it gradually developing, or you may already be a caregiver. No matter how it happens, one is seldom sufficiently prepared for, or even aware of, how insidiously the situation can consume the caregiver. If you can see it coming, start making memories – plans and activities – NOW.



Upcoming Sunday Forum Topics:

3/3/13	Morgan Thompson:	“What’s in Your Genes? - Making Sense of Genetic Information”
3/10/13	Rein Beeuwkes:	“What You Should Know About Fusion Energy”
3/17/13	Evan Seitz	“Haiti”

HEARTBEAT

ISRAELI + PALESTINIAN
YOUTH MUSICIANS

FROM JERUSALEM, HAIFA, & JAFFA-TEL AVIV

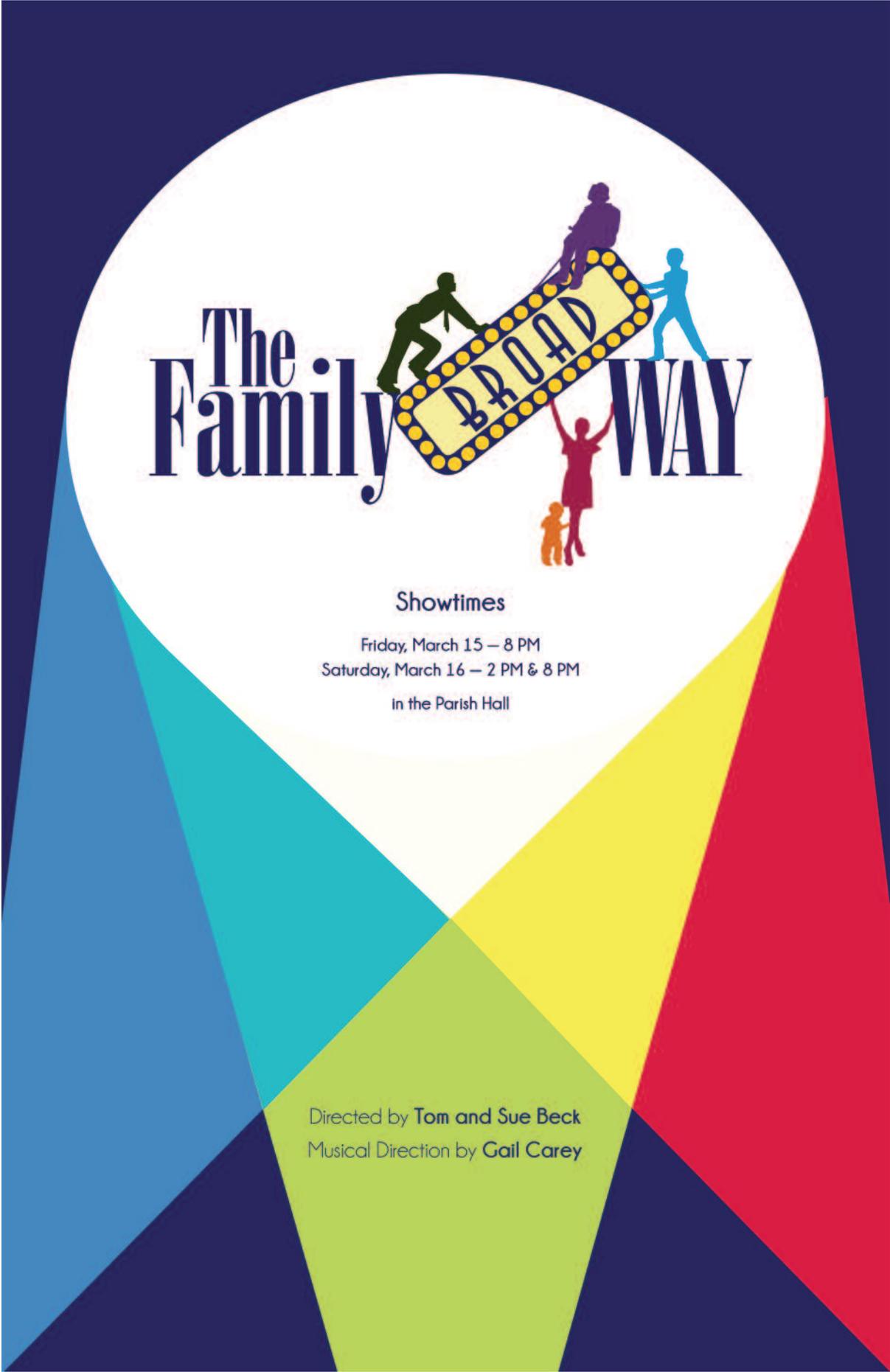


THE POWER OF MUSIC TO TRANSFORM CONFLICT
PERFORMANCE + WORKSHOP

SATURDAY FEB. 23
FIRST PARISH IN CONCORD
20 LEXINGTON RD. 7PM



OPEN TO THE ALL AGES
DONATION SUGGESTED
HEARTBEAT.FM



The Family BROADWAY

Showtimes

Friday, March 15 – 8 PM

Saturday, March 16 – 2 PM & 8 PM

in the Parish Hall

Directed by **Tom and Sue Beck**
Musical Direction by **Gail Carey**



for *Spiritual* Renewal

The Wright Tavern Center at First Parish in Concord

An Oasis in Our Busy Lives • February 2013

The Wright Tavern Center (WTC) 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..

SPRING 2013 COURSES BEGINNING NOW

Meet and Work with the Healing Angels of the Energy Field — Ariel, Raphael, Gabriel, Celestina, Faith, Cassiel, Daniel, Sarah and Michael

This course will enable you to join together with other students and work as a team — meeting and working with the Healing Angels. You will learn how to call upon the healing angels with a special prayer of invitation. You will then learn how to use an angelic heartlink to connect with the angels' energy. You will discover the special healing gifts that each angel brings; and you will invite each of the healing angels to support you in your physical, emotional, mental and spiritual healing journey.

Facilitator: *Mae Pagan*

You can call upon these healing angels whenever you need healing support. If you support others in their self-healing through energy therapies like Integrated Energy Therapy, Reiki, Therapeutic Touch, Healing Touch, Massage or other techniques, the Healing Angels can add a special spiritual dimension to you sessions.

Throughout his 12 years of facilitating Integrated Energy Therapy® sessions, international published author Stevan J. Thayer had many angels join with him and offer their healing gifts. He came to understand that these angels each brought a unique gift of healing and are delighted to be invited to offer you their healing gifts.

Saturday, March 9 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Fee: \$95

Rise Up and Call Her Name — NEW DATES

“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 to twinklemanning@gmail.com or bozena-smith@mindspring.com. (These two e-mail addresses are being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view them.)

Wednesday February 6, March 6 9:30 a.m.

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*

• 10 Thursdays: Feb. 7–April 12 12:00–1:15 p.m.
• Fee: \$150 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 four 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

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: 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: Feb. 1-22 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.

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)

Movie Night — “Creation” — in the Parish Hall

Wednesday, Feb. 6 7:00 p.m.

Inquiries to pne@aol.com.

“Discussion” Meeting at Free Concord Library, Trustees Room.

Hosted by Paul Jameson and Maria Greene

Tuesday, Feb. 19 7:00 p.m.

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.