
SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS

**First Parish in Concord
Sunday, January 14, 2024**

*Please check our weekly e-newsletter, FP Weekly, for Zoom links
for events you are interested in attending virtually.*

Patriot's Day Pancake Breakfast Organizing Meeting

TODAY! 11:15 a.m.

Greeley Room

Patriot's Day in Concord is a festive time with parades and other activities. For years there was a pancake breakfast fundraiser at the Monument House. That event is no longer held and a group of us are meeting to discuss if First Parish should revive this tradition and make some money for our budget. Patriot's Day this year is April 15 so we should begin talking now to see if we want to do this. If this appeals to you in any fashion (flipping flapjacks, steering hungry eaters to tables, acting as a cashier, etc.), please join us to hear more details. —Gib Metcalf

New Opportunities for Connection:

Join a Small Group Ministry Group!

Registration Deadline Extended to January 23

During the past years, groups have gathered at First Parish to explore some of life's issues, whether of small or great consequence, and to listen deeply to each other as part of a facilitated discussion. Participants in these groups get to know people in the congregation whom they might never have encountered otherwise, and also to deepen connections with individuals they may already know. The groups consist of 6-8 people who meet for 90 minutes twice a month and are led by a trained facilitator. They will meet from February to June. All are welcome to participate.

[Register here.](#)

We are hoping to be able to accommodate your first or second choices but if there are difficulties we will be in touch. Any questions, contact [Lillian Anderson](#).

Clothing and Miscellaneous Item Collection for CityReach

Our CoA group is collecting items for the homeless community in Boston. Practical unisex clothing is preferred. Please bring donations to the coat closet by January 26.

- New white socks
- New underwear for men and women/bras (all sizes)
- Coats
- Sweatshirts/sweatpants
- T-shirts/long-sleeve shirts
- Jeans/casual pants
- Waterproof boots/comfortable shoes
- Hats/waterproof gloves
- Belts
- Blankets/sleeping bags
- Backpacks/fanny packs/small suitcases (wheeled)
- Travel-size toiletries: soap, shampoo, deodorant, lotion, Chapstick, toothpaste, shaving cream, toothbrushes, disposable razors, tampons

Real World Tools for Addressing Conflict in Healthy Ways

Saturday, January 27, 9:30 a.m.

Parish Hall & Parlor

Have you ever avoided conflict because you weren't sure how to respond? Maybe you were worried things might escalate. Or maybe you just didn't feel equipped to respond at the moment. Please join us for this practical workshop. We'll begin the day with a bit of theory from restorative practices and end the day with practice of the tools you've learned. You will leave this workshop with concrete tools to

**Welcome! We are so glad you are here. Please stop by the Welcome Table after service
or fill out a Connection Card located in your pew.**

respond in healthy ways when conflict is present. This will include bystander intervention, de-escalation, and other helpful means for addressing conflict in the moment.

Funderburg Fundraising Dinner/Zoom Saturday, February 10, 6:30 p.m.

Parish Hall and on Zoom

Funderburg Scholars – Meet the Students Fundraising Dinner at church or Zoom, Saturday, February 10th! Be at First Parish at 6:30 p.m. or on Zoom at 7:30 p.m. Help Roxbury youth attend and graduate from college! These engaging students will tell stories about their college experiences. Sign up for dinner (or request a Zoom invite) by e-mailing [Loretta Ho Sherblom](mailto:Loretta.Ho.Sherblom). More info at www.FunderburgScholars.org.

At Home Retreat for the Women of First Parish

Weaving Connections: The Power and Joy of Deepening Relationships

- **Free Welcome Celebration on Friday, March 8** at 7:00 p.m. for ALL FP women. (Those who attended the away retreat are welcome to come!)
- **Retreat Program is Saturday March 9**, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Join old friends and make new friends to explore how you can find the joy and power of deepening relationships. Includes time for reflection, creativity, singing, laughing, weaving crafts, lunch, and companionable silence.

To register for either program, please go to <https://bit.ly/FPAtHomeRetreat>.

News from the First Parish Microfinance Committee

Since January 2018, our church's Microfinance Committee has been using social justice funds (partly contributed from Share the Plate) to make micro loans to carefully selected individuals around the world, through the charity KIVA. Because those loans are repaid, we have been able to lend the same dollars over and over. So that over six years and guided by areas of interest identified by our parishioners (i.e. racial justice, immigrant justice, women, environmental action,

and diversity), we have used \$3,802 to make 797 loans in 52 countries, totalling \$20,620. We are so very grateful to our congregation for supporting us. Unfortunately, a recent article in MIT Technology Review makes it clear that KIVA has misrepresented aspects of the way our funds are used. For example, they do not necessarily end up in the hands of the people we have selected.

After careful research, our committee has decided to cease making loans through KIVA and to disband. We are allowing KIVA loan repayments to accumulate and will ultimately withdraw those funds and make equal donations to the following well-respected Microfinance organizations:

1. Women's Microfinance Initiative Corporation
2. Once Acre Fund
3. Building Resources Across Communities (BRAC)
4. FINCA International

Once again, we thank First Parish for its support. If you have any questions, please contact [Toby Smith Ropeik](mailto:Toby.Smith.Ropeik).