

What's Happening at First Parish?

MEETING HOUSE NEWS

MAY 2017



Photo by Kathleen Elcox

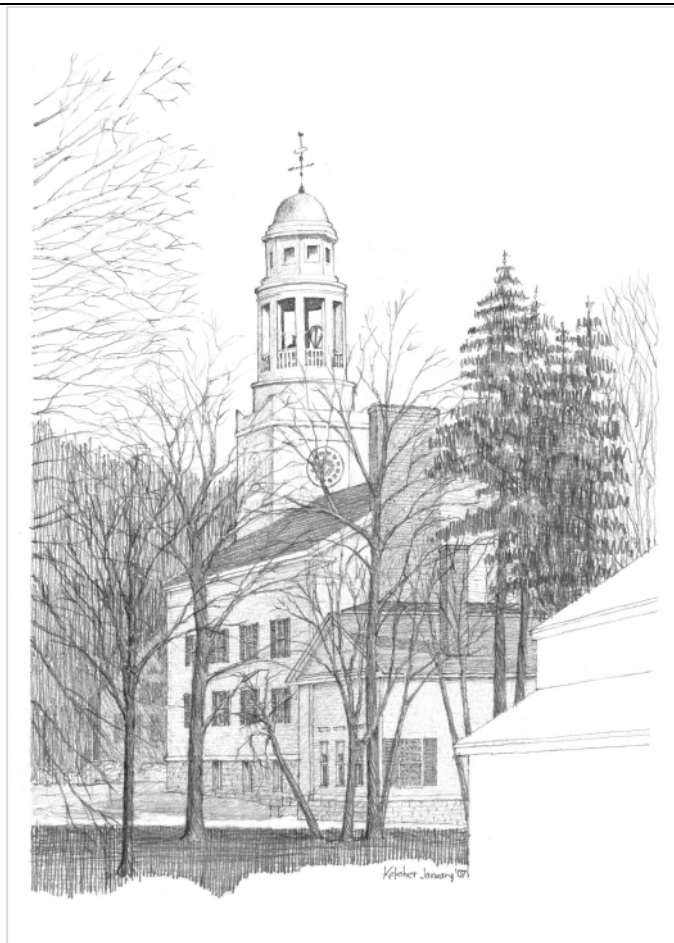
Next Meeting House News – June
June will be the final MHN until September.

COMMITTEES—Please plan ahead for a submission review and see [Editor's Notes](#) for details. Thank you.

Deadline: May 16
Publication: May 24

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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, May 7 – “Henry David Thoreau Skips Church, Again”

Rev. Howard N. Dana

Contemporary Vocal Ensemble and Children’s Choirs; Gail Carey, director

Sunday, May 14 – “Huckleberry Picking with Thoreau”

Rev. Amy Freedman, Minister of Religious Education

First Parish Choir

Sunday, May 21 – “Beulah Land”

Rev. Howard N. Dana and Zachary Roe, Social Action Coordinator

First Parish Gospel Singers; Anderson Manuel, director

Sunday, May 28 – “Staying Sisters, Staying Friends”

Jan Hutslar, Ministerial Intern

Beth Norton, vocalist

Sunday, June 4 – TBD

Rev. Howard N. Dana

First Parish Choir

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. Café will be closed over the summer.

Come Celebrate Jan Hutslar

Sunday, June 18, Special Coffee Hour

Save the date! Our wonderful ministerial intern, Jan Hutslar, will be leading worship on June 18, her last day with us. The Intern Committee invites everyone to enjoy a special coffee hour to celebrate Jan’s year with First Parish, and to wish her well as she continues her journey to ministry. For more information, contact Kate Keleher at kate@rkeleher.com.



Sunday Forums

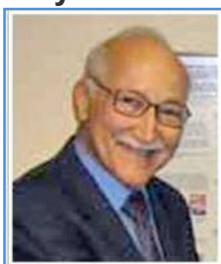
After worship, promptly at 11:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., in the Sanctuary

April 30 – “From Syria to Carlisle—A Syrian refugee family’s journey”

Sean Kavanagh and Donna Vaillancourt and the Alloh Family will share their experiences, the challenges they are facing, and their hopes for the future. Five years ago, the Allohs fled Syria with their five children only to spend four years in a refugee camp before coming to the United States. This Forum will help put a human face on the subject of Islamic refugees. In the end, they are just a family trying to make their way in the world, just like all of us.



May 7 – “Health Care in the Time of Trump”—Phil Villers



What does health care look like in the time of Trump? What are the consequences for the American people? What is happening now that the Republicans have failed to “abolish Obamacare”? What can we each do to limit the damage and help in the plan to rebuild? Come hear someone who has been working on health care reform since 1982. Phil and his wife Katherine founded the *Families USA Foundation*, and he currently serves as president. The foundation’s major focus is on achieving universal access to high quality, affordable health and long-term care for

all Americans.

May 14 – “Report Back from the People’s Climate March”—Peter Lowitt

The Environmental Leadership Team and participants from the April 29 People’s Climate March in D.C. will report back to the community on the march and their thoughts and impressions. Come see the photos from the march and hear suggestions on what you can do to protect our planet going forward.



May 21 – “Reforesting the Amazon”—Robin and Eric Van Loon

In 2006, Robin Van Loon founded Camino Verde, a U.S.-based nonprofit organization. Camino Verde’s work is focused in the Tambopata river basin in Madre de Dios, Peru. The nearby Tambopata Reserve is an important protected area that has been recognized as a biodiversity Hot Spot and is considered by some to be the most biodiverse place on Earth. Sadly, the region’s forests and rivers face increasing pressures from migratory agriculture, irresponsible lumber extraction, and reckless gold mining.



Come hear about the work being done. Robin is the founder and Executive Director of Camino Verde, and has been based in the Tambopata region of the Peruvian Amazon since 2004. A longtime student of traditional and indigenous agricultural and medicinal practices, Robin’s work has focused on developing community-based reforestation strategies to preserve important endangered plants of the Amazon. He is a writer, regenerative designer, and consultant in agroforestry, reforestation, and sustainable development.

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May 28 – Memorial Day—No Forum

If you enjoy these Forums, please consider joining the Forum Committee to help keep them coming. For more information, contact Pat Brinkman at pabrinkman@comcast.net or 781-259-9639.

Religious Education News

May Day at the Manse

**Field Trip: Sunday, May 7, from 10:15 to 11:30 a.m.; Rain Date: May 21
At the Old Manse, 269 Monument Street, Concord
Permission Form Required**

As a part of our Spring theme, “Explorations with Thoreau,” there will be a field trip during regular religious education time May 7. Following the Children’s Message, Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 who are not in OWL will walk together to the Old Manse, a 15-minute walk. We will hear stories about Henry David Thoreau and his friends at this special place. Then we will explore and play games. A snack of apples, Tostitos, and water will be provided.



Please return permission forms to Amy at church or by mail, or scan and email to afreedman@firstparish.org.

Parent Discussion Circle

**“Parenting Children with Special Needs in Our First Parish Community”
Sunday, May 7, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Wright Tavern**

Parent Circles are an opportunity for parents to connect and share with one another in a meaningful way, and reflect on parenting from a Unitarian Universalist perspective. This circle is intended for parents of children with special needs—physical, emotional, and learning.

Rev. Amy Freedman will join us for spiritual guidance and support. Child care is available upon request. This program is free but registration is appreciated. Contact Rev. Amy Freedman, afreedman@firstparish.org or Leslie Pelton Nichol, lpelton@lpconsult.com.

Mother’s Day Coffee Hour

Sunday, May 14, 11:00 a.m., Parish Hall

In celebration of Mother’s Day, our children will be hosting coffee hour. Following the Children’s Message, all ages will gather in the Parish Hall to decorate, bake, and compose songs and poems about their mothers. During coffee hour, there will be an Open Mic for all ages to pay tribute to their moms.

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

Blessed be, Amy
Rev. Amy Freedman
Minister of Religious Education
afreedman@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

May Pastoral Care Lay Minister

Due to travel schedules, these lay ministers will be covering May:

- ♥ **May 1-7**, Sue Dobbie, Email: susandobbie@gmail.com, 978-501-6969
- ♥ **May 8-14**, Virginia Taylor, Email: virginiarosstaylor@verizon.net, 978-727-3619
- ♥ **May 15-21**, Sue Dobbie, Email: susandobbie@gmail.com, 978-501-6969
- ♥ **May 22-31**, Virginia Taylor, Email: virginiarosstaylor@verizon.net, 978-727-3619

Small Group Ministry Group Forming

Think Big, Act Small: a Small Group Ministry of Joyful Resistance

May 8 through June 5; Sign-Up by May 2



Unitarian Universalism invites us to commit to putting our values into action to resist hate, fear, and bigotry. Challenged by what we see in the wider world, we gather to remind ourselves of the values of our UU Principles and our First Parish benediction. Participants will share hopes, thoughts, and stories of how we may joyfully act in accord with our beliefs.

- **When:** From 7:00 to 8:45 p.m. on four Mondays—May 8, 15, 22, (skip Memorial Day), and June 5
- **Where:** Brooks Room
- **Participants:** Limited to 10, so be sure to sign up early
- **Facilitator:** Merrill Comeau

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- **Sign-Up:** By May 2 on the sign-up sheet in the church office, or contact Marion Visel, mvisel@firstparish.org or 203-931-5239 (cell). We need your name, email address, and phone number. Merrill will contact you before the first meeting.

Caregiver Support Group

Meets Alternate Monday Afternoons, 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 every other Monday afternoon, regularly. The group and facilitators will decide on a summer schedule by mid-May. To learn more about the group, contact facilitator, Rev. Marion Visel, mvisel@firstparish.org, or Diane Clapp, dianeclamclapp@gmail.com. If you are unable to attend meetings on Monday afternoon, please let either of them know of your interest.

Come to Cook—*Rescheduled*

Friday, June 16, 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! (NOTE: This session was postponed from May 12.)

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

Shawl Ministry Needs a New Leader

Meets the Second Tuesday of the month, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

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 during 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 Dembsey at Dembsey@verizon.net or 978-263-3272 (email preferred).

MUUsings



Since April 1, I've lost count of the number of times I've been asked "How does it feel to be back from sabbatical?" Sometimes it feels like I never left. Other times it feels like I was away a long, long time. I'm still discovering changes that were made while I was on sabbatical. It's amazing what happens at First Parish in only three months!

"Grub's Place" was my first post-sabbatical event at First Parish. What a way to return! For the first 20 minutes or so of the show, I had the experience of viewing First Parish through the eyes of a newcomer. Even though most of the cast members were well-known to me, I couldn't recognize them in their makeup! So for a while, I got to watch this wonderful expression of our community values and aspirations without knowing the individuals who were playing these engaging characters. And it was a compelling, moving, and inspiring expression of those community aspirations. What a beautiful, inviting intergenerational production. And what talent in this congregation!

Gradually, voices and gestures (and a glance at the program during intermission) revealed old friends—and some familiar youth who had changed as only youth can during a three-month period. I am so grateful to Jane Blumberg for her creative abilities, and to Francene Amari-Faulkner and Claudia Nimar for bringing Jane's vision to life. And to Gail Carey for pulling the musicians together with such grace and expertise. What a show!

I am deeply grateful to my colleagues, Eric Huenneke, Anderson Manuel and Gail Carey, for their continued professional leadership of our music ministry while I was on sabbatical. I know they each went beyond their regular job descriptions to keep it all going. And it went so smoothly.

And I give special thanks to Kenneth Griffith, who came in for three months to direct the First Parish Choir. Kenneth brought a unique artistic vision, great musical gifts, a love of church and new perspective to the choir, stretching their horizons musically and spiritually. Over and over I have heard almost the same phrase from choir members and parishioners: "We loved having Kenneth here. And we're glad to have you back." A perfect balance.



Thank you all for being the community that you are. It's good to be back.

Blessings, Beth

Beth Norton, Director of Music

Contact: music@firstparish.org or 978-369-9602



Standing Committee News

Next Meeting: Sunday, May 7, 6:00 p.m., Emerson Room
Annual Meeting, June 11



On April 9, the Standing Committee met in the Brooks Room to hear regular reports, to review our progress on our goals, and to hear the results of the recent stewardship survey. Next month, we will be discussing a preliminary budget for FY18 and approving the warrant for the Annual Meeting. We welcome anyone interested to attend our next meeting.

Nominating Committee Change

At the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the Standing Committee voted to reduce the membership of the Nominating Committee from 9 people to 7 people over the next two years. This change reflects the current responsibilities of the board, which are less than the responsibilities undertaken when the board was expanded to 9 people in 2000. To enact this change, as two members rotate off of the board, only one new committee member will be elected in each of the next two years.

Stewardship Survey

Treasurer Tom Wilson first shared results of the stewardship survey with the Standing Committee on April 9. Then he and the Finance Committee shared it with a larger audience at a Forum on April 23. There were 225 surveys collected, and the overall tone of the responses was one of optimism for our congregation. Thank you to the Finance Committee: Rudi Scheiber-Kurtz, Gib Metcalf, Fred Van Deusen, Patty Popov, and Tom Wilson for creating, collecting, and analyzing the Stewardship Survey.



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 on the website under [Connection → Committees → Standing Committee](#).

Best Regards,
Kristin Coffman Haddad, chair, Standing Committee
kristin.haddad@gmail.com or 978-254-5012

Operations

Where Your Pledge Dollars Go

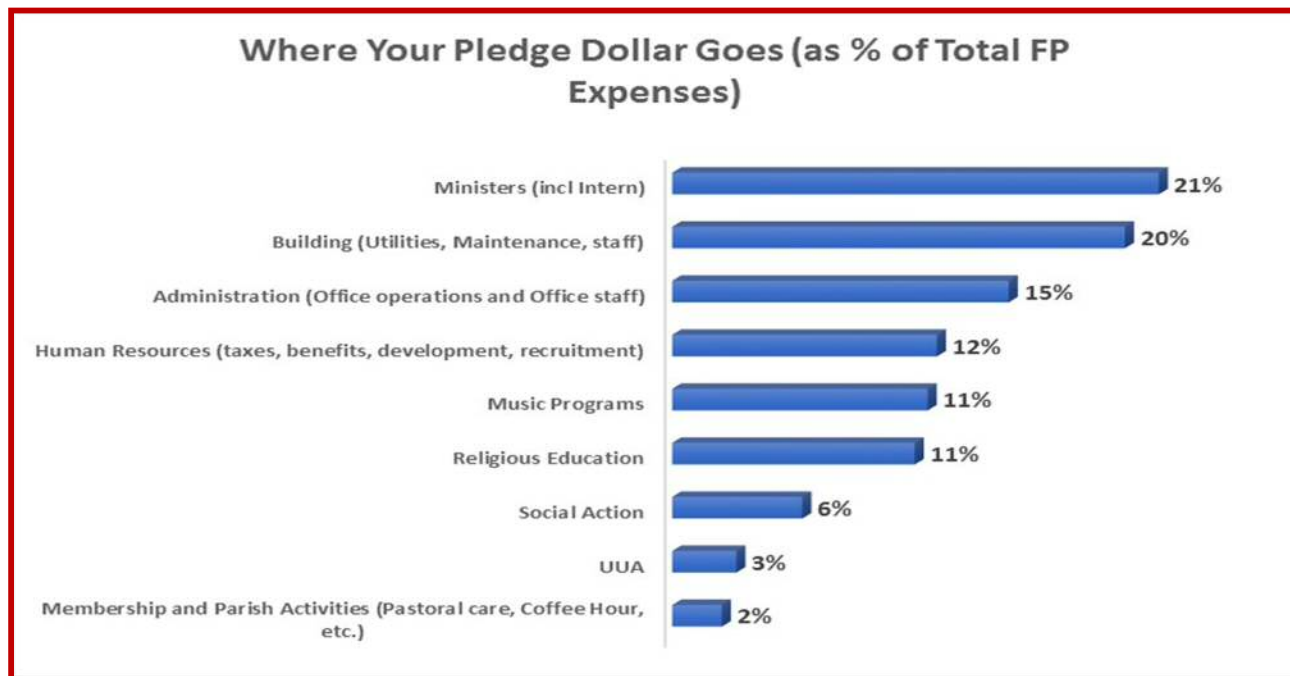
Compensation for the ministers and maintenance for the building (utilities, maintenance, sextons) constitute 41% of our pledge dollars (41 cents of every dollar you pledge). Running the office, and meeting our tax and benefit obligations, uses a total of 37% (37 cents of every dollar). The programs of services, including Religious Education, Music,



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and Social Action, together use 34% (34 cents of every dollar). The remaining 5% goes to the UUA and membership/Parish activities.

Here is a chart that shows where your money goes. However, the most important question is, Where do you receive the greatest value from being part of First Parish?



Annual Pledge Campaign Closes April 30 Deadline

In support of our FY2017/18 operating budget, the First Parish Annual Pledge Campaign draws to a close on April 30. By mid-April, we had received pledges from 369 families totaling \$946,066 (target: \$1 million).



We are grateful to all who have so generously pledged. We still need your help, however, to meet our target. If you have not yet pledged, we encourage you to step up and make a financial commitment that will help First Parish meet the goals that have been determined by our own membership, and continue the “Fire of Our Commitment” in our community and in the wider world.



Remember, you must pledge by April 30 in order for it to be counted toward our budget for the coming year. Please pledge now and be as generous as you can. Thank you.

The Annual Pledge Campaign Team

Fifi Ball, Director of Operations
fball@firstparish.org, or the church office, 978-369-9602, x456

Curator's Corner

In honor of the 200th anniversary of Thoreau and our "Black Lives Matter" banner, we begin this new history series on First Parish artifacts. Of all the lovely items and memories we start with a couch. What could possibly be so special about a couch?



In the Parlor is the Sanborn-U.U. couch. Donated and anonymously restored, it was originally owned by Frank Sanborn, schoolmaster of a private Concord school founded by John and Henry Thoreau and a member of the Free Soil Society, a political party that opposed the expansion of slavery.

In his home Sanborn hosted the fiery abolitionist zealot, John Brown (Harper's Ferry, anyone?) and introduced Brown to the Concord Abolitionists, who called Brown the spark that started the war that ended slavery—the Civil War. Thoreau and Emerson became strong supporters of Brown.

You can imagine the many lively discussions that took place in the Sanborn's living room among the Abolitionists who came to hear John Brown and were seated on the couch. Brown eventually left Concord with \$2000 from the "Secret Six" and headed for Harper's Ferry.



A full story of the couch is framed on the wall nearby. Come, have a seat with a friend on this historic couch and ponder the role of Concord in past and future events. If you listen deeply, you may still hear Brown, Sanborn, and the "Secret Six" discussing events.

Douglas Baker
Curator and Sexton
Contact: dbaker@firstparish.org or 978-369-9602

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.



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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
Sunday	April 30	3:00 p.m.	Photo Club Annual Show and Reception
Wednesday	May 3	6:00 p.m.	Arts Council meeting (all welcome)
Sunday	May 7	7:00 p.m.	Concert by The Conchords
Saturday	May 13	9:30 a.m.	Photography Club (open to all First Parish adults)
Friday	May 19	7:30 p.m.	Rise Up Singing (monthly folk song circle; open to all)
Sunday	May 21	7:00 p.m.	Sarasa Chamber Music Concert, "Russian Nights"

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.

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.



Photography Club

Next meeting: Saturday, May 13, 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

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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.

Social Action Community

Faith into Action

Greetings

Greetings, First Parish in Concord! I would like to start by saying what a privilege it is to be part of the FPC community. Over the last few weeks, I have had the opportunity to be in conversation with many in the Social Action Community, to share meals, to hear people's stories, and to begin to form a vision for the future of social action at FPC. As that vision becomes more concrete, there are several principles that should be guiding our thoughts on its creation. For this month's newsletter, I want to focus on the principle that I consider to be at the heart of all social action work: "relationality." In the context of social action at FPC, "relationality" includes both our interactions as allies to oppressed communities and our interactions with each other as part of a religious community.

As allies, we need to be listening to oppressed communities about their needs and how they would like us to give our support. It is important that we avoid falling into the narrative of the "white savior": coming with our own ideas about how to be an ally, thinking we have the answers to their problems, and seeking to "save" communities. We can avoid this by being in relationship with those we seek to help: not speaking for or at them, but allowing them to speak to us. By building these relationships across lines of race, religious tradition, sexual orientation, gender identity, citizenship, socioeconomic status, political ideology, etc., we open ourselves to the possibility of being transformed by these encounters. We can also put flesh and blood onto an issue so that we are not only working to change situations but are also working for the good of people we know, people with whom we are in relationship, people we have come to love.

In this discussion of "relationality," it is also vital to emphasize its importance within FPC. Social action is part of the core identity of both our own community and Unitarian Universalism. However, as we work to bring justice and build relationships outside our walls, we must not forget to do so within them. As a religious community, we must strive for personal and spiritual growth in relationship together. We are stronger and more effective when working as a whole for a common purpose.



In peace and hope,
Zach

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

SAC Committee

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, May 16, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., Greeley Room



Ongoing actions include supporting individuals who've been punished for peaceful human rights activities, Massachusetts prison reform, death penalty abolition, and women's rights, including health rights through Planned Parenthood. We are advocating for the release from prison of two young Azerbaijanian student activists. We are looking into the possibility of organizing a public screening this spring of the film "Tickling Giants."

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



Black Lives Pins and Signs

Black Lives pins and signs are now on sale during coffee hour. Signs are \$10.00 each or 3 for \$20.00. Pins are 50¢ each or 3 for \$1.00.



Boston Pride Parade

Saturday, June 10, 12:00 p.m., Boston



The Diversity Committee will take a group to march with our banner in the Boston Pride Parade on June 11. This is a multi-generational event; kids, youth, and adults are all welcome to help us show support for the LGBT community. Put the date on your calendar and plan to join us. For more information, contact Sara Ballard at sara@sb.org or 978-371-0723. Email preferred.

Partner Congregation Committee

2018 Pilgrimage to Transylvania

Informational Meeting

Sunday, April 30, 11:30 a.m., Emerson Room

The Partner Congregation Committee (PCC) and Rev. Amy Freedman are excited to announce plans for a 2018 multi-generational pilgrimage to our partner congregation in Székelykeresztú, Transylvania. We are exploring either April school vacation or the summer as possible travel times, and will have specific information about dates, costs,

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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 or Rev. Amy Freedman afreedman@firstparish.org.

High School Graduation

Transylvanian Unitarian School in Székelykeresztúr Acknowledgments due Sunday, May 7, by Noon

Rodger Matlage will be our partner congregation delegate to this year's high school graduation at the Berde Mózes Unitarian school in Székelykeresztúr. Cards and small, flat, lightweight gifts for scholarship students and for your friends in Keresztúr may be left in the Partnership box on top of the staff mailboxes in the church office by noon, Sunday, May 7. If you have any questions, please contact Rodger, rmatlage@mac.com or 781-259-9639.

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-against citizens.

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

Women's News

Advocates for Women's Empowerment

Next Meeting: Saturday, May 20, 8:00 a.m., Club Car Cafe in Concord

AWE – inspiring events and thank-you's:

- Would you like to cook and serve dinner at Rosie's Place in Boston on Sunday, June 18, 3:00-5:30 p.m.? We are looking for 15 volunteers (adults and teens 12 or older) to participate. Contact Suzie Weaver, skatesuzie@aol.com, 978-369-5352.

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- Thank you for generously donating to our toiletry drive for Rosie's Place. We collected close to 1,300 items!
- Wearing pink hats, AWE members and friends marched in the Patriots' Day parade in Concord with the "Reclaiming Our Democracy" group on April 17.
- Thanks to the volunteers and speakers who participated in an informative and stimulating panel on "Women and Healthcare," cosponsored with the Women's Parish Association on April 28.
- Mailing List: To join, contact Lora Venesy, venesy@comcast.net.



Mother's Day Walk for Peace

Sunday, May 14



Come walk with thousands from Boston and many UU congregations as part of this major fundraiser for the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute.. Be part of First Parish in 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 sign up to participate in the Peace Walk.

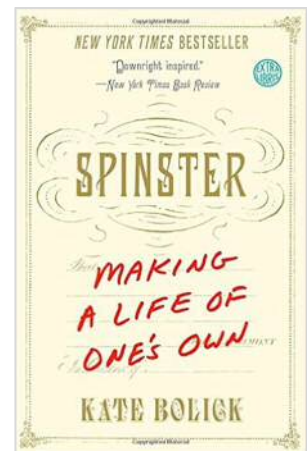
If you have questions, please call or email Margie King Saphier at margie.king.saphier@gmail.com or 781-424-2179.

Women's AM/PM Book Group

Monday, May 22, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m., Brooks Room

Tuesday, May 23, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m, Brooks Room

The last Women's AM/PM Book Group selection for this year is *Spinster: Making a Life of One's Own*, by Kate Bolick. 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
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

Craft Fair and Flea Market

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

While you're doing your spring cleaning, remember that the Women's Parish Association



will be holding its Craft Fair and Flea so start collecting high quality items to donate, such as jewelry, household items, gift items, children's items, collectibles, antiques, etc. While you're thinning out your gardens, consider donating plants as well. You may also want to rent a table yourself to sell your treasures.

To rent a table or to arrange for donations of high quality gift items to the WPA table or plants, contact Dian Pekin at pekindc@comcast.net. Don't miss this popular event. Bring friends and neighbors!

Luncheon Program

About Open Table

Wednesday, May 17, 11:30 a.m., Parish Hall and Parlor

Reservations Required by May 14

Open Table has been providing delicious meals, lovely gatherings, and groceries for its guests for 25 years, and the Women's Parish Association will be honoring its great accomplishments with a special luncheon and program. Come and learn about Open Table's great work and its future plans to further serve the Concord area communities with a newly purchased building and expanded offerings.



Open Table

*Caring for Families
& Creating Community*

Social time is followed by lunch and the program. Charge is \$15. Proceeds will be donated to Open Table. To reserve, contact the church office, 978-369-9602, or Dian Pekin, pekindc@comcast.net.

Other Cool Stuff

First Tuesday Group (65+)

"Conscious Aging: An Introductory Workshop"

Tuesday, May 2, from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m., Parlor

Annie Gray will lead a workshop with discussion and exercises on living consciously, embracing the journey of aging, and exploring important themes that emerge as we age. Gray has led a highly acclaimed, eight-session version of this workshop through Concord-Carlisle Adult and Community Education. Come participate in the stimulating discussion and exercises that explore the potential of life's later chapters.

Continued next page.

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

First Tuesday Group Follow-Up

In April, the First Tuesday Group explored a daunting topic—whether to downsize and, if so, when and where? Panel members Mary Clarke, Nancy McJennett, Linda Benua, and Mary Johnson presented an overview of continuous care retirement communities, assisted living facilities, over-55 communities, and aging in place with help as needed from local agencies.



General advice included the following. Start with the Council on Aging. Visit several facilities. Ask about affordable units, and when you find a place you like, add your name to the waiting list before you really need it. Copies of a resource guide are available in the Pastoral Care Library. Many thanks to our wonderful panelists and participants.

General Assembly

“Resist and Rejoice!”

June 21 – 25, New Orleans, Louisiana

Sunday Service Broadcast at First Parish, June 25

First Parish has eight delegate positions, and since this year we will elect the next President of the UUA, it is important to vote. You can also be a delegate and not attend or attend remotely. Registration fees, which are paid for by First Parish, increase after May 1. The sermon at the Service of the Living Tradition will be broadcast at First Parish during our Sunday worship, June 25.



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, landerson@uubelmont.org.



Jewish Jokes and Humor

Friday, May 19, 7:00-9:00 p.m., Brooks Room

Steph Chiha will lead the Jewish Awareness group in an evening of Jewish humor. Bring your favorite Jewish jokes or comic sketches to share with all. We'll share challah, wine, blessings, conversation, and laughs.

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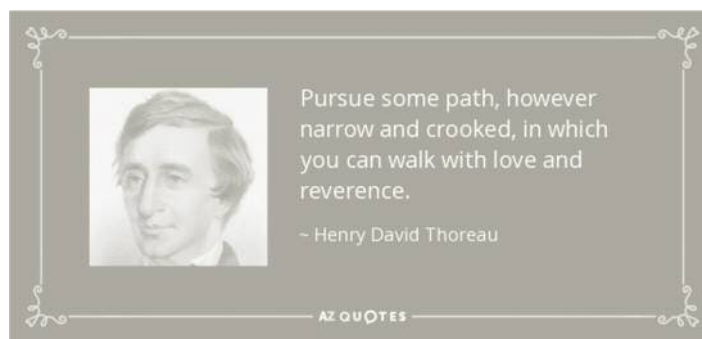
Each month, this affinity group gathers to share some bread, wine, and conversation. All are welcome. For more information, contact Dana Snyder-Grant, 978-760-1129.

Reverence for Life Cooking Class

Smoothies Cooking Class

Tuesday, May 9, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., Emerson Room

Smoothies give you energy! Learn how to make your own almond milk, plus four recipes that taste like dessert but are amazingly nutritious (nuts in recipes)! The class is free. Registration required. Contact Jeannie at Jeanniegen@yahoo.com. Hope to see you! Sponsored by Reverence for Life and Vegan Metro West Network.



Thoreau Bicentennial

Historic Bell Commemoration

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



Following the Sunday service, Rev. Howard N. Dana will dedicate a marker for the historic steeple bell, giving the bell its place in First Parish history. It was hung in 1826 and damaged in the fire that destroyed the Meeting House in 1900. The bell now occupies a place of honor on the church green.

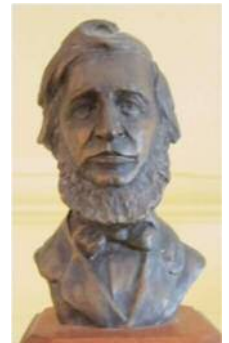
Thoreau rang this bell in 1844 to announce Ralph Waldo Emerson's courthouse address against slavery. The marker has been donated by the Women's Parish Association.

For information, contact Marilyn Lowitt, marilyn.lowitt@verizon.net. Free and open to the public.

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Gala Celebration Lecture and Dinner
Saturday, May 6, 4:00-7:30 p.m.
Open to all ages

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 National Heritage Area.

Family Trivia and Dinner/Dessert

Following Jayne Gordon’s lecture, 5:15 p.m., Parish Hall
Reservations Required by May 1

- **Trivia Night**, informal trivia on topics related to Thoreau’s life. You don’t need to be a history expert! Hosted by historian Richard Smith, as Henry David Thoreau. Water/cider provided.
- **Buffet Dinner and Dessert**: buffet by Comella’s, dessert by Boo’s Creations. Bring your own beverage. Water and cider provided.

Advance registration is required by May 1. Please contact Shelley Hawks, 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.

Website Wonder

Is Your Committee’s Content Up-to-Date?

While browsing the First Parish website for this newsletter section, I came across some outdated information. It got me wondering if you or a committee you serve on may have outdated information online. Just as you are responsible to make *and* cancel room reservations, please be sure that you let Stoney Ballard know when items can be removed from the website. Be sure someone on your committee is monitoring your content on the First Parish website.—The Editor

Double-Check

After you request something to be posted to the website, be sure to double-check that your information is displaying correctly on computer, cell phone, and tablet. Are all the dates there that you need? Start and end times? Room location? It takes a village and that’s certainly true keeping our wonderful website information up-to-date and accurate. Thank you!

Editor's Notes

Next *Meeting House News*: **Deadline: May 16, 2017**

Next Publication Date: **May 24, 2017**

*******NOTE: June is the last MHN until September.*******

Submissions and Guidelines

There is a new, simplified brochure that covers publicizing events at First Parish. Are you wondering when to use *The Sunday News*, FP Announce emails, and/or the *Meeting House News*? Please stop by the small table outside the church office for a copy.

The older, more detailed guidelines for submitting can be downloaded from the website: <http://firstparish.org/wp/news/news-submission-guidelines/>.

Meeting House Newsletter 2017-2018

Issue	Deadline	Publication
May	18-Apr-17	26-Apr-17
Jun*	16-May-17	24-May-17
Sep	15-Aug-17	23-Aug-17
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.



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

Love, Light, and Community
at First Parish
Happy May!



FP General Information

Office Hours

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

Summer Office Hours – 2017

June 20 through September 1

Flower Communion Sunday will be Sunday, June 18. That is the last official service of this church year. Summer office hours are Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (noon), Tuesday through Friday. The office, as usual, is closed on Mondays.

- Summer hours begin Tuesday, June 20, continuing through Friday, September 1.
- Regular hours will resume Tuesday, September 5.

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/>

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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