

# *What's Happening at First Parish?*

# MEETING HOUSE NEWS

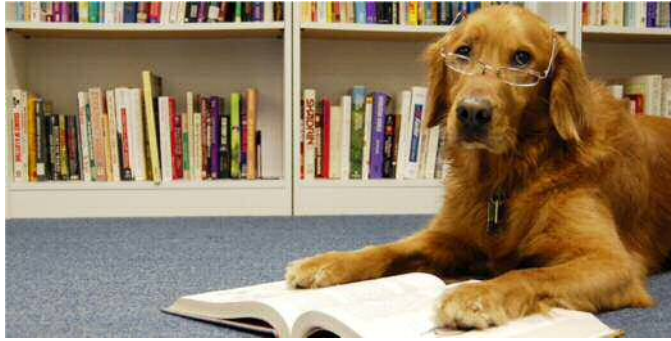
## APRIL 2017



*Beneath the frozen ground is a bounty waiting to spring forth. Spring's coming!! First Parish Herb Garden. Photo by Dian Pekin.*

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*Chilly weather? Snuggle up with a friend and share a good book. Spring is around the corner. Photo, Google images.*

### **Honoring the 200th anniversary of his birth, some spring quotes**

by Henry David Thoreau

“Spring—an experience in  
immortality.”

“Spring. March fans it, April  
christens it, and May puts on its  
jacket and trousers.”

### ***Meeting House News, May***

**Deadline: April 18**

**Publication: April 26**

**Please 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 (ex. EASTER).

### Worship-at-a-Glance

#### **Sunday, April 2 – “The Divine Trickster”**

Rev. Marion Visel

First Parish Choir

#### **Sunday, April 9 – Palm Sunday**

Rev. Howard N. Dana

First Parish Choir

#### **Thursday, April 13 – Maundy Thursday**

*Service at 11:00 a.m.*

Followed by a fish chowder luncheon.

Rev. Howard N. Dana

#### **Friday, April 14 – Good Friday**

*Service at 7:00 p.m.*

Rev. Howard N. Dana

#### **Sunday, April 16 – Easter Sunday**

Rev. Howard N. Dana

First Parish Choir and Brass

***Services at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.***

#### **Sunday, April 23 – Earth Day: Celebration and Despair**

Jan Hutslar, Ministerial Intern

Lincoln Ringers

#### **Sunday, April 30 – Huckleberry Hunting with Thoreau**

Rev. Amy Freedman

First Parish Choir

#### **Sunday, May 7 –**

#### **Henry David Thoreau—200 Years After His Birth**

Rev. Howard N. Dana

Children's Choirs and Contemporary Vocal Ensembles

### First Parish Café

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



Read more about the Thoreau Celebration events on May 6 and 7, including the ***Historic Bell Commemoration*** and ***Thoreau Bicentennial Gala Celebration*** on [page 23](#) and on the detailed flyer at the end of this newsletter.



## Sunday Forums

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

Come enjoy these Forums and join our Forum Committee to help keep them coming. For more information, contact Pat Brinkman at [pabrinkman@comcast.net](mailto:pabrinkman@comcast.net) or 781-259-9639.

### March 26 – LGBT Asylum Task Force

Come hear from three asylum seekers, two from Uganda and one from Jamaica. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Asylum Task Force is a ministry of Hadwen Park Church. In nearly 80 countries, it is illegal to be gay, and those who are face persecution, imprisonment, and even death for their sexual orientation or gender identity. The LGBT Asylum Task Force helps them seek safety in the United States through the process of political asylum. See [www.lgbtasylum.org](http://www.lgbtasylum.org) for more.



### April 2 – The Invisible Crisis—Forced Migration



Speaker Patricia Montes is the Executive Director of Centro Presente. Come meet one of the women who fled to the United States with her children. Watch a short documentary of women migrants fleeing violence, abuse, and social instability. They come here to survive and to save their children. Yet upon arrival, they again see their human rights abused by a system that fails to recognize their plight and humanity. Until now, their stories have been invisible. Join the conversation. See [www.cpresente.org](http://www.cpresente.org) for more.

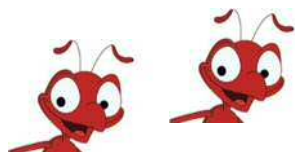
### April 9 – Living the Seventh Principle: Activism to Protect the Planet

Speaker Hilary Clark's activism led her to the Healing Walk in Alberta, Canada, two summers ago. There, she joined hundreds of people, many from First Nations, protesting the extraction of oil from the tar sands and the far-reaching effects of this process on people and wildlife dependent on the Athabasca River. Hilary has organized multiple rallies on topics related to Climate Change and has led groups to climate rallies in D.C. and New York. Hilary grew up in Concord as the daughter of First Parish member Debbie Clark.



### April 16 – No Forum

### April 23 – First Parish 2017-2018 Pledge Campaign Update



*Continued next page.*

## April 30 – Is Walden Pond OK?

The interaction of phosphorus and dissolved oxygen is the root cause of the toxic algae blooms such as have occurred on White Pond in Concord.



Speaker Jack Nevison's talk will illustrate the level of current similar threats to the well-being of Walden Pond, as well as discussing possible actions to ameliorate this potentially serious problem. For a baseline date, in 2001 the U.S. Geological Survey released a comprehensive survey of the chemistry of Walden Pond for the years 1995-1999.

## MUUsings

As I write, there is a blizzard howling outside my window. It seems that winter isn't done with us yet! It's hard to believe that April, spring, and my return from sabbatical are only a few weeks away.

I have had a wonderful sabbatical. It has been a restful and deeply creative time for me. I've had a chance to do many things that fall down the priority list during "ordinary time." What luxury to open a full cupboard or a drawer and think, as I often do, "I should really sort through this sometime." And then to realize that "sometime" is "now"! If I had nothing else to show for this time, it would still feel like a great accomplishment to see that the drawers, cupboards, and bookshelves in my house are more spacious than they used to be. Curiously, as those spaces appeared, more space opened in me for spiritual and creative endeavors.



Some of you will ask what have I done during my sabbatical. There are so many answers. I have rested. I have skied and hiked and walked for as long as I like. I have taken a Qigong class. I have sung and played the violin and spent luxurious hours composing and revising music. I have spent treasured time with my family. I have worshipped at several other churches. I have attended an overwhelming and inspiring convention of the American Choral Directors Association in Minneapolis. I have lost track of what day it is. I have read as little email as possible. It has been delicious.

I will be ready to return on April 1. The tug in my heart at the thought of First Parish increases as March progresses. I'm curious to know what's been going on. I've been catching up on sermon podcasts. I've been thinking about the music we will make together.

I have missed you. But I have had a wonderful three months. Thank you for this gift of time. See you April 1.

Blessings, Beth

Beth Norton, Director of Music

Contact: [music@firstparish.org](mailto:music@firstparish.org) or 978-369-9602

## Messiah Sing

**Easter Sunday, April 16, both 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. services. Note service times.**



Dust off those *Messiah* scores. Easter is coming! Singers from the congregation are invited to come to the choir loft during the final hymn on Easter Sunday and join the choir, organ, and brass in our traditional Easter postlude, G. F. Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus." If you have a copy of the *Messiah*, you are welcome to bring it with you. If not, there will be some extra music available and choir members are always willing to share.

We will sing at the end of both the 9:00 and 11:00 o'clock services.

Even if you don't wish to make the climb (or take the elevator) to the balcony, feel free to join in this joyous chorus on Easter morning.

## Religious Education News

### RE Classes

#### *Kindergarten, Grades 2, 3, and 4*

##### **Explorations with Thoreau**

Our Spring theme "Explorations with Thoreau" is under way. The year 2017 marks the 200th anniversary of Henry David Thoreau's birth. Organizations throughout Concord—and around the world—will be hosting events to commemorate the occasion. Inspired by our spiritual ancestor, we will spend time outdoors—journaling, walking, connecting with nature, and reflecting on our place in it.

Goals of "Explorations with Thoreau" are to:

- Celebrate our spiritual ancestor.
- Explore and connect with the wonders of nature.
- Live simply.
- Act with principle.

#### *Adolescents and Grades 1 and 5*

##### **Comprehensive Sexuality Education**

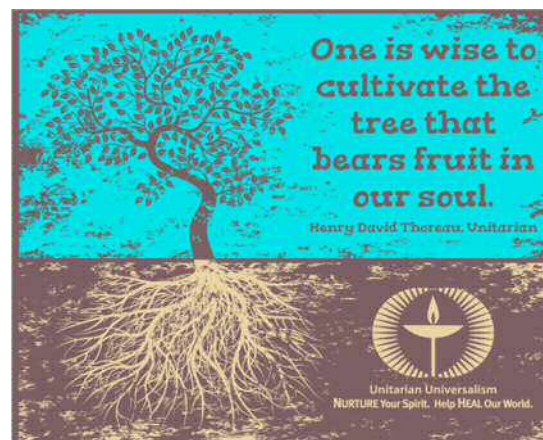
**Sundays, 10:15-11:15 a.m.**

This year, we are pleased to offer comprehensive sexuality education not only to adolescents but also to Grades 1 and 5. This program is being offered for eight Sundays during regular Religious Education time.

#### *Grade 6*

##### **PRO-test Art**

Our Neighboring Activists are creating "PRO-test art" and will host a pop-up gallery at First Parish this month.



*Designed by Jessica Ferguson*

*Continued next page.*

## Grade 7 and 8

### Neighboring Faiths and OWL Continues



If you have any questions about our Children's Program, please contact me: [afreedman@firstparish.org](mailto:afreedman@firstparish.org).

Blessed Be, Amy  
Rev. Amy Freedman  
Minister of Religious Education  
[afreedman@firstparish.org](mailto:afreedman@firstparish.org)

## COA Service Highlights

### Coming up: Youth Sunday, May 21

What Are Your Highest Values? What Is Your Personal Philosophy of Life? Kindness. Friendship. Family. Intuition. Courage. These were some of the topics addressed in the credos presented by the participants in this year's Coming of Age class on March 12.

During a service chock-full of uplifting music, heartfelt reflection, and an overall spirit of celebration, the Coming of Age (COA) youth delivered many nuggets of wisdom, hammered into shimmering prose during their credo-writing efforts of the past few months. Their credos (see excerpts on page 27) were the product not just of this year's workshops and field trips, but of all the spiritual lessons and life experiences that they have absorbed during their passage through childhood—here at First Parish, in their family lives, and in the world beyond.



*2017 COA Participants, left to right: Georgie Svrcek, Claudia Caliandro, Lucy Jiménez, Peter Nelson, Annie Jiménez, Ava Moore (missing: Daisy Boynton).*

Perhaps the clocks' springing forward tricked you into oversleeping, and you didn't make it to COA Sunday this year. While you did miss out on a great service, you might be able to catch the voices of some of these same COA youth later this spring when they will have the opportunity to join the rest of the First Parish Youth Group in reviving the annual tradition of an entirely youth-led service. We all have something to teach each other, across all ages. And, as one of our COA spiritual seekers pointed out:

*Continued next page.*







## Come to Cook

**Friday, May 12, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., First Parish kitchen**



As a part of our shared Pastoral Care outreach, the Caring Connection of First Parish provides delicious meals for parishioners during times of transition. We are going to cook and you're invited to help. No experience or skills are necessary. Recipes and provisions are provided. Breakfast snacks will be served!

Please RSVP to Judy Dembsey at [dembsey@verizon.net](mailto:dembsey@verizon.net) or 978-263-3272 (email preferred).

## Shawl Ministry Needs a New Leader

The Shawl Ministry's able leader for many years, Regina Hugendubler, will be moving to Texas by June. The Caring Connection needs a new leader to keep this group going, providing the shawls that the minister or lay ministers take to parishioners having difficult times.

The group meets on the second Tuesday of the month from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at First Parish. The leader schedules the room for the meetings, sees that needed supplies are available, and that shawls are photographed. If you are interested in leading this important part of Pastoral Care, contact Judy at [Dembsey@verizon.net](mailto:Dembsey@verizon.net) or 978-263-3272 (email preferred).



## The Holden Fund

**Applications and extension requests reviewed in May**



The Holden Fund was established at First Parish in 1901 when Ellen Emerson contributed \$3,500 in honor of Nancy Holden for "daughters taking care of mothers in straitened circumstances." Those original instructions have been interpreted more liberally since then to support residents of Concord who require care to continue to live in their own homes. Monthly stipends of varying amounts, based upon need, are awarded to help support caregivers (family members or paid professionals).

The Trustees of First Parish have shepherded the fund for over one hundred years. They continue to manage the fund, but as of July 1, 2015, the Holden Fund Panel, part of our Pastoral Care program, handles the administration. The panel has broadened eligibility to include members of First Parish, *no matter the town in which they reside*.

The Holden Fund Panel reviews applications/extension requests twice a year, in May and October, and reviews emergency applications as needed. Eligibility criteria:

*Continued next page.*

- 1.) Financial support is needed to provide for care in the home, no age requirement.
- 2.) Applicant is a resident of Concord or member of First Parish in Concord.

For questions or to request an application, please contact Rev. Marion Visel, Minister for Pastoral Care, [mvisel@firstparish.org](mailto:mvisel@firstparish.org) or 978-369-9602, X414.

### *Holden Fund Panel*

Rev. Howard Dana, Susan Dobbie, Alice Van Deusen, and Rev. Marion Visel.

## Denominational Affairs Committee

### Regional Assembly

**Meet the candidates for UUA president**

**April 21-22, Woburn, Mass.**

**Registration deadline, April 10**

Celebrate our Unitarian Universalist faith through inspired worship, music, engaged learning, fun, and fellowship. Meet the 2017 UUA presidential candidates. Sing. Reflect. Feel. Make connections. Awaken your spirit! Experience a “mini – General Assembly (GA)” right here.



The Friday evening Candidates Forum is free of charge, but you must preregister. Saturday sessions include worship, singing, and workshops with outstanding UU leaders. Preregistration and fee required.

For more information, see [new-england.eventbrite.com](http://new-england.eventbrite.com) and contact Darien Smith ([darien@smithquest.com](mailto:darien@smithquest.com)) of the Denominational Affairs Committee.

## Operations

### Annual Pledge Campaign

**Campaign ends on April 2**



When the Fire of Commitment sets our mind and soul ablaze  
When our hunger and our passion meet to call us on our way.  
When we live with deep assurance of the flame that burns within  
Then our promise finds fulfillment and our future can begin!

*Jason Shelton*

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Our 2017-2018 Annual Pledge Campaign kicked off at Celebration Sunday, March 5. Thank you to everyone who has pledged! As of March 13, we had \$745,000 in pledges from 205 households. Your promise to the church will keep our fire of commitment going. Our goals this year are to:

- provide staff salary increases
- continue to increase our membership dues paid to the UUA
- increase our reserves for long-term building maintenance
- continue to prioritize funding of our RE and Social Action programs



If you have not yet pledged, please do so soon. First Parish needs your help, no matter what your level of participation. Your pledge makes a big difference! If you are able, please consider increasing your pledge by 5 percent or more over last year's amount. You are welcome to make your pledge online at [www.FirstParish.org](http://www.FirstParish.org) or by mail. Your promise is First Parish's future.

Fifi Ball

Director of Operations

[fball@firstparish.org](mailto:fball@firstparish.org), or the church office, 978-369-9602, x456

## Standing Committee News

**Next Meeting: Sunday, April 9, 6:00 p.m., Emerson Room**

**Leadership Workshop: Thursday, April 27, 6:00 p.m.**

**Emerson Room**

On March 12, the Standing Committee met in the Emerson Room to hear regular reports, as well as to discuss our evaluation practices and the upcoming Leadership Workshop.

In addition, some members arrived early to hold an informal discussion on additional topics, such as how to foster conversation between people with diverse political opinions. We welcome anyone interested to attend our next meeting.



## Leadership Affirmation

The Standing Committee's good practices in leadership include a check-in during the first year of a recommended two-year chair term. This check-in provides an opportunity for the chair or the committee to request a change in leadership and would trigger a reentry into a leadership selection process. At the March meeting, it was mutually decided that Kristin Haddad would remain as chair for a second year, through FY2018.

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## Annual Meeting

At its upcoming May 7 meeting, the warrant for this year's meeting will be approved by the Standing Committee. If you have any questions or ideas you would like to share about the Annual Meeting, warrant articles, etc., please contact Kristin Haddad.

## Leadership Workshop

Mark your calendars! With the support of the Standing Committee, Rev. Howard N. Dana will facilitate a leadership workshop on Thursday, April 27, at 6:00 p.m. in the Emerson Room. This will be a chance for committee chairs, as well as anyone throughout the congregation interested in leadership, to work together to grow their relationships and leadership skills.

## We Want to Hear from You!

Standing Committee members are always eager to talk with 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 on the [Standing Committee page](#) on the First Parish website.

Best Regards,  
Kristin Coffman Haddad, chair, Standing Committee  
[kristin.haddad@gmail.com](mailto:kristin.haddad@gmail.com) or 978-254-5012

## Adult Education

### "What Moves Us" - Hosea Ballou

**Monday, April 3, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m., Brooks Room**

Join us for the remaining session of this adult education class that combines theology, history, and personal reflection. Explore what moves you.

Transformation through direct personal experience is a major source of our Unitarian Universalist (UU) faith; yet we often stumble when trying to explain our UU theology to ourselves and to others. The "What Moves Us" program creates an adult faith journey for UU's who want to explore what they have already experienced but have not been able to articulate – the spiritual power of our faith. Participants will explore their own theology.



Ministerial Intern, Jan Hutslar, will facilitate this *UU Curriculum for Adults*. Each session focuses on a UU forbear, naming the change of heart that moved them to new theological understanding in their liberal religious faith. All are welcome!

For more information, visit "What Moves Us" on the UUA website, <http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/movesus>, or contact Jan Hutslar, [jhutslar@firstparish.org](mailto:jhutslar@firstparish.org).

## April History Hikes

With Rev. Howard N. Dana

This is a series of April walks in and around historic Unitarian and Universalist sites. No sign-up needed. Suitable for adults and children. Participants must be able to walk at a reasonable pace for 1 to 2 miles on flat ground. For each outing, we will carpool from First Parish in Concord at 9:30 a.m. All hikes will end by 2:00 p.m. for our return to Concord. If you wish to meet us at the hike, you are welcome to do so. All are welcome.



### *Fruitlands*

**Saturday, April 1**

Travel to the nineteenth century Unitarian utopian community just west of Concord. \$5 entrance fee required.

### *Boston Common*

**Saturday, April 8**

Walk to historically significant places near Boston Common, visiting churches and statues. Free.

### *Mount Auburn Cemetery*

**Saturday, April 15**

Visit the graves of many famous Unitarians and Universalists in this lovely Cambridge cemetery. Free.

### *Concord Center*

**Saturday, April 29**

A short walking tour of Concord Center will end with a visit to the Concord Museum. \$10 entrance fee required.

## 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](mailto: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.

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## Upcoming Events

Day	Date	Time	Event
Friday	March 31	7:30 p.m.	<i>Grub's Place</i> —A First Parish Musical
Saturday	April 1	7:30 p.m.	<i>Grub's Place</i> —A First Parish Musical
Wednesday	April 5	6:00 p.m.	Arts Council meeting (all welcome)
Friday	April 7	7:30 p.m.	<i>Grub's Place</i> —A First Parish Musical
Saturday	April 8	9:30 a.m.	Photography Club (open to all First Parish adults)
Saturday	April 8	7:30 p.m.	<i>Grub's Place</i> —A First Parish Musical
Sunday	April 9	10:30 a.m.	"Pop Up" Art Show
Sunday	April 23	5:00 p.m.	Oriana Consort—Endings and Beginnings, a vocal concert
Friday	April 28	7:30 p.m.	Rise Up Singing (monthly song circle)
Sunday	April 30	3:00 p.m.	Photo Club Annual Show—Opening and Reception
Sunday	May 7	7:00 p.m.	The Conchords Concert

For more information on these events, check this *Meeting House News*, FP Announce, and *The Sunday News*. For additional information, contact Rob Hamilton at [robh@netchromatics.com](mailto:robh@netchromatics.com).



### The Conchords Concert

**Sunday, May 7, 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary**  
**Reception will follow in the Parish Hall**

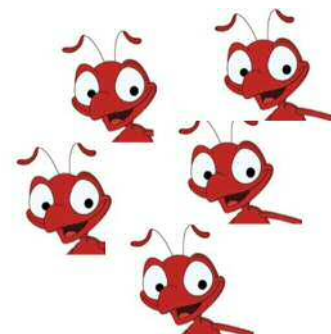
The Conchords, a six-member vocal ensemble comprised of current and former members of the First Parish Adult Choir, will perform selections from the Great American Songbook, music for the stage, and favorites of the Boomer generation. While most pieces will be performed a cappella,

the Adult Choir's accomplished rehearsal accompanist Grace Choi will accompany some selections. No tickets are required. A goodwill donation at the door will be gratefully accepted.

### *Grub's Place*—Musical Premier

**Friday, March 31, April 1, 7, and 8, at 7:30 p.m., Parish Hall**

The *Grub's Place* musical is about to premier. Starring Terry Rothermel as Grub and Simone Tricca as Mirabel, it is written and composed by Jane Blumberg, directed by Francene Amari, and produced by Claudia Nimar. It opens March 31.



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This delightful intergenerational musical set in an ant colony explores community life and is enlivened by a praying mantis, irreverent fireflies, and a past-her-prime reclusive spider. Turf battles, jealous hearts, and prejudice threaten the colony's survival. Musical numbers *Dear, Dear, Friend* and *Community Hymn* will be memorable.

Tickets (\$20.00 adults, \$10 students) can be purchased at coffee hour and the church office, at 978-369-9602, or online [www.mktix.com/fpuuc](http://www.mktix.com/fpuuc).

## **Oriana Choral Consort**

**Reception follows**

**Sunday, April 23, 5:00 - 8:00 p.m., Sanctuary**



Photo © Hendrik Broekman

The Oriana Consort presents "Endings and Beginnings: Choral Music as Remembrance," with music from centuries 16, 17, and 20.

- End-of-life works are Claudio Monteverdi's "Lagime d'amante" ("Tears of a lover"), selections from Herbert Howells' "Requiem," and Thomas Tomkins' "When David Heard."
- Beginnings are celebrated in Gerald Finzi's "My spirit sang all day" (love), Clément Janequin's "Le chant des oiseaux" (Spring), and the largest work, Aaron Copland's "In The Beginning" (Genesis).

Tickets are available at <http://www.orianaconsort.org> (Look for the "Buy Tickets" button).

## **Photography Club**

**Next meeting: Saturday, April 8, 9:30 a.m., Emerson Room**



We welcome new members 18 years and older of all skill levels; and meet on the second Saturday of each month, except in July and August, to share pictures and learn. We take field trips to locations near and far, and are planning a trip to Martha's Vineyard in the spring. We also have an Annual Photo Show at First Parish to display our work. We will have a table at coffee hour once a month. Stop by and we'll be happy to answer your questions, or email Susan Page, [srpage13@gmail.com](mailto:srpage13@gmail.com).

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### **Annual Show and Reception**

**Sunday, April 30, 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., Parish Hall**

The Photography Club's ever popular "Photo Booth" is back at this year's annual show, with another wonderful assortment of costume items available for your portraits. Images will be available online soon after the show.



Also for your enjoyment:

- **Stage Gallery** – members' framed work
- **Parlor** – slide show of ten of each member's photos
- **On the stage** – slide show of highlights from selected club field trips

The show is open to all. Bring your friends and family. An array of delicious foods and beverages will be served. Questions, call Kathleen Elcox at 978-318-1970.

## **Social Action Community**

### **Faith into Action—Board Update**

#### **SAC Coordinator**

The Screening Committee selected and interviewed four impressive candidates. Its assessments were provided to Howard, who will be conducting his own interviews of the top candidates. We hope to announce the finalist soon.



#### **Community Organizer**

The SAC Board met with Howard and UU Mass Action to review a draft contract for the scope of work for Community Organizer Evan Seitz to work with First Parish. We are convinced that Evan can help link us to the wider UU community and other social justice organizations, and have a greater impact than we could alone.

#### **SAC Grants**

Check our Web page, [firstparish.org/wp/justice/social-action/sac-grants](http://firstparish.org/wp/justice/social-action/sac-grants), for the final SAC grant awards for this season.

#### **Social Justice Funding Work Group**

More volunteers are needed to join a work group that will look at First Parish's social action giving. Building on feedback from our congregation and information about how other churches have funded their social justice initiatives, we will explore our options, including piloting share-the-plate collections and expanding our criteria for grant giving. The group will determine how best to get the \$10,000 accumulated grants reserves out into the world. A broad range of parishioners is desired. If you're interested in



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serving on this committee, please contact John Lowe at [john.moore.lowe@gmail.com](mailto:john.moore.lowe@gmail.com) or Wendy Holt at [wendyh@dmahealth.com](mailto:wendyh@dmahealth.com).

### More SAC Information

You can find the contact information for each Social Action Community committee member along with programs, grants, calendar, and newsletter on the [Social Justice Community](#) page on the First Parish website. Working with and for you to advance social justice.

### Amnesty International, Group 15

**Tuesday, April 18, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., Greeley Room**

We'll be finalizing arrangements for our April 30 fundraiser for the local nonprofit *Dignity in Asylum* (DIAS). Our ongoing actions include:

- Support for individuals who've been punished for peaceful human rights activities
- Massachusetts prison reform
- Abolition of death penalty
- Prevention of violence against women
- Advocate for the release from prison of two young Azerbaijanian student activists.



We welcome all to join us. For more information, contact Kathy Taylor at [Kly.taylor@gmail.com](mailto:Kly.taylor@gmail.com) or 781-718-7640.

### Climate Action March in D.C.

**Saturday, April 29**

**Buses leave Friday at 10:00 p.m., return expected by 4:00 to 5:00 a.m. Sunday**

This march will be a massive outcry for climate, justice, and jobs just 100 days into the Trump administration. It is sponsored by the First Parish Environmental Leadership Team, and organized nationally by a broad coalition of more than 300 labor, justice, and environmental groups. First Parish has leased two buses to transport local climate activists to Washington, D.C. Learn more at <https://peoplesclimate.org/>.

Cost is \$110 per person. After you register, you will be notified of specifics as they are firmed up. It's important to register now at <https://goo.gl/forms/5a89IMmEXd87UDF32>. For questions, contact Kate Crosby at [cfcrosby@gmail.com](mailto:cfcrosby@gmail.com).





## Partner Congregation News

**2018 Pilgrimage to Transylvania, Informational Meeting**  
**Sunday, April 30, 11:30 a.m., Emerson Room**



The Partner Congregation Committee (PCC) and Rev. Amy Freedman, Minister of Religious Education, are excited to announce that plans are moving forward for a 2018 multi-generational pilgrimage to our partner congregation in Székelykeresztúr.

We are exploring either April school vacation or the summer as possible travel dates, and will have specific information about dates, costs, activities, and itinerary at the meeting. This is open to all, individuals and families alike. Please plan to join us if you want to hear more about it.

If you are interested or have questions but are unable to attend, contact Lillian Anderson ([lillianand@comcast.net](mailto:lillianand@comcast.net)) or Rev. Amy Freedman ([afreedman@Firstparish.org](mailto:afreedman@Firstparish.org)).

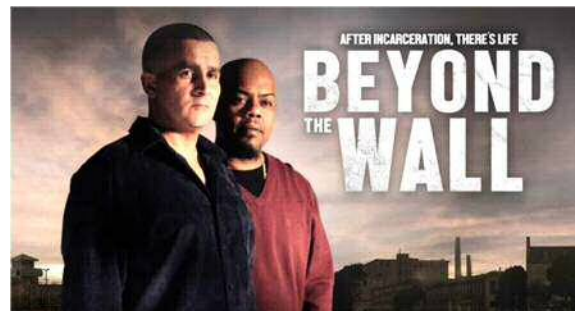
## Peace Campaign Alert

**Film—"Beyond the Wall"**

**Tuesday, May 2, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., Chapel**

Filmmaker Jenny Phillips screens her powerful new documentary, *Beyond the Wall*; discussion follows. 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.



For more information and to watch a synopsis/trailer, visit <https://beyondthewallfilm.com/>. Contact Pat Simon, [psimon4peace@gmail.com](mailto:psimon4peace@gmail.com) or 781-373-1410.



# Women's News

## Advocates for Women's Empowerment

**Next Meeting: Saturday, April 15, 8:00 a.m., Serendipity Cafe in Maynard**

Advocates for Women's Empowerment (AWE, formerly Reproductive Justice) shares the following news:

- Our LunaFest film festival in March was a huge success, raising \$2000 for the Breast Cancer Fund and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Women's Rights. Thanks to everyone who attended or volunteered, especially to Whitney Taylor, Political Director from the ACLU MA, and State Senator Jamie Eldridge.
- Save April 29 for the WPA "Women and Healthcare" event.
- Thank you for donating to our toiletry and feminine hygiene drive for Rosie's Place and Open Table. Our boxes overflowed!
- Thanks to the Social Action Council for the grant to enable First Parish to fund four meals at Rosie's Place. We will need volunteers to cook and serve, so stay tuned for dates.



### AWE Mailing List

To join the AWE mailing list, contact Lora Venesy, [venesy@comcast.net](mailto:venesy@comcast.net).

## Mother's Day Walk for Peace

**Sunday, May 14**



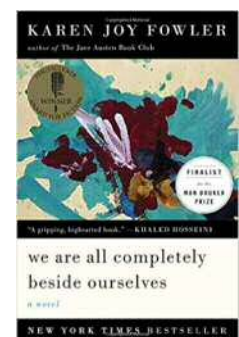
Come walk with thousands from Boston, and many UU congregations, for this major fundraiser for the Louis D Brown Peace Institute. Be part of First Parish of Concord's intergenerational march by walking in either Boston or Concord! Learn all about it during coffee hours. Come visit the Peace Walk table to make a donation and/or to sign up to participate in the Peace Walk. We'll have a table during coffee hours starting Sunday April 2. If you have questions, please call or email Margie at [margie.king.saphier@gmail.com](mailto:margie.king.saphier@gmail.com) or 781-424-2179.

## Women's AM/PM Book Group

**Tuesday, April 25, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m., Brooks Room**

**Monday, May 1, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m., Brooks Room**

For April, the Women's AM/PM Book Group will discuss *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves* by Karen Joy Fowler. 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](mailto:darien@smithquest.com).



## Dates and Books for 2017

Date	Book	Author
April 25 (a.m.) May 1 (p.m.)	<i>We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves</i> NOTE: The evening discussion is on a later date because the Concord Town Meeting is on April 24.	Karen Joy Fowler
May 22/23	<i>Spinster: Making a Life of One's Own</i>	Kate Bolick
June TBD	Annual Potluck and Book Choosing for 2017-2018	

## Women's Parish Association

### *World Day of Prayer Follow-Up*

This year's service, held on Friday, March 3, was a time of prayer and solidarity with those seeking social and economic justice. Written by the women of the Philippines, it was deeply moving, with firsthand stories, songs, responsive readings, and beautiful improvisational dance by the sacred dance group *Skyloom*.



A festive luncheon followed, celebrating the people, food, and artifacts of the Philippines, during which a lovely slide show helped us understand what it means to govern and bring children's literacy to a country of over 7600 islands. Next year, the service will be written by the women of Suriname.



Thank you to the WPA for hosting this important, deeply moving, and community-building service.





### ***WPA Craft and Flea Market***

**Saturday, June 4, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Parish Hall**



Have you started thinking about spring cleaning yet? Remember – the Women’s Parish Association will be holding its Craft and Flea Market in June, and will be collecting items to sell at its tables. So start collecting high-quality items to donate, such as jewelry, household items, gift items, children’s items, collectibles, antiques, and more. You may rent a table to

sell your treasures. To rent a table or to arrange for donations of high-quality gift items to the WPA table, contact Dian Pekin at [pekindc@comcast.net](mailto:pekindc@comcast.net).

### ***Women and Healthcare***

**AWE and WPA Panel Discussion**

**Saturday, April 29, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall**

Hold the date for a special panel discussion on women’s health and access to it. We will focus on what’s at stake and what we can do about it.

This timely and informative program and discussion is cosponsored by the Advocates for Women’s Empowerment (AWE), formerly Reproductive Justice, and the Women’s Parish Association (WPA).

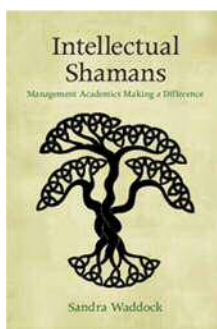


There is no charge and any donations will be gratefully accepted at the door. Stay tuned for details. Contact Lora Venesy with questions at [venesy@comcast.net](mailto:venesy@comcast.net).

## **Other Cool Stuff**

### ***Concord Area Humanists***

**Wednesday, April 5, 7:00 p.m., Emerson Room**



Sandra Waddock will present her book “Intellectual Shamans.” The talk will translate what seems like the esoteric work of the shaman into modern-day terms that we all can understand and work with. She will also draw on a yet unpublished manuscript (currently titled “Healing the World”).

Sandra is the Galligan Chair of Strategy, the Carroll School Scholar of Corporate Responsibility, and Professor of Management at Boston College’s Carroll School of Management.



For more information, contact Patrick Everett at [pne@aol.com](mailto:pne@aol.com) or 978-369-1589.

## Ferry Beach Retreat

**Friday to Monday, May 26-29**

**Registration from April 9 to April 23**

Join families, couples, and singles from our own congregation and First Parish in Lexington for a relaxed weekend on the beach at the UU Ferry Beach Camp and Conference Center in Saco, Maine, over Memorial Day weekend. Registrations will be taken during coffee hours or in the church office.



As of April 9, the Registration Packet can be downloaded from <http://firstparish.org/wp/news/forms/>. Also, check out the excellent summer camps and conferences for all ages at Ferry Beach at <http://www.ferrybeach.org/>. For questions or to inquire about scholarship assistance, contact Darien Smith ([darien@smithquest.com](mailto:darien@smithquest.com)).

## First Tuesday Group (65+)

**Moving On—An Overview of Housing Options for Seniors**

**Tuesday, April 4, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m., Parlor**

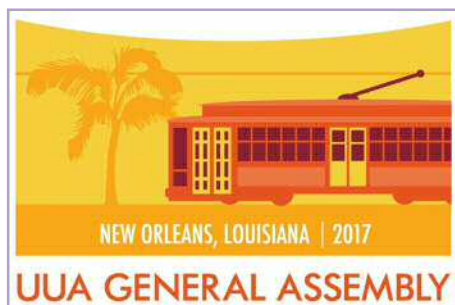


Members Linda Benua, Mary Clarke, and Nancy McJennett will present a summary of their research on housing choices in and near Concord, and describe a housing continuum that ranges from independent aging-in-place to fully-assisted living facilities. They will detail the many steps and innovative combinations of steps involved, with special attention paid to the financial arrangements for different choices. Come explore today's many housing options! Please come if you are interested.

While our heading says 65+, please come if you are interested, whatever your age. For more information, contact Virginia Taylor, [virginiarosstaylor@verizon.net](mailto:virginiarosstaylor@verizon.net) or 978-263-9777.

## General Assembly

**Wednesday through Sunday, June 21 – 25, New Orleans, Louisiana**



General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of the UUA, where attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the association through the democratic process. This year's GA theme, "Resist and Rejoice!," will awaken and deepen the commitment of Unitarian Universalists to the power and possibility of working in solidarity with those on the margins.

Registration and housing information are on the website <http://www.uua.org/ga>. If you are interested in attending or being a delegate, contact Lillian Anderson, member of the Denominational Affairs Committee, at [Lillianand@comcast.net](mailto:Lillianand@comcast.net).

## Passover Seder

**Saturday, April 22, 5:00 p.m., Parish Hall**

The Passover Seder is an ancient celebration of freedom. Rev. Amy Freedman, our Minister of Religious Education is leading our service. The Parish Hall becomes our family dining room. This Cooperative Seder is a fun and meaningful ritual for all ages—to eat, tell the Passover story, and reflect on our lives together. Whether you have a Jewish background or never attended a Seder before, you and your family are welcome.



Get tickets and sign up to help at coffee hours on Sundays April 2, 9, or 16. Suggested donation for dinner: \$20 for adults, free for those over 80 or under 7, and \$10 for those between 7 and 12. For more information, email Del Friedman, [gstodelfriedman@gmail.com](mailto:gstodelfriedman@gmail.com) or call Dana Snyder-Grant, 978-760-1129 (cell).

## Thoreau Bicentennial

### *Historic Bell Commemoration*

**Sunday, May 7, 11:00 a.m.**



Following the Sunday service, Rev. Howard N. Dana will commemorate the historic steeple bell hung in 1826 and rung by Henry David Thoreau on August 1, 1844, to announce Ralph Waldo Emerson's antislavery speech.

The bell was damaged in the fire that destroyed the Meeting House in 1900 and now occupies a place of honor on the church green. This event will celebrate the installation of a plaque giving the bell's place in First Parish history. The plaque is a gift of the

Women's Parish Association of First Parish in Concord.

### *Gala Celebration Lecture and Dinner*

**Saturday, May 6, 4:00-7:30 p.m.**

The Transcendentalism Council is sponsoring these events. We hope you will join us for some fun and informative sessions.

#### *Lecture by Jayne Gordon*

**"Walking, Working, Waking: What Was Thoreau Seeking?"**

**Lecture, 4:00 p.m., Sanctuary**

A lecture by historian Jayne Gordon is free and open to the public through a grant from Freedom's Way.

*Continued next page.*

## *Gala Celebration Lecture and Dinner (continued)*

### *Family Trivia and Dinner/Dessert*

**Following Jayne Gordon's lecture, Parish Hall  
Reservations required by May 1**

- **Trivia Night**, on Thoreau's life and work, with Richard Smith as Thoreau. Teams of four will compete for prizes.
- **Buffet Dinner and Dessert**, advance registration is required by May 1. Please contact Shelley Hawks, [Shelley\\_Hawks@msn.com](mailto:Shelley_Hawks@msn.com), or call the church office at 978-369-9602. Cash or check accepted at the door: \$20/adult; \$10 for ages 20 and under; maximum \$50/family. BYO beverage. Water and cider provided.

## **Editor's Notes**

Next *Meeting House News*: **Deadline: April 18, 2017**

Next Publication Date: **April 26, 2017**

## **Submissions and Guidelines**

Please review the Editor's Notes in the January 2017 *MHN*. Detailed guidelines for submitting to *The Sunday News*, FP Announce weekly email, and/or the monthly *Meeting House News* can be downloaded from the website: <http://firstparish.org/wp/news/news-submission-guidelines/>.

MEETING HOUSE NEWS DEADLINES		
Month	Deadline (Tuesday)	Publication (Wednesday)
May	Noon, April 18, 2017	April 26, 2017
June*	Noon, May 16, 2017	May 24, 2017
September	Noon, August 15, 2017	August 23, 2017

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

***Love, Light, and Community***

***at First Parish***

***Happy April!***



*Where's Henry?*



## 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.

### Contact Us

**Address:** 20 Lexington Road, Concord, MA 01742

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

**Email:** [Contact@firstparish.org](mailto:Contact@firstparish.org); **Website:** [www.firstparish.org](http://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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*Add us to your address book*



# Thoreau Bicentennial Gala Celebration

**Saturday, May 6, 4:00-7:30 p.m.**

**First Parish in Concord, 20 Lexington Rd.  
Sanctuary and Parish Hall.**

- ☛ **“Walking, Working, Waking: What Was Thoreau Seeking?”**  
Lecture by historian Jayne Gordon at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.  
Free and open to the public, supported by a grant from  
Freedom’s Way National Heritage Area, Hidden Treasures 2017.
- ☛ **Trivia Night and Buffet Dinner in the Parish Hall following  
the lecture.**

Family Trivia Night on topics related to Thoreau’s life and work. Hosted by historical interpreter **Richard Smith**, as Henry David Thoreau. Before dinner, intergenerational teams of 4 will compete for Thoreau-related prizes.

Buffet Dinner by Comella’s Restaurant. Dessert by Boo’s Creations. (Open to all ages and primarily for members and friends of First Parish. Interested parties are welcome to register and attend as space allows.)

**Advance registration (by May 1) and admission required for Trivia and Dinner.** Cash or check payment at the door after lecture. \$20 per adult; \$10 for age 20 and under; maximum \$50 per family. Bring your own beverage. Water/cider provided.

Sponsored by the Transcendentalism Council of First Parish in Concord. For information and to make a reservation, contact Shelley\_Hawks@msn.com or call the First Parish office at (978) 369-9602.



## **Historic Bell Commemoration**

**Sunday, May 7,  
11:00 a.m.**

Following the Sunday service on May 7th, Rev. Howard Dana will commemorate the historic steeple bell, hung in 1826 and rung by Henry David Thoreau on August 1, 1844 to announce Ralph Waldo Emerson’s antislavery speech.

The bell was damaged in the fire that destroyed the meetinghouse in 1900, and now occupies a place of honor on the church green. This event will celebrate the installation of a plaque telling the bell’s place in First Parish history. The plaque is a gift of the Women’s Parish Association of First Parish in Concord.



Thoreau Birthday Party illustration © Donna Marie Przybojewski, used by permission. 19th-Century bell in photo cast by the Holbrook foundry in Medway, MA, which also made First Parish’s 1826 bell.

# COA Service Credo Excerpts

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*The following excerpts are from the credos presented by the participants in this year's Coming of Age class on March 12.*



2017 COA Participants, left to right: Georgie Svrcek, Claudia Caliandro, Lucy Jiménez, Peter Nelson, Annie Jiménez, Ava Moore (missing: Daisy Boynton).

“Spirituality is, almost by definition, intangible. So, when I try to explain who I am, I worry that by neglecting to include one of my character traits or values, I betray myself and those who wish to understand me. To be honest, I’d rather be a mystery than be completely misunderstood.”

“My brain doesn’t believe that God is real, but some other part of me hopes God is. Although I don’t believe in a single God governing our planet and beyond, sometimes I find myself praying to one . . . So, as I sat in the middle of Walden Woods, I prayed for a miracle: that...my whole credo would just appear in my journal . . . A miracle never came to me in the woods, but a set of values [did]: working hard; learning from mistakes; appreciating your privileges; and making the most out of things you are stuck with, like sitting on an uncomfortable pile of leaves and branches for three hours.”

“When I was growing up . . . I wanted to follow a religion [like my classmates did]. But I did not know how. I didn’t even understand my own religion. I felt lost not knowing . . . hat I should believe in. But after watching my older sister’s and brother’s Coming of Age ceremonies, I got a sense of what it really means to be Unitarian Universalist. So, after thinking for years and searching, I have finally found my beliefs.”

“But these rights come with responsibilities too.

- As someone who deserves to be loved, everyone has the responsibility to put aside differences and love others.

*Continued next page.*



- As someone who deserves to have someone to talk to, everyone has the responsibility to be a person that someone can talk to if they need it.
- As a person with the right to their own feelings and opinions, everyone has the responsibility to listen to the feelings and opinions of others, even if they happen to disagree.
- As someone who deserves to be consoled and have someone there for them, everyone has the responsibility to console those in need and be there for someone as needed.”

“I believe that kindness is the key of the world.”

“My family is a constant source of support for me and is there for me no matter what. Almost every night, we sit down to dinner together . . . Knowing that I have this ritual to look forward to every night helps me get through days where I might be feeling badly about how I did on a test or how I played in a game . . . I know that as I get older, what I believe in might change and grow. But at this point in my life, what keeps me a happy and grounded individual is the support, love and encouragement which I receive from my friends and family.”

“I believe in the power of friendship.”

“I believe in being good, and having good relationships with others, and that those two things can make the world better for everyone . . . The most important relationships I have are with my family . . . I also have my congregation here at church, my soccer team, and my friends. All of these families help me be a good person, and remind me when I’m not . . .”

“It’s possible some higher power guides us in our decisions, making us feel good when we do good, and bad when we don’t. And I’m happy to be part of a congregation that is also trying to do good. Maybe my many families are the higher power that makes me do good.”

“I don’t think religion can help [us] answer all the questions [we have], but I do think worshipping together with other people asking the same questions is important.”

“These five simple words: “Have courage, and be kind.”

