

What's Happening at First Parish?

MEETING HOUSE NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2017



Photo by Rodger Mattlage

HOMECOMING

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Photo by Doug Baker



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Office Hours Resume September 5

Regular office hours, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, will resume on Tuesday, September 5. Reminder: the office is closed on Mondays.

Next Meeting House News

Deadline: September 12, 2017

Publication: September 20, 2017

Don't miss the Quiz in the [Editor's Notes](#).



*Hi, Who am I and
where do I hang out
at First Parish?*



Sundays at First Parish

All Sunday Worship Services are held at 10:00 a.m. unless otherwise noted.

Worship-at-a-Glance

Sunday, September 3 – “Journey to Faithism”

Rev. Jo VonRue – Minister in Residence
Robert Goodearl, vocalist

Sunday, September 10 – “We Are A People of Welcome”

Rev. Howard N. Dana and Rev. Amy Freedman
First Parish Choir

Sunday, September 17 – “Small R Republicanism”

Rev. Howard N. Dana
First Parish Choir

Sunday, September 24 – “How Are We Redeemed?”

Rev. Howard N. Dana
First Parish Choir

Sunday, October 1 – “View from the Pew”

Rev. Gary Smith, Minister Emeritus
First Parish Choir



Café Returns

The First Parish Café returns on Sunday, September 10, at 9:00 a.m. Come enjoy the fellowship and light fare before the service.

Homecoming Picnic

Sunday, September 10, 5:30 p.m., Lawns



All First Parish. Bring your whole family, all ages. Visit with your friends, catch up on the summer news, and meet other First Parish folk. Enjoy the music, labyrinth, and a family activity. This is an evening for everyone. Please bring: a finger food dessert to share; your own picnic, food and beverage; lawn chairs and blankets. The party will be on the lawns of First Parish weather permitting; in the Parish Hall in case of rain. No admission charge. Mark your calendar now.



Sunday Forums

After worship, promptly at 11:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

SEPTEMBER FORUM

September 17 – Resist and Rejoice with UUs Worldwide”

The General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), where attendees worship, witness, sing, learn, connect, and make policy for the association through the democratic process.



When the UUA GA met in New Orleans in June 2017 in the midst of our society’s turmoil, it was really powerful. The combination of the extraordinary events within our own denomination’s leadership and the focus of the upheavals in our society combined to encourage honest discussion about the issue of white supremacy.

The GA delegates, both on-site and off-site, will share some of those moments and hopefully inspire you to attend GA in the future. They also bring back resources that will benefit First Parish as we attempt to understand how we can change some of our own patterns. Here are some links:

- From the GA website, <http://www.uua.org/ga/off-site/2017>
- To inspire you:
 - <http://smallscreen.uua.org/videos/ga-2017-203-co-presidents-panel-discussion>
 - <http://www.uua.org/ga/off-site/2017/worship/sunday>

OCTOBER FORUMS

Save the dates!

October 15 – “Legacy Giving”

Come hear about how you can be remembered while providing for the future of First Parish at the same time.

October 22 – “Clover Foundation”

Clover Foundation will tell us about the preschool in Uganda that is doing well, with the help of funding from First Parish.

If you have topics or speakers, or would like to help, please contact the cochairs: Patricia Brinkman, pabrinkman@comcast.net and Alan Whitney, awhitney@alum.mit.edu. Thank you for your continued support.

MUUsings

*Somebody’s hurting my neighbor
And it’s gone on far too long . . .
And I won’t be silent anymore.*

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In July, I sang this song on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial with a group of interfaith singers, invited by the UU Musicians Network to offer multicultural music witness in our nation's capital. We were led in this song by its creator, Yara Allen, the artistic voice of the Moral Mondays Movement, led by Rev. William Barber. This song has been in my head, my heart and my voice this summer.

As I write, I listen to reports and analysis of the violence between White Nationalist and Counter-Protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia; I hear, with growing alarm, the escalating rhetoric of world leaders; I am incredulous at the real consideration of the human toll of a nuclear strike. As I write, I continue to wrestle with issues of white privilege and white supremacy and my own complicity in the inequities and injustices of our world.

*Somebody's hurting my neighbor
And it's gone on far too long . . .
And I won't be silent anymore.*

I also write with the conviction that the music ministry to which I have been called opens a path to move through these difficult times in solidarity with those who are most vulnerable. Music provides a medium to break our silence, to express our hopes, our fears, our vision for a more just and equitable world. It is a pathway to the heart. Singing together changes our discourse.

I invite you to lift your voice in song and join in the music ministry at First Parish. Adult singers, join the First Parish Choir or the Contemporary Vocal Ensemble. For our children and youth, there are three wonderful choirs and two of the most inspiring music leaders I know who are ready to welcome young singers into musical community and to empower them to lead our congregation in meaningful worship.



For those who wish to provide comfort and support in song, our By Your Side Singers ministry is a wonderful vehicle and a supportive singing meditation community. And at our monthly Rise Up Singing sessions—well, we really raise our voices!

Don't be silent anymore. Come, lift your voices in song.

Blessings, Beth
Beth Norton, Director of Music
Contact at music@firstparish.org or 978-369-9602.

Choir Rehearsal Schedule

Fall 2017, See you on September 17!

Please see the two-page listing of Choir Rehearsal information at the [end of this newsletter](#). Keep it handy as you make plans for fall and consider joining a choir!

Religious Education (RE) News

At First Parish in Concord, we offer Religious Education (RE) for all ages.

September Theme

What does it mean to be a people of Welcome?



Date	Time	Theme	Description
Sunday September 3	10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Blessing of the Backpacks	Multiage Workshop, Amy Freedman and Dawn Van Patten
Saturday September 9	9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Religious Exploration Orientation	Adult volunteers meet with Amy and Dawn. Lunch provided.
Sunday September 10	10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Sunday Service	All ages worship together.
Sunday September 17	10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Welcome!	Religious Exploration
Sunday September 24	10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Community	Religious Exploration
Saturday September 30	6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Family Night Out	Dinner and Social Time for adults. Activities for kids.

Religious Education News

Our goal this year is to deepen our connections with one another. This begins with our Religious Exploration Teams! If you would like to join in the fun, please contact Dawn or me to learn how you can be a part of our engaging program for children and youth. We believe that spiritual growth and discovery is a lifelong process that is enriched through sharing, fun, and mutual support.



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Coming of Age Program

Orientation, Sunday, September 17, 6:00 p.m.

Fall Retreat, Saturday/Sunday, September 23/24, Camp Takodah in Richmond, NH

This year I will be leading our Coming of Age program for Ninth Graders with Ken Reeves, who is a UU minister, father, therapist, and member of First Parish. Each teen will also have a personal mentor from the congregation to help them explore big questions. On Sunday, September 17, 6:00 p.m., parents and youth will meet for a Coming of Age orientation. Our Fall Retreat will include a ropes course and overnight at Camp Takodah in Richmond, New Hampshire, on September 23 and 24.

Religious Exploration Themes

This year we will be offering themes for reflection each month. That means that along with getting to know one another, learning to live the UU principles, exploring spiritual practices, gaining appreciation of world religious teachings, and taking action, we will be using "Soul Matters," a Unitarian Universalist small group program, as a resource in our RE groups.

Here are the Religious Exploration themes for 2017- 2018:

"What does it mean to be a people of . . ."

September: Welcome

October: Courage

November: Abundance

December: Hope

January: Intention

February: Perseverance

March: Balance

April: Emergence

May: Creativity

June: Blessing

Save the Date—Family Night Out

Please mark your calendar for Family Night Out on Saturday, September 30, 6:00 p.m. at First Parish. This will be an opportunity for parents and guardians to get to know one another better over dinner. There will be fun activities for children and youth held at the same time.



Blessings,

Amy

Rev. Amy Freedman

Contact at afreedman@firstparish.org or 978-369-9602.

Pastoral Care

Walking with One Another through the Changes Life Brings

Ministers

Minister for Pastoral Care, Rev. Marion Visel

Email: mvisel@firstparish.org

Church: 978-369-9602, ext. 414

Cell: 203-931-5329

Senior Minister, Rev. Howard N. Dana

Email: hdana@firstparish.org

Church: 978-369-9602, ext. 411

Cell: 717-412-8543



September Pastoral Care Lay Minister, Sally Brandon Bemis

Email: sgbrandon@me.com

Cell: 978-505-0492

NAMI Family-to-Family Program

Tuesdays, September 19 through December 5, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m., First Parish



The Family-to-Family Education Program is a free, 12-week course for family members of individuals with mental illnesses. Run by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), the course is taught by trained family members.

The course includes:

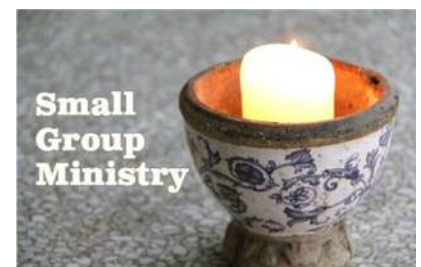
- Acquiring strategies for handling crises and relapse
- Focusing on care for the caregiver: coping with worry, stress, and overload
- Guidance on locating appropriate supports and services within the community

The course will be held at First Parish in Concord, on Tuesdays from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m., September 19 through December 5, 2017. To register or for more information, contact Clare Cooper, ccooper@westfordconsulting.com or 978-692-8994. Visit www.nami.org for information on this program and information on mental illness.

Small Group Facilitator Training

Saturday, September 30, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Brooks Room

Small Groups offered so far have been very well received, and group facilitators have found the experience to be meaningful and rewarding. People are enthusiastic about growing spiritually and deepening their relationships with each other. But Small Group Ministry can't exist without facilitators!



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Facilitating a Small Group requires commitment to a regular meeting schedule. A facilitator is responsible for helping manage group process, and clarifying expectations, while modeling caring covenantal relationship. Facilitators will be trained and supported by Marion Visel, Minister for Pastoral Care, and the Small Group Ministry Steering Committee. Marion is happy to talk with you about becoming a SGM facilitator.

Contact Marion at mvisel@firstparish.org or 203-931-5239.

Caregiver Support Group

Mondays, from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.



Providing care for a family member in need is an age-old act of love or at least loyalty. You may care for an aging parent, while also caring for your own children, a disabled spouse, sibling or young or adult child with physical, mental or addiction issues. Whether you provide direct care or oversee care at a distance, with support you can be a good caregiver without sacrificing yourself in the process. This group meets regularly. Please contact facilitators Marion Visel, Minister for Pastoral Care,

mvisel@firstparish.org, or Diane Clapp, dianebamclapp@gmail.com, to learn more about the group.

If you are unable to attend meetings on Monday afternoon, please let either Marion or Diane know.

Freezer Is Full

Many Thanks!

Many thanks to all those who helped with the Caring Connection Meals cooking. The refrigerator is now stocked with many tasty meals available to members going through a time of transition— injury, illness, bereavement or the like.

Thanks go out to these parishioners:

- ♥ Efficient shoppers: Suzie Weaver, Joyce Biggs, and Holli Jones–White
- ♥ Amazing cooks: Leslie Fisher, Petra Betts, Ingrid Wheeler, Kristin Haddad, Nancy Kerr, and Barry Copp
- ♥ Sous chefs, with a special shout out to Ella and Isabella for an amazing job



Thanks once again,
Vivienne Aldrich, Cook Coordinator, Meals for Caring Connection

First Parish Rides

Do you need transportation help to come to First Parish? First Parish volunteers can provide rides to Sunday worship and other parish events, in addition to rides for medical appointments, etc., on weekdays. With a few days' notice we can usually fulfill a request for a local ride.



If you need a ride or are interested in volunteering, please contact the Rides Coordinator, Pat Brinkman, at pabrinkman@comcast.net or 781-259-9639. Our drivers would love to help!

Staff News

Minister in Residence

Sunday Service, September 3, 10:00 a.m.

Welcoming Rev. Jo VonRue



Please welcome Rev. Jo VonRue! We are delighted to bring to First Parish a bright face with a new title. Rev. Jo VonRue, Minister in Residence, will join us this church year instead of a student intern. Please see her bio below. Jo has chosen First Parish to gain knowledge in the workings of a “big church” congregation. She leads worship on September 3 and is eager to get to know everyone, so do offer your advice, support, and love as Jo begins her work with us.

For any questions, contact Kate Keleher, Minister in Residence Support Committee, kate@rkeleher.com, or call the church directly at 978-369-9602.

Getting to Know You

Dear Friends,

Here's a little background on me. My name is Rev. Jennifer “Jo” VonRue—please call me Jo. Though I have lived in many places, I currently hail from northeast Pennsylvania near Wilkes-Barre, but am an Ohio native. I graduated in May with my Master in Divinity degree from Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago, and was ordained into the Unitarian Universalist tradition on April 23. I completed a two-year part-time internship with our congregation in Binghamton, New York and served as the Consulting Minister with our church in Cortland, New York while completing that internship.

The position I hold this year as your Minister in Residence is a way to say that I am filling your internship role as an ordained minister. Even though I have fulfilled all the work in becoming a minister, I feel called to large church ministry; so I am coming to Concord to gain some experience in the large church world. I have heard nothing but

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wonderful things about your congregation, and I am really looking forward to continuing to grow during my preliminary fellowship year with you.

My husband Isaac and I have a home in Shavertown, Pennsylvania, where he will be staying while I am here in Concord for the church year. Isaac, who is a chemistry professor at King's College, will be taking care of our two dogs Sam and Derby, our corn snake Teddy, and my horse, an American Warmblood named National Anthem (we call him Andrew). I am an avid competitive equestrian in Dressage and Hunt Seat, and a musician who plays the French horn and ukulele. I love getting out and exploring, meeting people, and laughter!



Please keep me apprised of great things to do in the community (especially if they are low cost). Other than that, I look forward to getting to know you, sharing worship, and changing the world together!

In faith and with love,
Jo

Rev. Jennifer "Jo" VonRue
Minister in Residence

jvonrue@firstparish.org or 978-369-9602, ext. 412

Office Goddess Update

Church Administrator, Tuesday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Sarah Burns continues as our amazing Church Administrator. With a background in illustration and office administration, Sarah oversees the production of the weekly Orders of Service, *Sunday News*, First Parish Announce emails, and various other publications. Do not hesitate to contact Sarah with general inquiries, such as submitting for a publication, arranging a wedding or memorial service, navigating the Church's website, listening to online sermons, or other related items.

She is in the office Tuesday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and can be reached at sburns@firstparish.org or 978-369-9602, ext. 410.



[Editor's Note: Please plan ahead and observe publication deadlines. Thank you!]

- **FP Announce Deadline – Noon Friday** for the following week
- **Sunday News Deadline – Noon Wednesday** before Sunday service

Standing Committee News

Next Meeting: Sunday, September 10, 6:45 p.m., Emerson Room



Meeting Summary

On August 13, the Standing Committee met in the Emerson Room to hear regular reports, to discuss Social Action initiatives looking for Standing Committee approval or support, and to discuss our planning for our upcoming “Year for Reflection and Visioning.” Minutes from our meetings are regularly posted on the [SC website page](#).

Sanctuary Level 2 Status

The Immigration Justice Task Force (IJTF) presented a proposal for First Parish in Concord to become a Sanctuary Level 2 congregation in support of First Parish in Bedford. The designation indicates that our congregation is willing to provide sustained resources to the Bedford congregation if they are ever called upon to provide physical sanctuary to undocumented people under immediate threat of deportation. The Standing Committee has requested that there be more education on the initiative provided to the congregation before voting to accept or reject this proposal. The Standing Committee will vote on the proposal at our October meeting.

Black Lives Matter Banner

At our Annual Meeting, there was overwhelming support for keeping the Black Lives Matter banner hanging in front of our church. The Standing Committee also heard concerns and questions about the absence of our “Join the Conversation” banner. In response, we asked the Race Conversations Group (RCG) to provide us with a recommendation for a second banner, in advance of our August meeting. After reaching out to the congregation and hosting meetings, their recommendation was not to hang a second banner. The Standing Committee affirmed this recommendation and is grateful to RCG for their willingness to coordinate the outreach.



We Want to Hear from You!

Standing Committee members are always eager to talk with First Parishioners. Please reach out to any of us at coffee hour, at an event, by phone, or by email to discuss your



First Parish experiences. You can find the contact information for each Standing Committee member, along with meeting agendas, governing policies, meeting minutes, and reports at

<http://firstparish.org/wp/connection/committees/standing-committee/>.

Best Regards,

Kristin Coffman Haddad, chair, Standing Committee

kristin.haddad@gmail.com or 978-254-5012

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Upcoming Year

The Standing Committee Introduces: “A Year for Reflection and Visioning”

The Standing Committee (SC) is looking ahead to an exciting year. At June’s Annual Meeting, we initiated:

1. A conversation to review our policy of allocating 7.5 percent of pledge receipts for social action
2. This year for an all-Parish inquiry to help us set end statements for First Parish and guide our leadership for the next five years



These two large and important initiatives will be separate but coordinated. Each will involve extra opportunities for connection between the Standing Committee and congregation. The all-Parish inquiry will include a congregational survey that covers most areas of congregational life. This survey will help us to identify areas for listening sessions in February. The weekend of March 10, 2018, we will host a congregation-wide workshop to think together about our future in several areas of congregational life. There will be many opportunities for parishioners to speak, engage, lead, and listen as we look back before forging forward. We look forward to taking this journey with you.

Leadership Workshop

“Harvest the Power”

Saturday, September 30, 8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Parish Hall



The Standing Committee (SC) invites you to gather for interactive activities to help us learn more about each other, ourselves, and the year for reflection and visioning that First Parish will undergo this year. Find out what kind of power we all have to make this a stronger, more connected congregation. Whether you’re a seasoned leader, someone who wishes to become one, or a person who is intrigued by the idea—you are welcome. For more information, contact Lora Venesy at venesy@comcast.net or 617-922-1733 (email preferred).

Funding Social Action

7.5% for Social Action: What Do YOU Think?

Do you want First Parish to continue allocating 7.5 percent of its annual pledges to fund Social Action grants and our Social Action coordinator? The congregation will vote at the June 2018 Annual Meeting to reaffirm, revise, or revoke this commitment. Throughout this church year, the SC will facilitate a congregation-wide exploration of this policy so you can learn more about the pros and cons.

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Please come to one of the following open discussions this fall:

- Saturday, September 23, 10:00 a.m., Emerson Room
- Wednesday, September 27, 7:30 p.m., Emerson Room
- Sunday, October 1, 11:30 a.m., Emerson Room



Survey Volunteers Needed

Do you have professional experience or expertise in survey construction? If so, the SC could use your input on the upcoming congregational survey that is a part of our “Year for Reflection and Visioning.” If interested, please contact Tom Wilson at twilson@wilsongroup.com or 617-281-1198 (email preferred).

Arts at First Parish

Fostering Community through the Arts

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



Day	Date	Time	Event
Wednesday	September 6	6:00 p.m.	Arts Council meeting (all welcome)
Saturday	September 9	9:30 a.m.	Photography Club (open to all First Parish adults)
Friday	September 22	7:30 p.m.	Rise Up Singing (monthly folk song circle; open to all)
Friday	September 29	8:00 p.m.	Organ Recital by Eric Huenneke
Saturday	October 28	7:30 p.m.	Peter Mayer “Blue Boat Home” Concert—folk singer and composer

For more information on these events, check this *Meeting House News*, FP Announce, and the *Sunday News*. For more information on the organ dedication events, see [below](#).

Purpose

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. For more information, contact Susan Page, chair, at srpage10@verizon.net.

Thank you for supporting the arts at First Parish!

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Celebrating the Organ

Organ Anniversary Concert

Friday, September 29, 8:00 p.m., Sanctuary



Our organist, Eric Huenneke, will play an organ recital celebrating the first anniversary of the completion of the Russell Organ. The music will showcase the colors of this wonderful instrument through a variety of styles and periods spanning over four centuries. Please come and bring your friends and neighbors for this fun evening. Eric has played at many venues across the country and looks forward to sharing this music with you.



Copley Singers Holiday Concert

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

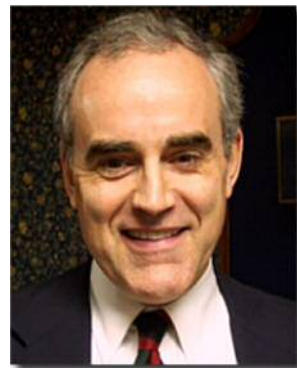
The celebration continues with a festive holiday concert by the Copley Singers, directed by Brian Jones. Katelyn Emerson, Organist of the Church of the Advent on Beacon Hill and International Concert artist, will accompany this semiprofessional chorus.

Silent Movie Night

Saturday, February 24

Save the Date! Organist Rob Humphreville will warm us by providing the live soundtrack for a silent movie night. A truly wonderful way to experience the versatility of our instrument!

With any questions about these events, please contact the church office at 978-369-9602, Beth Norton at music@firstparish.org, or Eric Huenneke at ehuenneke@firstparish.org.



Nature—A Walking Play

September 22 - October 1

Thursdays/Fridays, 5:30 p.m.

Saturdays/Sundays, 1:00 and 5:00 p.m.

The Old Manse, 269 Monument Street, Concord



The Trustees of Reservations and Tiger Lion Arts presents “Nature—A Walking Play,” the mythic telling of Emerson and Thoreau’s mutual love affair with the natural world. “Nature” is performed outdoors as a “walking play.” A professional ensemble of actors takes

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the audience on a journey through the natural environment as scenes unfold around them. They will be supported by a chorus of singers from First Parish and the community led by Beth Norton.

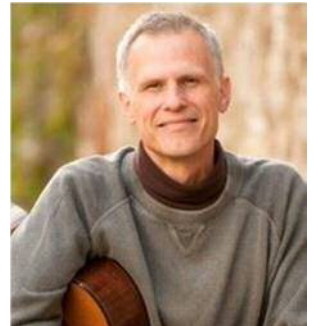
For more information and tickets, visit The Trustees [Special Events](#) website, or call the church office at 978-369-3909.

Peter Mayer Concert

Saturday, October 28, 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary

Save the date! Singer/songwriter Peter Mayer, author of our very popular hymn “Blue Boat Home,” will be performing in concert. The event is sponsored by Reclaim Our Democracy.

“His guitar work is breath-taking, his lyrics mind-spinning, his singing soul-soothing and his feet-on-the-ground optimism nothing short of healing.” —Marilyn Rea-Beyer, music director, WUMB Radio, Boston



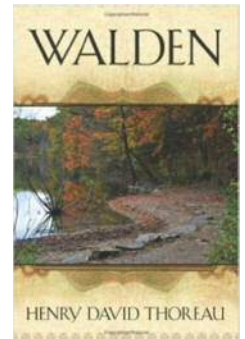
Contact Lillian Anderson lillianand@comcast.net for more information.

Thoreau Bicentennial Events

Thoreau as Spiritual Guide

Mondays, September 18, from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Chapel

Rev. Marion Visel facilitates conversations based on *Walden* over six Mondays beginning September 18, with no meeting on October 9. Limited to 15. Preregister with Rev. Visel, mvisel@firstparish.org, or leave a note in her office mailbox.



Gallery Talk and Tour

By Curator of Collections, Jeffrey Cramer

Thursday, September 21, 11:00 a.m., at the [Thoreau Institute Library](#)

Limited to 20. Preregister with Dianne Weiss, diannemcweiss@comcast.net. Carpooling is advised due to limited parking. Sponsored by the [Transcendentalism Council](#) of First Parish in Concord.



Women in Thoreau's Life

“Her Finer Instincts: The Women in Thoreau's Life”

Friday, October 20, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall

Sandra Petrulionis, Ph.D.

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Cosponsored by the [Transcendentalism Council](#) of First Parish in Concord and the Women's Parish Association. Contact Dian Pekin, pekindc@comcast.net, or the church office, 978-369-9602.



A Visit from Henry Thoreau

Saturday, October 21, 7:00 p.m., in the Sanctuary

A dramatic performance by Kevin Radaker with a reception following. Sponsored by the [Transcendentalism Council](#) of First Parish in Concord, the [Concord Museum](#), and [The Thoreau Society](#).

For tickets, contact [Concord Museum](#) or (978) 369-9763, ext. 216.

Social Action Community

Faith into Action

Greetings!

Welcome back, First Parish in Concord community! I hope everyone had a great summer and is well rested as we get to work for the congregational year.



Upcoming Events

There is quite a bit on the agenda for this coming year. Some of the SAC events will include: targeted food drives for Open Table, picking vegetables left after harvest for donation to those in need with Boston Area Gleaners, guest speakers such as David Billings, author of "Deep Denial: The Persistence of White Supremacy in United States History and Life," an intergenerational workshop on race and social change led by Boston Mobilization, a trip to the border through the UU College of Social Justice, and Borderlinks, and that is just to name a few. All are welcome, and there will be something for everyone.

New! Facebook and Twitter

For those on social media, we have recently established a Facebook page and a Twitter feed to keep folks updated on all our Social Action happenings.

- On Facebook, you can find us in the group "FPC Social Action Community."
- On Twitter you can follow us @FPCSocialAction.

For those who do not use social media, you can still find our updates in the *Meeting House News*, *Sunday News*, and through the SAC email list. Click through to sign up for the [SAC Newsletter](#).

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I am excited for the coming year and the good work we will be doing together.

In peace and hope,
Zach

Zachary Roe
Social Action Coordinator
zroe@firstparish.org, 978-369-9602, ext.450

Amnesty International, Group 15

Meeting: Tuesday, September 19, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., Greeley Room

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



First on the agenda is to sign letters to support human rights activists determined by Amnesty/USA to be “urgent” cases. A new undertaking will be to map out a plan to address the refugee/asylum crisis. Ongoing projects include Massachusetts prison reform, death penalty abolition, the prevention of violence against women worldwide, and the freeing of two Azerbaijani student activists. All are welcome to join us.

For more information, contact Nancy Lyons, njlyons22@gmail.com or 978-369-6109.

Concord Crop Walk

**Sunday, October 22, 1:30 p.m., at First Parish
Registration: 1:30 p.m., Step-Off: 2:15 p.m.**

The Concord Crop Walk (Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty) will take place starting at First Parish on Sunday, October 22. Registration is at 1:30 p.m., and the step-off is at 2:15 p.m.



This walk raises funds for nine local area food pantries and suppers, as well as the global disaster relief and development projects of Church World Service. Please put this date on your calendar and plan to walk or sponsor a walker.



For more information, visit www.concordcrop.org, and look for more details in next month’s newsletter. You may also register to walk or make a donation online. Contact Sara Ballard at sara@sb.org with any questions or to volunteer to help.

Open Table Grand Opening

Sunday, September 10, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.



You are invited to join Open Table for the Grand Opening in our brand-new location in downtown Maynard at 33 Main Street. The celebration includes:

- 1:00 p.m. – Tours and talks by Open Table artists.
NOTE: informal tours will be conducted throughout the day.
- 2:00 p.m. – Opening words by Kate Hogan and other special guests
- 2:15 p.m. – Ribbon cutting
- 3:00 p.m. – Recognition of our volunteers and capital campaign supporters
- 3:30 p.m. – We'll cut the official cake

For more information, visit our [event webpage](#). To RSVP, send an RSVP email to grand-opening@opentable.org. For any questions, contact OT by U.S. mail at Open Table, P.O. Box 42, Concord, MA 01742, or leave a voice message at 978-369-2275 (voicemail only).

Partner Congregation News

April Pilgrimage to Transylvania

Informational Meeting:

Sunday, September 24, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Emerson Room



The Partner Congregation Committee (PCC) and Rev. Amy Freedman are excited to announce that the April 2018 Transylvanian multigenerational pilgrimage to our partner congregation in Székelykeresztúr leaves either Thursday or Friday, April 12 or 13, and returns Monday, April 23. This multigenerational pilgrimage is open to all congregation members, individuals and families alike.

There is still time to register. The cost will be \$1,800 - \$2,200 per person (largely driven by airfares). Scholarship assistance is available by contacting Rev. Amy Freedman. Come join Howard, Beth, Amy, Dawn, and 14 other adults, youth, and children who have already signed up.

To learn more, please join us at the informational meeting. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Lillian Anderson, lillianand@comcast.net, or Rev. Amy Freedman, afreedman@Firstparish.org.

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Scholarships for Students



Since 1996, our congregation has provided scholarships to make it possible for deserving Hungarian minority students from rural villages in the Hungarian areas of Transylvania to get a high school education at the Hungarian Unitarian High School in Székelykeresztúr. We are now collecting donations for the coming school year. Look for upcoming announcements about our new scholarship program team and information for donors for the new freshmen class and for continuing high school and college students. Please visit the Partnership table at coffee hour for more information.

Race Conversations Group

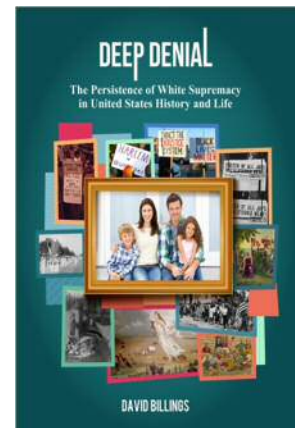
Sunday, November 5, 3:00 p.m., Sanctuary

Monthly meeting: Thursday, September 14, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., Brooks Room

The Rev. David Billings, author of *Deep Denial: The Persistence of White Supremacy in United States History and Life*, will discuss the historical legacy of racism and white supremacy, followed by a question and answer period. Afterward, Rev. Billings will sell and autograph his book in the Parish Hall and refreshments will be served.

Also watch for notices of viewings and discussions of UUA General Assembly presentations.

The Race Conversations Group meets on the second Thursday of every month, beginning September 14. Come join us.



For more information, contact the chairs, CC King, ccking.interplay@gmail.com or 617-710-1153, and Margie King Saphier, mksaphier@comcast.net or 781-424-2179.

Reclaim Our Democracy

“Go Granny D!” Performance

Saturday, September 16, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., Parish Hall



Come enjoy this 50-minute theatrical performance followed by discussion, sponsored by Reclaim Our Democracy and People Govern, Not Money.

At age ninety, Doris “Granny D” Haddock blazed a 3200-mile trail across the United States for campaign finance reform, precipitating the passage of the McCain-Feingold Act. Off-Broadway actress Barbara Bates Smith and musician Jeff

Continued next page.

Sebens highlight the story of this crusader who took the world by surprise and was elevated to national fame.”—The Monterey Weekly

For more information, email Fred Van Deusen at fredvandeu@gmail.com. For tickets, [click here](#).

Women's News

Women's AM/PM Book Group

Monday, September 25, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m., Brooks Room

Tuesday, September 26, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m., Brooks Room

New Schedule! 2017-2018

Welcome to a new year of books and discussions with the First Parish Women's AM/PM Book Group! All women of First Parish are warmly invited to read the current book and join a discussion.

Please note that we are always open for drop-ins, and you never need to sign up. Just come any month to either the Monday evening or Tuesday morning session, both at First Parish (usually in the Brooks Room).

If you would like to be added to the Women's Book Group email list, please contact Darien Smith at darien@smithquest.com.



Dates and Books for 2017-2018

Date	Book	Author
Sept. 25/26	<i>The Wonder</i>	Emma Donoghue
Oct. 30/31	<i>The Hungry Ocean: A Swordboat Captain's Journey</i>	Linda Greenlaw
Dec. 4/5	Poetry of Edna St. Vincent Millay (Stay tuned for suggested selections and sources)	Edna St. Vincent Millay
Jan. 29/30	<i>News of the World</i>	Paulette Jiles
Feb. 26/27	<i>Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right</i>	Arlie Russell Hochschild
March 25/26	<i>Commonwealth</i>	Ann Patchett
April 23/24	<i>America's First Daughter</i> NOTE: The April 23 date may be changed, depending on Concord Town Meeting.	Stephanie Dray and Laura Kamoie
May 21/22	<i>Necessary Lies</i>	Diane Chamberlain

Women's Empowerment

Advocates for Women's Empowerment (AWE)

Next Meeting: Saturday, September 16, 8:00 a.m., Trail's End Café in Concord

Thank You and Upcoming Events

- Thank you to everyone who participated in our women's wellness event and summer book group, and to Merrill Comeau for facilitating the thoughtful discussions.



- A big thank you to the 15 volunteers who cooked and served dinner in June at Rosie's Place, a sanctuary for poor and homeless women in Boston. The next date will be sometime in October. Contact Suzie Weaver, skatesuzie@aol.com.
- We're planning a fall retreat to reflect on what we've accomplished and how to continue our social justice work for women in the future. Watch for details!
- Our meetings are the third Saturday of the month. Come join us at our next meeting.
- Mailing List: To join the AWE mailing list contact Lora Venesy, venesy@comcast.net.

Women's Parish Association



Luncheon and Annual Meeting

**Wednesday, September 20, 11:30 a.m., Parish Hall and Parlor
RSVP by September 16**

You are cordially invited to the WPA Luncheon Program and Annual Meeting. Join old and new friends to share a meal together, catch up on the news, and enjoy a program that will include a celebration of the wonderful activities of First Parish's women's groups and their future plans. The annual report will be distributed and highlighted, and a brief review of last year's and next year's programs and events will be presented, followed by election of next year's officers. Luncheon cost: \$12.00.



Continued next page.

To make reservations, contact the church office at 978-369-9602 or Dian Pekin at pekindc@comcast.net by September 16. All are welcome!

Holiday Artisans Fair

Saturday, November 4, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., throughout First Parish facilities

It's not too early to start planning for this year's Holiday Artisans Fair. The Women's Parish Association (WPA) will hold its popular WPA Boutique again at this year's fair and is looking for donations of nice handmade items, as well as high-quality, like-new re-gifting items, such as jewelry, artwork, holiday and general home decorating items.



Please contact the office at 978-369-9602 or Dian Pekin at pekindc@comcast.net to arrange for your donations or to offer your help in making the famous catnip balls.

Other Cool Stuff

Concord Area Humanists

"Creating a Sustainable World" with Dr. Ellen Moyer

Wednesday, October 4, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall



An environmental consultant, Ellen assesses and cleans up contaminated soil and groundwater and develops sustainable solutions and practices to promote environmental and human health. Readers love her third book, "Our Earth, Our Species, Our Selves: How to Thrive While Creating a Sustainable World," published in December 2016.

See her website: <http://ellenmoyerphd.com/>. She is a registered professional engineer with a B.A. in anthropology, an M.S. in environmental engineering, and a Ph.D. in civil engineering. She is a regular contributor to *The Huffington Post*.

Jewish Awareness Affinity Group

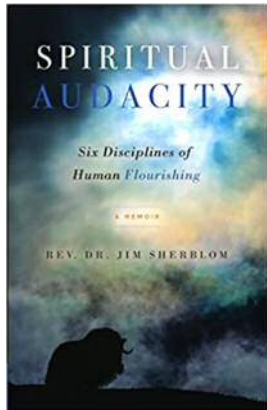
Friday, September 15, 7:00 p.m., Brooks Room

Come to the Jewish Awareness Affinity Group on the third Friday of September, when Jim Snyder-Grant will lead a conversation about why Hebrew is written right to left. He welcomes speculation and made up answers. We'll share challah, wine, blessings, and conversation. All are welcome. For more information, contact Dana Snyder-Grant, dana.snydergrant@gmail.com or 978-760-1129.



Spiritual Audacity – Jim Sherblom

Friday, September, 22, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall



Why do some people flourish in adversity and others do not? Jim Sherblom's spiritual memoir, "Spiritual Audacity: Six Disciplines of Human Flourishing," addresses this question from a Unitarian Universalist perspective. Please plan to come to church to help celebrate the publication release and book signing of this new UU book. There will be drinks and snacks served as well as readings from Jim's book. All are welcome!

Contact: Rev. Dr. Jim Sherblom, jimsherblom@gmail.com or 781-439-4806.

Editor's Notes

Next Meeting House News **Deadline: September 12, 2017**

Next Publication Date: **September 20, 2017**

Questions? Contact the Editor, Wendy Wolfberg: wolfberg@post.harvard.edu or 978-578-1077 cell (email preferred). Thank you!

MHN Deadlines

Issue	Deadline	Publication
Oct	12-Sep-17	20-Sep-17
Nov	17-Oct-17	25-Oct-17
Dec	14-Nov-17	22-Nov-17
Jan	12-Dec-17	20-Dec-17
Feb	16-Jan-18	24-Jan-18
Mar	13-Feb-18	21-Feb-18
Apr	13-Mar-18	22-Mar-18
May	17-Apr-18	25-Apr-18
Jun*	15-May-18	23-May-18
Sep	21-Aug-18	29-Aug-18

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

FP Quiz

1. What is the name of this garden?



2. What is the name of this outdoor area?



Answers to FP Quiz:

1. Ruth Johnson, a very active member of the WPA, who helped provide numerous fundraising, educational, and social events.
2. Keresztur Terrace, named in honor of our partner congregation in Székegyházas, since they gave such a generous donation to our capital campaign.

General Information

First Parish General Information

Hours

Regular office hours resume, September 6.

Regular office hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday.

A reminder that the office is closed on Mondays.

Contact Us

Address: 20 Lexington Road, Concord, MA 01742

Phone: 978-369-9602; **Fax:** 978-369-8701

Email: Contact@firstparish.org; **Website:** www.firstparish.org

Church Calendar: <http://firstparish.org/wp/news/calendar/>

Reserve a Room: <http://firstparish.org/wp/connection/reserve-a-room/>

FP Announce: Sign up for announcements by email: <http://firstparish.org/wp/news/>

FP Facebook

“Like” our Facebook page:

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

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

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Add us to your address book





Choir Rehearsal Schedule

Fall 2017

Please keep this schedule handy as you make plans for fall and consider joining a choir!

First Parish Choir

Wednesdays, 7:45 to 9:30 p.m.

Beginning Wednesday, September 6, Sanctuary
Beth Norton, director

Contemporary Vocal Ensemble

Sundays, 12:15 to 1:00 p.m.

Beginning Sunday, September 24, Chapel
Gail Carey, director

Gospel Choir

(Youth in Grades 7-12)

Sundays, 9:00 to 9:45 a.m.

Beginning Sunday, September 17, Emerson Room
Anderson Manuel, director

Junior Choir

(Grades 1-3)

Sunday, 11:30 a.m. to Noon

Beginning Sunday, September 17, Chapel
Gail Carey, director

Chalice Choir

(Grades 4-6)

Sunday, 9:00 to 9:45 a.m.

Beginning Sunday, September 17, in the Chapel
Gail Carey, director

By Your Side Singers

First and third Thursdays of the month, 7:30 p.m.

Beginning Thursday, September 7, in the Brooks Room
Beth Norton, director

For more information, contact Beth Norton at 978-369-9602, x420, or
music@firstparish.org.

Choirs for Children and Youth

Our choirs for children and youth will continue to rehearse on Sunday mornings this year, beginning on September 17. All are welcome. There is no need for any singing experience.

Continued next page.



Junior Choir (Grades 1-3)

Sundays, 11:30 a.m. to Noon, Chapel

Chalice Choir (Grades 4-6)

Sundays, 9:00 to 9:45 a.m., Chapel

If you have any questions about the Junior or Chalice choirs, please feel free to contact Gail Carey, Music Ministry Associate at gcarey@firstparish.org. You are also welcome to let your child “**try it out**” for September.

Gospel Choir (Grades 7-12)

Sundays, 9:00 to 9:45 a.m., Emerson Room

We welcome new members with open arms and hope that you are ready to inspire and be inspired. We will do some reggae, blues, gospel and a little contemporary gospel flair just to spice things up. For more information, contact Anderson Manuel at AManuel@firstparish.org.

Registration

Please note: Registration for choirs is combined with RE registration and may be completed online through [RE registration](#). See you on September 17!

Our children's and youth choirs offer a wonderful way for new families to build friendships and make connections. During the rehearsals before the service, family members may gather for the First Parish Café in the Parish Hall or after the service for the social hour.

By Your Side Singers

Next rehearsal: Thursday September 7, 7:30 p.m., Parlor

By Your Side Singers, First Parish's pastoral choir, begins Season 8 on September 7. By Your Side Singers welcomes adults who love to sing and long to serve through music. We sing to deepen our experience of music's comforting power. When invited, singers go to parishioners' homes or hospital rooms in small groups to sing with people seeking comfort and strength during times of illness or transition.

By Your Side Singers meets on the first and third Thursday of each month. For more information, contact Beth Norton at 978-369-9602 or music@firstparish.org.

First Parish Choir

Open Rehearsals in September

Wednesday, September 6, 7:45-9:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

The First Parish Choir begins each season with “open rehearsals” on Wednesday nights. This year, we start our season on Wednesday, September 6. Rehearsals are from 7:45 – 9:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Adult and teen singers of all voice parts are welcome to attend *with no obligation* during this time. The choir will sing in worship for the first time on Sunday, September 10 at 10:00 a.m.

If you plan to attend a rehearsal, or have any questions, please contact Beth Norton at music@firstparish.org or 978-369-9602 x420.