Welcome Back to Our Future

On September 7, First Parish will gather for a new church year with joy and expectation in our hearts. We are delighted to welcome The Rev. Dr. Stephanie May, who began work as our new settled minister on August 1. She was called to serve after a unanimous vote at a special congregational meeting on Sunday, May 4, 2014.

In her sermon earlier that morning, Stephanie talked about the rich history of First Parish. She noted that beginning in 1640, generation after generation of First Parishioners have come together in community to search for truth in freedom and in the spirit of love. Since then, our congregations have called many new ministers to walk along with them in their journeys of faith. Each generation has set the stage for the next to explore, to connect, and to serve.

And so we begin. This issue of the Unitarian presents some of the news, happenings, programs, and opportunities in store for us this fall. There is more information on our website, and weekly eblasts will keep us all up to date on events as they happen.

Welcome back, and if you are new to First Parish, welcome to what will perhaps become your spiritual home.

September Highlights

- Sept. 7: Water Sunday and Opening Picnic
- Sept. 21: Work Together Day
- Sept. 23: Regular Sunday morning Religious Education begins
- Sept. 27: Fellowship Dinners begin
- Sept. 28: Social Action Council meeting

For more events, see the calendar on the First Parish website.
The deadline for the October issue of the Unitarian is Wednesday, September 24.

Please send submissions to Nan Jahnke, the newsletter editor.

A Month of Sundays
September 7 — Water Sunday
(bring a little water from the summer if you wish)
September 14 — The Rev. Dr. Stephanie May preaching
September 21 — The Rev. Dr. Stephanie May preaching
September 28 — The Rev. Dr. Stephanie May preaching

News of the Parish
A memorial service was held on July 27 for the life of Gilan Hashemi, the mother of Sepi Hashemi and grandmother of Dori. The service was held in the Vestry and was led by Lisa Mobayed, the First Parish intern.

Jonathan Trimby, who grew up in First Parish, was married to Fiona Maurissette on August 16 in the chapel at Wellesley College. The Rev. Erin Splaine officiated. Jonathan is the son of Ross and Lynn Trimby.

Please share your news of the parish with our minister, Stephanie May, who will continue to update the community monthly in the Unitarian.

The Lay Ministers Are Here for You
The Lay Minister for September is Pat Sims (508-358-1611). Please feel free to contact her if you need a ride somewhere, or meals delivered, or just a friendly, confidential visit or chat.
During the relatively quiet month of August, I have been joyfully settling into being here at First Parish. I am grateful for the many ways that I have been welcomed—from emails and cards, to visits and calls, to a lovely, redecorated office. As I talk with many of you, I enjoy learning more and more about who you are as individuals, families, and a community. I look forward to hearing many more stories, hopes, and, yes, even your concerns.

Very soon, on Sunday, September 7, we will begin gathering together for Sunday morning services. As you reenter the familiarity of the Meetinghouse, you will inevitably notice some changes right away—such as the windows in process. As we embark into this first year together, I invite you to explore with me as we navigate between the familiar and the new.

As is the tradition in First Parish, as well as in many other Unitarian Universalist congregations, this first service will include a special water ceremony. In this simple act of sharing a bit of water, the mingling of the waters signals the re-gathering of the full community for a new church year. So please bring a little water that represents something that fed your spirit during the summer. You will be invited to share a word about what makes this water meaningful to you. When considering what to say, I encourage you to think poetry—how to convey the essential meaning in a few apt words.

May this year be one of wonder and renewal as we move together into this new chapter of the life of First Parish in Wayland.

Stephanie May
The Rev. Dr. Stephanie May
Minister, First Parish in Wayland

Welcome Back from the Parish Committee

The new church year is about to begin, and with it some big changes. We are all excited to welcome the Rev. Dr. Stephanie May as our new settled minister. Stephanie began her ministry on August 1 and has been enthusiastically preparing for the upcoming year. Her Service of Installation is scheduled for Sunday, October 26, at 5 p.m. Please mark your calendars for this joyous and historic event.

This summer has been busy with construction projects involving the Carriage Sheds and Meetinghouse. The sheds look beautiful with their new roofs. The offsite work on the Meetinghouse windows is progressing well, and the windows are scheduled to be reinstalled in October. We all owe a huge thank you to Jean Milburn, who spearheaded both projects and worked tirelessly over the summer.

The first service of our new church year will be held on Sunday, September 7, followed by our annual welcome picnic, hosted by the Community Life Community. The Community Life Committee is also hosting Fellowship Dinners in September and a Jazz Coffee House in October. Dining for Dollars will also return this fall; details will follow in a week or two. Please join us for all these fall events. We look forward to seeing you!

Come winter, we’ll have more excitement as we begin celebrating the 200th anniversary of our Meetinghouse in January, as well as the 375th anniversary of the congregation of First Parish. It will be quite a year.

This year Lynne Morrison and Brad Carver will share duties as Parish Committee Chairs. Our returning committee members are Roger Nuss, Clerk, Clare Lewis, Treasurer, Anne de los Reyes, Nancy Slocum, Jim Van Sciver, and David Wells. We also welcome two new Parish Committee members, Beth Butler and Keith Sims, who were elected at our Annual Meeting in June. We look forward to everyone’s wise counsel.

Lynne Morrison, Brad Carver
Parish Committee Chairs
What’s Happening at First Parish

Opening Day Picnic at First Parish
Sunday, September 7

Welcome back one and all, and a special welcome to our new minister, the Rev. Dr. Stephanie May. The Community Life Committee will celebrate our “Opening Day” this year by providing a picnic lunch featuring Fenway Franks. Join us in the Vestry immediately following the Water Sunday service, September 7.

Fun, friends, and food! What could be better? Well, what if we told you there would be a magician on hand to amuse and amaze us? Maybe he can score one for the Red Sox! Come and be a part of the team!

Fellowship Dinners
Saturday, September 27, 6 p.m.

The Community Life Committee is launching the church year with an evening of potluck “Fellowship Dinners” in parishioners’ homes on Saturday, September 27. Guests will be assigned to a host who will coordinate who brings what to the dinner. You can sign up here or in the Vestry. If you’d like to host, we’d like to hear from you as soon as possible (hosts determine for themselves the number of guests they can accommodate). Contact Rachel Sideman-Kurtz or Greta Stone with any questions.

Let us all eat, drink, meet new friends, and enjoy each other’s company!

Let’s Spruce Up the Church!
Work Together Day Is September 21

Our next church-wide Work Together Day will be held on Sunday, September 21. We’re expecting a busy fall at the church, and we want our place looking great after this summer’s renovations. Our preliminary plans include:

- landscaping
- painting a room for First Parish pre-schoolers
- reorganizing the church’s storage areas
- touching up the paint
- making carpentry repairs
- fixing up the deck, and
- anything else that is needed to put a shine on our beautiful property.

If you haven’t been to a Work Together Day before, or if you haven’t been to First Parish this fall, this is the perfect time to join in! Working in teams, we tackle all kinds of jobs around the church while having as much fun as possible. We will have tasks for every age, physical ability, and skill level. Really, if you are willing to help, we’ll find a good job for you. It’s a great way to reconnect with the church and learn more about other church members.

We wear our grubby work clothes to church and start working right after the service ends at 11 a.m. We wrap up around 4:30 p.m., but if you cannot stay for the entire time, we understand. Lunch is provided! Rain date is September 28. Walk-ons are welcome, but please pre-register if you can by emailing Bill Morrison so we can buy enough work supplies and food.

Don’t miss it!

If you can help the Turning Point group prepare a meal for the men’s shelter in Framingham on Tuesday, September 8, please contact Beth Butler ASAP (508-820-6905). For more information about Turning Point, click here.

Many thanks to John and Nathalie Thompson for their beautiful and generous gift to First Parish of an acrylic painting done by John. It is hanging in the Commons for all of us to enjoy. Come take a look!
Why Was Our Organ Wrapped Up in Plastic?

If you have been upstairs in the Meetinghouse this summer, you may have noticed our beautiful new organ covered in plastic. The plastic will be removed around Labor Day and our organ will be ready to play on Water Sunday, but meanwhile we’ve had some work to do on the building’s fire sprinkler system.

Two of the sprinkler heads in the Choir Loft were located above the pipes of the new organ. The flow of water during a fire could be impeded by the organ. To solve the conflict we have relocated the two heads to the front of the organ, and added a third head behind the organ. The combination of the three heads will cover the Choir Loft and the organ in case of fire.

Let us all sing a hymn to fire safety!

Summer Happenings

Summer Preservation Work with Our Thanks to the Townspeople of Wayland

Over the summer, First Parish’s Building Committee has been busy implementing the restoration of the Meetinghouse and Carriage Sheds that is being funded by a $150,000 Community Preservation Committee grant from the citizens of Wayland.

The Colonial Barn Company has performed roofing and carpentry on both buildings. The Carriage Sheds have a new cedar roof and copper flashing and drip edges. Inside the sheds, many large angle irons were bolted to the building’s frame to control forces that were spreading the front and back of the building apart. A rotten post in the front wall was replaced with a sound, antique hand-hewn timber that was carefully mortised into position. General carpentry repairs were made to the splashboards, trim, and siding.

The Meetinghouse roof required 300 new slates to replace those that were missing, cracked, or broken. Damage to the eaves of the Meetinghouse was repaired in many places, and the walls and steeple were carefully examined close-up from a platform on a lift machine. Carpentry repairs are being made to clapboards and trim boards from top to bottom, as well as to the trim on the front facade of the Meetinghouse.

Old Bostonian, a specialty window-restoration company, continues to work on the restoration of the old windows. A few windows, including the Palladian window over the front door, are being repaired in situ, but most of the damaged windows have been removed and are being restored in the company's workshop. We hope that all windows will be restored to their frames by mid-October. When re-installed, the windows will receive new weather-stripping to reduce drafts in the sanctuary.

Special thanks are due to Bill Kenney, who removed the front door and created a temporary front door to allow safe egress while the antique door is being repaired at Old Bostonian, and to Enrique de los Reyes, who has worked on the project all summer.

First Parish is deeply grateful to be Wayland’s first non-municipal beneficiary of a Community Preservation grant. The project is on budget, and every dollar is being spent carefully to assure that the 200-year-old buildings will continue to grace the Town’s Historic District and provide aesthetic enjoyment to everyone as they pass through the center of town.

Jean Milburn
Welcome back to all First Parish families, children, youth, and teachers!

Here is a brief description of what our children and youth will be exploring with us this year, along with links to calendars for all age groups. Please note that High School Youth Group begins on September 14, K-7 Sunday School begins on September 21, the 8th Grade Coming of Age program begins September 28, and Middle School Youth Group (Grades 6-8) begins October 5.

**Kindergarten—3rd Grade**
To best meet the needs of this small group, our Director of Religious Education, Lisa Maria Steinberg, will write the curriculum, aligning it with sermon topics, seasonal observances, or other aspects of First Parish life. Lessons will focus on Unitarian Universalist values, our principles and sources.

**4th and 5th Grade**
This group will engage with the well-loved curriculum “Bibleodeon.” Many past teachers have expressed an appreciation for this robust and engaging curriculum, in which participants engage interactively with stories from the Old and New Testaments.

**6th Grade**
A popular curriculum with teachers and students alike, “Riddle and Mystery” engages participants in “big questions” (Where did we come from? What happens when we die?) and Unitarian Universalist responses to them.

**7th Grade**
Participants will engage in multi-faith learning in a curriculum written by Lisa Maria using “Flipped Classroom” principles that make content more engaging and empower youth to use technology to discover more about the diverse world we live in.

**8th Grade**
In the capstone year for First Parish middle schoolers, 8th Graders have a comprehensive Coming of Age (COA) program, as well as a full year of OWL. The Coming of Age Service is on May 17, 2015. See below for information about 8th-grade OWL.

**Youth Groups**
**Middle School Youth Group** (Grades 6-8) meets once a month on Sundays, October-May, from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. **High School Youth Group** meets most Sundays, 4:30-6:30 p.m., throughout the year, excepting those Sundays that fall around school holidays and vacation weeks.

Here are the calendars for these programs.

- K-7 Sunday School calendar
- 8th-grade COA/OWL calendar
- Middle School Youth Group calendar
- High School Youth Group calendar

Feel free to contact Lisa Maria with any questions about this year’s Sunday School and Youth Group programs.

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**Our Whole Lives (OWL)**

8th Grade OWL will kick off with a sleepover on the night of October 3. We need parents to volunteer for the overnight watch. For your 8th Grader to participate in OWL, both parents must attend an OWL orientation; Lisa Maria will let you know the time and date once the meeting is settled. For the full calendar of OWL meetings please see the 8th-grade COA/OWL calendar.

5th-grade OWL will begin in January and meet on Sundays after the service. Stay tuned for more info later in the fall, or contact Lisa Maria if you have questions.

“Our Whole Lives” is a sexuality education program that offers curricula for many different age groups Kindergarten through Adults. First Parish has been an “OWL” congregation for many years. Our Director of Lifespan Religious Education and Spiritual Development, Lisa Maria Steinberg, is happy to talk with families about OWL at any time.
Men’s Book Club

What did Babe Ruth and Charles Lindbergh have in common? You can find out if you join us on Thursday, September 4, at 8 p.m. in the Sun Room, when we’ll discuss One Summer: America 1927 by Bill Bryson. We meet the first Thursday of every month through June. New members are very welcome at any time. Come whether you’ve read the book or not!

Hurry or you’ll miss this!

You, Too, Can Be an Usher!

Please consider volunteering to be an Usher & Greeter a couple of Sunday mornings during this church year. We need four volunteers each week to greet arriving churchgoers, hand out Orders of Service, and collect the offering. It’s friendly work, you can pick your own dates, and there are no meetings to attend! Contact Lynn Trimby (508-358-6644) if you’d like to help.

A First Parish Coffee House

The Neil Olmstead/Scott Free Jazz Quartet Saturday, October 4, 8 p.m., in the Vestry

First Parish Coffee House presents pianist and Wayland resident Neil Olmstead and guitarist Scott Free in a concert of jazz standards comprising some well-known tunes of the American songbook (and beyond). The quartet is rounded out with bassist Paul Del Nero and drummer Casey Scheuerell. All are faculty at Berklee College of Music with extensive performing and recording experience.

Tickets are $15 in advance or $20 at the door. Get your advance tickets during Coffee Hour on Sundays in September or by emailing the Community Life Committee. Can’t wait to hear the music? Check out Scott and Neil’s duo recording “Colaboração” on iTunes and CD Baby.

Interfaith Open House in Roxbury

The Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry invites you to a unique event to learn what’s happening at the oldest place of worship in Roxbury, and at one of the newest. Join them on Sunday afternoon, September 28, from 2—4:30 p.m. for an Interfaith Open House that starts at the First Church in Roxbury, founded in 1632, and finishes at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center, the largest mosque in New England.

Explore the 1804 meetinghouse, climb up to the steeple for a stunning view of downtown Boston, ring the Paul Revere bell, and go on a scavenger hunt to learn how this congregation helped to establish Harvard College, founded Roxbury Latin School, and played an important role in our Revolutionary War. Learn, too, about the many ways that the UU Urban Ministry, who are the stewards of the First Church, put our faith into action through service, education, and outreach to Roxbury and surrounding communities.

We will then walk down the hill to tour the Islamic Cultural Center (a minibus will drive anyone with mobility issues to the mosque). Our tour guide will talk about the architectural and spiritual features of the center. We will also learn about Islam and the Boston Muslim community and have an opportunity to discuss how we can all foster interfaith dialogue.

For more information, or if you can help with carpools, contact Chris Nelson.
Spending Decisions: What Works at First Parish?

In September and October, the Finance Committee will hold three parish-wide discussions to learn more about the objectives and obligations that shape our budget, and to think about what else we might want our spending to achieve. Everyone is welcome to come to one or more of these meetings to share their thoughts and hear what is important to other parishioners.

Among the questions we will explore are these:

- Why do people choose to give to, and through, First Parish?
- How does First Parish direct its spending now?
- What resources do we now create through our collective giving, and what might we want to change?
- What would the impacts of change be?
- What do we want to be sure to keep, and what do we aspire to do differently?

New answers to these kinds of questions have been reshaping the focus of the Unitarian Universalist Association’s spending decisions over the past several of years, shifting it away from congregation-focused services toward more external, mission-based spending. How might that shift affect our own budget decisions?

If you have thoughts about what should drive First Parish’s financial efforts and budgets in future years, please join us! The agenda of the meetings will be much the same; please come to the meeting that best fits your schedule.

Here are the meeting times and dates:

- **Budget Discussion Group Meeting #1:** Tuesday, September 23, 7:30 p.m., Sun Room
- **Budget Discussion Group Meeting #2:** Tuesday, September 30, 10:00 a.m., Sun Room
- **Budget Discussion Group Meeting #3:** Sunday, October 5, 11:30 a.m., Sun Room

**Susie Keyes**, Finance Committee Chair
**Clare Lewis**, Treasurer
Lisa Maria Is Starting a New Parents Group

Lisa Maria (along with her baby Viviana) is starting a group for expectant parents and parents with babies. The group will meet on the first Tuesday of the month, from 10-11 a.m., beginning in October; the room will be announced. We will gather with our babies to share our joys and challenges as new parents and to benefit from our collective wisdom. All parenting styles are welcome. We are both breastfeeding-friendly and formula-friendly, and both moms and dads are welcome to come. Spread the word to any new parents you may know; participants need not be First Parish families to attend. Contact Lisa Maria Steinberg, our Director of Lifespan Religious Education and Spiritual Development, for more information.

First Parish also sponsors a group for Parents of Children with Special Needs. Check it out here.

Musings from Lisa Maria

Bumper Boats

When celebrating a marriage, some are eager to invite a few hundred friends and family and have a fete to be fondly remembered with souvenir glassware and framed menus. Others wish to simply find an officiant and be joined in matrimony in their living room. Both ways – and all the ways in between – are the right way to celebrate the beginning of a marriage and the creation of a new family.

When experiencing grief, an inevitable reality arises: you aren’t the only one grieving. Your siblings, parent, spouse, or a close friend will likely be experiencing grief at the same time. When my father passed years ago, my mother’s grief and sister’s grief and my grief were often like the bumper boats at Kimball Farm as we navigated those uncharted waters of loss together. I wanted to listen to all the music I enjoyed sharing with my dad, my mother wanted silence; my sister focused her energy on poring over photos, I couldn’t bring myself to look at a single photograph.

Unless you have been away from any and all media sources for the last few weeks, you have likely heard about the ALS/Ice Bucket Challenge. I have two friends who have lost their parents to ALS, and their responses to the ALS/Ice Bucket Challenge could not have been more distinct. One grabbed the nearest bucket, filled it with ice water, dumped the bucket, posted a Facebook video saying why and how much money would be donated, and challenged friends to do the same. The other friend is staying out of it, because – well, it doesn’t matter why, just like it didn’t matter why I couldn’t look at photos and my sister couldn’t stop. In the same way, not all breast cancer survivors and their family members embrace the pink ribbon mission or want to do a three-day walk, and not all survivors of violence wish to tell their story to Barbara Walters or Ann Curry. We humans are so very much alike, and yet even when we share a common life cycle event together -- a marriage, a death, a cultural phenomenon, an illness, or public tragedy – we can respond in a dizzying array of ways.

Making sense of the world one celebration, one heartbreak, one one hundred million-dollar challenge at a time is what we do together as a human family. Belonging to and actively participating in a faith community can help us navigate those times with better articulation, more empathy, and tons more love. For when the boats start bumping, we see our fragile humanity in one another, and we can respond in disbelief and annoyance, or we can be glad that our sister or brother has found comfort or joy in their unique way. As this new church year begins, with changes and newness afoot, there will be experiences of loss, there will joy, and we will all bump our boats up against each other a little bit here and there. Luckily, when boats bump in a community of faith, we are close enough to extend a hand in fellowship, instead of floating away and alone.

Blessings,

Lisa Maria Steinberg
Director of Lifespan Religious Education And Spiritual Development
Reclaiming Prophetic Witness: A Book Discussion with Our New Minister

Join our minister, the Rev. Dr. Stephanie May, in this three-part discussion on the Unitarian Universalist Association’s “Common Read” for this year: “Reclaiming Prophetic Witness: Liberal Religion in the Public Square,” by Paul Rasor (Skinner House Books 2012).

The class will meet for 90 minutes from 7:15-8:45 p.m. on three Thursdays in October: October 16, 23, and 30; the room will be announced. Registration for this series is required; sign up by contacting Lisa Maria, our Director of Lifespan Religious Education, by October 1 so we can purchase the books in bulk from the UUA Bookstore and have them delivered in time.

The book will cost $12-13.50 depending on the number of participants. It is also available as an ebook. If you need financial assistance in purchasing the book, please let Lisa Maria know.

Paul Rasor, a UU minister, is director of the Center for the Study of Religious Freedom and a professor of religious studies at Virginia Wesleyan University. He is also the author of “Faith Without Certainty: Liberal Theology in the Twenty-first Century” (Skinner House Books 2005).

Come Help Out in the Pantry Garden

Here’s a perfect opportunity to garden and to do good! Please join us – Molly Faulkner, Janet Hadingham, Andrea Case, and Kathleen Lang – four caretakers of the First Parish Pantry Garden. You can learn to grow vegetables by growing them with us, or you can take more of a mentoring role.

This year we are growing tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, husk cherries, squash, and potatoes for two family shelters in Framingham. Each Wednesday, we combine our harvest with produce from the gardens at Claypit Hill School and the Middle School.

We have a fourth plot that needs to be cleared of many things: small trees, bittersweet, old fencing, and weeds, weeds, weeds. We’ve made a dent in it but want to get it finished up this fall. Here’s an opportunity for someone to really work out his or her life frustrations! Our new minister Stephanie May owns a weed wrench** and has volunteered to use it! If you’d like to join us, email Molly or talk with Janet, Andrea, or Kathleen.

Family Promise, formerly known as the Interfaith Hospitality Network, is seeking a part-time case manager to provide support to families who are homeless. Interested applicants please send a cover letter and resume to Sue Crossley at Family Promise.
Music Notes

Adult Choir
The first rehearsal of the Church Choir will be on Wednesday, September 3, at 7:30 p.m. in Stokey Library. We are about 20 voices strong and invite interested people to join us—no audition. On Wednesday we will rehearse for Water Sunday, September 7, the first Sunday of the new church year. Our music program is a marvelous one with two special Music Sundays, the first in early December and the second on the Sunday before Easter Sunday in addition to music at our weekly worship service.

There was some sprinkler work in the Choir Loft this summer, and our organ is scheduled to be unwrapped from its protective plastic right around Labor Day. We are looking forward to being back together with many stories to share.

Children’s Choir
Children 6 and older are invited to be in the Children’s Choir. The starting date for rehearsals will be announced later; the rehearsals are held on most Sundays at 11:20 following the Sunday service.

What a wonderful opportunity to have instruction from Polly. She has many years’ experience in cultivating a love of music and performance in children. The children will perform before the church audience. In years past, “Amahl and the Night Visitors” was presented, as have many smaller pieces. If you have any questions, please contact Kathleen Lang (508 653 1028), our Music Committee chair, or speak to Polly on Sundays.

Warm Welcomes

As this church year starts, there is an air of excitement and anticipation. Summer construction projects have given our Meetinghouse and Carriage Sheds a fresh new look, and we have a new settled minister. We all look forward to our new journey together.

Over this year we will have many new people coming through our doors on Sundays. If you show them the same open-hearted warmth you showed me when I started here last year, they will be beating down our doors! The same goes for old friends who have been away from First Parish for a while; we miss them and hope they will find their way back to us.

This year there is much work being done to help us all strengthen our bonds to each other. The Community Life Committee is planning a picnic after the service on Water Sunday to give us all time to catch up with each other after the summer. They are also planning a Jazz Coffee House for October 4 with the Olmstead/Free Jazz Quartet. Look for tickets at Coffee Hour. There are also great opportunities for learning through classes offered through the Lifespan Religious Education Program.

I am very excited to see you all and to enjoy this exciting church year together.

Kathleen Lang
Music Committee

Kathleen Lang
Music Committee

WELCOME

Kathleen Lang
Music Committee

Kate Holland
Membership Coordinator
Put Your Event on the Church Calendar

It’s the start of a new church year, and the calendar is beginning to fill in with all the wonderful things that we do. You can help us plan and share the news of church happenings by listing your church event on the calendar. To do so, please use the “Add an Event” form on the church website. The form will be sent automatically to our new Parish Administrator, Gretchen Pathak, who will post the event after checking that there are no conflicts. The form is incredibly easy to use, and you will receive a confirmation of your reserved time and place. You may also contact the Parish Administrator directly about your event. Meanwhile, check out the calendar for a quick peek at everything that is going on around First Parish.

Construction Suits Settled

The Parish Committee is pleased to report that the law firm that it retained, Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP, has successfully resolved all claims and lawsuits that were made against First Parish arising out of the failure of Pyne Construction, the general contractor on our Capital Campaign construction project, to pay various subcontractors and suppliers. Thanks to Brad Carver for his help in bringing us to this successful conclusion.

We Have a Support Group for Parents of Children with Special Needs

Fourteen years ago, under the guidance of our minister at the time, the Rev. Kimi Riegel, we started a support group for parents of children with special needs. The impetus was to be sure that we were embracing all the children in our Sunday School program, but it quickly became apparent when we met that most parents felt that First Parish was doing fine in understanding and accepting their children – the problem was the larger world!

We have since become a regular feature at First Parish. We meet every 4-6 weeks and provide a place for parents to share resources about assessments, the IEP (Individualized Educational Program) process, public school supports, private school options, and much more. We have parents of preschoolers all the way up through students in college! We laugh and sometimes we cry. We celebrate the uniqueness and challenge and joy of having a child who may be just a little – or even a lot – different. It’s what we Unitarians do – celebrating difference and finding the positive path — and happily so.

The group is led by Suzanne Tiberii, a special education professional and longtime member of First Parish. If you would like to join us, we’d like to have you. Watch the Orders of Service and upcoming Unitarians for meeting dates. If you would like to talk to the leader or to another parent about what we do, that can certainly be arranged.

We hope you’ll join us.

Suzanne Tiberii

New Thinking in the Finance Committee

This year we are taking a new approach to the budget-building process at First Parish. We are adding more people to the Finance Committee, building the budget over the entire church year, and doing some longer-term financial planning, including taking a look at our operating expenses to see where we can be more cost conscious. Susie Keyes has agreed to serve as the new Finance Committee chair. If you might be interested in helping in this interesting and important work, please contact Susie or Clare Lewis, our treasurer.

Susie Keyes, Finance Committee Chair
Clare Lewis, Treasurer

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We hope you’ll join us.

Suzanne Tiberii
Join Us for a Year of Social Action

Lois Doerr, Suzanne Reitz, and Suzanne Tiberii have been meeting over the summer, talking with Stephanie and Lisa Maria, and generating ideas for the coming year about getting individuals, youth, and families engaged in our wide range of social action projects. We hope you will come to church with energy and ideas about how we can make a positive impact on the wider world we live in. Please mark your calendars for our monthly Social Action Council meetings when committees will share their plans and initiatives around Social Action. Meetings will be at 11:30 a.m. on the following Sundays, in a room to be announced: September 28, October 26, November 16, December 7, January 25, February 22, March 15, April 12, May TBD.

The box on the right lists our current social action programs and their chairs for 2014-2015. The following programs are currently inactive, just waiting for the right people to come help lead them: Family Promise (temporary church-based shelters for homeless families), Lois Doerr, Liaison; Partner Churches in India and Transylvania, Suzanne Reitz, Liaison, UUA Denominational Affairs.

Lois Doerr, Former Social Action Council Chair
Suzanne Reitz, 2014-2015 Social Action Council Co-Chair
Suzanne Tiberii, 2014-2015 Social Action Council Co-Chair

2014-2015 Social Action Council

Domestic Violence Roundtable: Bob Mainer and Lynn Trimby
Green Sanctuary Molly Faulkner and Janet Hadingham
Habitat for Humanity Keith Sims
Partakers Prison Program George Ives
People for Peace Malcolm Astley
Turning Point Beth Butler
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee Bobby Robinson
Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry Chris Nelson
Welcoming Congregation Suzanne Tiberii
Social Action Council Co-Chairs Suzanne Reitz and Suzanne Tiberii

UUSC News

Welcome to a new year of coffee sales and social justice opportunities from the First Parish chapter of the UU Service Committee.

Equal Exchange fair trade products will again be sold every other Sunday after church beginning September 15.

Environmental Justice. In September, world leaders are coming to New York City for a UN summit on the climate crisis. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is urging governments to support an ambitious global agreement to dramatically reduce global warming pollution, and the UUSC is urging people to show their support by attending the People’s Climate March on September 21, also in New York City. To learn more about the march, click here.

Bobby Robinson, Chair

Habitat for Humanity Work Day

Our First Parish Habitat for Humanity Work Day is coming on Saturday, November 1, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., with lunch prepared by our youth and children. We will work on the two duplexes of affordable housing being built on Stonebridge Road in Wayland. About 25 folks are needed with a wide range of skills and abilities (including shopping and donating for lunch). Sign up Sundays during Coffee Hour starting in late September. Questions? Contact Keith Sims.
Turning Point Shelter

Opportunities to Help this Year
The residents and staff of Turning Point shelter in Framingham deeply appreciate the monthly delivery of a nutritious meal from First Parish. First Parish is committed to delivering a meal on the second Monday of every month from September through June. We usually deliver chili, bread and butter, and dessert and fruit provided by five volunteers. Please sign up in the Vestry to make a portion of a meal for a coming month, or to deliver the meal to the shelter. Complete instructions, including the very easy recipe for the chili are in the sign-up folder.

A Huge Thank You
Many thanks to all who shopped, cooked, baked, and delivered meals last church year; who remembered the residents with other donations of food; and who provided clothing and linens by dropping them into the Turning Point bin in the Vestry. Your kindness is gratefully acknowledged with every delivery to Turning Point.

Hello, New Friends
I am very excited to join your congregation as your new Youth Coordinator! Although I have big shoes to fill—literally, Sam’s feet are much bigger than my own—I assure you that the transition into my new role will be a smooth ride with just as much fun, shenanigans, and creative learning as last year.

Growing up an active member of the Unitarian Universalist congregation to the east, First Parish in Weston, I know how valuable it can be to have a strong community guiding people through their middle and high school years. I am honored that you have chosen to bring me into the lives of your youth community. I promise to create a safe and accepting environment full of fun, tons of laughter, perhaps a few necessary tears, and the joy that comes with further learning what it means for us to be Unitarian Universalists working for a better, tolerant, and more peaceful world.

Please feel free to reach out to me via email (I will check my church emails on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday mornings) or catch me in person on Sundays. It might take me a bit to learn everyone’s name, but I can promise you a smile and enthusiastic conversation whenever we see each other.

In peace,
Haley K.

The Rummage Corner
It’s not too early to think about the Rummage Sale! We have loads of ideas for improving the Rummage Sale to make it even more fun and more successful this year. We have formed the beginnings of a standing committee and are happy to welcome more members. We will hold a kick-off meeting in early October; date and time to be announced.

Thank you for all the donations we have received over the summer! I do have a large unfinished basement, so keep the Rummage Sale in mind as you clear out summer items or if you are downsizing your home. I still have plenty of room! Contact Kathie Cromwell, Rummage chair, (774-217-1352) to make arrangements for donations—or if you are interested in learning more about Rummage.

The UUSocial Message Board
First Parish has an online message board called UUSocial that operates as a Yahoo Email Group. Members post questions and comments about church happenings and everyday life challenges, and others answer back. The board covers a variety of topics—where to find an apartment, how to power wash a house, what folks think of this week’s sermon, and so on. Some things, like political endorsements and commercial solicitations, are off limits, but the discussion is generally wide-ranging, lively, and informative.

If you’d like to join the group, look for our moderator, Chauncey Wilson, during Coffee Hours later in September. He will sign you up and get you started!
“Five Wishes”
How to Manage End-of-Life and Emergency Instructions

First Parish Affiliate Minister the Rev. Maddie Sifantus will offer an evening workshop on Sunday, October 5, beginning at 7 p.m. on the document called “Five Wishes.” Five Wishes is an advance directive combining a living will and the assignment of a health care agent. It is designed to help people consider and communicate wishes for end-of-life or emergency care, including medical treatments they want (and don’t want) and palliative care. User-friendly and written in laypersons’ terms, the Five Wishes document will be available to each participant. Maddie will explore the relevant issues and will give instructions on how to fill out the document.

Everyone is encouraged to attend, since we are ALL aging and since our life circumstances can change in the blink of an eye. Having your family know what your wishes are in an emergency or at the end of life is one of the greatest gifts you can give them. The quality of conversation with loved ones that this process inspires is one of its rich benefits. The workshop is open to all and will be held in a room to be announced. Read more about Five Wishes here.

Introducing the Ministerial Relations Committee

The Parish Committee has named a new Ministerial Relations Committee (MRC) to support our newly called minister, the Rev. Dr. Stephanie May. The members of the MRC are Stephen Winthrop, Mary Trageser, Pat Sims, Bill Morrison, Kathy Genovese, and Lea Anderson.

The responsibilities of the MRC will include the traditional role of being a sounding board for the minister. In this year of transition, the MRC will also provide Stephanie with support in learning about and working with the congregation as she begins her ministry. Our role will evolve and we will keep the congregation informed as the year unfolds.

We couldn’t be more excited to be part of Stephanie’s support team in her first year at First Parish! We welcome your thoughts, reflections, and ideas throughout the year.

The Ministerial Relations Committee

Support and feedback are always welcome!

Goodbye, Summer. We hardly knew ye!

Here are our ushers and greeters for September.

Sept. 7: Andrea & Doug Case, Barbara Buell & Paul Langner
Sept. 14: Linda Collins, Lois Doerr, Lynn & Ross Trimby
Sept. 21: Brad Carver, Helen Tramposch, Rachel Sideman-Kurtz, Jeff Kurtz
Sept. 28: Alex Gibber, Sylvia Dickens, Anne & Enrique de los Reyes

Thank you for being there for us! If you can’t be there after all, please arrange for a substitute or swap dates with another usher.

Singing Meditation

Join our Affiliate Minister, the Rev. Maddie Sifantus, who will lead “Singing Meditation,” a contemplative hour that combines sound with short periods of silence, on Thursday, November 6, beginning at 7:15 p.m.; the room will be announced.

This spiritual practice is not about performance for an audience; it is a blending of voices in simple song and chant interspersed with meditation. The songs will come from a number of spiritual paths including Unitarian Universalism, Taizé, Earth based religions, and other world sources. Singing Meditation is suitable for beginners as well as experienced singers and meditators. The group is open to all.

Ushers for September

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Thank you for being there for us! If you can’t be there after all, please arrange for a substitute or swap dates with another usher.
Saturday, Oct. 4th

8 PM (doors open 7:30 PM)

TICKETS $15
$20 at door

THE FIRST PARISH
COFFEE HOUSE

PRESENTS

THE

Olmstead / Free

Jazz
QUARTET

The Vestry * First Parish

50 Cochituate Rd. Wayland

Tickets available during
Coffee Hour on Sundays or email
CommunityLife@uuwayland.org