

THE SUNDAY NEWS

First Parish in Concord, 20 Lexington Road, Concord, MA 01742

December 17, 2017

This Week

Sun., Dec. 17	9:00 Chalice Choir Rehearsal
	9:00 Gospel Choir Rehearsal
	10:00 Sunday Worship
	11:30 Junior Choir Rehearsal
	3:00 Author Talk: Transcendentalism
Tues., Dec. 19	10:30 Small Group Ministry
	6:30 T'ai Chi
	7:00 Amnesty International
	7:30 Blue Holiday Vespers
Wed., Dec. 20	9:30 Buddhist Group
	7:00 Women's Goddess Solstice Celebration
	7:45 Adult Choir Rehearsal
Thu., Dec. 21	7:00 Membership Committee Meeting
	7:30 By Your Side Singers
	7:30 Buddhist Group
Fri. Dec. 22	7:30 Rise Up Caroling
Sun., Dec. 24	10:00 Sunday Morning Christmas Eve Service
	5:00 Christmas Eve Family Service
	7:00 Traditional Christmas Eve Service
	9:00 Traditional Christmas Eve Service

Parish Notes

Join the Ushers and Sound Team

Are you friendly and helpful? Join us Sundays for an easy, monthly commitment to welcome fellow parishioners, hand out orders of service, and pass collection plates. We need ushers, greeters, and sound operators for the 3rd, 4th, and the rarer 5th monthly Sundays (training provided). Schedules are flexible, as ushers swap dates. This is a great way to learn names and make friends! Contact head usher Maile Hulihan at mailehulihan@earthlink.net or 978-443-7020 if interested.

Come View the Completed Banner Book

The Banner Book Project Committee has completed a document of the pulpit and celebration Sunday banners in photo and storybook form. Come to coffee hour and see Barbara Wheeler for a view of this book, and perhaps order one of your own.

Silent Auction for Thoreau Book

The Women's Parish 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 hour today. Bidding will close mid-January. Proceeds will be used for First Parish maintenance. Helen will match the highest bid, up to five thousand dollars.

Women's Retreats Registration, December 17–January 7

The theme for this year's Women's Retreats is "Connections and Connecting." Registration continues at coffee hour today and January 7. Forms are also available during the week in the church office and online at firstparish.org/forms. All women of First Parish are welcome to attend one of the away weekends at Senexet House (January 19 to 21 and January 26 to 28) or the at-home retreat at First Parish (February 9 and 10). Information available at coffee hour or contact Bozena Smith at bozenasmith@mindspring.com.

Author Talk: "Transcendentalism and the Cultivation of the Soul," by Rev. Dr. Barry Andrews, UU Minister Emeritus Today, December 17, 3:00 p.m., Parish Hall

Transcendentalists developed spiritual practices to nurture their souls and discover the divine: journals, contemplation, walking, reading, simplicity, and conversation. Rev. Andrews demonstrates

how Emerson, Thoreau, and Fuller led rewarding spiritual lives that inspired them to fight for abolition, women's rights, and education reform. He reveals how these practices are valuable to today's spiritual seekers and religious liberals. Books will be available for sale and signing. Sponsored by the Transcendentalism Council and the Thoreau Society Shop at Walden Pond. No charge. Contact Dianne Weiss at diannemcweiss@comcast.net.

Holiday Memorial Wreath Throughout December, Sanctuary

Acknowledge the memory of a loved one who has died by tying a ribbon to the wreath for those you wish to remember. We invite you to tie a black ribbon in memory of people of color lost to injustice.

Blue Holiday Vespers: "Find a Stillness" Tuesday, December 19, 7:30 p.m., Chapel

Gather in community to find stillness in the midst of all that is going on in the world and in your life. Find comfort in the beauty of candles, music, and understanding. Rev. Marion Visel, Rev. Jo VonRue, Beth Norton, and the By Your Side Singers offer a holiday alternative—a quiet space to share reflective words of remembrance and solace. Though the winter holidays are not always merry, this time can be one of gentle, loving kindness. All are welcome.

Merry Yule! Women's Circle Solstice Gathering Wednesday, December 20, 7:00 p.m., Parlor

Long before Christmas as we know it, pagan communities set the Winter Solstice as a time to pause and reflect. Winter is the season of darkness, coldness, and dormancy, but the light is returning. The Women's Circle invites the First Parish community and friends to join a festive Solstice gathering. All are welcome—men, women, and children. There will be stories, songs, a blazing yule log, a spiral dance, seasonal refreshments, and companionship. Contact Darien Smith at darien@smithquest.com with questions.

Help Distribute Holiday Flowers

Tuesday, December 26, 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary

Deliveries of Christmas poinsettias bring cheer to parishioners. Contact Caitlin Selle, selle.caitlin5@gmail.com, to let her know whether you can deliver a plant or two.

Please Lend Your Voice!

During the month of January, our Standing Committee will host a dozen 90-minute listening sessions: the first step in our Year for Reflection and Visioning. Everything we hear will help the Standing Committee, Senior Minister, and staff set goals for the next five years. Sign up at coffee hour or just drop in to one of these sessions: January 6 at 10:30 a.m. or 4:30 p.m.; January 7 at 12:00 p.m.; January 10 at 9:30 a.m.; January 11 at 7:30 p.m.; January 14 at 12:00 p.m.; January 17 at 6:30 p.m.; January 21 at 4:30 p.m.; January 23 at 11:30 a.m.; or January 25 at 7:30 p.m.

PCC Hosts Balázs Scholar Rev. Emese Bodor Saturday, January 6, 2018, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall

Please join the Partner Congregation Committee and representatives from neighboring partner congregations to welcome this year's Balázs Scholar, Rev. Emese Bodor, a Unitarian minister from Cluj-Napoca/Kolozsvár, Romania. Refreshments at 7:00 p.m., program at 7:30 p.m. We'll discuss the Transylvanian Unitarians' perspectives on partnership and pilgrimage, as well as that church's definition of marriage as only between a man and a woman. The Balázs Scholars Program has sponsored a Transylvanian Unitarian Minister at the Starr King School for the Ministry yearly since 1994.

Sunday Bouillon Volunteers Needed

We might begin making bouillon in early January, as we did last year. Remember how delicious the bouillon was on a cold winter Sunday? Can you help one Sunday a month by buying, preparing, serving, and/or cleaning up? I will be there most Sundays to help clean up. You could team up with a friend—one does the buying and preparation, both serve (and schmooze with parishioners enjoying the bouillon), and the other cleans up; or any other way you'd like. Please contact Kel Keleher, kel@rkeleher.com or 978-944-2734, if you are interested.

WPA's Light in Winter

Friday, January 12, 2018, 6:30 p.m.

The Women's Parish Association invites you to add light and beauty to your winter months! Join other First Parish folks on January 12 at 6:30 p.m. for a delicious soup prepared by Howard, socializing, and decorating candles. Program: Howard, demonstrating his soup creation, Richard Fortier playing his guitar, Barbara Forman talking about the history of lighting, followed by a fun candle decorating workshop with Merrill Comeau giving artistic advice. No prior experience necessary. Hands-on advice and all necessary supplies will be available. 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 by January 9.

Social Action

Amnesty International, Group 15

Tuesday, December 19, 7:00-8:30 p.m., Greeley Room

Attend our annual December Write4Rights meeting, when we, along with tens of thousands of others around the globe, write in support of human rights activists at risk in their home countries. This will give you a taste of the variety of actions individuals are engaged in worldwide—and of better-than-usual refreshments as we celebrate the holiday season. For more information, contact Nancy Lyons, njlyons22@gmail.com, or 978-369-6109.

Nominate Your Favorite Charitable Organizations

The Social Action Community, with Howard and Zach, will pilot *Share the Plate Collections* January to May 2018. We will share the collection plate 50%/50% between the church and one designated organization each month. That month we'll learn more about the organization and may meet its leadership. For more information, including how to nominate an organization or serve on the selection committee, visit the SAC coffee hour table, see the SAC bulletin board, or view the new SAC Share the Plate page on the First Parish website. Nominations accepted until January 4, 2018.

Religious Exploration

Bundle Up for Christmas Eve Morning Service!

Sunday, December 24, 10:00 a.m.

All ages are invited to a special service that will send us outdoors together! Bundle up to discover special stations around First Parish grounds. We will sing joyful carols and find some surprises along the way. Our time together will culminate with decorating a tree for wildlife and drinking hot cider. (Three Candlelight Evening Services at 5:00, 7:00, 9:00 p.m.)

Would You Like to Help Bring Christmas Magic to Life?

Amy is looking for children, teens, and adults to help with the 10 a.m. Christmas Eve morning service. Would you make simple gingerbread ornaments (dough provided)? Offer a reading? Help make garlands for the birds? Please contact Amy for more information or to volunteer at afreedman@firstparish.org.

This Sunday, December 17: Religious Exploration

9:15 a.m. – Neighboring Activists—Meet in the Ripley Room,

Bucket Brigade off-site, return to First Parish by 11:15 a.m.

9:50 a.m. – Little RE (0-4yrs) – Lower Level

10:00 a.m. – UU Explorers (Grade 8) – Chapel

10:00 a.m. – Worship Service

Children in Kindergarten through Grade 6 begin in the Sanctuary with their families. Following our Children's Message, the children leave the Sanctuary for their classroom with their teachers. All RE sessions are held until 11:15 a.m. Parents of children 0-Grade 3 are asked to pick up their children in their classrooms listed below. Older children and youth will be dismissed to coffee hour.

10:15 – 11:15 a.m.

Kindergarten & Grade 1– Lower Level

Grade 2– Greeley Room

Grade 3– Bulkeley Room

Grade 4– Ripley Room

Grade 5– Wright Tavern

11:45 a.m. –Neighboring Faiths (Grade 7) meet in the Parlor, visit the Islamic Center of Boston, 126 Boston Post Road, Wayland, return to First Parish around 2:15 p.m.

Next Sunday, December 24: Christmas Eve

Return Guest at Your Table Box!

Over the holiday season, we invite a “Guest At Your Table” (GAYT), a traditional fundraising practice for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. UUSC's grassroots partners make a big difference in their communities, and so does your participation in GAYT. Please return your box this Sunday, December 17, so our 5th graders can count your contribution. Otherwise, please write a check for the amount, payable to UUSC. For more information, visit uus.org. Questions? Email Rev. Amy Freedman at afreedman@firstparish.org.

Three Kings Day with Santuario Luterano

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) on Sunday, January 7. 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, and the passing out of gifts and sweets. The Three Kings will be making an appearance as well! Santuario Luterano is a Spanish-speaking Lutheran congregation led by the 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 directly at zroe@firstparish.org.

February 2018 Meeting House News Deadline

Tuesday, January 16, 12:00 Noon

Keep article length to 100 words and send to the Editor, Wendy Wolfberg, wolfberg@post.harvard.edu. The February 2018 edition will be published on January 24.

The Sunday News deadline is Wednesday at 12:00 noon.

Please keep article length to 100 words and submit to

Sarah Burns at sburns@firstparish.org.

The Sunday News can be read online at www.firstparish.org.