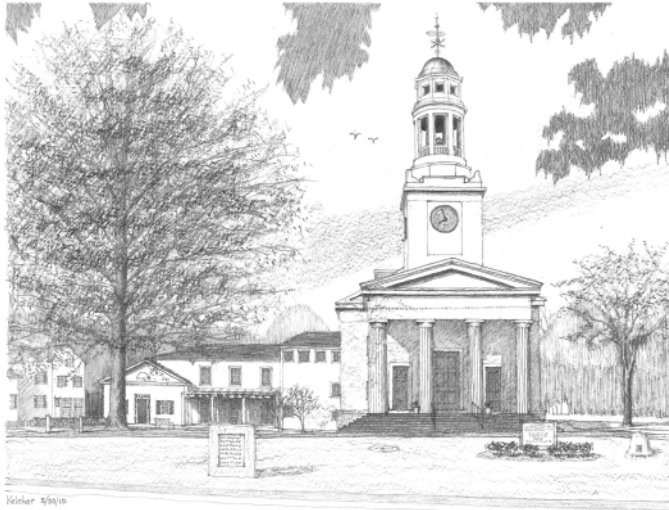




What's Happening at First Parish?

MEETING HOUSE NEWS

JANUARY 2018



Drawing by Kel Keleher.



IMPORTANT

***A Year for
Reflection and
Visioning***

A New Practice, Once Every Five Years

***Read more on Pages 4 and 12. Handout
at end of Newsletter.***

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Painting by Doug Baker; photo by Charles Lowell.

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PUBLICATION: JANUARY 24, 2018

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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 7 – “Threshold: A Place In Between”

Rev. Marion Visel

The Conchords, vocal ensemble

Sunday, January 14 – “Visiting the Whitney Plantation”

Rev. Howard N. Dana

First Parish Choir

Sunday, January 21 – “Seeing Whiteness”

Rev. Howard N. Dana

First Parish Choir

Sunday, January 28 – “Do When the Spirit Says Do”

Rev. Howard N. Dana

Sunday, February 7 – “TBA”

Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt, President, Starr King School for the Ministry

First Parish Choir

Sunday Forums

11:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

January 14 – Exile and Community: The Life of Carola Domar

A film on the life of a Holocaust survivor and longtime Concord resident Carola Domar. She escaped Nazi Germany in her teens and came to Concord, where she built a new life within the unique neighborhood of Conantum. In this documentary film, she and her daughter tell the story of her persistent search for community. Domar's story is all the more remarkable for the spirit of forgiveness with which she ultimately came to terms with her past and reconnected with her homeland. Her story of exile and community has particular relevance in the context of current mass migration. Film screening will be followed by discussion with film producer Susan Rieder and Carola's daughter, Alice.



The film, which runs 60 minutes, was produced and directed by Susan Orleans Rieder and sponsored by CCTV. It was partially funded by the Concord Cultural Council.

Continued next page.

January 28 – Is Walden Okay?

A 2001 U.S. Geological Survey collected and organized a huge amount of data about the chemistry of Walden Pond between the years 1995-1999 (inclusive). Among the data were details on the annual variation in two elements, phosphorous and dissolved oxygen. The interaction of these two elements is the root cause of modern toxic algae blooms, such as those that have occurred on White Pond.



This talk will demonstrate a simple dynamic model that ties together the data on these elements and illustrates the level of the current threats to the well-being of Walden Pond. The talk will also demonstrate that when the modern high levels of phosphorous are removed, the model reveals the probable pattern of the pond's function in earlier times. The surprising finding is that even in the late autumn of 1846, when Thoreau lived beside it, Walden Pond at its deepest points probably ran out of oxygen.

John M. (Jack) Nevison is president of New Leaf Project Management and lives within a half-mile of Walden Pond. He is the author of six books and numerous articles on computing and management. His first simulation model, about a watershed ecosystem, was published in 1974.

Save the Dates

- February 25, 2018—[Nagog Pond and Associated Issues](#)
- March 18, 2018—[Ranked Choice Voting](#)

To suggest a topic or speaker, join the Forum Committee; or to get emails about future Sunday Forums, contact the Forum Committee cochairs Pat Brinkman, pabrinkman@comcast.net; or Alan Whitney, awhitney@alum.mit.edu.

Thank you for your continued support.

Year for Reflection and Visioning **What's My Role?**

A New Practice, Once Every Five Years

Beginning in January, you will see a new banner in the Parish Hall as the Standing Committee launches a program to solicit ideas, thoughts, and opinions from the wider congregation. We plan to do this kind of all-congregation effort once every five years so all members have a chance to contribute to decisions about where we are headed.



Continued next page.

Your input is essential—your feedback will guide future goals set for the Standing Committee, Senior Minister, and staff for the *next five years*.

What You Need to Do Is As Easy As 1 - 2 - 3

- 1. January 2018**—attend one of the following listening sessions scheduled throughout January, where we will reflect back and look forward.
 - Saturday, January 6, from 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and from 4:30-6 p.m.
 - Sunday, January 7, from 12:00-1:30 p.m.
 - Wednesday, January 10, from 9:30-11:00 a.m.
 - Thursday, January 11, from 7:30-9:00 p.m.
 - Sunday, January 14, from 12:00-1:30 p.m.
 - Wednesday, January 17, from 6:30-7:30 p.m.
 - Sunday, January 21, from 4:30-6:00 p.m.
 - Tuesday, January 23, from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
 - Thursday, January 25, from 7:30-9:00 p.m.
- 2. February 2018**—complete a survey, based in part on what we hear in the listening sessions.
- 3. March 9-10, 2018**—join us for a congregation-wide retreat

Sign-ups are encouraged and will be available at a Standing Committee table at coffee hour.

Whom to Contact

Feel free to direct questions to any member of the Standing Committee.

Jeff Brainerd <jeffbrainerd@gmail.com>

Dave Elwood <daveelwood@hotmail.com>

Kristin Haddad, chair <kristin.haddad@gmail.com>

Peter Nobile, clerk <peter.nobile@gmail.com>

Toby Smith Ropeik <tobyasmith@gmail.com>

Michelle Fortier, treasurer

Kate Svrcek <katesvrcek@hotmail.com>

Lora Venesy <venesy@comcast.net>

Patty Popov <ppopov@nichols-pratt.com>

Tom Wilson <twilson@wilsongroup.com>

John Lowe <john.moore.lowe@gmail.com>

A handout on this important initiative is also available at the end of this newsletter. Please see the December *MHN* for additional background information.

Religious Exploration (RE) News

Neighboring Activists

Making a Difference

Our sixth graders spend the church year putting our values into action. In September and October, they made a banner, raised funds, and walked in the Concord Area CROP Walk Against Hunger. On All Souls Day, Rev. Gary Smith, our Minister Emeritus, led them on a walking tour of Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, where they honored our spiritual

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ancestors by laying roses on graves. Special thanks to Kate Svrcek, who offered a Treasure Hunt designed to uncover more First Parish history the following Sunday.



On a blustery November Sunday, our Neighboring Activists helped clean up the Hugh Cargill Community Garden. In early December, they sent holiday cards to our neighbors who are inmates at MCI-Concord. They decorated and delivered over 30 buckets of sand to Concord seniors as a part of the Concord Council on Aging's Bucket Brigade.

In the New Year, this group will select their own social action and service projects. We are proud of how our Neighboring Activists make a difference!



January Theme

What does it mean to be a people of Intention?

Day, Date, Time	Theme	Description
Sunday, January 7 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Setting Intentions	Religious Exploration
Sunday, January 14 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Peace	Multiage Program
Sunday, January 21 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Intention and Action	Religious Exploration
Sunday, January 28 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Intention and Mistakes	Religious Exploration

Questions

Discover more: <http://firstparish.org/wp/learning/re/>. If you have questions about our programs for children and youth, please contact

- Dawn Van Patten, Assistant Director of Religious Education: dvanpatten@firstparish.org, or
- Rev. Amy Freedman, Minister of Religious Education: afreedman@firstparish.org



Continued next page.

Three Kings Day

with Santuario Luterano

Sunday, January 7, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

6 Eddy Street in Waltham



Join Zach Roe and members of First Parish as we visit Santuario Luterano in Waltham for the celebration of Día de los Tres Reyes (Three Kings Day). Día de los Tres Reyes celebrates the arrival of the three kings from the biblical story of the nativity. There will be homemade Puerto Rican food, decorating of boxes for the youth, passing out gifts and sweets, and the Three Kings will be making an appearance as well! Santuario

Luterano is a Spanish-speaking Lutheran congregation led by Rev. Ángel Marrero, who is Zach's husband.

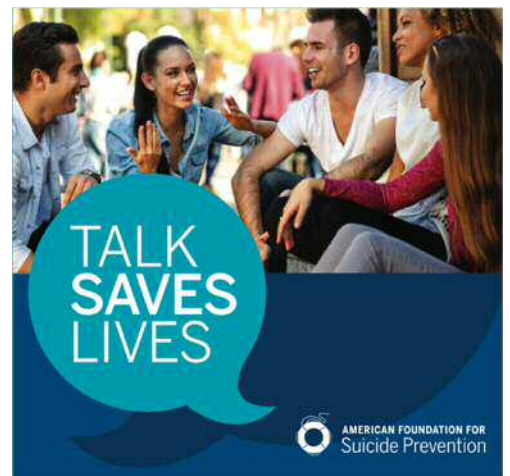
Space is limited, so please reserve a spot by RSVP-ing on the First Parish in Concord – Social Action Community page on Facebook (facebook.com/fpcsac), or contact Zach: zroe@firstparish.org

Talk Saves Lives

Tuesday, January 30, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m., Parish Hall

Talk Saves Lives is a community-based presentation that covers the general scope of suicide, the research on prevention, and what people can do to fight suicide. Attendees will learn the risk factors and warning signs of suicide and how together, we can help prevent it. This event is intended for parents and adults and is open to the public. Brought to us by funds raised by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's Eastern Massachusetts Chapter, afsp.org.

The event is free, but reservations are recommended on the First Parish in Concord Facebook page. Questions? Email Dawn: dvanpatten@firstparish.org



MUUsings

*Yonder come day, day is a breakin'
Sun is a risin' in my soul.*

These words, greeting the dawn of a new year, are sung on Watch Night, a New Year's Eve religious tradition in some African-American communities. This tradition may have roots in the fifteenth-century with the Moravian Church, in what is now the Czech Republic. For those ancient people of faith, Watch Night was a ritual of repentance and renewal, reminiscent of Rosh Hashanah in the Jewish tradition.



Eighteenth-century Moravian missionaries spread Watch Night to the Methodist church; and after a schism over racial discrimination, to the African Methodist Episcopal denomination, founded by freed slaves in Philadelphia. The tradition of Watch Night continued through the nineteenth-century in African-American communities, both free and enslaved. Among slave communities in the south, Watch Night had a particularly somber meaning: customarily, white property owners paid debts and redistributed property on January 1. For enslaved families, this presented the agonizing possibility of separation from spouses and children on the first day of the New Year.

However, the tone of Watch Night was transformed on the eve of January 1, 1863, when Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation went into effect. That evening, faithful people of African descent gathered to pray through the night between bondage and freedom. *Yonder Come Day*, a traditional spiritual of the enslaved was chanted while the congregation waited for day to break on the New Year and freedom. The chant has been preserved in what is thought to be an authentic version by the Gullah culture of the Georgia Sea Islands.

This January our choir will sing a favorite arrangement, based on this chant, by UU composer Clif Hardin. It is a delightful arrangement that bears little resemblance to the version preserved in the Georgia Sea Islands. Musicologists and composers, most of them white, have transcribed and transformed the song—bringing it to a wider audience, but also pulling it away from its roots. This is part of the “folk process,” but when seen through the lens of white supremacy, it gives me pause. What are the assumptions that we have made by changing this chant? How can we sing it and still honor its origin? These are the kinds of questions that arise when we start to see whiteness—complex layers that merit further discernment and discussion.

May the day that is breaking bring us better understanding.

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



Pastoral Care

Walking with One Another through the Changes Life Brings

Ministers

Minister for Pastoral Care, Rev. Marion Visel

Email: mvisel@firstparish.org

Church: 978-369-9602, ext. 414

Cell: 203-931-5239

Senior Minister, Rev. Howard N. Dana

Email: hdana@firstparish.org

Church: 978-369-9602, ext. 411

Cell: 717-412-8543

Minister in Residence, Rev. Jo VonRue

Email: jvonrue@firstparish.org

Church: 978-369-9602, ext. 412

Cell: 570-899-0457

January Pastoral Care Lay Minister, Sally Brandon Bemis

Email: sgbrandon@me.com

Cell: 978-505-0492



Call for SGM Facilitators

Small Group Ministry (SGM) Facilitators Needed for Winter/Spring Groups

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

Whether you are a trained facilitator or would like to be trained, be in touch with Marion Visel about starting a SGM this winter or spring. Facilitating a SGM requires commitment to a regular meeting schedule. A facilitator is responsible for helping manage group process while modeling caring covenantal relationship. Facilitators will be trained and supported by Marion Visel, Minister for Pastoral Care, and the SGM Steering Committee. Contact Marion at mvisel@firstparish.org or 203-931-5239.



Thank-You

Caring Connection Cooking Session

Many thanks to all who helped Friday, December 8. The refrigerator is now stocked with many tasty meals. Thanks to the

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efficient shoppers: Suzie Weaver, Joyce Biggs, and Holli Jones-White; and the amazing cooks: Leslie Fisher, Stephen Ruzich, Andrea and Linnea Hubbard-Nelson, Mike and Marie Talbot, Dean Aldrich, and Barry Copp. Thanks once again for the amazing job you did!

First Parish meals are available for those in the congregation who are going through a time of illness, injury, loss, or need. If you are in need of a meal, be in touch with Marion Visel, Minister for Pastoral Care, or one of our Pastoral Care Lay Ministers.



Vivienne Aldrich, First Parish Meals Cook Day-Coordinator

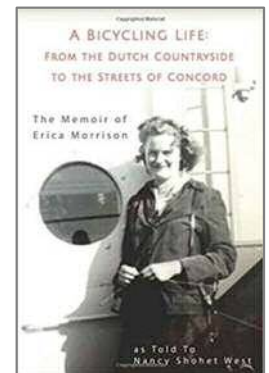
New Books

Here are short descriptions (thanks to Amazon) of two of the new books in the Pastoral Care Library. If you read them, we'd love to hear how you liked them. Email your opinion to Enid Boasberg at harpplayer@comcast.net.

A Bicycling Life

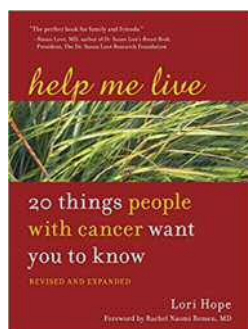
The Memoir of Erica Morrison

"Born into a family of Dutch aristocrats in 1925, Erica Morrison . . . encounter[ed] the severe challenges of . . . the German occupation and the Dutch Hunger Winter. But an inner core of resilience carried her through as she grew up to be a world traveler, outdoor adventurer, mother of five, and beloved community member in her adopted hometown of Concord, Massachusetts." (For more of the description, visit this link at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).)



Help Me Live

Revised: 20 Things People with Cancer Want You to Know



"Following her own treatment for cancer, Lori Hope created a survey for cancer survivors addressing issues they wanted their families, friends, and caregivers to understand.... If you are a caregiver, Help Me Live will help you communicate more effectively and respond more compassionately. And if you are a survivor, it will help you feel validated, empowered, and, ultimately, hopeful." (For more of the description, visit this link at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).)

Legacy Giving Program

Legacy Circle

Are you a member of the *First Parish Legacy Circle* and don't know it? When each of us assigns some portion of our estate to First



Parish, we are making a contribution to our beloved church that will last forever! If you have already done this, we thank you, and ask that you take one more step: please fill out the **Legacy Gift Form** and give it to Fifi Ball, our Director of Operations.

How to Get a Legacy Gift Form

For a form, contact Fifi or go to the First Parish website [Giving/Legacy Giving](#), and scroll down to the link to download a PDF of the form: "[Legacy Gift Form 6-9-17.](#)" Give the form to Fifi Ball and you will then become a member of the *First Parish Legacy Circle* and join other members of our community in this very important group. Thank you.

Tom Wilson, chair, Legacy Giving Committee, twilson@wilsongroup.com.

Standing Committee News

Next Meeting: Sunday, January 7, 6:00 p.m., Emerson Room



Meeting Summary

On December 10, the Standing Committee met in the Emerson Room. In addition to our regular business, we heard reports from the Jericho Road Project, and Beloved Conversations and Race Conversations. Next month, we will discuss Howard's request for sabbatical, update our sabbatical policy, and hear about the new direction of our Denominational Affairs Committee. Minutes from our meetings are regularly posted on the website [here](#).

Jericho Road Project Update

In August, JRP announced that they were shuttering operations and considering their options for the future. Over the past few months, many concerned people, primarily First Parish members, have discussed what the future of this 501c3 ought to be. Eric Van Loon and Halley McIlwain reported that JRP has decided to remain an independent nonprofit, with at least eight congregants agreeing to serve on the board. The focus of JRP will be to help bridge relationships between the members and friends of First Parish in Concord and the staff and volunteers at Lowell-area nonprofits. We are excited that this cooperation will provide another way to identify concrete actions for First Parishioners to "go out into the world."

Black Lives Matter Banner

At our meeting, Margie King Saphier and C.C. King reviewed the many activities of the Race Conversations Group over the past six months and outlined initiatives for this spring. We discussed the importance and timeliness of standing for racial justice. The Standing Committee unanimously voted to continue to hang the Black Lives Matter banner through Annual Meeting. However, it was also recognized that checking in every six months is a worthwhile exercise.



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The banner is a temporary structure and will eventually come down, hopefully for a good reason.

Year for Reflection and Visioning



Throughout the 2017-18 church year, First Parish will take time to reflect on the present and envision its future. This is the first in what will be a once-every-five-year reassessment of where our community is and where we want to go. In December, we conducted facilitator training for the congregational conversations occurring in January. Sign up for a conversation at coffee hour, or just come to one

(or more) of the scheduled sessions. The schedule is available at coffee hour and is posted on the website. Remember, this initiative will culminate in a congregational visioning summit the weekend of March 10. Please watch FP Announce, the Sunday News, and the website for more opportunities to shape our future together.



We Want to Hear from You!

Standing Committee members are always eager to talk with First Parishioners. On Sunday morning, before church, one of us can be found near the Parlor, greeting 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 First Parish website [here](#).

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

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.



Continued next page.

Upcoming Events

Day	Date	Time	Event
Wednesday	January 3	6:30 p.m.	Arts Council meeting (all welcome)
Friday	January 5	7:00 p.m.	AWE Movie Night "Made in Dagenham"
Saturday	January 13	9:30 a.m.	First Parish Photography Club (open to all First Parish adults)
Friday	January 19	7:00 p.m.	Jewish Awareness Group Film "Theodore Bikel: In the Shoes of Sholem Aleichem."
Friday	January 26	7:30 p.m.	Rise Up Singing!—a monthly open folk song circle

For more information on these events, check this *Meeting House News*, FP Announce, and the *Sunday News*.

Social Action Community

Faith into Action

News from Zach

Happy New Year, First Parish Community! I hope that in the hustle and bustle of the holiday season everyone has been able to find moments of rest and relaxation.

Three Kings Day

Sunday, January 7, Mass 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., Event 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.



We have the opportunity to connect and celebrate with Santuario Luterano in Waltham. Santuario is a Spanish-speaking congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ([ELCA](#)) that is led by my husband, Rev. Ángel Marrero. We will join them in their celebration of Three Kings Day (the arrival of the three kings at the manger in the biblical narrative). There will be homemade Puerto Rican

food, decoration of shoeboxes by the children (in which will be placed gifts and sweets), music, and even a visit from the Three Kings themselves!

The event will start around 6:00 p.m. and end around 8:00 p.m. (There will be a Mass in Spanish from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. that all are welcome to attend.) If you would like to attend, please RSVP by January 2. You can do so on Facebook [here](#), or you can contact me directly at zroe@firstparish.org. Hope to see many there!



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Use of Social Media Training

End of January

We will also be hosting Peter Bowden, husband of our Director of Religious Education, Amy Freedman, to train us on the effective use of social media for our social action groups. In our intersectionality conversations, we have discussed the need for using these platforms for reaching a wider audience and making our events better known to those in our First Parish and Concord communities. The date of this event is currently evolving, but it will be toward the end of January. If your group is interested in attending, please contact me directly.

Calendar of Events

Work is currently being done to create a calendar of events that includes the monthly activities of the individual SAC groups. While this is being created, information can be found by contacting the leaders of these groups that are listed on our website [here](#). Many groups have regular monthly meetings, one-time events, and more opportunities for you, no matter the amount of time and engagement one has available. There is a place for all! The leaders of the groups will be happy to let you know how to become involved.

So many great things are happening with social action here at First Parish in Concord!



Keep an eye out for more through FP Announce, *Sunday News* insert announcements, and our [Facebook page](#)!

Looking forward to a great and productive coming year!

In peace and hope,

Zach

Zachary Roe

Social Action Coordinator

zroe@firstparish.org, 978-369-9602, ext.450

Partner Congregation News

PCC Hosts Balázs Scholar

Saturday, January 6, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall

Refreshments at 7:00 p.m.; Program at 7:30 p.m.

This year's Balázs Scholar at Starr King School for the Ministry, Rev. Emese Bodor, a Unitarian minister from Cluj-Napoca/Kolozsvár, Romania, is coming to First Parish to discuss the Transylvanian Unitarians' perspectives on partnership and pilgrimages, as well as the current situation in Transylvania regarding the Hungarian Unitarian Church's statement defining marriage as only between a man and a woman. Representatives from neighboring partner congregations will join us. Please join Howard, Beth, Amy, and the PCC in welcoming our guest.



Race Conversations Group

"Beloved Conversations"

Beginning Friday and Saturday, February 2 and 3

First Parish members and friends will undertake a joint Beloved Conversations program with First Parish in Lexington to explore the invisible footprint of race and ethnicity, and interrupting racism today. The opening retreat will be led by trainers from Meadville Lombard Theological School. Thereafter, groups of 10 to 12 participants will meet for two hours every other week for eight sessions. The opening retreat is Friday evening, February 2, and all day Saturday, February 3, followed by eight small-group sessions.



Sponsored by the Race Conversations Group. Free. Limited seats available. Sign up at coffee hour or contact Lea Delacour, leadelacour@comcast.net.

Women's News

AWE Upcoming Events

Advocates for Women's Empowerment



Upcoming Events

- **Book Group:** Tuesday, January 2, 7:00 p.m.
- **Film Series:** Friday, January 5, 7:00 p.m., Chapel
- **Cook and Serve:** Sunday, February 11, from 3:00 to 5:30 p.m., Rosie's Place
- **Next Meeting:** Saturday, January 20, 8:00 a.m., Brooks Room
- **Save the date:** Fifth Annual LunaFest Fundraising film festival – later this spring

Mission Statement

We approved our mission statement at our November meeting: "Advocates for Women's Empowerment is a social action group dedicated to advancing women's rights and improving their lives through advocacy, direct action, and education." Our events help us achieve that mission!

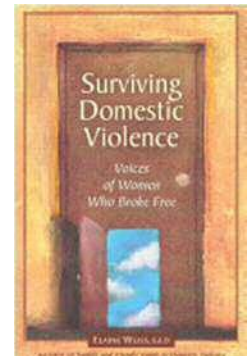
Film Series

We will show a free, feminist film, "Made in Dagenham," a dramatization of the 1968 strike at the Ford Dagenham car plant, where female workers walked out in protest against sexual discrimination. Contact: Lou Toussaint (mloutoussaint@gmail.com).

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Book Group

In January, we'll discuss "Surviving Domestic Violence: Voices of Women Who Broke Free," by Elaine Weiss. Our March book is "At the Broken Places: A Mother and Trans Son Pick up the Pieces," by Mary Collins and Donald Collins. Contact: Jen Izzo at jbizzo@hotmail.com.



Cook and Serve

There are still a few openings to volunteer at Rosie's Place. To volunteer for February, sign up with Suzie Weaver (skatesuzie@aol.com).

Monthly Meetings

Our meetings are the third Saturday of the month. Our meetings and events are open to women, men, and people of all gender identities and expressions who wish to advance women's rights and improve their lives.

Mailing List

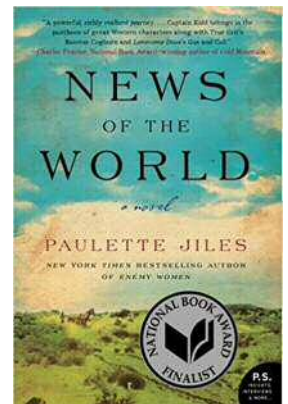
To join, contact Lora Venesy, venesy@comcast.net.

Women's AM/PM Book Group

Monday, January 29, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m., Brooks Room

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

Our first book in the New Year is *News of the World*, by Paulette Jiles. 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, contact Darien Smith at darien@smithquest.com.

Dates and Books for 2017-2018

Date	Book	Author
Jan. 29/30	<i>News of the World</i>	Paulette Jiles
Feb. 26/27	<i>Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right</i>	Arlie Russell Hochschild
March 26/27	<i>Commonwealth</i>	Ann Patchett
April 23/24	<i>America's First Daughter</i>	Stephanie Dray and Laura Kamoie
May 21/22	<i>Necessary Lies</i>	Diane Chamberlain

Women's Parish Association

Light in Winter—A Fun Event

Supper, Socializing, and Candle Decorating

Friday, January 12, 7:00 p.m.

Reservations by: January 9

The Women's Parish Association invites you to add light, beauty, and fun to your winter months! Join old and new friends for a delicious soup meal (prepared by our very own "Rev. Chef Howard N. Dana"), socializing, and decorating candles. Enjoy: Howard's brief demo of his soup creation; Richard Fortier playing his guitar throughout the evening; Barbara Forman giving an introductory talk about the history of lighting; and a candle decorating workshop with Merrill Comeau giving artistic advice.



No prior experience necessary. Hands-on advice and all necessary supplies will be available and you can bring your creations home. Cost: \$7.00 which includes food, beverages and supplies. For reservations, contact the office at 978-369-9602 or Dian Pekin at Pekindc@comcast.net.



Silent Auction for Thoreau Book

Bid at Coffee Hours through January 17

Author will match highest bid up to 5K

The WPA is holding a silent auction for a delightful illustrated book by Helen Stoddard, entitled *H.D. Thoreau, Scenario of His Early Life*. The bidding sheet will be available at coffee hours through January 17. Proceeds will be used for First

Parish maintenance. Helen will match the highest bid up to five thousand dollars.

Women's Retreats 2018

"Connections and Connecting"

Registration Deadline: January 7

Once again we will host three retreat offerings:

- ♥ **1st Weekend Away:** Friday evening to Sunday afternoon, January 19 - 21, at Senexet House, Connecticut
- ♥ **2nd Weekend Away:** Friday evening to Sunday afternoon, January 26 - 28, at Senexet House, Connecticut
- ♥ **"At Home" Retreat:** Friday evening, February 9, and Saturday morning through afternoon on February 10, at First Parish



Continued next page.

This year's retreats will focus on *Connections—with others, with your own deeper self, with nature, with and via technology, etc.* Banish all cares as we relax, have fun, rejuvenate, get to know each other, and explore what connections and connecting can mean to us. All women of First Parish are warmly invited and welcome!



Registration

Register by January 7. Late registrations will be accepted on a space available basis. Registration forms will again be available at coffee hour on January 7. Forms are available in the church office during the week and at <http://firstparish.org/forms>.

Questions

- ♥ **Retreats**—contact Bozena Smith at bozenasmith@mindspring.com or 978-371-1060.
- ♥ **Registration or Financial Assistance**—contact Darien Smith at darien@smithquest.com or 978-369-1471.

Other Cool Stuff

Amnesty International, Group 15

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



Save the Date

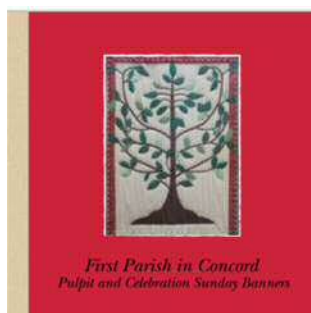
It's not too soon to put the evening of April 26 on your calendar(s). Sister Helen Prejean ("Dead Man Walking") is coming to town at our invitation, and our planning for the event begins tonight.

Also on our meeting agenda are updates on criminal justice reform in Massachusetts and our continuing advocacy for two students in Azerbaijan imprisoned for nonviolent political actions. We welcome all to join us.

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

Banner Photo Book

Visit Us at Coffee Hour



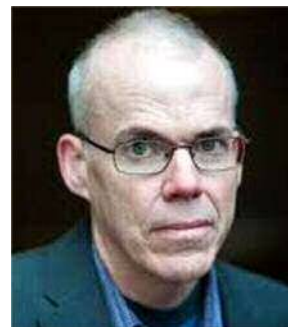
Excitement is brewing as the banner books are shown about. Do you have your copy? They're for sale at coffee hour through January. This archival book documents the pulpit and Celebration Sunday banners in photo and storybook form. Look for Barbara Wheeler at coffee hour for a view of the book and a chance to order one of your own. If you've ordered a book, stop by to pick up your copy. You can also reach Barbara Wheeler by phone or email, 978-369-9518 or barbw213@comcast.net.

Climate Solutions

An Evening with Bill McKibben

Thursday, January 18, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., Sanctuary

Come hear internationally known environmental activist, author, educator, and founder of 350.org Bill McKibben talk about his latest thinking on the best solutions to the climate crisis. Bill has, for many years, organized and coordinated powerful climate actions around the world.



This event is part of the First Parish Climate Solutions Speaker Series and is cosponsored by First Parish and seven other local organizations. Save the date now! For more information, contact Bob Andrews at andrewsrobert430@gmail.com or Berni Jenkins at bernijenkins2@gmail.com.

Concord Area Humanists

First Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall

January 10 – Ray Mount, Ph.D.

“Hiking the Appalachian Trail; six months in the inner world of a psychotherapist”

Ray was a psychologist for 30 years. His clients’ issues ranged across depression, anxiety, domestic abuse, and PTSD. Retiring last March, he set out to hike the Appalachian Trail, finishing in October. He will describe the many opportunities for self-discovery along the trail from breathtaking wilderness to encounters with snakes and bears, including both video and still photography.



February 7 – David Ropeik

“Cognitive Limits on Human Reason”

Humans claim superiority among species to reason and make choices. However, the brain is more an organ with which we “think” we think. David Ropeik, author and consultant on risk-perception psychology, will discuss research on human cognition that established that our “thinking” is a mix of thinking and feeling, all reasoning is “motivated,” and all perception ultimately subjective. David will cite his 2012 book, “How Risky Is It, Really? Why our fears don’t always match the facts” available for sale afterward.



Questions? Contact Pat Everett, pne@aol.com. All welcome.



First Tuesday Group (65+)

"The Subtle Art of Haiku"

Tuesday, January 9, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m., Parish Hall

Haiku Festival
Seniors writing poetry
Learn the ancient art!

(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.

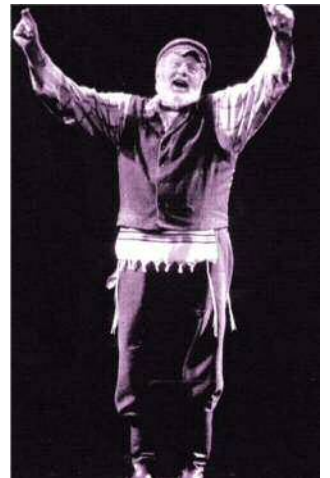
Jewish Awareness Affinity Group

Theodore Bikel: In the Shoes of Sholom Aleichem

Friday, January 19, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall and Parlor

The stories of two beloved Jewish icons are woven together in this enchanting documentary: Sholem Aleichem, the great Jewish storyteller of Shtetl life, and Theodore Bikel, troubadour, actor, and one of the most popular stage interpreters of Aleichem's work, including "Fiddler on the Roof." This 90-minute documentary, narrated by Alan Alda, is a joyous extravaganza of Jewish storytelling and song.

We'll share challah, wine, blessings, and conversation. All are welcome.
For more information, contact Dana Snyder-Grant at dana.snydergrant@gmail.com or 978-760-1129.



Editor's Notes

Next January *Meeting House News* deadline: **January 16, 2018**

Next Publication Date: **January 24, 2018**

Publicity Deadlines

- **FP Announce Deadline – Noon Friday** for the following week
 - **Sunday News Deadline – Noon Wednesday** before the Sunday service
- Please note that the order of service insert, or *Sunday News*, is compiled, formatted, printed, folded, and inserted on Fridays. As you can imagine, it takes time to pull this all together in an already busy office, and last minute submissions are problematic. Please plan ahead. Your insert copy **MUST** be received by Noon on Wednesday. Much appreciated. Thanks for your help.

Continued next page.

Communications at First Parish

To whom and by when do I send my submission?

Please pick up a copy of “Publicizing Events at First Parish in Concord” on the table outside the church office.

Steps for Publicizing a First Parish Event

1. Plan ahead; then add a “fudge factor”—extra time for committee review and for Editor’s questions. We need you to adhere to deadlines.
2. How much lead time does the Editor need? Which Editor?
 - a. **Weekly** email – FP Announce, send to Sarah Burns by Friday Noon
 - b. **Sunday** insert – *Sunday News*, send to Sarah by Wednesday Noon
 - c. **Monthly** – *Meeting House News (MHN)*, send to Wendy by the deadline noted in the first two pages of your last *MHN* or on [website under “News”](#)
3. Write draft, send for review, rewrite, and send to Editor before deadline.

Editor Information

FP Announce, *The Sunday News*


Sarah Burns, Office Administrator and Editor
978-369-9602
sburns@firstparish.org



Meeting House News (MHN)

Wendy Wolfberg, Editor
978-578-1077, cell
wolfberg@post.harvard.edu (email preferred)



We are glad to answer any questions. Please review deadlines and guidelines.
Thank you. 

Meeting House Newsletter Deadlines

Issue	Deadline	Publication
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.

Questions?

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

Continued next page.

General Information

First Parish General Information

Hours

Regular office hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday. A reminder that the office is closed on Mondays.

Contact Us

Address: 20 Lexington Road, Concord, MA 01742

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

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

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

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

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

FP Facebook: "Like" our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/First-Parish-in-Concord-Unitarian-Universalist/343822177494>.

First Parish in Concord, Massachusetts, is a welcoming congregation seeking ways to deepen spiritually, build community, and make a positive difference in the world.

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Add us to your address book.*



Year for Reflection and Visioning

What's My Role?

A New Practice, Once Every Five Years

Beginning in January, you will see a new banner in the Parish Hall as the Standing Committee launches a program to solicit ideas, thoughts, and opinions from the wider congregation. We plan to do this kind of all-congregation effort once every five years so all members have a chance to contribute to decisions about where we are headed.

Your input is essential—your feedback will guide future goals set for the Standing Committee, Senior Minister, and staff for the **next five years**.



What You Need to Do is As Easy As 1 - 2 - 3

- 1. January 2018**—attend one of the following listening sessions scheduled throughout January where we will reflect back and look forward
 - Saturday, January 6, from 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and from 4:30-6 p.m.
 - Sunday, January 7, from 12:00-1:30 p.m.
 - Wednesday, January 10, from 9:30-11:00 a.m.
 - Thursday, January 11, from 7:30-9:00 p.m.
 - Sunday, January 14, from 12:00-1:30 p.m.
 - Wednesday, January 17, from 6:30-7:30 p.m.
 - Sunday, January 21, from 4:30-6:00 p.m.
 - Tuesday, January 23, from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
 - Thursday, January 25, from 7:30-9:00 p.m.
- 2. February 2018**—complete a survey, based in part on what we hear in the listening sessions.
- 3. March 9-10, 2018**—join us for a congregation-wide retreat.

Sign-ups are encouraged and will be available at a Standing Committee table at coffee hour.

Whom to Contact

Feel free to direct questions to any member of the Standing Committee.

Jeff Brainerd <jeffbrainerd@gmail.com>

Dave Elwood <daveelwood@hotmail.com>

Kristin Haddad, chair <kristin.haddad@gmail.com>

Peter Nobile, clerk <peter.nobile@gmail.com>

Toby Smith Ropeik <tobyasmith@gmail.com>

Michelle Fortier, treasurer

Kate Svrcek <katesvrcek@hotmail.com>

Lora Venesy <venesy@comcast.net>

Patty Popov <ppopov@nichols-pratt.com>

Tom Wilson <twilson@wilsongroup.com>

John Lowe <john.moore.lowe@gmail.com>