

THE WAYLAND UNITARIAN

FEBRUARY 2022

A Message from the Visioning Team

From Vision to Focus to Plan

How can it be February already? We're speeding into 2022, but where are we headed? Is this the year that the pandemic morphs into an endemic? Will school, work, our services be in person or hybrid? Two years in and there are still a lot of unknowns. Like you, I have suffered losses, challenges to my physical and emotional well-being, and disappointment after disappointment; and yet, I am optimistic because I have learned some things about myself, the world, and community. With that newly gained knowledge, I am ready to envision a bright future. How about you? How will you choose to be in this community we share as we make our way to something new?

A year ago, Deb Stubeda and Rev. Stephanie spearheaded a series of focus groups with able assistance from Kit Kitendaugh, Lynne Cavanaugh, and Chauncey Wilson. These groups, led by current and recent Parish Committee members, delved into what we learned from the first year of the pandemic, how we changed, and how we and First Parish adapted. Those community conversations gave rise last fall to the Parish Committee Visioning Team, which was tasked with expanding on this important work. In December, an online survey took stock of the congregation's well-being, our level of engagement, and our commitment to the future. The sheer fact that 114 of you responded says a lot!

Here are the key findings from that survey:

- A sense of shared values and ethics is central to who we are
- Sunday services are of key importance and highly valued
- There is a strong commitment, devotion, and connection to First Parish and the people in it
- People remain actively engaged in the life of First Parish

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Rummage 2022 - Not???

As you know, First Parish, through extensive work by the Re-Entry Team and the Parish Committee, has developed a thoughtful set of guidelines governing in-person use of the church for First Parish events at various COVID infection levels. These include separate guidelines for use of the church buildings by third party organizations, like the

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FIRST PARISH IN WAYLAND
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Sharing Our Plate

On February 13 we will share our plate with [OUT MetroWest](#), an organization that builds communities where LGBTQ+ youth thrive.

OUT MetroWest's first program, Prism (formerly WAGLY), was started by UUs in Wellesley. Since then, OUT MetroWest became an independent, non-profit organization that offers more than a dozen youth meetings per month out of its hub in Framingham, and on-line programming around the region. Since 2011, the organization has directly served more than 1,000 youth at its meetings, has conducted dozens of trainings for local schools and organizations, and has welcomed thousands of supporters to its community events.

Lay Minister of the Month

February's Lay Minister is Kathie Schmidt. Please contact Kathie if you need a ride, a meal, a friendly, confidential visit or chat. We don't publish parishioner contact information in the Unitarian. Contact [the office](#) if you'd like to reach the Lay Minister, or if you need the password to the Parish Directory. The link to the Directory is available on our website [home page](#).

A Month of Sundays

The morning worship service begins at 10 a.m.

February 6

Freedom and Accountability

Rev. Dr. Stephanie May

SEEK Class, Youth Group

February 13

Welcoming Congregation Service

The Evolving Promise

Andrew Mackay, Laurel Whitehouse,

Rev. Dr. Stephanie May

SEEK Class, Youth Group

February 20

Where You Go, I Will Go

Alyssa Lee

February 27

The Ecology of Hope

Rev. Dr. Stephanie May

SEEK Class, Youth Group

February's Worship Theme

Widening the Circle

How to Attend Sunday Services

Our services are offered on-line only through mid-February due to high Covid numbers. Watch our weekly eblast for updates. Zoom links are in the Thursday and Sunday morning eblasts. Or find us on [Facebook](#) at First Parish in Wayland either live at 10 a.m. or watch the posted video later. Some weekday events are also available via Zoom. If you are not on our eblast mailing list, call the First Parish office at 508-358-6133 or [email us](#).

Reflections from Rev. Stephanie

Growing and Learning



This semester I will be teaching a class on Unitarian Universalist Polity (governance) at Harvard Divinity School. Unfortunately, the first time I taught the class in Spring 2020 the class didn't go as well as I had hoped. For one thing, a pandemic erupted and the course abruptly moved online. Also, the syllabus I had created reflected the Unitarian Universalism that I had first encountered as a student—just six years earlier. In a very short time, Unitarian Universalism shifted significantly in response to its own reckoning with structural and cultural legacies of white supremacy culture. My syllabus did not adequately reflect this shift.

In her recent sermon, Alyssa described white supremacy culture as the “elevation of the values, preferences, and experiences of white people above all others.” (<https://www.nea.org/resource-library/white-supremacy-culture-resources>.) This is a broader understanding of white supremacy culture than the KKK member who may be the first image that comes to mind when we hear “white supremacy.” While we may not be white supremacists in this latter sense, the reality is that our civil and religious culture has been shaped by assumptions of whiteness as preferential. In recent years, we have witnessed a kind of national reckoning with the ongoing influence of white supremacy culture and a call for anti-racism, anti-oppression work.

In redesigning the UU Polity course, I attempted to center anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multi-cultural issues (ARAOMC). I have come to believe that one of the core issues Unitarian Universalism faces today is the question of accountability for how well we in fact engage in anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multi-cultural work. Do we just claim these values or do we intentionally embrace our “growing edges” (as Alyssa preached) to live them out more fully?

On February 6, my sermon will explore the role of accountability in ARAOMC work as individuals and as a congregation and its tension with long-held UU values of freedom. How do we navigate both the gift of free belief and a sense of accountability for the impact of our (in)actions? Undoubtedly one sermon will not be adequate to address these questions! If you would like to go deeper into learning more, I invite you to consider a couple options:

- a) **ARAOMC in the UU World**—Tuesday, February 15, 7:00 p.m., online. Join me to learn more about what is happening in the larger UU world, including the [Widening the Circle of Concern](#) report and a movement to affirm an [8th Principle](#).
- b) [Beloved Conversations](#)—Multiple Sessions online beginning in March; register now. This groundbreaking program of Meadville Lombard Theological School invites participants to embody social justice as a spiritual practice through online curriculum, online Learning Pod discussions, and more. Join the Spring 2022 “Within” course to begin the journey. While there is a fee, scholarships are available from Meadville or talk to me about the fee or the program. Alyssa plans to participate and can also answer questions.

By engaging in this work, my hope is that my ministry, my teaching, and my living will remain relevant to the world around us and consistent with the values of justice, equity, and freedom I proclaim. While that Spring 2020 Polity course was not “fun,” I am grateful for the opportunity I received to learn from my students. May we all keep growing and learning.

In faith,
Rev. Stephanie

From the Parish Committee

Focusing on Congregational and Staff Wellbeing

The Parish Committee has one eye on the present and one eye on the future. A constant is our focus on the wellbeing of the congregation and staff. At our January meeting, Jay Woodruff updated us on the work of the ventilation committee to improve our air quality and safety. Brad and Susie Keyes have been working with Flemming Lund [Infrared Diagnostics](#) on air exchange tests. The Covid Re-Entry Task Force keeps us informed of Covid trends and changing protocols. With healthier air quality and a drop in Covid rates, we can look forward to increased use of our buildings.

Meanwhile, Rev. Stephanie, Polly Oliver, and all the staff have become tech wizards to offer virtual Sunday services. We are looking into getting them some help in managing the tech requirements of our multi-platform worship service. Kate Holland has moved the SEEK classes and Youth Group online for the time being. The demands on all our staff have been extraordinary and prolonged. I encourage you to drop them a few words of gratitude.

These past two years have seen a shift in all our programs and activities—and the work of many of our committees. If you are one of the many who lead these volunteer efforts, you have likely talked with your Parish Committee liaison. We are here to learn how you're doing, help you strengthen your committee, and help increase engagement throughout the community.

In Spring 2006, the Parish Committee adopted a Safe Congregation Policy to prevent sexual and physical abuse of children and youth. Since then, the idea of “safety” in congregations has expanded to include concerns about outside threats, internal conflicts, appropriate behaviors among all participants in congregational life, and of course public health and safety. Rev. Stephanie asked us to think about these issues, and a lively discussion ensued. How do we keep our congregation safe? When does healthy disagreement become outright conflict? How do we engage with each other and the outside world in healthy, faithful ways? A task force is being created to address these questions and to review and revise our outdated policy. Alyssa Lee, our ministerial intern, will serve as convener, bringing her extensive HR and legal background to this group.

And what about that eye on the future? Ted Barnes continues his effort to move important First Parish documents to the cloud to keep us all better informed. Our chairs are looking ahead to our spring stewardship drive and beginning to think about summer services. But the big “future news” is your incredible response to the Visioning Survey the Parish Committee conducted in December. We hoped for 50 respondents and got more than twice that (114!). For a discussion of the survey results and coming focus groups, see the article on page 1. Your thoughtful answers and suggestions made it

You Are Invited!

The Parish Committee and Rev. Stephanie invite you to join in conversations about how we nurture, grow, and expand connections, inclusion, and outreach.

Starting in February, we will hold a series of focus groups to deepen our understanding of the Visioning Survey results.

Please watch for details and plan to join the conversation!

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Happenings

First Parish Podcast Club Thursday, Feb. 17, 7:30 p.m. on Zoom New York Times Podcast *Nice White Parents*



American public schools do not guarantee every student an equal education. Who are schools serving, and who are they failing? And what makes white parents so powerful? The New York Times Podcast called “Nice White Parents” looks at schools, decades of school reforms, and the role of arguably the most powerful influencers: white parents.

Missed the first meeting of First Parish's new podcast club? No problem! You only have to catch up on one episode (or don't catch up at all). We will gather online on February 17 at 7:30 p.m. to discuss the second episode in the series. Our last meeting was an engaging discussion and we'd love to welcome more participants. If you have any questions about downloading podcasts, please contact Alyssa Lee at alee@uuwayland.org. You can also stream the episodes directly from the web at <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/23/podcasts/nice-white-parents-serial.html>. Join us!

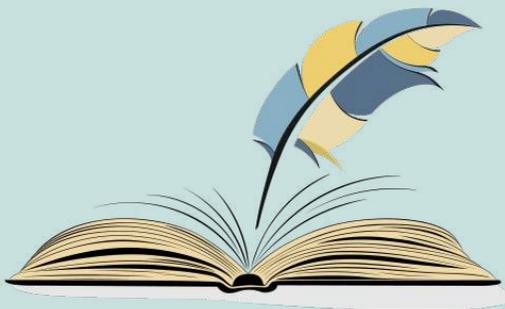


WK?FP@FP Who Knew? Fascinating People @ First Parish

David O'Leary

Friday, February 4 at 7:30 p.m. on Zoom

This month, **David O'Leary** will talk about his extensive involvement with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) and what he has learned from this important work. Watch the weekly eblast for the Zoom link. Contact [Kate Holland](#) with any questions.



Virtual Poetry Evening Tuesday, February 8, 7:30 p.m. on Zoom

Intern Minister Alyssa Lee is hosting another poetry night! Bring any poem that you love, it can be silly or serious, and share it with your fellow members of First Parish.

Contact [Alyssa Lee](#) to sign up or ask questions, or watch the eblast for the Zoom link and just show up.

Two Favorite Winter Session Events Return!

First Parish in Wayland Winter Photo-Walk and Photo-Enhancement Classes



Buddleia, January 2022

20220125.1300

Photographers Lynne Lipcon and Brad Keyes invite you to join them for a two-session class to enhance your photography skills.

The first class will be an outdoor photo-walk on Friday afternoon.

The second class will be a virtual class room using Adobe's Photoshop and Lightroom to alter and improve your digital photos.

Class One - Outdoor photo-walk in Wayland using your Digital DSLR or Phone Camera
February 11th, Friday afternoon 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Class Two - Using Photoshop and Lightroom (or free alternatives) class via Zoom
February 12th, Saturday afternoon 3:00 to 5:00 pm

Participants are welcome to sign up for just one or both classes.

Lynne and Brad have enjoyed photography for years and worked together on photo assignments and sharing their skills with the community.

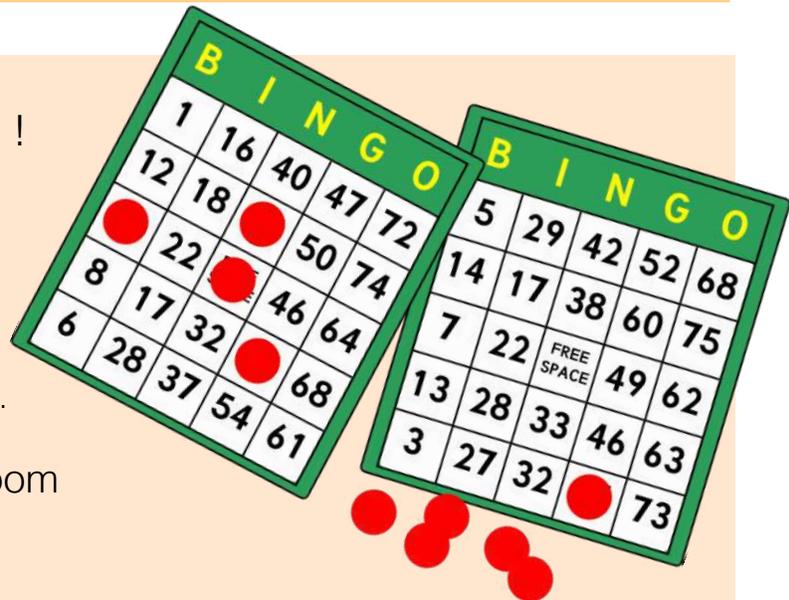
To sign up for the Winter Photo-Walk and Photo-Enhancement Classes, contact [Kate Holland](#).

Join Your Fellow FPer for B-I-N-G-O !

There is a reason that BINGO has been around for so long — it's fun, it's simple (leaves lots of room for socializing!), and it's suited to all ages.

Join together with First Parish friends to play Zoom BINGO. Watch the eblast for the Zoom link.

Saturday, February 12, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom



Welcoming Congregation Service on Feb. 13: The Evolving Promise

For almost 30 years First Parish has affirmed that we are a Welcoming Congregation. The Welcoming Congregation status is a covenant we make with each other in the world to be welcoming to all. It is an evolving promise. The February 13th service will focus on the spectrum of gender and gender expression, the importance of respecting pronouns, and moving beyond the two boxes of “male” and “female” when we open our doors and arms.



Why Pronouns are Important *by Andrew Mackay*

February 13th will be a welcoming service focusing on what it means to be a Welcoming Congregation. By entering into being a Welcoming Congregation, we made a promise to be accepting and to evolve with how identity and expression change with time. There will be a focus on what it means to be transgender, to transition from the two genders we think of the most, or to be neither male or female (what we call non-binary).



If you met me when I started coming to First Parish in Summer 2019 you would know me as Andrew, and people would refer to me as “he” or “him.” In the winter of 2020/2021 I became more aware that being male did not hold any attachment or meaning to me. I thus changed how I wanted to be addressed, first to either “he” or “they” pronouns, and now “they/them” pronouns. If you’ve ever mixed them up with me or someone else, it happens! Nobody is immune.

Pronouns and pronoun change are difficult. That’s why it’s important that our nametags display the pronouns we use, large enough to read easily.

There are more sets of pronouns than you could ever imagine: he, she, they, just using someone’s name (“Sume’s passed the test”) or whole new sets of pronouns created every day for someone’s individual experience. The importance is that pronouns are visible, and people know them and respect them.

Pronouns are a good starting point in talking about gender identity and to avoid assumption. Someone’s outward appearance does not mean they have an obvious pronoun set. I am non-binary, I have a beard sometimes but also very long hair I sometimes treat to look more female (or femme, that is, the typical female appearance we were raised with). But non-binary people can present being androgynous, masculine, feminine, or a mix of characteristics.

When I visit a UU congregation, pronoun stickers for visitors are a sign that the congregation is welcoming. When I enter worship I am me. I am non-binary, my relationship to gender is complex, but I have been acknowledged. I have been welcomed.

Do You Know What the Nominating Committee Does?

Did you know that First Parish has a Nominating Committee? The Nominating Committee has a very narrow focus, and is responsible only for selecting nominees for a small number of roles and committees. We have lots of volunteer roles and committees at First Parish, and most of them are fairly informal, and the Nominating Committee has no involvement with these. There are a few committees, however, that are selected by the Nominating Committee in a more formal process, as specified in our by-laws:

- Board of Directors (what we call “The Parish Committee”)
- Clerk
- Treasurer
- Trustees
- Moderator
- Nominating Committee



is charged to prepare a slate of nominees to bring to the Annual Meeting for a congregation-wide vote in May every year.

The Nominating Committee consults the Parish Committee, Stephanie, and Kate about anticipated leadership needs (particular skill sets or areas of expertise) needed for a given opening. For example, it can be very useful to have attorneys on the Parish Committee to help with contract negotiations and other legal matters as they arise. Overall, we strive to prepare a slate that will best represent the needs of the congregation as a whole.

If you are interested in a leadership position, please make sure that Stephanie and Kate are aware of your skills and interests. And feel free to reach out to any of us if you have questions.

Nominating Committee members: Jenny Silberman, Chair; Leah Levine; Jim Kitendaugh; M. Jane Williamson

For these special roles, the Nominating Committee

Visioning, continued from p. 1

- We have a strong desire to meet challenges, change, and grow in ways that ensure an even stronger future for First Parish in Wayland

If you haven't already read the full survey report, please [click here](#). I think you will agree that we are a deeply involved community at First Parish and are committed to building our future. As you'll see from the overall results, your responses to questions were thoughtful and thorough. We also captured many individual ideas and suggestions to pass on to the appropriate folks for further attention. We cannot emphasize enough how grateful we are for your participation.

This month, you will be invited to focus groups where we will explore further what it is that connects us to this community. Why are you here? What keeps you coming back? How do we nurture, expand, and grow connections? In what ways might we improve our outreach, welcome, and inclusion and be relevant to changing circumstances? We want to hear everyone's voice and especially those of our younger families to whom we will offer a dedicated group. Please say yes to the focus groups and help shape the vision for the bright future of this beloved community.

Many thanks!

Lynne Lipcon, for the Visioning Team

[A Year in Pictures](#)



I have found myself thinking a lot about what we have all gone through over the last year. We have had so many ups and downs that I have to admit that this current pause in in-person gatherings has left me feeling that we have gone backwards with the pandemic. I need to uplift myself. I am happy to report that I have found my lifeline and my optimism in my photo feed.

As I was going through the past year's photos to find a picture of my pup to send to my daughter, all of my photos from the life of First Parish went through my scroll. I will repeat what I have said before: In navigating the pandemic, working with the community of First Parish in Wayland has been one of the guiding stars that has helped me find my way. Going through the photos made me so happy and proud of this community. We have found ways to stay connected whether we are on Zoom or we put on our winter coats to meet outside.

I have great faith in this community, and I am lucky to get great strength during hard times from the work that I do here. I [made a slide show](#) of my photos from 2021. I hope it lifts your spirits as much as it did mine.

Kate Holland

Director of Education and Engagement

Winter Writing Group Thursdays at 10 a.m. on Zoom

Let the stillness of winter inspire your reflective and creative thoughts. Join Rev. Stephanie for a time to write and share briefly about our writing. Writing prompts provided or bring your own project.



Children's Book Suggestions from Kate

***Let the Children March* by Monica Clark-Robinson**

This book tells the story of the children's crusade during the civil rights movement.

***Mae Among the Stars* by Roda Ahmed**

This story is inspired by the story of Mae Jamison, the first African American woman in space.

***This Jazz Man* by Karen Ehrhart**

A fun jazzy update on the old song "This Old Man" that pays tribute to some of the best Jazz musicians.

***I Am Enough* by Grace Byers**

A lovely book that helps to teach children that each of us is perfect just the way we are.

***Superheros are Everywhere* by Kamala Harris**

A great story about how superheroes don't always wear capes. They are all around us each day and we too can become a superhero.



New Techniques, New Talents



Faithfully, every Wednesday night from 7:30 to 9 pm, First Parish Choir and I meet via Zoom to do some music together.

During this precious hour and a half each week, we work over the musical lines of a soon-to-be recorded anthem for an up-and-coming service. Part of the time, we chat and catch up with each other's lives. Occasionally we bring in a speaker to hone our musical interests or a vocal clinician to help us keep our voices healthy and supported. Often, we will end our rehearsal with a group lesson in vocal technique.... just to keep in shape, you know! Visitors and prospective members are always welcome at these sessions.

We do our best to record and present an appropriate anthem for a service every two weeks. Each of us has set up a "studio" in a corner of our home, complete with a computer, a piano or musical keyboard, an optional stand-alone microphone, a music stand, a mirror (yes, a mirror...to keep an eye on our vocal technique while exercising our voices and producing our tones), and a glass of warm water to keep our throats lubricated while practicing or recording...drinking cold water is a "no-no" for a singer.

Although our choir practices ordinarily consist of nine or ten voices, our Zoom Choir sessions often boast an attendance of four sopranos, four altos, three tenors and two basses. Although we cannot sing together in this medium because of the sound delay over Zoom, we individually share lines of music and rhythms. We are now used to singing "solo" for one another, receiving group affirmation, corrections and suggestions on our accuracy and vocal production.



After a piece is assimilated and learned in this way, we are ready to record. Each singer records a track over our Soundtrap system. I occasionally have comments and/or suggestions on this "first draft." I then do my own assimilating...while listening to and mixing the tracks for balance, ultimately producing a finished anthem to send off to be presented to all as part of the church service.



Emily Miller Mlcak leads a hymn during a Sunday service.

In addition to being devoted choir members, several of the First Parish Choir serve as live hymn-leaders for our Sunday services. As the hymns are chosen, the "fit" is made as to which of them will lead and explain the hymns of a Sunday morning. We treasure our hymn-leaders and thank them for their leadership in this vein of musicianship!

Our Parish Musicians, instrumental and vocal, are to be thanked profusely for their willingness to provide our services with live music from the choir loft. We are fortunate to have a goodly number of semi and professional players in our midst who are gracious enough to share their talents.

We are also fortunate to have our own splendid Areen Bell Choir

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Our Values in Action

Masks and Gloves for Uganda Exceeded the Goal

Thanks to the significant generosity of First Parish congregants, members of the Ugandan community in Waltham, local community members in Wayland, and the Lydia Maria Child Fund, the Masks and Medical Gloves Drive was a huge success. With donations continuing in January after the holidays, we far exceeded what we had originally projected. We expected to ship up to 40 pounds of masks and gloves last month, but our totals reached 72 pounds! This total, shipped by air to Uganda, amounted to several thousand of these much-needed items. Many, many thanks to all who were able to contribute and support!

Protective Gear On It's Way: A volunteer (left) inspects dozens of boxes containing masks and gloves, in preparation for shipping to Uganda. At right, First Parish member Robert Waswa (in mask) and Tony, a fellow volunteer, ready boxes for shipment to Uganda.



Music Notes, continued from p. 10

back in practice with a wonderful group of twelve ringers, all under the very capable direction of Linda Murdock. For the time being, the bell choir is practicing online, but when we resume live services, the group will ring, fully masked if need be, from its usual place at the front of the sanctuary

Of course, there are restrictions for the live music now being presented from the choir loft. Soloists and hymn leaders must remain masked and socially distanced from each other and me unless singing or playing, but this is easily accommodated and a small price to pay for our safety and for the ability to present live music for our services.

So, as you see, live music is alive and well in our First Parish community, and as the pandemic wanes, our music will stay strong and flourishing as it awaits its full resurgence when we all can meet once more "in the flesh"!

Polly Oliver
Music Director

The Alliance

Notice of Alliance Meeting: Thursday, March 3, 7 - 8 p.m. on Zoom

The Alliance will hold a brief but important business meeting on the evening of March 3. A quorum of 10 or more women of the Parish (including staff who choose to attend) is required to transact business. Please plan to attend if you possibly can.

For the first time since 1961, the Alliance Board is asking its members to vote on a significant update to the Bylaws. The clean proposal is included in full [at this link](#) and has been made available several times previously. Annotated copies, showing exactly what has been added or deleted, how it relates to previous versions of the Bylaws, and why each change was made, are available on request from Melinda Morgan, Alliance President as is a clean copy like the one in the hyperlink.

Penny Wilson will lead a discussion of the most significant changes: the revision to a more gender-neutral membership definition, the clarification of the Alliance's purposes, and the inclusion of suspension and dissolution provisions (not because we

want to, but because the last couple of years have taught us a lot). Previous invitations for comment, beginning in the fall of 2020, have garnered little if any feedback, so the discussion is expected to be brief. Please hold any comments you may have for the meeting so that all those interested may hear them. At the meeting, only women of the Parish (including female staff) will be able to vote but all interested potential members are welcome to attend. If you have strong feelings about any revision, please come.

Melinda Morgan will discuss Rummage 2022. Pat Sims will be recognized for her leadership of Undecorate the Tree 2021. Look for the Zoom link on the church e-blast or social@uuwayland. Hope to "see" you there!

The Alliance Board 2021-2022

Melinda Morgan, President; Kathy Heckscher, Secretary; Penny Wilson, Treasurer; Clare Lewis, Assistant Treasurer; Penny Beer, Vice-President

Rummage, continued from p. 1

Alliance. (You may know that the Alliance is not a church committee but a separate 501(c)(3) organization. It does not have the same First Amendment exemptions from government regulation that First Parish does.) As I write this, the church is closed to all third-party events. The Town of Wayland also has restrictions on indoor gatherings in effect that apply to the Alliance but do not apply to First Parish. It is difficult to know when the Covid metrics might allow a safe return for large gatherings. It is likely that we would have a very small window to plan and put together a Rummage-like event in late May. It is almost impossible to plan with this much uncertainty.

A second, equally important consideration is that we have no Rummage Queen or King for 2022. It is a big job at the best of times, and clearly, 2022 is not the best of times for this type of event.

In the absence of leadership and due to Covid concerns, The Alliance Board recommends that the Alliance not hold a Rummage event in 2022. We are, however, open to suggestions. If you have an idea for an Alliance fundraiser/fellowship event that could work in this uncertain environment, and the time and energy to be its Organizer/King or Queen, please contact Melinda Morgan sometime in February to discuss your idea. The Alliance vote will happen on March 3, and you are invited to be there. Please don't send an idea to Melinda unless you, personally, can devote the time and effort to make it happen. Good ideas abound in our community; unfortunately, these days, free time and strong backs do not. And thanks to all who helped make 75 years of Rummage a success before COVID.



The Alliance Board

Friendships Enrich Our Lives (and so do waffles)

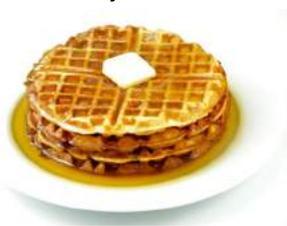


One of my favorite holidays is on February 13: Galentine's Day. Never heard of it? Well, you wouldn't be the only one. It stems from the show, *Parks and Recreation*, in which the lead character, Leslie Knope, invites her girl-

friends to a brunch in which they eat a bunch of waffles and celebrate one another. In the episode from 2010, Leslie says, "Every February 13, my lady friends and I leave our husbands and our boyfriends at home and we just come and kick it, breakfast style. Ladies celebrating ladies."

It has become a bright spot on the calendar for me and many of my friends, and in the inter-

vening years since this episode aired, I have received many Galentine's Day cards from friends near and far and sent my own in return.



The reason this kind of silly, made-up holiday resonates with me is that I love the idea of taking a day to highlight the impact of friendships on our lives. We rarely take the time to reach out to the people who help our lives have meaning and tell them just how important they are. When a friend passes away, many of us are left with regrets that we did not tell them we loved them or how much they meant to us. We always assumed they would be there and are now reeling from their absence in our lives.

This seems emblematic of the way the significance of friendships often gets short shrift in our culture. We celebrate romantic relationships and familial ones, but we rarely take the time to recognize the impact our friends have on our lives.

For instance, many of us grieve after the breakup of an important friendship. You share a significant portion of your life and emotions with this person. They have often been through some of the major moments of your life; therefore, their

loss can be incredibly painful. Yet, so few people talk about the hurt they are feeling about the ending of these relationships. We do not encourage people to mourn the breakup the same way we might encourage someone to mourn the ending of a romantic relationship, but often that is exactly what we need.

I value Galentine's Day because it is an opportunity for me to be thoughtful about the friendships in my life, reach out to those people, and tell them I love them.

This February 13, take some time to reach out to the important people in your life. You don't have to treat them to waffles or wish them a happy Galentine's Day, but it never hurts to tell someone you care for them or make it clear to them the impact they have had on your life. Let's take this February to let all the people in our lives know just how much we love them and value them—and maybe treat yourself to some waffles, too.

Alyssa Lee
Intern Minister

Parish Committee, continued from p. 4

abundantly clear that you remain deeply involved in First Parish and are committed to building our future. All that you cherish and safeguard today will guide us to a bright tomorrow.

We are so grateful for your support of First Parish this year and always. Please be [in touch](#) with ideas, questions, or concerns. Your Parish Committee wants to hear from you.

Lynne Lipcon, on behalf of The Parish Committee:
Deb Stubeda, Co-Chair, Annie Stubbs, Co-Chair, Heather Felton, Nan Jahnke, Ted Barnes, Larry Green, Barb Heffner, Lynne Lipcon, Nathalie Thompson, Jay Woodruff, Rev. Stephanie May, ex officio

Family Promise MetroWest Update

The December *Keeping the Promise* fundraiser yielded \$184,000 to support programs. Appreciation is expressed for contributions, including Christmas, end-of-year donations, and the auctioned holiday basket.



Shelter Program: While major construction is going on at the Natick Mulligan Street center, 4 families are being housed in local hotels. The shelter's opening date is now May 1, at the earliest. Once opened, there will initially be only 1 or 2 families staying there. Staff, who are all now working remotely, will return to renovated office spaces. Eventually the shelter will accommodate 3 families with up to 4 people per room.

Transitional Living: The two Bacon Street mothers have been focused on finding permanent housing, while working, and taking courses to improve their career options and income.

LIFE program: In 2021 the LIFE Program served 37 families, 46 people and 65 children. There are currently 23 families in the LIFE Program. Two single mothers entered the program in the last month. One works as a Personal Care Assistant, has two children, and now they recently moved into an affordable apartment. The LIFE program paid for the security deposit. The second family (parent works full time as a Security Guard, has one child) is looking for an apartment for her and her daughter. Meanwhile, two other families finally found apartments after searching for months. Apartments are especially hard to obtain now. And income requirements are high (much higher than the families' salaries).

Events planned for March (dates to be determined, and more information coming next month):

- All-Network Meeting
- Spring Walkathon (First Parish in Wayland will have a team)
- Orientation sessions for shelter volunteers, beginning in March

First Parish continues to be a support congregation for Family Promise. For more information [click here](#).

Lois Doerr, Coordinator

What If It Snows?

Sunday services are currently online only. However, when in-person services resume, winter weather may still be with us. In snowy or icy conditions, First Parish may move to online services only. If this happens, you can find out in several ways:

1. On our website, www.uuwayland.org
2. In an eblast to all subscribers
3. Through the UUSocial network
4. On the First Parish private Facebook group



photo by Judy Canty

Our Values in Action: Turning Point

Currents of Change at Turning Point

This has been a month of scrambling to adapt to one change after another. When the church went into lockdown early in January, the Turning Point Committee unanimously agreed to switch from cooked meals to \$150 grocery gift cards for the duration of lockdown, just as we did last year. Several people reached out, offering to help with the cost of the card. But Leo told us that, thanks to the big hearts of several donors and the frugality of our summer meal shoppers, the current balance of the Turning Point reserve is \$2750.42! So we turned these offers down for now, marveling once again at the generosity of our community.

Card in hand, Melinda Morgan, our winter driver, called Roberto Ortega, Turning Point's long-time chef, to arrange a drop-off. And called. And called. Two weeks and about a dozen phone calls later, we were stymied on card delivery and extremely worried about Roberto. Was he sick? Visiting his daughter in South America? It just wasn't like him to ignore calls. Finally, I called the main staff number at Turning Point and got Nestor Martino, who was introduced to you in last month's article. Nestor explained that Roberto was well, but that he no longer lived at Turning Point and now only worked occasional shifts there. We've seen before that change can be unsettling for Roberto. I will keep calling his number to let him know that he still matters to us and that we wish him well in whatever he is doing now. Roberto is very involved with his church, and I am sure that they will support him through this transition.



Nestor explained that he is on staff and can accept the gift card on behalf of Turning Point. Like Roberto, Nestor is a devout Christian. Unlike Roberto, Nestor is not at Turning Point 24x7, and Melinda cannot deliver every day. But he has regular days, so he and Melinda are working out this month's delivery. Nestor sees himself as an artist, first and foremost, though he works at other jobs, and welcomed the opportunity to introduce himself and his work to our community. He did correct me on one point, though.

"I wouldn't necessarily call myself Turning Point's Artist in Residence, though. I was hired by Jim Cuddy as an artist in residence for the South Middlesex Opportunity Council. Turning Point is just the program ran by it that I work at currently. Aside from that you can just let everyone there know I said, "Praise Jesus," and thanks for considering me and my work. I appreciate it. They can also check the mural out for themselves at 7 Bishop Street. If anyone is interested in having something done let me know. Having 'disposable income' isn't necessarily an issue...I also have a few examples of my work up on my website, cargocollective.com/nesone. ...Thanks, Nestor. Praise Jesus."

You can contact Nestor directly at [The Turning Point Shelter](#), where he usually answers the listed number on the days he works there. Nestor also gave me the contact information for Turning Point's Director, Renee Hicks, who is responsible for some of the big transformations Turning Point has

continued on p. 17

Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry

Happenings and Updates at the UUUM: Historic Clocks, Youth Program, Activist Artists

Rev. Mary Margaret Earl's recent inspirational sermon at First Parish reminded us of the importance of our roles in combating the racism that exists at all levels of society, but particularly that which is experienced by the African American community.

Through our "hands, minds and hearts" we can make a difference. Through the generous grant of the Lydia Maria Child Committee, we were able to support the creation of an accessible walkway in the newly created garden on the UUUM campus. This new space is gorgeous and will be a wonderful gathering place for us to join our hands with other UUs and Roxbury neighbors. To see more photos of the Peace Garden, [click here](#).

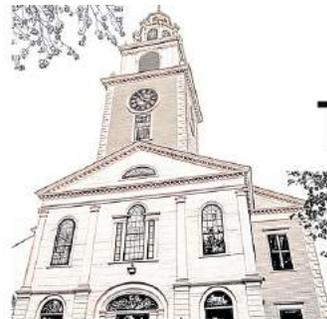


A view of the Peace Garden at the UUUM, supported by our Lydia Maria Child Fund.

Don't Miss These Upcoming Virtual Events:

Feb. 7, 6-7 p.m. Treasures of the Meetinghouse Series: "Behind the Scenes: Tackling a Major Restoration of an Historic Site."

This promises to be a fascinating look at the process of restoration which has been completed on the exterior of our First Church, Boston, as we now look forward to planning for the interior.



the
**Treasures of the
Meetinghouse**
series
Episode #04

Feb. 8, 6-8 p.m. Community Conversation: "Gentrification"

A conversation focusing on the causes and challenges faced by Boston residents living in areas such as Roxbury.

For Zoom links and more info, visit <https://www.uuum.org/attend>

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST URBAN MINISTRY
presents
COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS
Gentrification
Root Causes | Impact on Individuals & Families | Efforts to Combat It
RONEL REMY, DAVID MYNOTT, PAULA COAR from CITY LIFE/VIDA URBANA

Tuesday, February 8th, 6:00pm - 7:30pm
Join us for this virtual event: [uum.org/attend](https://www.uuum.org/attend)

City Life/Vida Urbana is a grassroots community organization committed to fighting for racial, social, and economic justice and gender equality by building working class power.
The organization promotes individual empowerment, development of community leaders, and building collective power to affect systemic change and transform society.

Event sponsored by: First Parish Church Weston

UU Urban Ministry | 10 Putnam Street | Roxbury, MA 02119 | www.uuum.org

Tuesday, February 8, 6:00pm - 7:30pm
Event and Zoom Info [HERE](#)

Thank you to event sponsor: First Parish Church Weston.

Ongoing “Drop-In” Programs

These Programs are Virtual

Mid-Week Check-In

Join with Rev. Stephanie, Alyssa Lee, and others for a casual check-in, conversation about your week, the monthly theme, or anything else.



Wednesdays, 4:30 p.m.

Watch the eblast and the Social email network for Zoom details

Knit One, Laugh Two!



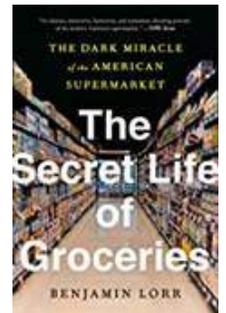
Do you love to knit or want to learn? The knitters are always happy to see new faces. This small group meets on most Wednesdays — now online. Come knit yourself into a new community. Email or call Heather Ryan for log-in information.

Most Wednesdays, 7 p.m., Online

Men’s Book Club

Are you sure you know what you’re putting on your table? Let’s explore this question when we discuss *The Secret Life of Groceries: The Dark Miracle of the American Supermarket*, by Benjamin Lorr. All who present as male are welcome. Questions? Contact Keith Sims.

Thursday, Feb. 3, 8 p.m.
Watch the eblast for Zoom log-in info



Turning Point, continued from p. 15

undergone in the last year. It is so nice to have phone numbers! They have been hard to get in the past. We haven't really given a Special Gift since Roberto's Glorious Griddle, and that was quite a while ago. All Roberto asked for this year was bottled water for the men, and that has been worked into our meal deliveries. Given the cash balance in our reserve, it might be time to talk to SMOC Director Hicks about another one. More on this next month.

The next delivery dates are February 14, March 14, and April 11. COVID being what it is - quick to peak, somewhat slower to decline - we expect that February will need to be another grocery gift card. But we hope that by March or April we will be back to cooking chili meals for the men of Turning Point. Thank you for your ongoing support. If you have any questions, please get in touch with any member of the Turning Point Committee – Lois Doerr, Peggy Holland, Sandy Hoyt, Marty McCullough, Melinda Morgan, Suzanne Reitz, Pat Sims, Annie Stubbs, Chauncey Wilson and me.

Respectfully submitted, Penny Wilson for the Turning Point Committee

What is a Planned Gift?

A Planned Gift is a frequently used term for a charitable provision included in a will. There is an increasing awareness of the joy of giving to a beloved organization with recognition, if desired, before or at the time of death.

Such gifts can be given with specific instructions on how they are to be used. Recent bequests to First Parish have been directed to Endowments, Social Action, Intern Ministry and the Music program. The endowments are especially important for the operations of First Parish and provide for maintenance of our Meetinghouse (East Sudbury Ministerial Fund) and general operations (The Ken Sawyer Fund).

Planned Gifts may be made in a great number of ways, including:

- A direct cash amount from an estate
- A percentage of an estate either before or after other wishes are accommodated
- The remainder of a retirement plan
- Life insurance
- Annuity gifts that can provide an income stream to the donor or specified recipients
- Gifts of real estate, works of art, or other valuables

Anyone considering making such a gift is asked to work with their estate attorneys to ensure a donor's wishes are carried out. If you have questions on how to get started, please contact John Thompson.



"The mission of First Parish and our values reflected in our community have inspired us to remember First Parish in our estate plan. We want to foster these values in future generations. Love never dies!"

Keith and Pat Sims
*Pictured above at the 2014
First Parish Auction*

The Wayland Unitarian is the monthly newsletter of the First Parish in Wayland, a Unitarian Universalist congregation. A full calendar of events is posted on our website, www.uuwayland.org. A directory of community members is also available; contact the office for the password.

Parish Office Hours

M, T, W, F: 9 a.m. — 3 p.m.; Th: 11 a.m. — 3 p.m.
In person W & F; 508-358-6133

Worship Service and SEEK (Spiritual and Ethical Exploration for Kids): **See Sunday Schedule, P. 2**

First Parish is located at 225 Boston Post Road in Wayland, at the corner of Routes 20, 126 and 27. See our website for parking information.

Our mailing address is:
First Parish in Wayland
PO Box 397, Wayland, MA 01778

Our Ministers

The Rev. Dr. [Stephanie May](#), Minister
The Rev. Ken Sawyer, Minister Emeritus
The Rev. Dr. [Deborah Pope-Lance](#), Affiliate Minister
[Alyssa Lee](#), Intern Minister

Our Staff

[Kate Holland](#), Director of Education and Engagement
[Polly Oliver](#), Music Director and Organist
[Karen Plaskon](#), Parish Administrator
[Leo Monzon](#), Bookkeeper
[Matt Freije](#), Technology Facilitator
Christine Bracken, Emma Silberman, Childcare Providers



FIRST PARISH IN WAYLAND
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