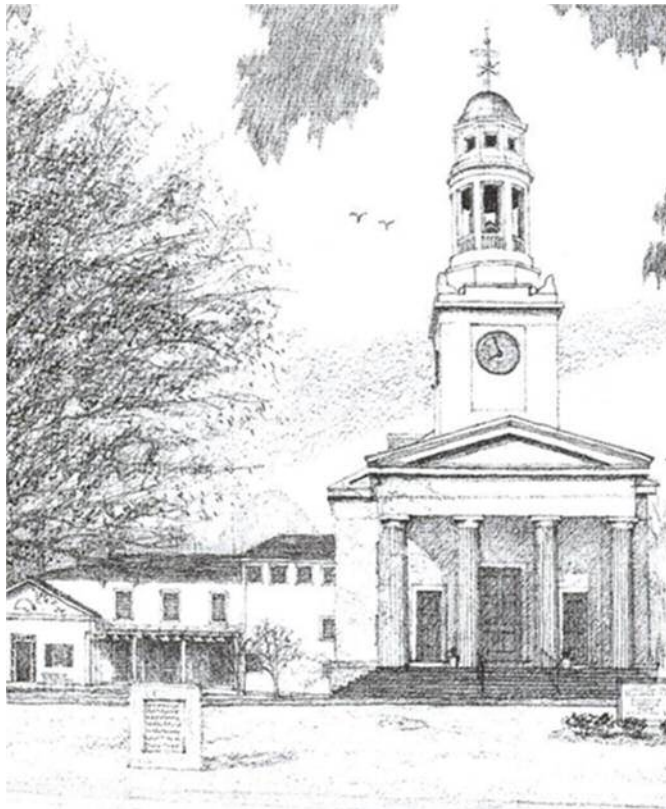


What's Happening at First Parish?

MEETING HOUSE NEWS

JANUARY 2017



Pencil drawing by Unknown

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Photo by Tom Brosnahan

Next Meeting House News

Deadline: January 17

Publication: January 25

**Plan ahead. See [Editor's Notes](#) for details.
Thank you.**

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Sundays at First Parish

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

Worship-at-a-Glance

Sunday, January 1 – “A Change of Perspective for a New Year”

Jan Hutslar

Pamela Schweppe, soprano

Sunday, January 8 – “When Black Lives Matter, All Lives Will Matter”

Rev. Howard Dana

First Parish Choir; Kenneth Griffith, Sabbatical Choir Director

Sunday, January 15 – “There is Only One Question: How to Love the World?”

Jan Hutslar

First Parish Choir

Sunday, January 22 – “Spiritual Resistance”

Rev. Marion Visel

First Parish Choir

Sunday, January 29 – “The Real Housewives of Wherever”

Rev. Howard Dana

First Parish Choir

Sunday, February 5 – “The Face of Poverty in Concord”

Rev. Howard Dana

First Parish Children’s Choirs and Gospel Choir



First Parish Café

The First Parish Café is available on Sundays at 9:00 a.m. Come to the Parish Hall and enjoy the fellowship and light fare before the service.

Sunday Forums

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



Following our successful Fall Forum series, mostly internal to First Parish, we now start a Winter series with a wider choice of topics. Please invite non-Parish friends to join us.

January 15—“Communities Without Borders” by Dr. Richard Bail

Come hear about the obstacles and successes of engaging our American communities with communities in Zambia providing educational opportunities to children orphaned by the AIDS epidemic. Efforts must be driven by the priorities of Zambian

Continued next page.

communities, but the resulting direct, personal involvement creates lasting, treasured relationships. A deep sense of meaning in life can be gained through this service. Bethany-Lowe was one of our first participants. Dr. Bail is the founder of Communities Without Borders, a 501c3 born out of his experience in Zambia in mobilizing funding for a three-year plan for combating AIDS in 1999.

January 22—No Forum due to Presidential Inauguration

January 29— “Living in Divine Mystery” by Jim Sherblom

Through stories of spiritual pilgrimages, and his life as a parish minister, Jim recounts traditional and untraditional paths to enlightenment. He tells of dancing with Sufis, transcending mountains with Taoists, exploring hallucinogenic plant medicines with South American shamans, and other tales along the way traveling into the mystic. He will speak about some of those adventures. Jim is a longtime First Parish member.



February 5— “Faith, Trembling, and Reimagining Justice” by Kaia Stern of Concord Prison Outreach

Now is the time to bear witness to the ways we punish—ourselves, our children, the “criminal.” It is time to challenge the current narrative about justice in the United States and help create a more equitable and effective justice system. After sharing some thoughts on faith and trembling, this Forum will focus on reimagining justice. Drawing on 23 years of work in and about prisons across our nation, Kaia Stern will invite us to consider how specific religious and racial ideologies—notions of sin, evil, and otherness—continue to shape our relationship with crime and punishment. In conversation, we will explore a cultural hunger to punish and a vision of justice that inspires and transforms.



Red Mugs at Coffee Hour A Change



Until recently, new attendees or new members were encouraged to pick up a red mug when heading for coffee hour in the hopes that seasoned parishioners would notice the red mug and engage by welcoming them. The Membership Committee thought it helpful to reverse the process. The goal is to invite interactions among our congregational community. Now, the person holding the red mug, eager and willing to engage in conversation, answer questions, or provide information will, most likely, be a member of the Membership Committee.

Continued next page.

It was felt that often a new person might have been a bit uncomfortable taking the first step, resulting in a missed opportunity to connect with others in the congregation. We hope this new approach will promote and encourage many new conversations and relationships among our growing congregation. If you see a “lost” look at coffee hour, do introduce yourself and feel free to escort a new person to a committee member—the one now holding the red mug.

Karen Sullivan
Membership Committee

MUUsings

Last spring, First Parish gave me a wonderful gift: three months of sabbatical time from January 1 to March 31. At the time, I was still unclear about how exactly I would be spending my sabbatical. What I was clear about was that this gift of time would allow space for fresh air to reignite some of the glowing embers of my spiritual and creative fire. My discipline these last few months has been to allow that space to be and not to fill it.

The prospect of this sabbatical time has provided the very tool I’ve needed to help keep this space open. That tool is this five-word sentence: “I will be on sabbatical.” A free pass! For the last several months, it has taken the place of my usual five-word phrase: “let me check my calendar,” and that most wonderful, but also perilous, word “yes.”



What I have said “yes” to is three months of luxuriously unstructured time. The last time I took three months off from full-time work was my maternity leave 26 years ago. I soon learned that infants have their own way of structuring one’s time!

You have asked me what I plan to do. And I have answered carefully. I plan to use this gift of time and space to slow down and concentrate on “being” rather than “doing.” I look forward to listening to music, playing music, composing, reading. I look forward to visiting other churches and sitting in the pews while others lead worship. I look forward to clearing some of the clutter in my home and in my head. Weather permitting, I look forward to spending some time on my cross-country skis and visiting with family and friends.

So, thank you for this gift of time. And thank you to all the staff and volunteers who are ably stepping in to fill the spaces I will leave in the music ministry at First Parish during my absence.

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

Religious Education (RE) News

First Parish Parent Circles

What does it mean to be a UU parent? How can we be spiritually resilient in the face of life's challenges? Rev. Amy Freedman, our Minister of Religious Education, will offer three Parent Circles on topics of interest to today's parents. Each session will feature someone with additional wisdom and expertise to share. This will be a chance for parents to connect with one another in a meaningful way and reflect on parenting from a Unitarian Universalist perspective.



Blessed Be, Amy
Rev. Amy Freedman
Minister of Religious Education
afreedman@firstparish.org



To see a larger view of this beautiful quilt, see the last page of this newsletter.

Parent Circles

Date	Theme	Speakers
Sunday, January 22 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Parenting in the Digital Age	Rev. Amy Freedman and Peter Bowden
Sunday, January 29 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Talking with Children about Death	Rev. Amy Freedman and Dawn Van Patten
Sunday, February 5 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Sandwich Generation: Caring for Aging Parents and Children	Revs. Amy Freedman and Marion Visel

RE Winter Term World Religions

Date	Theme	Description
Sunday, January 1 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	New Year's Day	Multi-age Workshop
Sunday, January 8 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Islam	Sunday morning Religious Education
Sunday, January 15 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	MLK Weekend	Multiage Workshop
Sunday, January 22 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Lunar New Year	Sunday morning Religious Education
Sunday, January 29 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Hinduism	Sunday morning Religious Education

Youth News

COA Reaches Out to Homeless

Common Cathedral's "City Reach"

On Friday night, December 9, a group of ninth-graders from this year's Coming-of-Age program traveled to Boston to take part in Common Cathedral's "City Reach" program. After an opening circle and meeting the other youth groups and the City Reach staff, we split into small groups, and our hosts took us on a tour of Boston Common in the bitter cold. Garrett and Frank shared their experiences with being homeless, and answered the youth's questions about what it is really like. Back at the church, after a reflection circle and prayer, everyone spread out their sleeping bags on the floor of the beautiful sanctuary to get some sleep.

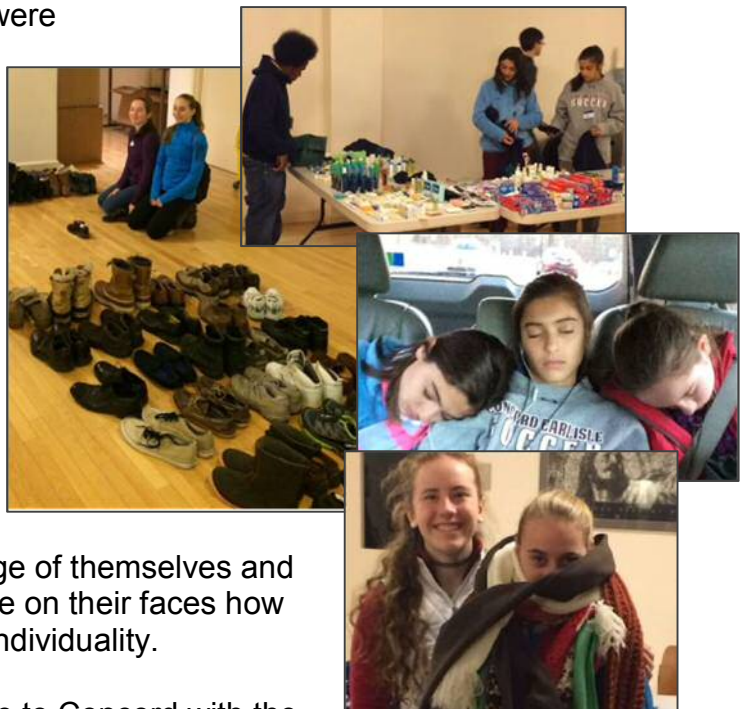
How Gratifying It Was to Help

When we woke at 6:30 a.m., we could see there were already people lined up outside the big glass doors, waiting to get in. Three of our First Parish youth volunteered to bring hot chocolate to the people in line, while the rest of us hustled to get the donated goods ready to offer to our guests. We were put in charge of toiletries, hats-gloves-mittens-scarves, shoes, blankets, and bags.

Once people started coming to our tables, the hours flew by. Many of the youth remarked later on how friendly and nice everyone was, and how gratifying it was to help them find what they needed.

In the scarf and hat department in particular, we took special pleasure in helping people find something they liked, something that matched their image of themselves and that looked good on them. You could see on their faces how important it is to them to maintain their individuality.

Late Saturday afternoon, we drove home to Concord with the warm feeling of having really helped people. Plus, "it was a lot of fun to be there with the other kids and with the staff," as one youth said, and "the fact that the church and Common were so pretty didn't hurt!"



Continued next page.

Interacting with Different Lives

The main takeaway was that “it was interesting to interact with people who lead such different lives than we do.” Seeing such deep need, contrasted with the beauty of the historic cathedral, really drove home that difference. Thanks to everyone at First Parish who donated the warm clothing and blankets that allowed us to help City Reach bridge that difference.



Christa Champion
Youth Programs Director
Coming of Age Program and Senior High Youth Group
cchampion@firstparish.org

YAC Is Coming Back!

Sunday, January 8, 11:15 a.m., The Loft

You’ve been missing your YAC, and you didn’t even know it! What’s a YAC? A YAC is a “Youth and Adult Committee”—a small group of youth leaders and adult advisors working together to help the youth choose, plan, organize, and implement the youth programming of a congregation. Obviously, a YAC is very UU—one, it’s a committee, and two, it’s got an acronym, and three, it affirms at least four of the seven principles!



Are you down with valuing the worth of youth input, encouraging their growth, promoting equity in leadership, and using the democratic process? If you said “yes,” come learn more about YAC at a brief interest meeting, open to all adults and youth. If you can’t be there but have questions or want to get involved, please email Christa Champion, cchampion@firstparish.org.

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: 203-931-5329



Senior Minister, Rev. Howard N. Dana

Email: hdana@firstparish.org

Church: 978-369-9602, ext. 411

Cell: 717-412-8543

January Pastoral Care Lay Minister, Sally Brandon Bemis

Email: sgbrandon@me.com

Phone: 978-505-0492

Continued next page.

First Parish Meals

Thank you, cooks!

On Friday December 9, assisting Pastoral Care cooking manager Vivienne Aldrich, were these cooks: Donna Peterson, Marian Stanley, Heather MacPhee and Leslie Fisher. Barry Copp provided a helping hand in the kitchen. A comforting chicken soup and yummy chocolate cake were added to the freezer. Thank you, all! These meals are available for those in the congregation who are facing challenges or sadness. If First Parish Meals would be of support to you, contact the Minister for Pastoral Care, Marion Visel, or one of the Pastoral Care Lay Ministers or Judy Dembsey, dembsey@verizon.net, chairperson of the Pastoral Care Council.



Pastoral Care Council Brochure

The Pastoral Care Council has a new brochure that brings more clarity to our pastoral care program (what is it, whom to contact) and hopefully makes it more accessible for everyone. At some point in our lives most of us would benefit from pastoral care to help us through difficult situations, transitions, or losses. Among other services, our program offers ministers, lay ministers, and visitors who can be present with you in your pain, loss, struggles, or joy. They can offer encouragement and comfort, and help you work through your situation, whatever it is. Please pick up a copy of our new brochure outside the office.

Standing Committee News

Next Meeting: Sunday, January 8, 6:00 p.m., Emerson Room

On Sunday, December 11, 2016, the Standing Committee held its monthly meeting. Margie King Saphier presented recent and upcoming racial justice work in support of our Black Lives Matter banners. The committee also finalized the remainder of its biennial goals. In January, the Standing Committee will discuss staff compensation, our further response to the Concord Historic Districts Commission, and a governance committee charter. We welcome anyone interested to attend our next meeting.

Black Lives Matter Banner Update

Rev. Margie King Saphier came before the committee to request that the “Black Lives Matter” and “Join the Conversation” banners remain in place after the new year. She reported to the Standing Committee on the current and future work of the Race Conversations group. She supported the banners by describing them as “a beacon,” and credited their presence with helping to forge many connections and to begin difficult and important conversations. The Standing Committee voted to continue hanging the banner through Annual Meeting on June 11, 2017.

Housing Allowances Approved

There is a provision in our tax code that allows housing costs for ministers to be deducted from their personal federal income tax as a housing allowance. The Standing

Committee officially approves these amounts requested by the ministers, but the verification of the amounts in case of an audit are the sole responsibility of the minister. At our meeting, the Standing Committee approved the applicable allowances for Rev. Howard Dana and Rev. Marion Visel.

Goals Update

The Standing Committee has finalized the remainder of our goals through 2018. Our five goals are:

1. Create a process to ensure policies are maintained;
2. Nurture leadership within First Parish;
3. Strengthen connections to other UU congregations and to the wider denomination;
4. Support SAC and its pilot programs;
5. Complete a congregation-wide exploration on social action funding.

To see the indicators for all five goals, please visit the Standing Committee News at <http://firstparish.org/wp/category/news/standing-committee-news/>.

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 e-mail 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

Finance Committee

Congregational Conversations Feedback

In November, the First Parish Finance Committee conducted two congregational conversations in regard to the church's financial health and the needs of the congregation. Key discussions posed by attendees included:

- Needs for a capital budget, building maintenance fund, and contingency fund for emergencies
- Shorter pledge drive with possible multiyear commitments
- Creation of a Legacy Giving Program
- Need to develop a long-term strategy for a sustainable financial future

The Finance Committee will have open sessions again in the spring. Contact Tom Wilson, Treasurer, at twilson@wilsongroup.com for more immediate requests.

Arts at First Parish

Fostering Community through the Arts



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

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.

Upcoming Events

Day	Date	Time	Event
Wednesday	January 4	6:00 p.m.	Arts Council meeting (all welcome)
Saturday	January 14	9:30 a.m.	Photography Club Open to all First Parish adults
Saturday	January 14	7:00 p.m.	Cosy Sheridan Concert
Friday	January 27	7:30 p.m.	Rise Up Singing, monthly song circle
Sunday	January 29	7:00 p.m.	Sarasa Chamber Music Concert

For more information on these events, check this *Meeting House News*, FP Announce, and *The Sunday News*. For additional information, contact Susan Page, chair, at srpage10@verizon.net.

Cosy Sheridan in Concert

Saturday, January 14, 7:30 p.m., Parish Hall

First Parish Music Events presents award-winning singer/songwriter Cosy Sheridan. Cosy first caught the attention of folk audiences in 1992, winning songwriting contests at Kerrville and Telluride. She has been on the road ever since, playing clubs, concert halls, and coffeehouses from Berkeley to Boston. Cosy has taught songwriting, performance, and guitar at workshops and adult music camps across the country.



Her concert is a wide-ranging exploration of love songs for adults and practical philosophy for a complicated world. Admission is \$15. We hope to see you there!

Continued next page.

For more information and tickets, visit the FP website > News > Music Events, <http://firstparish.org/wp/category/music-events/>.

Sarasa Chamber Ensemble Returns

Sunday January 29, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall



The Sarasa Chamber Ensemble returns to First Parish for a concert entitled “Music Fit for a King (or Queen).” Included are selected arias for countertenor and basso continuo, sonatas for Baroque cellos and for solo theorbo. Works by Purcell, Dowland, de Visée, Händel, Gabrieli, Scarlatti, Porpora, Kapsberger, Vivaldi, and Lanzetti.

Artists include Christopher Lowrey, countertenor; Michael Leopold, theorbo; Timothy Merton, cello; Jennifer Morsches, cello and five-string piccolo cello.

For more information and tickets, visit <http://www.sarasamusic.org/events/2017/music-king-concord>.

Social Action Community

Faith into Action

SAC Board Update

New Board Members

We are pleased to report that Sue St. Croix and Ted Bayne have agreed to join the SAC Board. Sue and Ted bring financial and technical skills that will be very helpful as we continue to evaluate social action giving and improving communication.

Aid to Haiti and North Dakota

As announced at worship on December 11, the SAC Board is also pleased to report our decision to grant humanitarian aid to assist people who continue to face unusual hardship in Haiti and North Dakota.

We have sent \$4000 from our Grants reserve to [St. Boniface Haiti Foundation](#). Located near the area hardest hit by Hurricane Matthew, St. Boniface is sending mobile clinics to places where medical facilities no longer exist, and they've helped vaccinate 23,000 people against cholera. They also continue to provide emergency assistance to their neighbors who have lost their homes, crops, and livelihoods.

We have sent \$2000 from our Grants reserve to [Oceti Sakowin Camp](#) to support the Water Protectors at Standing Rock through the winter as they organize to protect their water supply and sacred lands from the encroachment of the Dakota Access Pipeline.



We recognize that the situation at Standing Rock Reservation continues to evolve, but we also know that the struggle for native rights will be ongoing.

Social Action Community Board

Working with and for you to advance social justice.

Ted Bayne, tedbayne@comcast.net
Bob Brack, brackrobert@gmail.com
Leslie Fisher, lesliefisher@treitman.com
Tricia Haut, triciahaut@gmail.com
Wendy Holt, wendyh@dmahealth.com
Janine Olson, janine.olson@morganstanley.com
Tony Rodriguez, trod.rodriguez@gmail.com
Sue St. Croix, sue@suestcroix.com
Margie King Saphier, margie.king.saphier@gmail.com

Americans for Economic Fairness

Reclaiming Our Democracy

Tuesday, January 31, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., Parish Hall

Were you upset by the recent national elections? Do you believe that corporations, Super PACS, and the very wealthy have too much influence on our government? Do you believe that “we the people” need to reclaim our democracy? If so, please join us to view the 30-minute film *Legalize Democracy*, followed by a number of breakout sessions to better understand the issues and what needs to be done. For more information, email Fred Van Deusen at fredvandeu@gmail.com.



Amnesty International, Group 15

Tuesday, January 17, 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Greeley Room

Dignity in Asylum

In keeping with Amnesty International’s “I Welcome” campaign to advocate for migrants and asylum seekers globally, we’ll be brainstorming about ways to support the work of Concord’s local nonprofit group Dignity in Asylum.

Freedom Fighters Newsletter

To widen the network seeking the release of our two young prisoners of conscience in Azerbaijan, we now have a Freedom Fighters newsletter, with suggested actions on their behalf. All are welcome to join us. For more information, contact Kathy Taylor at Kly.taylor@gmail.com or 781-718-7640.

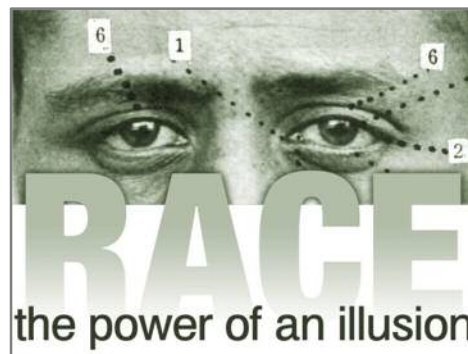
Diversity Documentary

Race: the Power of an Illusion

Three-part PBS Documentary:

- Sunday, January 22, Part One, 7:15 – 8:45 p.m., Parish Hall
- Sunday, February 12, Part Two, 7:15 – 8:45 p.m., Parish Hall
- Sunday, February 26, Part Three, 7:15 – 8:45 p.m., Parish Hall

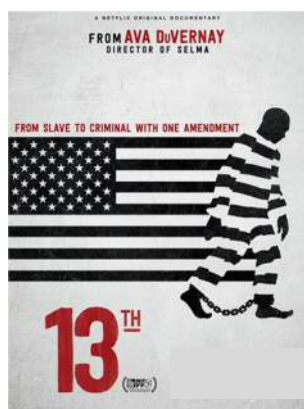
This three-part PBS documentary will be shown over three Sunday evenings; a short discussion will follow each showing. This series examines the science that challenges our assumptions about race, the history of how artificial racial distinctions were adopted, and the ways that politics, economics, and culture define “race.” We’ll gather for socializing and refreshments at 7:15, and start each screening at 7:30 promptly.



No admission charge. For more information, contact Sara Ballard at 978-371-0723 or sara@sb.org (email preferred).

Documentary—“13TH” Discussion

Sunday, January 8, 7:00-9:00 p.m., Chapel



We will continue our discussion of Ava DuVernay’s exceptional documentary, “13TH”, which addresses mass incarceration of black and brown people, enabled by the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution and continuing today due to the war on drugs and other “tough on crime” policies. The documentary was screened at First Parish on December 6 but is also available on Netflix. Please join us to share your thoughts. Sponsored by the Race Conversations Group.

For more information, contact Margie King Saphier at margie.king.saphier@gmail.com or 978-369-4467.

Native Americans Discussion

Reflections, Past and Present

Sunday, February 5, 11:30 a.m., Loft

Come gather with us to discuss how First Parish might create events concerning Native American issues. The recent happenings at Standing Rock are an impetus for this discussion. Contact Dana Snyder-Grant, danasq@newview.org, 978-266-9409; or Francie Nolde, francie12637@gmail.com, 978-929-2556.



Partner Congregation News

Next meeting: Thursday, January 12, 6:30 p.m., at the home of Dana Booth, Carlisle



Thank You, All

For Helping to Strengthen Our Connection

The Partner Congregation Committee would like to thank all of those who helped make the recent visit by our friends from our partner congregation in Székelykeresztúr, Transylvania, such a success. Many of you hosted our guests and/or a gathering, attended events, shared food, and helped make them feel welcome. We especially appreciate the hospitality and participation shown by our staff. This visit helped strengthen our connection, and sparked new ideas of how staff and lay leaders of both congregations can collaborate regularly, using Skype and other technologies. It was a time of deep sharing.

Val Holt Partnership Fund

Thanks to all who have donated to the Val Holt Partnership Fund in Val's memory; keeping our partnership strong meant so much to her. Donations may still be made; send them to First Parish, c/o Fifi Ball, 20 Lexington Road, Concord, MA 01742. Checks should be made out to "First Parish in Concord" and should specify on the memo line that the donation is for the "Val Holt Partnership Fund." You may also make a donation via the First Parish website, www.firstparish.org.

Welcoming Your Participation

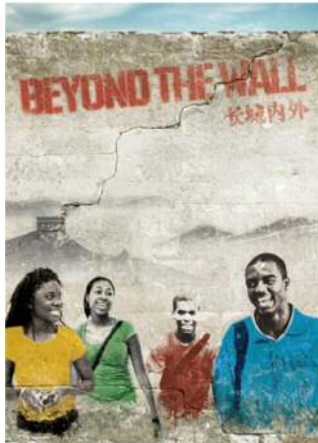
If you were inspired by our recent visitors and want to get involved in partnership work, we welcome your participation. If you'd like to find out more about our partnership, please attend our next meeting. Dana will provide a Chinese dinner for those attending.

Contact one of our cochairs, Lillian Anderson at lillianand@comcast.net or Rodger Mattlage at rmattlage@mac.com, for more information or to RSVP.

Peace Campaign Alert

Coming in February!

In February, filmmaker Jenny Phillips screens her new documentary, *Beyond the Wall*, and will lead a discussion. Phillips' work lays out the desperate situation of the flood of prisoners returning to our communities without guidance and support for transition to society.



Set largely in Lowell and Lawrence, where once- thriving textile mills have been replaced by poverty, crime, and drug addiction, the film bears witness to personal stories of reentry, relapse, recovery, and redemption. Phillips puts a human face on the social, economic, and emotional barriers encountered by former prisoners who are among our most discriminated citizens.

Philippine Items Needed

For World Day of Prayer Service

Friday, March 3, 11:00 a.m.

First Parish will be hosting Concord's commemoration of the 2017 World Day of Prayer. Women of the Philippines wrote this year's prayer service, which reminds people of social and economic justice needs in their country and elsewhere.

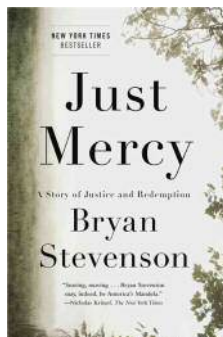
If anyone has decorations, artwork, jewelry, travel posters, cookbooks, clothing, etc., from the Philippines that could be used for this year's service or luncheon, please contact Dian Pekin at Pekindc@comcast.net.



Race Conversations Group

Discussion of Congregational Read

Tuesday, January 10, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., Emerson Room



Join the Race Conversations Group for a discussion of our first congregational read of the year, Bryan Stevenson's *Just Mercy*. After graduating from Harvard Law, Stevenson founded the [Equal Justice Initiative](#) in Montgomery, Alabama, and has worked for decades obtaining justice for condemned prisoners. His first-person account of the clients he's served and the injustices they've suffered is disturbing, gripping, and inspiring.

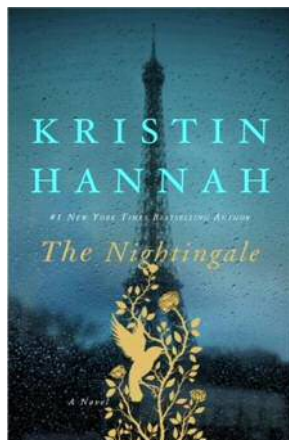
Contact Don Miller to sign up or obtain a copy of the book: donaldmiller@comcast.net or 978-610-6298. Undecided? Watch Stevenson's TED Talk online.

Women's News

Advocates for Women's Empowerment

The Advocates for Women's Empowerment ("AWE," formerly Reproductive Justice) has the following AWE-some events lined up for 2017:

- **Friday, January 20 to Sunday, January 22, Bus to Washington, D.C.**
There will be a chartered bus to attend the Saturday, January 21, Women's March in Washington. We will march to protect women's rights, safety, health, and families. Limited space still available, \$160 per person. Contact Jen Izzo jbizzo@hotmail.com. For more information, <https://www.womenmarch.org/>.
- **Saturday, January 21, Boston Women's March**
Interested in marching in Boston the same day? Contact Lora Venesy, venesy@comcast.net.
- **Friday, March 4, LunaFest, Parish Hall**
A fundraising film festival of short films by, for, and about women.
- **Next Meeting: Saturday, January 14, 8:00 a.m., Trail's End Café in Concord.**
- **Mailing List**
To join, contact Lora Venesy, venesy@comcast.net.



Women's AM/PM Book Group

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

Tuesday, January 31, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m., Brooks Room

Welcome to the New Year and new book selections! Our book for January is *The Nightingale*, by Kristin Hannah. All women of First Parish are warmly invited to read the book and join a discussion—there's no need to sign up!

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

Date	Book	Author
Jan. 30/31	<i>The Nightingale</i>	Kristin Hannah
Feb. 27/28	<i>Brooklyn</i>	Colm Tóibín
March 27/28	<i>Becoming Nicole: The Transformation of an American Family</i>	Amy Ellis Nut
April 25 (a.m.)	<i>We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves</i>	Karen Joy

Continued next page.

Date	Book	Author
May 1 (p.m.)	NOTE: The evening discussion is on a later date due to Concord Town Meeting on April 24.	Fowler
May 22/23	<i>Spinster: Making a Life of One's Own</i>	Kate Bolick

Women's Parish Association

WPA Luncheon Program

Thoreau and Money

Wednesday, January 18, Parish Hall

Social time: 11:30 a.m.

Lunch and Program, Noon

RSVP by January 14

2017 is the Henry David Thoreau bicentennial. Join old and new friends for a delicious lunch, after which Rev. Dr. Jim Sherblom will talk about Thoreau and money. Drawing on his training in American history, economics, and finance and his love of Thoreau and Walden, Jim's talk will illuminate how Thoreau's spiritual life was deeply affected by money.



For reservations, contact the office 978-369-9602 or Dian Pekin, pekindc@comcast.net. Luncheon \$12. All are warmly welcome!

Women's Retreats 2017

Registration Deadline: January 8

"To Thine Own Self Be True: Knowing Your Authentic Self"

Once again there are three retreat options: **(Note: Some dates have changed!)**

- ♥ **1st Weekend Away:** Friday evening to Sunday afternoon, January 27-29, at Senexet House, Connecticut
- ♥ **2nd Weekend Away:** Friday evening to Sunday afternoon, February 3-5, at Senexet House, Connecticut
- ♥ **"At Home" Retreat:** Friday evening, February 10, and Saturday morning through afternoon on February 11, at First Parish

This year's retreats will focus on *"To Thine Own Self Be True: Knowing Your Authentic Self."* Banish all cares as we relax, have fun, rejuvenate, get to know each other, and explore what it means to know and express our core beings. All women of First Parish are warmly invited and welcome!



Continued next page.

Registration

Register by January 8. Late registrations will be accepted on a space available basis. Registration forms are available in the church office, online at www.firstparish.org/forms, and at coffee hour on January 8.

Questions? Contact Bozena Smith at bozenasmith@mindspring.com or 978-371-1060.

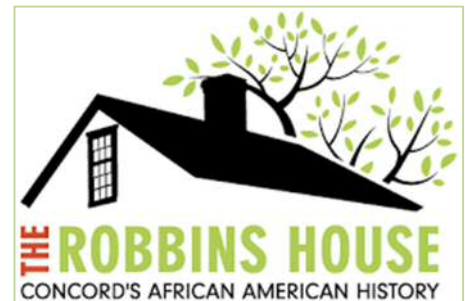
Other Cool Stuff

First Tuesday Group (65+)

History of African Americans and Abolitionists in Early Concord
Tuesday, January 3, from 1:30-3:00 p.m., Parlor

Come participate in a stimulating dialogue about race and how we can today foster a spirit of reconciliation and healing!

Maria Madison, chair of the Board of Directors of the Robbins House, will speak. The Robbins House is an early 19th century house originally inhabited by the first generation of descendants of a formerly enslaved African-American Revolutionary War veteran, Caesar Robbins, and by a fugitive slave, Jack Garrison.



For more information, contact Virginia Taylor, virginiarosstaylor@verizon.net or 978-263-9777.

“Grub’s Place”—Get Involved!

2017 Performances on March 31, April 1, April 7, and April 8



If you wish to get involved with “Grub’s Place” (on-stage or off) and thought you missed out or have not been contacted yet, please contact stage manager Rebecca Curzon at rebcurzon@gmail.com.

“Grub’s Place,” a new musical, is written and composed by Jane Blumberg, directed by Francene Amari, and produced by Claudia Nimar. This intergenerational musical is set in an ant colony. Grub (played by Terry Rothermel) creates a spot for everyone commanding compassion rather than conformity. Turf battles, jealous hearts, death, and prejudice threaten the colony’s survival.

Don’t miss out on this wonderful community building experience. No experience necessary! If you have questions, contact director Francene Amari at francene99@gmail.com.

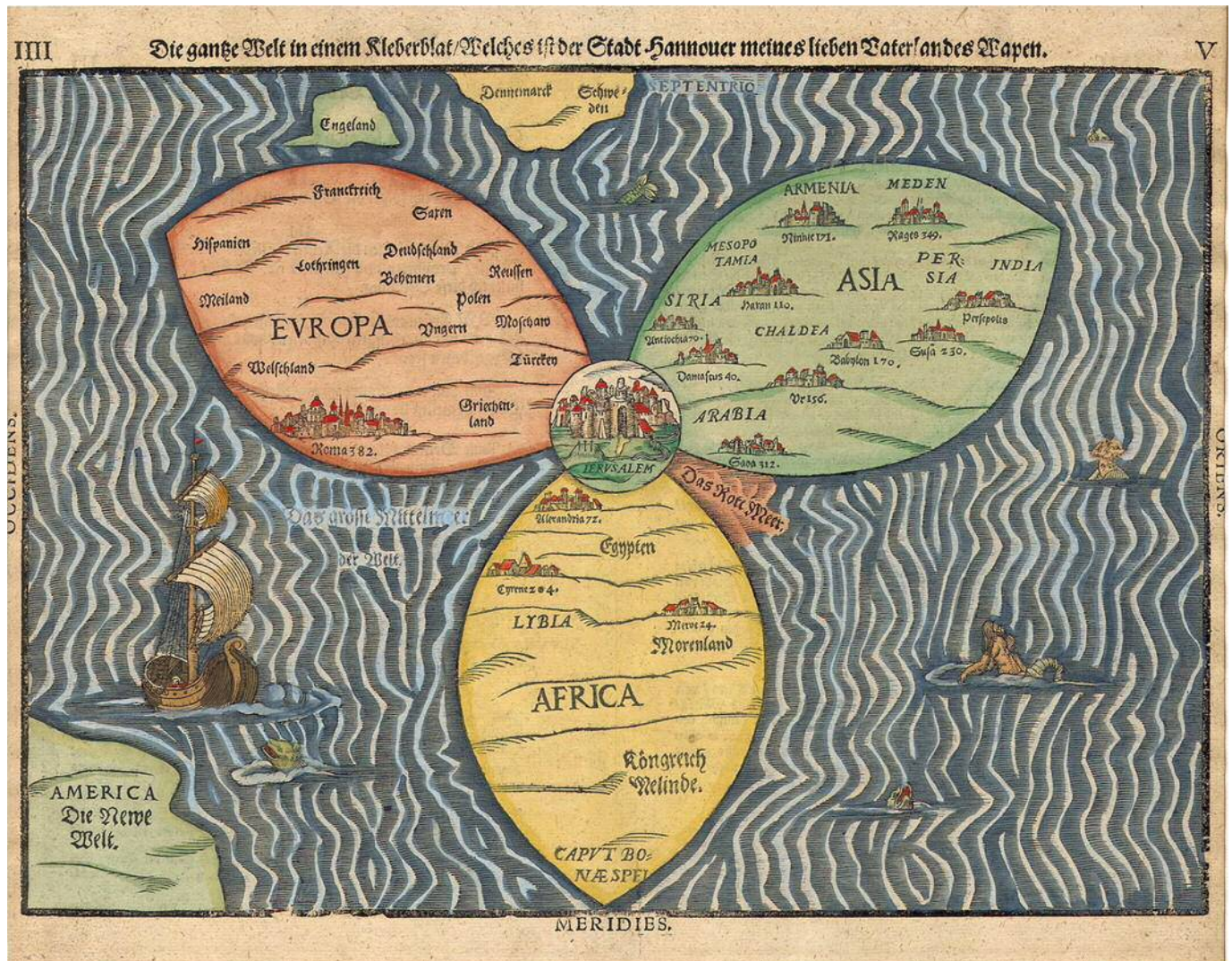
Jewish Awareness Affinity Group

Discussion of "Jerusalem, Center of the World"

Friday, January 20, 7:00 p.m., Brooks Room

Come to the January monthly meeting and discuss the PBS documentary "Jerusalem, Center of The World." If you can't find this in your local library or elsewhere, contact Dana. We may be having a showing in one of our homes sometime before the meeting.

Each month, this affinity group gathers to share some bread, wine, and conversation. All are welcome. For more information, contact Dana Snyder-Grant, dana.snydergrant@gmail.com or 978-760-1129.



Editor's Notes

Next *Meeting House News* **Deadline: January 17, 2017**

Next Publication Date: **January 25, 2017**

You (and your committee) are asked to submit one time or early and only send FINAL form. You are strongly encouraged to read and comply with the [guidelines on the First Parish website](#). Remember to send your submission as an *attachment*. The file format should be a Microsoft Word DOCX file format, but formats RTF and TXT are also accepted. All other file formats should be changed using "File > Save As." Check for a confirmation email from the Editor that your submission was received. If you submit regularly, request a template to edit, reducing work for you and the Editor.

Publicity Options at First Parish

FP Announce is a weekly email of current topics. *The Sunday News* is a weekly insert in the Sunday service program. The *Meeting House News* is a monthly newsletter. Please contact the appropriate Editor below per the deadline timetable for inclusion of your FINAL form submission

- Sarah Burns, sburns@firstparish.org, Editor for *FP Announce* and *The Sunday News*
- Wendy Wolfberg, Wolfberg@post.harvard.edu, Editor for the *Meeting House News*.

FP Announce Deadline: Noon Friday for the following week

Sunday News Deadline: Noon Wednesday before Sunday service

Meeting House News Deadline: Noon Tuesday, see below or recent newsletter

Meeting House Newsletter:

Month	Deadline	Publication
February	Tuesday, January 17, 2017	Tuesday, January 25, 2017
March	Tuesday, February 14, 2017	Tuesday, February 22, 2017
April	Tuesday, March 14, 2017	Tuesday, March 22, 2017
May	Tuesday, April 18, 2017	Tuesday, April 26, 2017
June*	Tuesday, May 16, 2017	Tuesday, May 24, 2017

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

FP General Information

Office Hours

September 6 through June

Regular office hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday. The office is closed on Mondays.

Continued next page.

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

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

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>

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

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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