



The Meeting House News

January 2015

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Greetings!

Welcome to the January *Meeting House News*.
Enjoy!

Worship Services

Sunday, January 4

"The Church Bells of First Parish"

Rev. Howard Dana and the Lincoln Ringers; Diane Burke, director

Sunday, January 11

"From Fear to Calm"

Rev. Howard Dana and the First Parish Choir

Sunday, January 18

"Standing on the Side of Love: Where Black Lives Matter"

Beth Norton, Bethany Lowe and the Intergenerational Gospel Choir

Sunday, January 25

"Good News Abounds"

Brian Chenowith and the First Parish Choir

Sunday, February 1

Rev. Howard Dana and the First Parish Choir

All Sunday Worship Services at 10:00 a.m., except as follows:

Two worship services, at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Palm Sunday, March 29, 2015

Easter Sunday, April 5, 2015

Pastoral Care

Lay Minister

Sue Dobbie

susandobbie@gmail.com

978-501-6969

Minister for Pastoral Care

Rev. Marion Visel

978-369-9602, ext. 414

mvisel@firstparish.org

Senior Minister

Rev. Howard Dana

978-369-9602

hdana@firstparish.org

Ministerial Intern

Brian Chenowith

630-877-5371

bchenowith@firstparish.org

Caring Connection

Rides

Suzanne Hogan

978-318-9035

suzanne.hogan@comcast.net

Meals Delivery

Bev Bringle

bevbringle@yahoo.com

978-369-4793

First Parish Café

Every Sunday, 9:00 a.m.

Coffee, tea, hot chocolate
and muffins

Events This Month

Worship

Sunday, January 4, 10:00 a.m.

Shawl Ministry

Tuesday, January 6, 2:00 p.m.

Women's Retreats

Registration Deadline

Wednesday, January 7

Concord Area Humanists

Wednesday, January 7, 7:00 p.m.

Arts Council Meeting

REVeries

*This is an excerpt from my sermon, "Risk—Stumbling
Toward the Holy"*



We have all taken risks in our lives. Some of these risks have been physical. Some of these risks have been emotional, like learning to love someone or trusting a friend. All of these risks have changed us, making us the people we are today. Whether we consider ourselves risk-takers or not, life demands risk. It demands change. And faith is one of the ways we learn to make meaning out of the risks we face. We all have moments when the old way of being is stripped away and the path ahead becomes clear. We all have moments when what we have been doing no longer works and we are forced to make a change. We all have moments when something strong and beautiful and transformative wakes us up to our lives again. These are holy moments. These are rites of passage. These are awakenings to what is next.

The Spirit of Life calls me continually to be more than I am. It calls me through my fears and past them to a life that is more daring than I would have chosen for myself. However you see it, the Holy will find a way to make you take risks if you are open to it. These risks will keep you from falling into destructive patterns and habits. These risks will thrust you into the clear, cool waters of change and growth.

Ministers talk a lot about a sense of calling. For us it is usually a calling to serve people or to build religious community. But we are not the only ones who experience a sense of call. It can happen to anyone and everyone. It can happen to you. The trick is to remain open to the calling. When asked by an interviewer, "How do we learn to hear?" Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz replied:

"We don't learn to hear. The only thing that we can really learn is that something may happen, and when it comes, listen. In the first revelation to Moses, he is not sure what has happened; he has to be given some kind of sign. There's an immediate call to see a sign, the burning bush, just in order to come close, which is again the same thing: it's like knocking on a door, like feeling a hand on your shoulder. It's not in itself a message, but it is a kind of awakening... Sometimes the only thing to be learned is this: when the call comes, jump!" (Parabola, Spring 1994, p. 33)

In this New Year—flying, floating, swimming, leaping—let us jump. Let us risk. Let us live.

Love, Howard

Intern-al Dialogues

As the New Year unfolds, I realize that I now only have five more months with all of you here at First Parish in Concord. This is the bittersweetness of a one-year internship. While I am ready to venture out into the wild and wonderful world of searching for my own congregation, it is so very good to be your intern. I don't know about you, but, I want good things to last. I want to enjoy them as long as possible. Time with good friends and family, growing in relationship with a community, experiencing a moment of bliss, and so



Wednesday, January 7, 6:00 pm

Speak Spanish

Thursday, January 8, 7:00 p.m.,
offsite

“Darlingside” Concert

Friday, January 9, 7:00 p.m.

Photography Club Meeting

Saturday, January 10, 9:00 a.m.

Worship

Sunday, January 11, 10:00 a.m.

Standing Committee

Sunday, January 11, 6:00 p.m.

Vegan Potluck Dinner

Tuesday, January 13, 6:30 p.m.

Intergenerational One-Rehearsal-
Choir

For worship on Sunday, January 18

Wednesday, January 14, 6:15 p.m.

Partner Congregation Council
Meeting

Thursday, January 15, 7:00 p.m.

Jewish Awareness Affinity Group

Friday January 16, 7:00 p.m.

Intergenerational Worship

Sunday, January 18, 10:00 a.m.

WPA Luncheon Meeting

Wednesday, January 21, 11:30 a.m.

Rise Up Singing

Friday, January 23, 7:30 p.m.

Worship

Sunday, January 25, 10:00 a.m.

Transylvanian Pilgrim Share

Sunday, January 25, 6:30 p.m.

Women’s AM/PM Book Group

Monday, January 26, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, January 27, 9:30 a.m.

Event with Sarah Chayes

Thursday, January 29, 7:30 p.m.

Film Screening and Discussion

Friday, January 30, 7:00 p.m.

many other things—these are worthy and wonderful moments. They leave us wanting more. But life, as it so often does, tells us that that is not how the world works. We find that change comes upon us whether or not we are expecting it. This is true for First Parish in Concord as well. Change is happening. There is no easy way of accepting or grieving the changes of life. For me, what makes them bearable is knowing I have a community of people to turn to. It is comforting to share in navigating this unpredictable life with others.

I will enjoy these last five months with all of you. I will look ahead and know, yes, things will change but right now they are just as exciting and delightful as they were when I first learned I would be your intern almost a year ago. So, too, with the changes that naturally come upon any church community. Exciting things await all of us—whatever they may be.

I would like to extend my gratitude for the support and well-wishes I received before I went before the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. If you haven’t heard, I was welcomed into Fellowship! This community certainly played a part in preparing me for that day. It has been a joy to share in the celebration with all of you. While I am going into search for a congregation, I will still be around as your intern. I will still be here to learn from this wonderful community, to be challenged, and to grow. I can’t wait to see what the New Year has in store for all of us!

Warmly, Brian

MUSings

On the night of the Grand Jury decision in Ferguson, Missouri, the First Parish Choir rehearsed in the Sanctuary while demonstrations erupted in cities all over the US. In an act of witness and prayer, we ended that rehearsal with a song based on the words of St. Francis of Assisi: “Lord, Make us instruments of your peace; walls of pride and prejudice will cease when we are your instruments of peace.”



That’s a pretty tall order. How can we be instruments of peace? How do we witness to injustice in our society and the grief that it creates? How do we respond to the refrain “black lives matter”?

I believe in the power of music to build bridges, unify disparate groups, build community, express the human yearning for justice and inspire us to work for it. We can begin to be instruments of peace through music making. On pilgrimages to Transylvania and El Salvador we have experienced music’s power to reach across boundaries of language and culture; music has been a bridge in reaching out to the Roxbury community through our commitment to the UU Urban Ministry.

In 2015, First Parish music ministry will continue to seek ways to make us instruments of peace. The first opportunity will come on January 18, the Sunday we observe Martin Luther King’s birthday. The service that day is intergenerational and singers of all ages are encouraged to join the choir, regardless of whether you sing in one of our regular choirs or not! (see separate article).

Rock 'n' Roll Bingo Fundraiser
for Youth Group Service Trip
Saturday, January 31, 6:00 p.m.

Photography Exhibit
January 31, Altshuler Gallery

Worship
Sunday, February 1, 10:00 a.m.

Every Week

Worship Sharing Circle
Sunday, 11:10 to 11:30 a.m.
Rev. Howard Dana's study

Buddhist Group
Wednesday, 9:30 a.m.
Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

Additional details elsewhere

Members of the Standing Committee

Kate Crosby
kate_crosby@newview.org

David Elwood
daveelwood@hotmail.com

Kristin Haddad, Clerk
kristin.haddad@gmail.com

Jake Nunes
Jake_Nunes@shs.org

Patty Popov
ppopov@nichols-pratt.com

Mark Russell Prior, Chair
mark.russell.prior@comcast.net

Kitsy Rothermel
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Toby Smith Ropeik
tsr@tobyasmith.com

Lora Venesy
venesy@comcast.net

Alec Walker
alecwalker@aol.com

First Parish singers and musicians will return to the UU Urban Ministry in Roxbury on the afternoon of Sunday, April 12 for the "Hope Out Loud IV Praise Celebration" a gathering that seeks to bridge communities and families through praise and music. We hope that many Concord parishioners will plan to join us.

The First Parish Choir has been honored with an invitation from UU Service Committee Executive Director Rev. William Schulz to premier a new composition by eminent African American composer T. J. Anderson and US Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky for the Gala Celebration of the UUSC's 75th Anniversary on April 30.

And finally, on Music Sunday, May 31 all of our choirs will join to offer Jason Shelton's "Suite Progress," a three-movement work for chorus and instrumental ensemble which was commissioned by Nashville Harmony, the GLBT & friends chorus of Nashville. This inspiring piece lifts up both the struggles and progress of folks in the GLBT community and will include voices of all generations.

"Walls of pride and prejudice will cease, when we are your instruments of peace." A tall order indeed. May music help us build a path to peace and justice.

Blessings,
Beth

Social Action Community

It has been a blessing to be Unitarian Universalist these past few weeks.

As our country has erupted into choruses of Black Lives Matter and No Justice, No Peace; as my Facebook feed became overflowing with articles reporting previously unheard stories about Mike Brown and Eric Garner; as I became the recipient of many articles about being a white ally in racial justice movements; as my faith communities—here, at home, and at school—never let me forget that I had the ability to choose whether I listened to these choruses and read these articles. That I had the privilege of choosing to engage, or disengage. It's been a hard month to be a Unitarian Universalist, but one in which I feel I am being asked to enact my faith.

I had to admit, at first I was a bit discouraged that the cacophony of concern was not as loud here in Concord as I had expected. But, the next day, when I went to school and heard anger from classmates who hadn't heard a word about Mike Brown, Eric Garner, or the worth of black lives in their Sunday morning services, I realized that we are doing something radical here at First Parish in Concord.

As we move towards Martin Luther King Day and Black History Month, I hope that we'll keep this radical spirit alive. I hope that we find ways to enact our concern for black lives and communities marred by police brutality. I hope that we'll take risks, make mistakes, and learn about ourselves as we get angry at the inequality we see around us.

In faith, Bethany



Tom Wilson, Treasurer
twilson@wilsongroup.com

Ministers & Staff

Rev. Howard N. Dana
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hdana@firstparish.org

Rev. Marion Visel
Minister for Pastoral Care
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Brian Chenowith
Ministerial Intern
bchenowith@firstparish.org

Fifi Ball
Director of Operations
fball@firstparish.org

Rachel Baker
Director of Membership
and Communications
rbaker@firstparish.org

Bethany Lowe
Social Action Director and
Youth Program Director
blowe@firstparish.org

Cassy Bosworth
Church Administrator
cbosworth@firstparish.org

Tina Storey
Assistant to the
Director of Operations
tstorey@firstparish.org

Doug Baker
Sacristan and Curator
dbaker@firstparish.org

Beth Norton
Director of Music
music@firstparish.org

Eric Huenneke
Parish Organist
music@firstparish.org

Gail Carey
Music Ministry Associate
music@firstparish.org

Pastoral Care Team

Walking with One Another through the Changes Life Brings

Minister for Pastoral Care: Contact Rev. Marion Visel at mvisel@firstparish.org, or by calling her cell phone at 201-931-5239, or the church at 978-369-9602, ext. 414.

Senior Minister: Contact Rev. Howard N. Dana at hdana@firstparish.org, or by calling the church at 978-369-9602, ext. 411, or his cell phone at 717-412-8543.

Ministerial Intern: Contact Brian Chenowith at bchenowith@firstpaarish.org, or by calling the church at 978-369-9602, ext. 412, or his cell phone at 630-877-5371.

The Lay Minister for January: Contact Sue Dobbie at susandobbie@gmail.com or by calling her cell phone at 978-501-6969.

Meals Delivery for January: Contact Bev Bringle at bevbringle@yahoo.com or 978-369-4793.

The above information is always available as the first item in the left-hand column of the Meeting House News for easy access.

Volunteers Needed for Pastoral Care

Pastoral care is in need of additional volunteers. Forms are available on the Pastoral Care bulletin board. Fill out a form and place it in the pastoral care mailbox (bottom shelf) in the office.

Consider Writing a Personal Note

Every Sunday, one of the ministers reads the names of those on the Pastoral Care List. It includes the names of those experiencing illness, or loss, or the celebration of a happy event. After the church service, consider writing a personal note to one of those folks named on the Pastoral List. Look for the table in the Parish Hall with the sign "Thinking of You Cards." A copy of the Pastoral Care List is provided with an assortment of cards made by a member of the pastoral care team. Place the completed note card in the small box on the table. It will be mailed for you by the office on Tuesday. Your note will bring comfort, hope or celebration.

Shawl Ministry

Come help knit and crochet shawls for the Shawl Ministry on the first Tuesday of every month at 2:00 p.m. Lessons are available for anyone who would like to learn to knit or crochet and contribute to this ministry. First Parish offers shawls to anyone who may like the literal comfort of a warm shawl wrapped around the shoulders or draped across a lap during challenging times. If you would like a shawl, please contact Rev. Marion Visel at mvisel@firstparish.org.

First Tuesday 65+ Group

Our next meeting is Tuesday, January 6, 1:30-3:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall and Parlor. Each meeting includes a time of focused sharing and a topic for facilitated discussion. This month's topic will be *Looking Forward: What do we want to leave behind from 2014 and what we wish for ourselves in 2015?* There will be a fire in the fireplace and friendly conversation again, to keep us warm.

Anderson Manuel
Director of Youth Gospel Choir
music@firstparish.org

Dawn Van Patten
Assistant Director of
Religious Education
dvanpatten@firstparish.org

Gary E. Smith
Minister Emeritus

David Huston
Music Director Emeritus

Contact First Parish

Office Hours:

Tuesday – Friday
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Address: 20 Lexington Road
Concord, MA 01742

Phone: 978-369-9602

Fax: 978-369-8701

Email: FPConcord@firstparish.org

Website: www.firstparish.org

Church Calendar:

<http://www.firstparish.org/cms/about-first-parish/hours-directions-services/church-calendar>

Sign-Up for Emailed First Parish

Announcements:

<http://www.firstparish.org/cms/about-first-parish/e-mail-lists>

"Like" Our Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/First-Parish-in-Concord-Unitarian-Universalist/343822177494>

Reserve a Room:

<http://www.firstparish.org/cms/reserve-a-room>

Winter Storms

Closures and Cancellations

The Meeting House will be closed if

The Tuesday Group meets the first Tuesday of the month 1:30-3:00 p.m., don't worry about your age, all welcome, you determine whether the topic is for you. Hope to see you there!

Tuesday Group Steering Committee: Berni Jenkins (Contact Person): berni.jenkins@verizon.net 978/369-2876, Bob Andrews, Mary Clark, Dave Dawson, Susan Dobbie, Patricia Ellis, Bill Maxwell, Jack Nevison and Virginia Taylor

Standing Committee

We are around the corner and heading into the second half of the year. Standing Committee projects initiated during the fall are coming to fruition. Our Congregational Outreach group held its first open discussion before the Sunday service on December 14. Topics that came out of that meeting are being teed up for focused discussions in the winter and spring. We are making good progress on a one-page description of the First Parish governance model, and should have a document ready for congregational review in late winter. Our evaluation group is preparing for a mid-year survey of the congregation about how the Standing Committee is doing on its annual goals. The Standing Committee's new Finance Committee, having delivered its report on spending priorities in November, is reviewing and refining its operating processes and preparing for budget presentations in the spring. Also, conversations with Rev. Howard Dana, the Religious Education Council, and congregation members about the future of our First Parish Religious Education program have begun, and planning and preparation for the Annual Pledge Campaign is under way.

This year, we've put a lot of effort into our communications with the congregation, sending out regular informational updates and holding discussions on important topics. In the remainder of the year, we'll continue reaching out to congregational groups to learn about their activities and interests. In addition to these more formal communication activities, we're also interested in having more informal conversations with individual members of the congregation. Standing Committee members are always available to talk with First Parish members and friends about issues of concern. We'd also like to hear about things big and small that please and inspire parishioners. So please feel free to reach out to any of us, at coffee hour, or at an event, or by phone or email, to talk about your First Parish experiences.

Best wishes for a happy new year!

Mark Russell Prior, chair, First Parish Standing Committee

RE News

With Pam Howell's departure the religious education (RE) program at First Parish is in transition. One of our first priorities is to hire an interim Director of Religious Education (DRE) to start immediately and continue until we have a full time DRE. We are currently in the process of interviewing for this interim position with a search team consisting of Lora Venesy, Amy Capofreddi, Jeff Brainerd, and Rev. Howard Dana.

the Concord Public Schools are closed. Church will be cancelled in the event of a serious snowstorm; a decision will be made by the Senior Minister and the Director of Operations by 8:00 p.m. on Saturday evening. A notice will be placed on the website, an email will be sent out on the FP-Announce list, and there will be a message on the church telephone. Please use your judgment to ensure your safety and that of your family.

This transition also means that First Parish has an opportunity to explore where we would like to go with our religious education program. What does RE mean to us as a congregation? What is our vision for RE at First Parish? How can we make that vision a reality and how will that define the person we would like to lead RE at First Parish? We are planning congregational discussions to explore these questions early in the new year. In addition to helping run the RE programs, one of the interim DRE's roles will be to facilitate these congregational discussions.

Until an interim DRE is on board all RE programs will continue and will be run by a combination of staff and members of the congregation. Rev. Dana will adjust staffing as necessary, and the RE Council will act as lay leaders. The RE Council will coordinate additional volunteers as necessary and an RE Council member will be available each Sunday morning as a point person to respond to any issues. Each grade level has an RE Council member as the primary contact person; any questions should first go to that RE Council member.

Grade Level	Contact Person	Email
Kindergarten	Caroline Minkin	carolineminkin@gmail.com
1	Sarah Wilfert	sarahwilfert@gmail.com
2	Leslie Pelton	lpelton@ljpcconsult.com
3	Denise Howard	denisejohn@comcast.net
4	Jan Goddard-Taylor	jangoddard-taylor@comcast.net
5	Michelle Fortier	mfortierhome@gmail.com
6	Sarah Napier	sarah.napier@mac.com
7	Jeff Brainerd	jeffbrainerd@gmail.com
8	Jeff Brainerd	jeffbrainerd@gmail.com

Staff member Dawn Van Patten is the contact person for LittleRE (0-4years), and Bethany Lowe is the contact for Coming of Age (COA) and Youth Group.

We look forward to engaging the congregation in conversations about the future of religious education at First Parish, and we are confident that with your input and support we can continue the excellence that Pam brought to our RE program.

Sincerely,
 Rev. Howard Dana, Senior Minister
 Jeff Brainerd, Chair, RE Council

Darlingside Concert

Darlingside is a terrific band that plays a variety of stringed instruments. Their music is beautiful. Come hear them and support the RE Program at First Parish on January 9 at 7:00 p.m. This concert is scheduled to end about 8:30 p.m. The tickets are \$20. If you would like to reserve seats, please go to doodle and enter your name and the number of tickets your family would like. It is the honor system. We will collect money at the door. There are only 150 seats available, so sign up soon:
<http://doodle.com/vn2quh2xs7symbnc>

Sunday Forum: OWL

Sunday, January 11, 11:30 a.m., Sanctuary

Who taught you about sex? We are very fortunate to provide Our Whole Lives (OWL), to our eighth graders at First Parish each year. The comprehensive sexuality curriculum is enhanced by UU values and beliefs and has been taught (first under the name, About Your Sexuality (AYS)) since 1970. A crucial part of our children's growth and congregational life, it allows the opportunity for open, honest conversations, while sharing fact-based information. OWL not only provides facts about anatomy and human development, but helps participants clarify values, build interpersonal skills, and understand the spiritual, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality. OWL empowers participants to make healthy decisions about sexuality and relationships, and become healthy adults.

Come hear a panel of past OWL teachers, as well as meet our new teachers to discuss OWL here at First Parish. We'll talk about the curriculum and UU values, as well as our expansion to Little OWL for first grade, and a high school level course (and what they would cover). Please contact Lora Venesy at venesy@comcast.net or Dawn Van Patten at dvanpatten@firstparish.org with any questions.

Seeking a Garden Coordinator for 2015

Are you a gardener? Would you like to take on coordinating our First Parish plots in the Hugh Cargill Community Garden? We are hoping to be able to continue this 'hands-on' spiritual practice that supports or social justice and environmental mission. If you are interested, please contact Dawn Van Patten dvanpatten@firstparish.org

Rock 'n' Roll Bingo Fundraiser for Youth Group Service Trip

On Saturday, January 31, at 6:00 p.m. the Youth Group will lead a night of Rock 'n' Roll Bingo. This event will be open to folks of all ages and families of all sizes. Pizza and homemade chili will be sold at the event. Youth lead many rousing rounds of bingo. Each time a "bingo" is announced, we'll celebrate with music. Dancing will be encouraged. There will also be a silent auction of toys, games, babysitting services, etc. All proceeds will go to support the Youth Group's service trip to New York City this coming February. Please come and support the efforts of our youth to make their service trip financially sustainable.

The Arts

Fostering Community through the Arts

Each month the First Parish Arts Council will highlight arts events that offer opportunities to participate in the ministry of the arts at First Parish. Unless otherwise noted, questions may be directed to music@firstparish.org.

January 7 at 6:00 p.m. – Arts Council Meeting

January 9 at 7:00 p.m. – “Darlingside” Concert

January 10 at 9:00 a.m. – Photography Club Meeting – open to all First Parish adults

January 23 at 7:30 p.m. – Rise Up Singing, First Parish's monthly song circle

January 30 at 7:00 p.m. – “Inequality for All” Film

January 31 – Bill Claybrook Photography Exhibit in the Altshuler Gallery

For more information on these events, check this *Meeting House 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 Susan Page, chair, for more information: srpage10@verizon.net.

Intergenerational Choir for MLK Sunday

Once again this year, all First Parish choirs will be teaming up on January 18 for our Intergenerational Gospel Choir Sunday. This one-rehearsal choir is open to all congregants of our church. Perhaps you've always wanted to sing in a choir but do not read music. Maybe you love the idea of learning music together in the time-honored oral tradition. Maybe you cherish the opportunity to join in singing together across the generations. If so, this is the choir for you!

If interested, just come join us on Wednesday, January 14, for our joint rehearsal. We've decided to make a community gathering out of the evening, so it looks like this:

6:15-7:00: Learn songs with the music staff in the sanctuary

7:00-7:45: Community dinner with pizza and greens

7:45-9:00: Joint choir rehearsal including chalice choir, gospel choir, adult choir, IG singers and band

We will sing together in worship on Sunday, January 18, for the 10:00 a.m. worship service. Please arrive by 9:00 a.m. ready to warm up with all choirs. Any questions may be directed to Gail Carey or Beth Norton. Please do let us know if you plan to attend on Wednesday, January 14, so we can order enough food for all.

In song,

Your FP Choir Directors: Beth, Anderson and Gail

First Parish Choirs

For information about singing with the choirs at First Parish, contact Beth Norton, Music Director, at music@firstparish.org.

SAC Action

Vegan Potluck

Tuesday, January 13 at 6:30 p.m.

Enjoy a delicious pot-luck dinner in the Parish Hall on Tuesday, January 13 at 6:30 p.m. hosted by Reverence for Life and the Environmental Leadership Team. Please bring your own beverage and a dish to share that is free of meat, fish, eggs, honey and dairy. Also, attach a card with the ingredients of your dish, to help out those with allergies or special diets. Your \$2 donation helps to cover expenses. Don't have time to cook? A simple salad or a loaf of bread is just fine. Need a recipe? Contact Lyell Slade at [978-369-0636](tel:978-369-0636) or llsrdv@netscape.net.

Event with Sarah Chayes

Thursday, January 29, 7:30 p.m.

Come hear Sarah Chayes, a former reporter for National Public Radio who covered the United States of America intervention and fall of the Taliban in Afghanistan. After leaving NPR, Chayes founded the Arghand Cooperative, a venture that encourages local Afghan farmers to produce flowers, fruits, and herbs instead of opium poppies. The Arghand Cooperative was the recipient of a grant from First Parish and many other organizations in the Concord area. Currently, she is at the Carnegie Endowment in Washington, DC. Chayes recently wrote a book, *State of Thieves*, which is due out at the beginning of this year. Sarah has many stories to share from her years in Afghanistan. She spoke at First Parish a few years ago to a crowded Sanctuary. This is not an event to miss!

"Inequality for All" Screening and Moderated Discussion

Friday, January 30, 7:00 p.m.

The Denominational Affairs Committee invites you to a screening of Robert Reich's gripping film about the origins and corrosive effect of income disparity in America. First Parishioner and Massachusetts State Rep Cory Atkins, who brought this film to the community in October, will introduce the evening. Fred Van Deusen will moderate the follow-on discussion, starting with further materials Reich has provided. Atkins will be on hand to field questions on legislative action. The film is in line with the UUA's current Congregational Study/Action Issue (CSAI) of income disparity, and it may be the chance to kick off deeper engagement with UU's everywhere on the CSAI.

Rock 'n' Roll Bingo Fundraiser for Youth Group Service Trip

On Saturday, January 31, at 6:00 p.m. the Youth Group will lead a night of Rock 'n' Roll Bingo. This event will be open to folks of all ages and families of all sizes. Pizza and homemade chili will be sold at the event. Youth lead many rousing rounds of bingo. Each time a "bingo" is announced, we'll celebrate with music. Dancing will be encouraged. There will also be a silent auction of toys, games, babysitting services, etc. All proceeds will go to support the Youth Group's service trip to New York City this coming February. Please come and support the efforts of our youth to make their service trip financially sustainable.

Reserve a Room

We have a new system for reserving rooms! We are confident that this new method will make reserving rooms easy and comprehensive, and improve communication with you and other groups. Go to www.firstparish.org/cms/reserve-a-room next time you need to reserve a room for your meeting or event. For your convenience, paper copies of this form are available in the front office. Please share information about this new system with your friends and groups.

Worship Sharing Circle

Parishioners are invited to gather in Rev. Dana's study to take turns sharing what stood out for them about the service. This simple opportunity to share, listen and get to know others in the First Parish community starts soon after the service ends. It usually runs from 11:10 to 11:30 a.m. and is open to everyone. First Parish volunteers will be present to help facilitate this event.

Partner Congregation

Our recently returned pilgrims from Keresztúr will share some of their experiences there at a gathering on Sunday January 25 at 6:30 p.m. Please join Howard, Beth, and our travelers for dessert, and hear inspiring stories from our pilgrims. We will share some singing, and there will be a slide show of some of the many wonderful pictures our travelers took. The next Partner Congregation Council meeting is at First Parish on January 15 at 7:00 p.m.; we warmly welcome all who are interested to join us as we work to strengthen our partnership.

Women's Retreats

Women's Retreats 2015: Creativity! - Registration deadline Wednesday, January 7
All women of First Parish are warmly invited and welcome to attend this year's retreats, where we'll focus on Creativity as we share our time together. Banish all cares as we relax, have fun, rejuvenate, and reflect on what creativity means to us and how we can find and foster it in our lives. (Creativity is found in many aspects of life, not just arts and crafts!!) Choose either of the two weekend retreats (Friday evening through Sunday lunch) at Senexet House in Connecticut, January 23-25 or January 30-February 1, or the at-home retreat at First Parish, Friday evening, February 6, and Saturday morning through afternoon, February 7. Registration information and forms at coffee hour today, in the church office, or download from www.firstparish.org/forms. Questions? Contact Darien Smith at darien@smithquest.com or 978-369-1471.

Speak Spanish?

Do you speak Spanish—or want to speak it better?

¿Hablas español, o quieres mejorar?

Please join otros compañeros de First Parish for conversación, diversión, y comida. Our next meeting will be Thursday, January 8, at 7:00 p.m., jueves 8 de enero a las 7 en la casa de Jim Reynolds. 615 Elm St, Concord. Don't be shy. ¡No tienes que hablar bien! English is allowed. There will always be someone who can translate. We'll celebrate el año nuevo and in recognition of El Día de los Reyes Magos, we'll consider the gifts that the past year

has brought us. Please bring comida y bebida for a potluck supper. Para más información: for more information, llama a call Alec Walker, 978-227-4031. O manda or send email to AlecWalker@aol.com.

Vegan Potluck

Tuesday, January 13, 6:30 p.m.

Enjoy a delicious potluck dinner in the Parish Hall, Tuesday, January 13, at 6:30 p.m., hosted by the Reverence for Life and the Environmental Leadership Team. Please bring your own beverage and a dish (4-6 servings) to share that is free of meat, fish, eggs, honey and dairy. Please also bring your own place setting to reduce paper waste and cleanup. Also, attach a card with the ingredients of your dish, to help out those with allergies or special diets. Children welcome! Creative fun at the children's craft table is provided. Need a recipe? Contact Lyell Slade at 978-369-0636 or llsrvd@netscape.net.

Jewish Awareness Affinity Group

Friday January 16, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at First Parish

Please join us for our January meeting, entitled "I didn't know they were Jewish."

If possible, please come to the meeting with the name of someone famous that you didn't know was Jewish. One possible place to start is the Wikipedia article "Lists of Jews," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lists_of_Jews. Pick an area you might recognize names from, and scan away. If you can, see if there's any information about their relationship to Judaism, and come with a short summary. We hope that this will spark conversation about the many ways people relate to Judaism, and why.

The Jewish Awareness Affinity Group meets on the third Friday of every month. We are open to all, including Jews, non-Jews, people related to Jews, fans of Jews, etc. We typically start with short Sabbath blessings over wine and challah, and then chat about a topic related to Judaism, watch a movie, or listen to someone who has prepared a short talk. We are more about questions than answers, and more about curiosity than closure. No credentials or special knowledge necessary.

WPA

Women's Parish Association

WPA Luncheon Meeting

Wednesday, January 21, 11:30 a.m.

Join old and new friends at the Women's Parish Association's luncheon meeting on Wednesday, January 21. Social time: 11:30 a.m. Lunch: 12:00 p.m., followed by the program. In a slide presentation of their recent pilgrimage to Transylvania, Concord parishioners who visited our partner church community in Szekelykerestur will show highlights of their trip. Cost of the luncheon is ten dollars. Contact the office or Dian Pekin at Pekindc@comcast.net by January 18 to make reservations and to communicate food requirements. All women and men are cordially invited.

Women's Book Group

For January, the Women's Book Group will be reading *My Beloved World* by Sonia Sotomayor. The evening discussion will be Monday, January 26, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.; and the morning discussion on Tuesday, January 27, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. Both groups meet 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 of these discussions. If you would like to be added to the Women's Book Group email list, please contact Darien Smith at darien@smithquest.com or 978-369-1471.

Books and Dates for 2014-2015

January 26/27: *My Beloved World*, Sonia Sotomayor

February 23/24: *Main Street*, Sinclair Lewis

March 30/31: *The Art of Travel*, Alain De Botton
April 27/28: *The Orphan Train: A Novel*, Christina Baker Kline
June 1/2: *Moloka'i*, Alan Brennert

Denominational Affairs Committee

Inequality for All. Screening and Moderated Discussion
Friday, January 30, 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

The Denominational Affairs Committee invites you to a screening of Robert Reich's gripping film about the origins and corrosive effect of income disparity in America. First Parishioner and Mass. State Rep. Cory Atkins, who brought this film to the community in October, will introduce the evening. Fred Van Deusen will moderate the discussion, starting with additional materials prepared and provided by Robert Reich. Atkins will be on hand to field questions on legislative action. The film is in line with the UUA's newest Congregational Study/Action Issue of income disparity, and it may be the chance to kick off deeper engagement with UU's everywhere on the CSAI.

Hearing Aid Needed

One of our good friends in Transylvania is in need of a working hearing-aid for his left ear. If you have one you are no longer using or know someone who does, please contact Bill Maxwell at 978-369-5257 or wmaxwell5257@gmail.com.

Concord Area Humanists

Concord Area Humanists (CAH) meet the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Additional information is available on the website, www.concordareahumanists.org, under "Events." Questions to pne@aol.com.

Humanists 'Fusion Energy,' Is it possible? Is it needed? Wednesday, January 7, by Dr. Reinier Beeuwkes in Parish Hall. Social 7:00 p.m. Program 7:15 p.m. Is Fusion Energy from ordinary water just a pipe dream, or can it happen to make a difference? Dr. Beeuwkes's basement cyclotron won first place in the 1958 Westinghouse Science Talent Search. His B.S. is from MIT, and his Ph.D. from Harvard. He is an active scientist, entrepreneur and conservationist, with many publications and patents. Come and join the discussion.

UU World

Mindful Journey

Take a mindful journey with UUs to the hill towns of Italy, July 26 to August 4, 2015. Experience the enchanting hill towns of Tuscany and Umbria, view the awesome landscapes, admire the incredible art, taste the wine, enjoy fresh pasta and all the delights this area of Italy offers us. Spend three nights in Florence, and three each in the hill towns of Siena and Assisi, staying in charming accommodations. We'll explore Cortona, made famous by the movie "Under the Tuscan Sun," see the Renaissance architecture designed by a humanist Pope in Pienza, meditate to Gregorian chanting at the twelfth-century Abby St. Antimo. The hill towns of San Gimignano, Montalcino, Montefalco, Bevagna and Spoleto are also on our itinerary. We'll learn each town's stories from its art, food and inhabitants. Because we are booking small monastery guest house accommodations, we need to make deposits by February 1, 2015. Please see the Itinerary and costs at <http://nuuc.ca/spiritual-growth/spiritual-practice/mindful-journeys/>. Or email Beverlz@me.com for more information at the Neighbourhood UU Congregation of Toronto.

Upcoming Cuba AyUUda Trips

Cuba AyUUda, a UU Social Justice Action Group, leads friendship-building small group trips to Cuba. Affordable all-inclusive trips this winter and spring will include visits to a community project for the arts, health clinics, and UNESCO World Heritage sites. Please visit our Web page at www.cubaayuuda.org for more information and to apply for this chance of a lifetime.

Editor's Notes**Next *Meeting House News* deadline:**

Tuesday, January 20, 11:59 p.m. (yes, the middle of the night)

Email submissions, either in the body of the email or as an attached Word document (not a PDF), to Rachel Baker at rbaker@firstparish.org. Inserts will no longer be possible, due to the new format.

Next publication date:

Tuesday, February 3, 2015

First Parish in Concord, Massachusetts, is a welcoming congregation seeking ways to deepen spiritually, build community, and make a positive difference in the world.

A Member Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association.