

Meeting House News

May 2015



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Worship this Month

Sunday, May 3, 10:00 a.m.

“Choose Your Ancestors”

Rev. Howard Dana and the First Parish Choir

Sunday, May 10, 10:00 a.m.

Mother’s Day

Rev. Howard Dana and the First Parish Choir

Sunday, May 17, 10:00 a.m.

Youth Sunday

Bethany Lowe, First Parish Youth, and the Youth Gospel Ensemble and Youth Musicians

Tuesday, May 19 at 7:30 p.m.

Evening Vespers

Songs and story from Anna Huckabee Tull and poetry and meditations from Bethany Lowe.

Sunday, May 24, 10:00 a.m.

“One Small Flickering Flame”

Brian Chenowith and Nancy Ackerman, clarinet

Sunday, May 31, 10:00 a.m.

“Suite Progress”

Rev. Howard Dana, Beth Norton, and the First Parish Choir, Children’s Choirs and Gospel Singers

Intern-al Dialogues

I’m sure I’m not alone in breathing a sigh of relief now that Spring is finally starting to happen here in Concord. It’s been a busy year at First Parish and I am thankful for some opportunities to catch my breath and enjoy a snowless landscape.



If you haven’t heard already, I have good news to share! I’ve been selected

as the candidate for the next settled minister for the UU Church of Lexington, Kentucky! I can't help but muse on the notion that I'm going from Concord to Lexington. It's an exciting time and I look forward to spending a week with them in May by the end of which they will hopefully vote to call me as their next minister. Deep down I know that without the experiences here at First Parish that this likely would not have been possible. So, thank you!

However, even with all of this excitement and possibility unfolding I am mindful that I am still your intern. A one year internship goes by so quickly and you need to make the best of what time there is. So in these last months I will be doing what needs to be done. I will be looking at areas where I haven't been able to engage or things I've wanted to be involved in. I look forward to enjoying these last months and simply continuing to learn and soak up everything that First Parish has to offer.

Warmly,
Brian

MUsings

Our Unitarian Universalist principles call us to recognize the inherent worth and dignity of every person; and to promote justice, equity and compassion in human relationships.

Through the "Standing on the Side of Love" campaign, UU's have created a progressive, visible and vocal presence in the struggle for marriage equality and equal rights for LGBTQ people.



Contemporary UU music reflects these values, notably the music of Rev. Jason Shelton, Minister for Music at First Unitarian Universalist in Nashville, Tennessee. Jason's song, "Standing on the Side of Love" was written as the Massachusetts legislature voted to legalize same-sex marriage. Jason is a prolific composer who continues to create inspiring music that expresses our faith and values to the world.

So it was very exciting to learn at last summer's UUMN Conference in San Diego that Jason had written a new piece, "Suite Progress," to celebrate the tenth anniversary of "Nashville in Harmony," an LGBTQ and friends chorus, which was founded by the Nashville UU congregation as an outreach

program.

This three-movement work starts by looking back at the hope that such a chorus could even exist in Nashville, or anywhere (The Dream). Then there's a "right-now piece" (Asking), which poignantly questions whether life will ever get any better. And finally, after a brief interlude, there's an exuberant expression of hope that the dream might be fulfilled in a time not too far off (Shameless).

Our choirs' offering of "Suite Progress" in worship on May 31 will be a family affair: David Ballard, a child of First Parish (son of Sara and Stoney Ballard) and an alumnus of our youth choirs, will return from his professional acting pursuits in New York to sing the opening solo; Siri Smedvig and daughter Iman will play in the string quartet, as will Norma Floyd; Michael Madera, father of two Chalice Choir members will play bass; John Bigay will be our drummer; and our Children's choirs and Gospel Singers will join the First Parish Choir for the hopeful and rousing final chorus.

It will be a Sunday to celebrate "sweet progress" in the struggle for LGBTQ rights, and to voice our hopes for a future "Where the beauty of each story, the beauty of each face, is honored in a circle made of song. Where our voices joined in laughter, our voices joined in grace, are lifted, showing all of us belong." (The Dream, Jason Shelton)

Blessings,
Beth

RE News

The information from our Religious Education Congregational Conversations has been collected, compiled, and quantified. To access this information link to the [First Parish website](#). What we learned through our process informed the creation of the job description for the next Religious Education Professional. You may find the job listing [here](#). Religious Education Council members will have a copy of this information at coffee hour and are available to answer your questions about the conversations and the job search process. We look forward to sharing our progress. Stay tuned to FP and RE Announce for reports.

Best,
Merill

Social Action Community

The Social Action Community Council is hosting a retreat this month for members of our Social Action Community. The goal is to revitalize social action by examining the resources we already have, and imagining how we will “go out into the world in peace” in the coming years.



Often when we start these conversations, people around the circle think back to Jericho Road, City Year, and Open Table. These were all events that involved many members across the various groups in our community. They were events that brought us together, and let us make new connections. They were activities that made us feel like we were making a positive difference.

I often wonder about what the next one of these types of far-reaching, multigenerational activities will be. What groups will be involved? What will inspire the idea? Why will we feel a need for this specific activity to happen in a faith-based community? Who will we touch? How will this activity change us?

I’m on the lookout (and listen-out) for something that will inspire us to come together to make a positive difference in our world, together, and for the long run.

—Bethany

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee evaluation of Rev. Howard Dana has been completed. This essential annual practice, designed to ensure the success of First Parish’s partnership with Howard, was embraced by Howard and the Standing Committee when Howard was called as our Senior Minister and Head-of-Staff two years ago.

The Standing Committee Evaluation Group, consisting of three Standing Committee members, developed five open-ended questions encompassing the goals that Howard and the Standing Committee agreed upon in the beginning of the year. The group obtained feedback from all eleven Standing Committee members and an additional 12 people chosen from among First Parish leaders. Feedback was then compiled into a summary evaluation report, presented to Howard, and discussed with Howard at the April 12 Standing Committee meeting.

Feedback was very positive and highlighted Howard's strengths and achievements over the past year. Recommendations for improvements were also provided in a number of areas. The summary evaluation report is available on the [Standing Committee Reports web page](#) on the First Parish website.

FY16 Budget: At our next Standing Committee meeting on May 10, Howard and Director of Operations Fifi Ball will present the first draft of the Fiscal Year 2016 budget. This budget will be based on revenue projections generated from the Annual Pledge Campaign 2015-2016. If you haven't yet pledged to support the programs and operations of our church, I encourage you to do so. And please consider your pledge amount carefully. We have a lot to preserve and much more to accomplish.

Annual Meeting 2015: The First Parish Annual Meeting is scheduled for June 14. At the meeting, the congregation will receive reports from staff and committees, vote on officers and committee members, approve delegates to General Assembly, approve the budget for next year, and more. Who can vote at our Annual Meeting? Our bylaws state that First Parish members who have signed the Membership Book at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting may vote. So, if you are considering joining our community and would like to participate and vote, you must sign the book soon! Contact Rachel Baker, Director of Membership and Communications, for more information.

Standing Committee members are always available to talk with First Parish members and friends about issues of interest and concern. So please reach out to any of us—at coffee hour, at an event, or by phone or email—to talk about your First Parish experiences. If you don't know us yet, look for our

faces and contact information on our bulletin board. If you have an account for the First Parish website, you can go to the Standing Committee Web page and view the minutes of our meetings, our contact information, meeting schedule, and governance policies. (Accounts may be requested online on the First Parish website.)

Best regards,

Mark Russell Prior, Chair, First Parish Standing Committee

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, kitsy.mcr@icloud.com

Toby Smith Ropeik, tsr@tobyasmith.com

Lora Venesy, venesy@comcast.net

Alec Walker, alecwalker@aol.com

Tom Wilson, Treasurer, twilson@wilsongroup.com

Standing Committee

webpage:<http://www.firstparish.org/cms/committees/standing-committee>

Pastoral Care

Walking with One Another through the Changes Life Brings

Minister for Pastoral Care, Rev. Marion Visel

Email: mvisel@firstparish.org

Church: 978-369-9602, ext. 414

Cell: (203)931-5239

Senior Minister, Rev. Howard N. Dana

Email: hdana@firstparish.org

Church: 978-369-9602, ext. 411

Cell: 717-412-8543

Ministerial Intern, Brian Chenowith

Email: bchenowith@firstparish.org

Church: 978-369-9602, ext. 412

Cell: 630-877-5371

Lay Minister for May, Bev Bringle

Email: bevbringle@yahoo.com

Phone: 978-369-4793

Meals Delivery for May, Pat Kane

Email: cstmcloth@yahoo.com

Phone: 978-369-8418

Meet Mr. Dewey

The Pastoral Care Library is converting to the Dewey Decimal numbering system to make it easier for you to find the books you need. When it is done, you will find all of our books sitting on the shelves with spine labels showing you the appropriate Dewey number while the number ranges are displayed on the shelves. There will also be a paper catalog that you can consult to see what we have in the collection. It is mostly 100's Philosophy and psychology, 200's Religion, 300's Social Science, 600's Technology, and 800's Literature and Rhetoric. Stay tuned as the library renovation continues.

—Enid Boasberg, Pastoral Care Council

Annual Pledge Campaign

The Campaign Ends Sunday, May 3!

Thank you to all who have pledged generously this year. After two months of effort, the 2015 Annual Pledge Campaign is drawing to a close. Although we will happily receive pledges throughout the year, the total pledges received as of May 3 will determine the amount of the FY 2016 budget and the amount available to allocate to important priorities such as pastoral care, the RE program, and staff salaries, not to mention ongoing facilities maintenance and paying our fair share toward UUA dues.

In order to be successful, First Parish needs to increase the number of pledging households and the amount of each pledge, and it looks like we are starting to do just that. Analysis of pledging through mid-April revealed some interesting and encouraging facts:

- 42% of pledging households have increased their pledge over last year
- 28% of pledging households have increased their pledge 11% over last year
- The median pledge has risen by 7% from \$1,000 to \$1,070
- 25 households pledged for the first time this year

However, we need to do more. As of this writing in mid-April, we have not yet met our lowest target of \$998K. We need everyone who has not yet pledged to step up and make a financial commitment that can help to achieve the 7% increase in pledging over last year that will enable First Parish to maintain programs and services at current levels, and continue to make a difference in our community and the world.

We are very grateful to all who have pledged. If you haven't pledged and want your pledge to count toward the FY2016 budget, please pledge by May 3. Let's keep the momentum going!
—The Annual Pledge Campaign Team

The Arts

Fostering Community through the Arts

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

May 1 at 7:30 p.m. – “American Visionaries,” concert by Triple Helix and Rivers Conservatory Chorus

May 6 at 6:00 p.m. – Arts Council Meeting

May 9 at 9:00 a.m. – Photography Club meeting, open to all First Parish adults

May 9 at 7:00 p.m. – Lunafest Film Series

May 17 at 3:00 p.m. – Photography Club Exhibit Opening Reception

May 20 at 11:30 a.m. – Skyloom Dancers, sponsored by the Women's Parish Association

May 29 at 7:30 p.m. – Rise Up Singing, First Parish's monthly song circle

May 31 at 7:00 p.m. – Sarasa Chamber Music Concert, “Bohemian Rhapsody”

For more information on these events, check this 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 Susan Page, Chair, for more information: srpage10@verizon.net.

Photography Club Exhibit and Reception

Please join us Sunday, May 17, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. for fantastic photos, a 3D demonstration, a 30-minute slide show with seating, and more. Members will be glad to discuss their images and techniques, and help you with your photographic questions. We look forward to seeing you, your family and friends. Yummy refreshments available and some items for sale. The First Parish Photography Club is a noncompetitive group for adults from novice to professional. We meet to learn and socialize. For more information, please see our brochure.

WPA Luncheon Meeting

The Womens Parish Association is presenting, as part of the Beyond Mothers Day Series, a special luncheon program by the Skyloom Sacred Dance Group on Wednesday, May 20, which will portray an escape from slavery to freedom and a woman's journey of transformation. The program will follow a delicious lunch, which will begin at noon. The cost of the luncheon is ten dollars. Contact the office or Dian Pekin at Pekindc@comcast.net by May 17 to make reservations and to communicate food requirements. All women and men are cordially invited.

By Your Side Singers

By Your Side Singers is the pastoral choir at First Parish. We sing together to deepen our experience of music's comforting power. When invited, we go to parishioners' homes or hospital rooms in groups of three or four to provide a musical presence for those seeking comfort and strength during times of

illness or transition. Member Mary Ann Barton's recent poem beautifully captures the essence of By Your Side Singers.

Singing with You Is Our Prayer

"Singing,
singing with you,
singing with you is our prayer."*

In the lamplight
on a Thursday evening,
we halt the ticking of the old clock
on the parlor wall,

breathe deep,

open the heart,

remember those we love—
remember those who need love—
remember how it was, so long ago,
that our ancestor-women
and our men, so long departed,
sang at the bedside.

Deep voices and treble,
we practice those chants and songs
most beloved for healing
or distraction
or reminiscing
or conjuring tranquility.

We come to your bedside
or your kitchen table.

Singing with you
is our prayer.

—Mary Ann Barton

*Lyrics by the Reverend Burns Stanfield

SAC Events

Event with Deborah Jiang-Stein, author of Prison Baby

Saturday, May 2, 7:30 p.m.

The author of Prison Baby and founder of the unPrison Project, Deborah Jiang-Stein was born in prison, and spent the first year of her life in solitary confinement with her mother before being adopted into a middle-class Jewish family. Her realization of her beginnings led to a tumultuous adolescence and beyond. She is a dynamic speaker who travels around the United States to present to women in prisons, colleges and other large venues, promoting awareness of the issues surrounding women and incarceration. Proceeds will benefit the unPrison Project, her nonprofit that educates and empowers women in prison. During the second half of her presentation, Deborah will be interviewed by our own Representative Cory Atkins, who has worked diligently to advocate for women. A book signing will follow. Tickets are \$10 and will be available at coffee hours or at the door. For more information, please contact Lora Venesy at venesy@comcast.net.

Tina Chery to Speak in Sunday Morning Forum

Sunday, May 3, 11:30 a.m.

Tina Chery, founder of the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute (LDBPI) will speak at the May 3 Forum from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Twenty years ago, at age seventeen, when walking to a Teens Against Violence meeting, Louis was killed, caught in the cross fire between two gangs. Tina responded to this horrific tragedy by creating a center for peace that provides hope through healing, teaching and learning. The First Parish SAC Grants Committee has awarded three consecutive grants to the LDBPI in support of the PeaceZone Curriculum and the Leadership Academy. Please attend to learn how “Peace is Possible” through the practice of restorative justice.

Presentation by Chrisantus Mwandishi (UU Service Committee Partner)

Sunday, May 3, 3:00 p.m.

To cap off our Commit2Respond campaign, First Parish in Concord will host Chrisantus Mwandishi, the founder of SoilFarm Multi-Culture Group (SFMG), a

UU Service Committee partner organization. Mwandihhi is a veteran human rights defender and founder of SFMG, a membership-based, community-led association that preserves the Kakamega Rain Forest and advances human rights in Kenya. SFMG has planted hundreds of thousands of trees and brought adequate nutrition and environmental education to thousands of children through the renowned Hope in Crops program. His presentation on May 3 will focus on how SFMG is helping Kenyans adapt agricultural and water management practices in the face of climate change. A reception will follow. If you plan to join us, please let Bethany Lowe (Blowe@firstparish.org) know. But also please feel free to just show up.

Diversity Committee

The next Diversity Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, May 5 at 7:00 p.m. We welcome all who would like to help us make First Parish a more diverse and welcoming congregation to attend. We will take a group from First Parish to march in the Boston Pride Parade on Saturday, June 13, at noon; put this date on your calendar and plan to join us. Look for more details in the June newsletter.

Lunafest

Saturday, May 9, 7:00 p.m.

This is a juried Women's Film Festival to benefit Jhamtse Gatsal (a recent SAC grantee) and the Breast Cancer Fund. The films are made by women from all over the world. Come view eight powerful, funny, moving short films that highlight the talent of women filmmakers and support two worthy causes helping women here and abroad. Appropriate for ages eleven and up. Men are welcome too. Tickets are \$15 and will be available at coffee hours, at the door, or online at <http://www.lunafest.org/concord0509>. For more information, please contact Lora Venesy at venesy@comcast.net.

Mother's Day Walk for Peace

Sunday, May 10, 8:00 a.m.

This Mother's Day, Sunday, May 10, thousands of caring and concerned citizens will rally and walk in support of creating a more peaceful and violence free community. The Mother's Day Walk for Peace began in 1996 for families who had lost their children to violence. On a day that we celebrate mothers and children, the walk became a place for families and friends to feel support and love with thousands of others who pledge their commitment to peace.

The walk is the primary fundraiser to support the work of the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute. All walkers must register at www.mothersdaywalk4peace.org. This year First Parish Concord hopes to have enough folks participating so we can rent a bus (or two) and ride to Boston together. Every Sunday until the Peace Walk, you can visit the Mother's Day Peace Walk table during coffee hour, before or after the service, to learn more about the walk, to make a donation, and/or to learn how to register for the walk. Contact Rev. Margie King Saphier for more information: 781 424 2179.

5th Annual G.R.A.C.E (Growing Racial and Cultural Equity) Summit

Saturday, May 16 , 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., offsite

As movements build to confront such racialized injustices as police brutality, immigrant deportation, mass incarceration and threats to voting rights, UU congregations committed to racial justice are asking how to respond meaningfully, wondering if they are ready to respond and asking what readiness looks like. Some have already taken bold responsive steps. Participants at this year's GRACE Summit will consider "Ministries in the Era of Ferguson." The elements for our time together will include engaged, multicultural worship; the keynote speech by Rev. Bishop John Selders, minister at Amistad UCC in Hartford, Connecticut; testimonials from a few congregations about how they have taken responsive action and what they have learned in the process; conversation about how these issues are being discussed and dealt with in our congregations; and spiritual practices to keep us grounded and focused as we consider the onslaught of opportunities for engagement. This event, sponsored by the New England Region of the UUA, will be held on Saturday, May 16, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Church of Marlborough and Hudson. First Parish in Concord is sending a team. If you are interested in joining this team, and then bringing the information learned back to our congregation, contact Bethany Lowe (Blowe@firstparish.org).

Discussion on Proposed Warrant Article on Fossil Fuel Divestment

Sunday, May 17, 11:30 a.m.

Please join us on Sunday, May 17, at 11:30 a.m. to look at a proposed warrant article on fossil fuel divestment for the Annual Meeting of First Parish in Concord in June. This meeting is part of an ongoing First Parish dialogue about social and responsible investing (SRI) and fossil fuel divestment, and we are interested in your feedback. Our dialogue is spurred on by the fossil

fuel divestment commitment adopted at the UUA General Assembly last June and other divestment discussions under way around the world. Questions and comments can go to Bruce Blumberg, Laura Bernstein, Bob Andrews, Kate Crosby or Bethany Lowe.

Amnesty International Group 15

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

Did you know that asylum seekers can't work in the U.S until they've been here six months? It's no surprise, then, that their greatest unmet need in the Boston area is housing--in short supply in the best of circumstances. That problem spurred two members of Group 15 to start a new non-profit, Dignity in Asylum, that currently provides an apartment in Maynard for women asylum seekers. Please join us at our May 19 meeting to hear more about this brand-new local project.

AI Group 15 meets regularly on the third Tuesday of each month from 7 to 8:30. If you'd like more information about Group 15, please contact Kathy Taylor, the group's coordinator, at Kly.taylor@gmail.com or [781-718-7640](tel:781-718-7640).

Save the Date: 2015 Boston PRIDE March

Saturday, June 13

Come join First Parish in Concord at this annual event to show our support for LGBTQ persons and their families. This event is family-friendly and will involve walking a few miles. Contact Sara Ballard for more information: sara@sb.org.

New Working Group Focusing on Immigration

The UUA chooses areas of significant concern for parishioners to focus on. Some we've been hearing about at First Parish are Environmental Justice (right to water, climate change and fossil fuel divestment), Economic Justice (escalating inequality and socially responsible investing). Another current area of concern is Immigrant Justice. A few of us have begun meeting to brainstorm ways we might develop this and related issues into a vibrant area of focus for First Parish, one that will include opportunities for action and for building relationships. Please join us in this process. Contact Tony Rodriguez at atrod.rodriguez@gmail.com or Laurie Van Loon at lvloon@comcast.net. We will let you know when we will be meeting next and send you notes from our meetings to date.

Advocacy Network Invites Your Engagement in Fighting Family Homelessness

The Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness, a SAC Grants recipient, is looking for volunteers to help with forum planning, email alerts, and Web page upkeep. Carl Miller, the Network's longtime coordinator, has stepped down. Jane Blumberg has assumed the role of coordinator and is looking to enlarge and reenergize the steering committee. The Network has grown to 700 members and enjoys a respectful working relationship with many legislators and organizations. For two to three hours a month during the budget season (February-June), you can help make a huge difference in the lives of homeless families. For more information, contact Jane at jane_blumberg@me.com.

Defibrillator at First Parish

First Parish is pleased to announce the purchase and installation of an AED (Automated External Defibrillator). The unit can be used on adults as well as children, per its instructions. It is centrally located in the lower hall, next to the double doors that open into the parish hall. Many of the ushers have been trained in its use, as well as the staff, who have had a brief instruction on how to use it.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee was established at last year's Annual Meeting to facilitate budget conversations with the congregation and to support the Standing Committee and staff as needed. The committee has been very active this year. Among other things, it organized two congregational budget conversations in the fall and helped implement one of the recent financial audit recommendations. And in an effort to increase transparency around church finances, it recently posted a "primer" on the church [Budget and Financials' webpage](#) to help church members better understand the monthly reports posted there. Take a look and let us know what you think.

Nourishing Congregational Initiatives

Whether your passion be in the arts, social justice, spirituality, history, music or politics, it seems that there is almost always somebody already doing that at First Parish. At an open discussion in December, there was a suggestion for lightly formed committees that would organize for a short time around a specific purpose, without necessarily being tied to an existing group. Howard has expressed the idea that any five congregants with a goal consonant with First Parish's mission could be confirmed as a Parish organization for a year. How do we find the right balance between encouraging initiative and keeping an orderly house? Come talk with other parishioners in the Chapel on May 3, at 9:00 a.m. The conversation will be hosted by Dave Elwood, Mark Richards, Kitsy Rothermel and Alec Walker.

Evening Vespers

Tuesday, May 19, 7:30 p.m.

Please join us for a vespers service filled with original songs and story from Anna Huckabee Tull, and poetry and meditations from Bethany Lowe. We'll sing, we'll listen, and we'll have time for reflection. All are welcome! We will start right at 7:30 p.m.

Partner Congregation Council

Concord-Keresztúr Scholarship Update: In an effort to provide new possibilities for supporting the students and donors, and to include more people in the scholarship program, we now have a team of volunteer coordinators. Each coordinator will facilitate communications between one class's scholarship students and its donors, and will follow that set of students and donors through the years. Please see our partnership page at <http://bit.ly/fpc-pcc> for more information about the program and our volunteer coordinators. Rodger Matlage will be the delegate representing First Parish at this year's graduation at the Berde Mózes Unitarian High School in Székelykeresztúr. Sponsors of graduating students are encouraged to send them cards; Rodger will take any that are left in the PCC box in the church office by May 10 and deliver them.

Our next PCC meeting will take place on Thursday, May 21, 6:00 p.m. at the home of Peggy and Bill Claybrook. All interested in finding out more or

supporting our partnership are invited to attend. The meeting will include dinner; please let Peggy know (pclaybrook@comcast.net) if you'd like to attend so she can plan enough food.

Tuesday 65+ Group

Tuesday, May 5, 1:30 p.m.

“From Clutter to Clean, Part 2”

At our April meeting, Fifi Ball led us through exercises to help us with the emotional obstacles to decluttering. Our May 5 meeting will focus on practical information to help us get rid of our stuff; who can help, how to assess value, how to sell, responsibly give away, use consignment shops, etc. Jane Lifton and Margaret Hoag will join us to share their wisdom and local resources. The Tuesday Group meets the first Tuesday of the month, 1:30-3:00 p.m. All are welcome; you determine whether the topic is for you.

Tuesday Group Steering Committee: Berni Jenkins (contact person)berni.jenkins@verizon.net 978/369-2876; Bob Andrews, Mary Clarke, Dave Dawson, Susan Dobbie, Patricia Ellis, Jack Nevison and Virginia Taylor

Women's AM/PM Book Group

The Women's Book Group will finish the year's discussions with *Moloka'i* by Alan Brennert on Monday evening, June 1, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.; and Tuesday morning, June 2, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. Both meet in the Brooks Room at First Parish. All women of First Parish are warmly invited to read the book and join one or both discussions.

There will also be a potluck in early to mid-June to socialize and choose books for next year. Details will be sent to those on the Woman's Book Group email list. If you would like to be added to the list, please contact Darien Smith at darien@smithquest.com.

Flea Market

The Women's Parish Association is holding a multivendor Flea Market on Saturday, June 6, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in our Parish Hall, rain or shine. Table rentals are \$35.00 per table. Snacks and lunch items will be sold throughout the day. Contact the office or Dian Pekin at Pekindc@comcast.net to rent a table or to arrange for donations of high-quality gift items to the WPA table. Vendors will be selling a variety of items—including household items, jewelry, children's items, antiques, collectibles, etc.

Beyond Mother's Day in May!

Several events by and about women, peace and justice, have been planned for the month of May. All members and friends of First Parish are invited to join us for these thought-provoking and celebratory programs:

Saturday, May 2, 7:00 p.m.: Deborah Jiang Stein, Author and Advocate for incarcerated women will speak to us about justice for imprisoned women. She is founder of the unPrison Project and author of *Prison Baby*, a personal account of life changing events which have shaped her advocacy work in this field. State Representative Cory Atkins will join us this evening, for discussions with Ms. Stein. Tickets are \$10.

Saturday, May 9, 7:00 p.m.: Lunafest Film Series returns! Lunafest is an evening of short films by women film makers. FP Mother/Daughter book group will make popcorn! Films are entertaining and thought provoking. This is a fund raiser. Tickets are \$15.

Sunday, May 10, 8:00 a.m.: Mother's Day March for Peace in Roxbury. Mothers, dads, kids, all are invited to join the annual march of the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute. Margie Saphier coordinates this early morning event for FPC. This is a family friendly event, which promotes the right of all individuals to live in peace.

Wednesday, May 20, 12:00 p.m.: Skyloom Dancers at WPA luncheon. This creative group of women will dance a spiritual celebration of women! Lunch begins at noon, followed by the Dance performance. Cost for lunch and performance is \$10.

Look for posters and sign-up sheets at coffee hours in May. Events are open to all members and friends of First Parish in Concord, and are part of a collaborative effort by the Social Action Committee, Reproductive Justice, RE Council, Mother and Daughter Book Group, and Women's Parish Association.

Speak Spanish?

¿Hablas español, o quieres mejorar?

Please join *otros compañeros de* First Parish for *conversación, diversión, y comida*. Our next meeting will be Thursday, May 7 at 7:00 p.m., *jueves 7 de mayo a las 7 en la casa de* Brooks Stevens, 55 Elm Brook Lane, Concord.

Let her know if you can come at stevensbrady@comcast.net. Don't be shy. *¡No tienes que hablar bien!* English is allowed. There will always be someone who can translate. Please bring *comida y bebida* for a potluck supper. *Para más información:* for more information, *llama a* Laurie Van Loon, 978-369-8528. *O manda* or send email to lvanloon@comcast.net.

Vegan Potluck Dinner

Tuesday, May 12, 6:30 p.m.

Enjoy a delicious potluck dinner in the Parish Hall, Tuesday, May 12, at 6:30 p.m., hosted by 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 lslrzd@netscape.net.

Concord Area Humanists

Come and enjoy our CAH first Wednesday talks in the Parish Hall starting at 7:00 p.m. Learn about the Concord Area Humanists and our programs on our website, www.ConcordAreaHumanists.org.

May 6: Presentation, Rick Heller of the Humanist Mindfulness Group in Cambridge will speak on “Secular Meditation.” See his [video](#) and his [articles](#) in “The New Humanism.”

June 3: Film viewing, “The People Factor: Finding Home in Austin” by Jane Turville, from her documentary series on “The People Problem, are there too many of us?”

The Wright Tavern’s Future

A forum on the future of the Wright Tavern will be held by the American Revolution Round Table on Monday, May 18, 7:00 p.m., at the Minute Man National Historical Park Visitor Center (off Rte. 2A). Questions to be addressed include why the Tavern is so important to Concord and how and why First Parish in Concord became the owner of this celebrated historic site. The presentation will feature Concord historian Jayne Gordon, professor of early American history and author Robert Gross; and a written historical commentary by Curator of Special Collections of the Concord Public Library Leslie Wilson. Audience questions and comments will follow the panel. Those interested in attending should reserve a place with moderator Mel Bernstein: mbern9@gmail.com or 781-259-9926.

Photo Directory

Next fall First Parish in Concord will create a new Photo Directory. All are invited to participate. Photography sessions are scheduled for October and November. Update your mailing address, email address, and phone number now at 978-369-9602 or email Rachel Baker at rbaker@firstparish.org. More information will be available in late spring and summer.

Editors Notes

Next Meeting House News deadline: Tuesday, May 19, 11:50 p.m. (yes, the middle of the night)

Include information for June, July, August, and first week of September.

Email submissions, either in the body of the email (preferred) or as an attached Word document (not a PDF), to Rachel Baker at

rbaker@firstparish.org. Limit articles to 100 words. I will send them back if they are too long.

Next publication date: June 2

Editor and Producer Needed for the *Meeting House News*!

Rachel Baker, the current editor, will train and hand over the responsibilities of the monthly *Meeting House News* to the first qualified person who expresses an interest.

If interested email Rachel at rbaker@firstparish.org.

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>