

Moving Our Shared Vision Forward

The Parish Committee continues to look toward a bright future as church members begin to implement some of the early projects that have arisen out of the Visioning program. As you may recall, well over 100 people enthusiastically participated in a visioning survey just 12 months ago. An impressive 60 members participated in online focus groups, generating more than 40 ideas that could well define what we see at First Parish in the future. Late this spring eight visioning exploratory teams continued the process and in October delivered implementation plans for the projects you brought forward.

Several plans – some “easy lifts” and others more involved – are already under way. For instance, the Facilities exploratory group looked at the shortage of parking spots in our two lots and recommended re-striping the lots. From that, John Thompson took the initiative to have our parking areas redrawn and lines repainted just a few weeks ago to create several new parking spaces. The same committee also developed a plan for reconfiguring the front of the Sanctuary to improve accessibility and to make it more inviting for performances as we reach out to the community around us. Also, based on a call for more First Parish events for the community, we began collaborating with Arts Wayland this fall, and have already held two concerts in the Sanctuary.



First Parish hosted a classical concert with Arts Wayland in October.

How can you help bring your visioning ideas to life? **After Sunday service on Dec. 18 we will have a Visioning Fair where you can learn more about some very exciting projects in need of volunteers.** You may also reach out to the Visioning Team of Lynne Lipcon, Ted Barnes, and Jay Woodruff at Visioning@uwayland.org. They will help connect you to whatever project interests you and they can link you to others who wish to be involved in realizing our vision. You are our future!

Jay Woodruff, for the Parish Committee

Holiday Happenings

Community Carol Sing Sunday, Dec. 4, 4:30 p.m.

As twilight falls, gather together on the steps of First Parish to sing favorite carols; then come indoors for hot chocolate and cookies.

Music Sunday: *Ceremony of Carols* Sunday, Dec. 11, 10 a.m.

Enjoy Benjamin Britten's joyful *Ceremony of Carols*, presented by the First Parish Choir and harpist Juli Miller, under the direction of Music Director Polly Oliver.

Blue Holiday Group Tuesday, Dec. 13, 7:00 p.m., Sunroom

The holiday season can be a challenging time. Gather with others who understand.

Winter Solstice Fire Wednesday, Dec. 21, 4:30 p.m.

Take a moment during the busy holiday season to celebrate the turning of the seasons around the fire pit at First Parish.

Christmas Eve Services Tuesday, Dec. 24, 4 p.m. and 7 p.m.

The family service at 4 p.m. includes a living Nativity pageant, outdoors if weather permits, and at 7 p.m., carols and candles usher in Christmas Eve.



Welcome to First Parish

We are a Unitarian Universalist congregation that affirms human dignity, community action, freedom of religious thought, and the power of love. We welcome everyone!

Our Mission

To Build Community

by forging caring connections and supporting one another through the joys, sorrows and mysteries of life.

To Search for Meaning

by creating opportunities for all ages to explore values and principles that orient and guide us through life.

To Deepen Our Spirituality

by gathering to share words and music, by nurturing private moments of reflection, and by cultivating reverence.

To Make a Better World

by engaging in compassionate service and promoting social justice.



In This Issue

- 1 Moving Our Vision Forward
- 1 Holiday Happenings
- 2 Our Mission
- 2 How to Connect With First Parish
- 3 A Month of Sundays
- 3 Christmas Day Online Service
- 3 Lay Minister of the Month
- 4 Reflections from Rev. Stephanie
- 5 From the Parish Committee
- 6 The Moms and Kids Thank You
- 6 December Events
- 7 Education and Engagement, SEEK
- 8 Music Sunday and Bells
- 9 Pop-Up Wrap-Up
- 10 Goods Arrive in Uganda
- 10 Family Promise Update
- 11 From our Intern Minister
- 12 Auction Preview, Monthly Events
- 13 UUUM News
- 14 Tips from Karen, Editor's Note
- 15 December Events

How to Connect With First Parish

Attend Sunday services and other events: Come in person, or when available, attend via Zoom or YouTube livestream. Zoom links to Sunday services and some other events are in the weekly eblast.

Sign up for news: [Visit our website](#) to see what's new and sign up for our newsletter and eblast.

Find us on social media: We have a public Facebook page and a private Facebook group. Contact the office to join. We are also on Twitter and Instagram.

Join our email listserv: Our congregation is a friendly and useful resource for recommendations ranging from plumbers to travel, and all sorts of other non-church-related topics. Contact the office or Chauncey Wilson, listserv moderator, to sign up.

A Month of Sundays

The morning worship service begins at 10 a.m.

December 4

Exploring Earth-Based Religions

Rev. Dr. Stephanie May

In December we explore the cluster of religions grounded in connections to the earth. In our short service, we will celebrate the upcoming Winter Solstice with a “Decking of the Halls.”

Please bring your own greens or some will be provided.

Following the all-ages service, everyone is invited to join one of three opportunities to learn more about Earth-Based Religions.

- **Exploring the Pagan Wheel of the Year**, Story and Activities, Laurel Whitehouse and Kate Holland, Stokey Library
- **Native American Story and Environmental Activity**, Rev. Stephanie, Vestry
- **Celebrating, Honoring, Healing**: A Collection of Earth-Based Rituals — Book Discussion with Suzanne Reitz, author, and Alyssa Lee, Sanctuary and online

December 11

Music Sunday:

A Ceremony of Carols by Benjamin Britten

Homily: Wolcum

Rev. Dr. Stephanie May

SEEK Class

December 18

Kindling the Light

Rev. Dr. Stephanie May, Intern Minister Alyssa Lee,

and Lea Anderson

SEEK Class

Saturday, December 24

4:00 p.m. Multigenerational Living Pageant, outside*

Rev. Dr. Stephanie May, Kate Holland, Alyssa Lee

**Weather permitting*

7:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

An Earthly Birth

Rev. Dr. Stephanie May and Alyssa Lee

December 25

A New Day

A special online service by UU Reverends Heather Janules and Laura Solomon

Sharing Our Plate

On Christmas Eve, 100 percent of our collection plates will go to support [Family Promise MetroWest](#), which works to transform the lives of families with children who are facing homelessness by mobilizing a diverse community to provide shelter, education and comprehensive support.

December's Lay Minister

Contact the office to reach December's Lay Minister if you need a ride, a meal, a friendly, confidential visit, or a 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 [members' page](#).

Christmas Day: A New Day

The Rev. Dr. Laura Solomon of the UU Church of Reading and the Rev. Heather Janules of the Winchester Unitarian Society invite you to celebrate December 25 — Christmas morning and the last day of Hanukkah — through a pre-recorded service. This service includes something for everyone, with the kindling of many lights, a Time for All Ages, hymns and carols and two short reflections exploring what Christmas and Hanukkah offer us as we approach the new day. Whether you are attending at home or in community, tune in to our YouTube channel for this collaborative celebration of a special Sunday morning.





Again we stand at a seasonal turning as holidays arrive and the weather turns cold. Perhaps for many of us we look forward to holidays for particular reasons, such as a favorite food, beloved activities, or time with family and/or friends. For me, I also simply love that they are holidays, or, as the etymology suggests, holy days. A holy day is a day set apart from the routines of our ordinary time. On holy/holi-days regular time is disrupted in ways that shift our attention and interactions. Each holiday is an opportunity to be reminded of a key moment, element, or value that impacts how we understand ourselves and/or our larger shared culture or faith.



Aaron Burden, Unsplash

Each holiday is an opportunity to be reminded of a key moment, element, or value that impacts how we understand ourselves and/or our larger shared culture or faith.

While holidays may disrupt the daily routine, by repeating year after year they also become part of an annual routine. The arrival of a certain holiday becomes how we know it is a particular moment or season. Within earth-based religions, festivals and holy/holi-days emerge from the rhythms of the natural year and intentionally mark the seasonal changes. As Laurel Whitehouse and Kate Holland will explore on "RE for All" on December 4, many earth-based religions embrace a great turning of the wheel that follows the cycles of the sun and the natural cycle of the growing season. In this way, pausing to notice and to celebrate the points of turning on the wheel of the year becomes a spiritual practice that connects us to the ever-unfolding cycles of Life.

Recognizing the signs of seasonal change has become a larger part of my own spiritual life over the years. I delight at the arrival of crocus and hellebore. I wait for peonies to explode as Flower Sunday approaches. I smile to see the first tinge of red leaves in the trees in late summer. And, during the pandemic, I began a spiritual practice of marking each new moon with a short ritual and intention for the coming month. Noticing the ways that my one small life exists within these larger circles of time and life brings a sense of perspective. I learn that no life can exist

Noticing the Turning of the Wheel

independently of others, which reinforces not only a sense of interdependency but also a sense of possibility. I wonder in what ways my living might help—or harm—the interdependent system of which I am a part.

As we explore Earth-Based Religions this month, I invite us all into reflection about the meaning of the arrival of winter. In what ways does this season of cold, of hibernation, of quiet, and of more darkness impact how you connect with nature, with others, with yourself? And, if you wish, I invite you to "Read Along with the Rev" in this month's book, *Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times*, by Katherine May (no relation). There are three copies available in the Commons to borrow. On Wednesday, December 28, 7:00 p.m., I will lead a conversation about the book and the theme as well. Perhaps together we might discover new lessons from the earth in this season.

In peace,

Rev. Stephanie

UU Urban Ministry Watch Party Tuesday, December 6, 5:45pm Vestry and online

Join your UUUM delegates in a watch party for the next "Community Conversation" on "Supporting Small Business in the City: Barriers and Opportunities" with Rev. Willie Bodrick, 14th Senior Pastor of the Historic Twelfth Baptist Church in Roxbury.



Join us in person or [online](#) to discuss ways to support small and minority-owned businesses in the Boston area. Beverages and light fare provided. Contact Lea Anderson or Rev. Stephanie with questions or to RSVP.

Rethinking the Seven Principles

In addition to discussing the Visioning work that is summarized on page 1, the Parish Committee took up a number of other important topics at its November meeting.

Potential major revision of Article 2 of the UUA bylaws.

Bylaws for the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) are subject to revision from time to time. This year the UUA is tackling a major topic: a change to Article 2, which touches on core UUA Principles and Sources. The Parish Committee wants to make you all aware of this subject and the process associated with proposing and possibly passing such an important article. The current draft proposes replacing the seven Principles with a new statement that centers Love as the energy that drives Unitarian Universalism, calling it the force that powers the six interconnected values that we share and embody: Justice, Generosity, Evolution, Pluralism, Equity, and Interdependence. The proposal also casts a wider net in acknowledging our Sources. To read the current draft, go to [the UUA website](#). The current bylaws, including Article 2, [can be found here](#).

The current draft proposes replacing the seven Principles with a new statement that centers Love as the energy that drives Unitarian Universalism.

The Article 2 revision is under development by the UUA Study Commission, which will submit a final draft to the UUA board this coming January for inclusion on the agenda for the 2023 General Assembly Meeting. In the meantime, Mini Assemblies will be scheduled to discuss Article 2. During GA 2023, delegates will then need to cast a majority vote to accept the proposal. If it passes it will then require a 2/3 majority vote the following year at GA 2024 to become a newly revised article in the bylaws. Those interested in learning more about the process can contact Reverend Stephanie and/or Nathalie Thompson, our UUA Denominational Affairs liaison.

Interest in First Parish by families appears to be growing. Rev. Stephanie May reported that we consistently see 12-14 children at Sunday services. While we are not currently staffing a nursery

2022–2023 Parish Committee: Lea Anderson, Heather Felton (Treasurer), Larry Green, Barbara Heffner, Nan Jahnke (Clerk), Lynne Lipcon, Deb Stubeda, Nathalie Thompson, Jada Williams, Jay Woodruff

Sundays, we can readily arrange for care for the very young if demand arises.

Rev. Stephanie will take a well-earned sabbatical next year, from mid-November 2023 to mid-March 2024, as per her Letter of Call from this congregation. (She accrues a month of sabbatical time for every year of service, and will be using four of those months next year.) While she is away, we will be served by a sabbatical minister, chosen by the Parish Committee in consultation with Rev. Stephanie, and paid for with funds that would ordinarily be paid to an Intern Minister.

Parish Committee member Larry Green has graciously taken on the 2023 Canvass effort and is looking for assistance and advice to help make this another successful year for our long-lived institution.

Submitted by Jay Woodruff on behalf of the Parish Committee

**Come to the
Visioning Fair!**



**Sunday, Dec. 18, 11:00 a.m.
In the Vestry**

**Come see how you can be the
change you want to see at
First Parish!**

The Moms and Kids Thank You!

The tree was in the Commons this year decorated with red and green paper candy canes. Having the tree back in these post-Covid times brought us joy, didn't it? It was apparent from your smiles and thumbs up and in your exclamations of, "Oh, I'm so glad we are doing Undecorate again." "I've missed shopping for the moms and kids."

Besides the Target gift cards, the moms asked for paper goods, cleaning supplies and toiletry items – all basic items and things you don't take with you if you are leaving an unsafe environment wearing only the clothes you have on your back. The kids also needed basics like socks, underwear and pajamas, but they also wished for puzzles, books, cars and trucks, craft kits, art materials, wooden blocks and stuffed animals.

And so, you and your kids signed out candy canes, and you shopped for the Target gift cards, the toilet paper, the shampoo, pajamas, the puzzles, books and crafts. You wrote checks so we could purchase gift cards for you.

On Tuesday, November 29, we filled several cars with your gifts and headed over to REACH in Waltham, the agency First Parish partners with that provides support and education to survivors of domestic violence. In addition to all the gifts and gift cards there were also over 150 rolls of wrapping paper. Once again we thank Steve Collins, our super wrapping paper bargain shopper!

Our First Parish community has helped to bring joy during a time that can be stressful and sad. A huge thank you from the moms and kids for your support – both the material support and the emotional boost of knowing that people care.

Pat Sims for the Alliance's Undecorate the Tree Committee: Linda Collins, Lois Doerr, Peggy Holland, Marney Ives, Suzanne Reitz, Suzanne Woodruff and honorary members Steve Collins and Keith Sims, and the Alliance Board: President, Melinda Morgan; VP, Penny Beer; Treasurer, Penny Wilson and Secretary, Kathy Heckscher.



First Parish undecorators

Spaghetti and Hide & Seek

Friday, Dec. 2, 6:00 p.m.

Come join Kate and First Parish friends for a delicious spaghetti dinner and a fun game of Hide and Seek around the downstairs of First Parish. We will end our evening with glow sticks in our lovely dark Sanctuary. All ages are welcome to come and eat and play. Questions? Contact Kate Holland.



Deck the Halls

Sunday, Dec. 4, 10:00 a.m.

Bring a sprig or two of evergreen to decorate the Sanctuary as we sing Deck the Halls!

Ugly, Festive and Extra-Festive Sweaters

Sunday, Dec. 11, 10:00 a.m.

We've decked the halls on December 4; now let's deck ourselves out with our favorite ugly, festive, or extra festive holiday clothing. Wear something in your closet or get creative in adorning your sweater. During Coffee Hour, we'll have special awards for your festive best.



Read Along With the Rev.

Wednesday, Dec. 28, 7:00 p.m.

Join Rev. Stephanie in a discussion of the book *Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times*, by Katherine May (no relation). Look in the Commons for copies of the book you can borrow.



First Parish Offers Lots of Ways to Mark the Holiday Season

At a recent meeting with the Worship Working Group, we talked about the joys of the season, like time spent with loved ones and the opportunities for quiet reflection and moments of peace. We also all acknowledged that not everyone has an easy time during the holiday season. This really helped us to bring attention to the services and programming that we are offering over the month of December.

To start the month off with some fun and joy, on Friday, Dec. 2 at 6:00 p.m., join me in the Vestry for a spaghetti dinner and a fun game of hide and seek!! Then let's finish the night off with some glow sticks in our beautiful, dark Sanctuary. Keeping with our monthly theme of earth-based religions, we will start the month by enjoying the pagan tradition of decking the halls during our Dec. 4 Sunday morning service. Bring a sprig of evergreen to tuck around the Sanctuary to mark the season. Then come on back at 4:30 to our annual Carol Sing. Sing the classics with the New Horizons Band and we may even get a special visit from Santa.

The December calendar at First Parish is bursting with activities both quiet and festive. Mark your calendar and join in!

On Dec. 6 at 6:00 p.m. come join Lea Anderson and Rev. Stephanie for a Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry watch party. The following Sunday is Music Sunday which is always a delight. To continue to "get our festive on," wear an ugly or extra festive Christmas sweater to celebrate the season.

Alyssa Lee will lead a Blue Holiday Group on Dec. 13 at 7:00 p.m. for those who would value support during the holiday season. On Sunday the 18th there will be a Visioning Fair after the service. Find out the ways that you can help First Parish realize our vision for the future. On the Winter Solstice, Dec. 21 at 4:30 p.m., join Rev. Stephanie for a fire to warm your soul with conversation and reflection on the year.

I want to put in a plug for Minister's Lunch on Dec 14 at 11:30 a.m. Minister's Lunch welcomes anyone no matter your age to come enjoy soup and really great conversation. If December is too busy, please keep it in mind for another month. It is a lovely way to have lunch with some of your First Parish friends.

Then to finish the season off, join us for our Christmas Eve services at 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. The 4 p.m. service will feature our Living Nativity and this year we will be adding a family bell choir to

the service. Our 7 p.m. service will be filled with Christmas carols, candles and a performance from our Bell Choir. I love December; there are so many ways to celebrate the season together in joyful and quiet ways.

On another note, there has been a change in our Nursery for the remainder of the year. We haven't had any babies or preschoolers attending this year so going forward we will use the nursery space as an area that parents can take their children to play, and we will have a computer set up so we can stream the service for the parents. We would also like to identify some folks who would be willing to possibly cover the nursery should we start to have families with smaller children join us. If you would be willing to help occasionally, please drop me an [email](#).

Kate Holland

Director of Education and Engagement



On Sun. Nov. 27, the SEEK class made soup to serve at Coffee Hour, to raise money for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

Music Sunday, Dec. 11, 10:00 a.m. A Ceremony of Carols, by Benjamin Britten

There's nothing like a long and dangerous Atlantic crossing during World War II to inspire a bit of musical composition, it seems. That scenario provided the circumstances for Benjamin Britten (pictured) to write *A Ceremony of Carols* some 80 years ago while crossing U-boat infested waters. Your choir and Juli Miller, a virtuoso harpist, will present this remarkable work at this holiday season's Music Sunday performance on December 11, under the baton of Music Director Polly Oliver.



Composer Benjamin Britten

Britten came across a book of medieval poems while berthed in Halifax, Nova Scotia, during a nearly one-month crossing, returning to England after spending three years in the United States, according to Len Mullenger, founder of MusicWeb International. Originally written for treble voices with 11 movements, Britten created a version for all voices - soprano, alto, tenor and bass - just a year later. That's the version you will hear on Music Sunday.

On its face, *A Ceremony of Carols* would seem to be much too scattered a collection of Christmas-related texts to work as a unified piece. It opens with a processional Gregorian chant in traditional Latin and cycles through a broad mix of Middle English and early Modern English texts, as Wikipedia explains it. However, inspired sequencing and a subtle genius for building a musical framework for the texts makes *Ceremony* one of the holiday season's enduring classics.

Join us for Music Sunday, December 11!

The Bells Ring Once More!

After a summer journey to Schulmerich Bells in Pennsylvania, the bells of the Areen Bell Choir are back in the white-gloved hands of their players. Under the direction of Linda Murdock, the bells were played for the first time since this spring at the community ecumenical service held November 20 at First Parish.

The Areen Bell Choir bells had not been serviced during their nearly 20 years of service at First Parish, after being given to the church by Tricia and David Marshall in honor of Tricia's mother. The cost of returning this three-octave set to as-new condition was high, but we view it as absolutely worth the expense. The refurbishment was made possible by combining money from the Music Program, which you fund annually as First Parish members, the First Parish Music Fund (originally and primarily funded by former choir member Hattie Best), and a generous late summer gift to the Music Fund from Linda Murdock and Diane Muffitt.

The First Parish music program is built on passion for music on the part of both listeners and participants, so let's all give ourselves a hand for bringing the bells back into our community's life.

With thanks from the Music Committee.

Children's Bell Choir for Christmas Eve

Interested children and their parents are invited to play a version of "Carol of the Bells," using children's bells with piano accompaniment, at the 4 p.m. Christmas Eve service. There will be three short, half-hour rehearsals after the Sunday services on December 4, 11, and 18, for kids and parents who wish to participate. Interested? To sign up, or for more information, contact Linda Murdock.



Holiday Pop-Up Shop: Successful and Fun



Pop-Up Helpers

They say many hands make light work, but the folks who made the Pop-Up Holiday Shop happen did some heavy lifting, both literally and figuratively. Here are some “day of” helpers, from top, l to r): Kate Holland; Jenny Silberman, Bobby Robinson, Beth Butler, Lois Doerr, Deb Stubeda and Jeanne Robison; Debbie Levens, Kathy Heckscher, Suzanne Tiberii, Jane Williamson, and Jan Miner; Jan Miner and Barb Heffner. Thanks to these terrific helpers and all those behind the scenes.

Holiday Pop-Up Wrap-Up

Our Holiday Pop-Up Sale on Nov. 19, with bonus shopping after the Sunday morning service, proved a fun event for volunteers socializing during set-up and netting funds for three fair trade nonprofits: our own Equal Exchange project, supporting small farmers around the world; [Project Have Hope](#), supporting women and families in Uganda; and [Under the Same Moon](#), funding a Guatemalan school.

The Kids’ Shop, held in the transformed and festive nursery space, was especially popular, with small shoppers proudly selecting gifts for loved ones.

Our sale of holiday décor generated \$407 for First Parish, the Equal Exchange table raised \$250, and the other two fair trade nonprofits raised more than \$2,400.

The event proved a good opportunity to reach out to our local community, while improving the global community, as expressed by our [sixth principle](#).

Warm thanks to all who volunteered during the week, who staffed on the day of the sale, and who helped tear down and clean up on Sunday.

Linda Collins, Barb Heffner, Deb Stubeda, and Suzanne Tiberii

Our Donations Reach Their Destination A Uganda Project Update

Great news: Your 'Spring UP' donations have arrived in Uganda. You sent your used clothes, household items, yoga mats (for sleeping on the ground), books, puzzles and games to Uganda via ship last May with funding by the LMCF Committee. Crane Cargo provided a discount because of the nature of our work.

Robert Waswa and Maria Kisiriko, First Parish Members, orchestrated the distribution of your donations to the schools, orphanage, and people that they thought needed our donations the most.

Now we have the pictures of the distribution in Uganda. We've put a few here, and soon we hope to have a PowerPoint presentation running at church on a Sunday so you can see lots more. Maybe you'll see something you donated. Some Steering Committee members will be there to answer questions and we'll have a big celebratory cake and a chance for children to do a Ugandan craft.

The Uganda Project Steering Committee: Robert Waswa, Barbara Pedulla (Co-Chairs), Maria Kisirika, Ted Barnes and Dan Lewis



Scenes from Uganda as the First Parish donated goods arrive.

Family Promise Update

As of the time of this month's newsletter submission, here's the news about Family Promise Metrowest:

The live and virtual fundraising concert



event, *Keeping*

the Promise, took place on November 18. A lead up message just before the concert said:

"Speaking of promises, over the last few weeks we've been sharing what this word means to us—why it's part of our name and how our promises show up in the work we do every day with our families. Three of the most important promises we make to the families in our programs is to help them create stable housing for their family, to ensure they have access to safe childcare, and to support their pursuit of education to build more hopeful, prosperous futures."

The three parents from the Shelter, Life, and Sail programs that staff interviewed during the show touched on each of these themes.

Another highlight of the evening was the introduction of the new executive director, Danielle Conti. She announced some new intentions under her leadership: lobbying for government funding for homeless families and working to increase the stock of affordable housing in the area.

The KTP Auction closed on November 28. At this writing, one of our parish members is the lead bidder for the French wines' basket we created!

continued on p. 13



The Only Constant is Change

Recently, my son and I were driving to his school and he called out from the back seat: "The sun is in the wrong place! Why is it in the wrong place?" We know that the sun can be in a different place given the time of day and the time of year. He was articulating that the sun had primarily been in the same spot on his way to school every morning and now something was different. His experience of the world had changed.

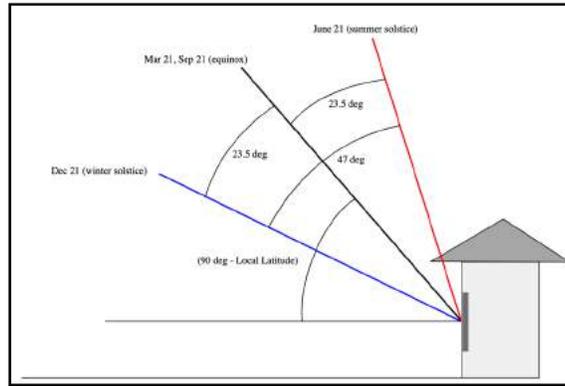
It made me think about how often the main consistency in our lives is change. Sometimes, change is so frequent that many of us do not notice the smaller changes in the world around us, like the position of the sun in the sky, until we are forced to reconcile with the larger changes that the turning of the seasons forces upon us – such as the sun setting earlier every evening and the temperatures cooling around us.

I am not someone who particularly welcomes change. Ideally, I want to be the kind of person who relishes not only the changing of the seasons in nature, but also the changing of the seasons of life. This is something I have been working on, but, if I am honest, most of the time, I am probably still yelling at the sky that I do not like that the metaphorical sun is moving on me. It should stay in the same spot!

As another year is drawing to a close, I wonder how many of you are welcoming the change of seasons and the change to a new year. Are you someone who clings to the previous year because it is familiar or do you welcome the promise of a new year and what it might bring? Or, are you somewhere in the middle?

For many of us, change can be difficult. It can disrupt our lives and call us to stretch out of what is comfortable and safe. But it

can also bring with it the promise of something new and exciting, challenge us in ways we never thought possible, and encourage us to grow in unexpected ways.



Many of the great moments in our lives are marked by the ending of one phase of life and the beginning of another. Knowledge of that still does not make it any easier for many of us. How do you mark moments of great change in your life? How do you mark the end of one season, or even the end of a year, and welcome a new season or year into your life?

As the year draws to a close, I like to take a walk and take stock of the past year and how my life has changed, and what I am looking forward to in the coming year. Do you have any personal rituals you follow to mark this time? I would love to hear about them.

Alyssa Lee
Intern Minister

How do you mark moments of great change in your life? How do you mark the end of one season, or even the end of a year, and welcome a new season or year into your life?

Sign Up for Flowers

Fresh flowers or plants in our Sanctuary provide a touch of beauty and an opportunity to honor or remember loved ones. It's easy to sign up; just [click here](#).

If you have questions or would like help getting or arranging flowers, contact Rita Anderson or Suzanne Woodruff.

It's a '70s REMIX!

First Parish Auction and Party: Sat., Feb. 4, 2023

Whether you came of age in the 70's, were born in the 70's, or studied the 70's in your high school history class . . . it's this year's theme for the grandest party yet to be experienced in our First Parish community. We want you there!

Our purpose? To have fun, be silly, eat and drink together, and raise some much-needed funds for all the good work here at First Parish. We'll be together to bid on unique items in our auction and watch a fabulous program, with Master of Ceremonies

David O'Leary and friends. There'll be music, contests (best dressed, best hairstyle, etc.) prizes, raffles and bidding wars. It'll be a romp that folks will be talking about for decades ahead.

Yes, we'll be gathering **in person** throughout our Vestry and Commons — transformed to envelop us in an era that shaped and defined many social movements. We'll **beam the program** portion of our evening on Zoom so anyone can **participate virtually**. And everyone can join in the **bidding starting in January when we launch our ONLINE AUCTION**.

If you have a special item to offer our Auction Team — an idea to host a dinner or event, have a special creation for folks to bid on, or a vintage item of value — send an email to the FP Office and Karen will get your inquiry to our Auction Committee.

So, pull out your tie-dyed T-shirts! Research your hairdo (You, too, guys!). Practice your disco moves. Or, just come as you are. Join us on Saturday, February 4 to get your groove on!



Men's Book Club

Thursday, Dec. 1, 8 p.m. on Zoom
Watch the eblast for Zoom log-in info

Join us to discuss *Frankie's Place: A Love Story* by James Sterba. All who identify as male are welcome. Questions? Contact Keith Sims.



Minister's Lunch

Wed., Dec. 14, 11:30 a.m., Vestry

Join Rev. Stephanie and fellow parishioners for a light lunch and good company. All are welcome! RSVP requested but not required [by email](#) or 508-358-6133.

Mid-Day Meditation

Mondays, 12 p.m. on Zoom

Details in weekly eblast

Join together on Zoom for an hour to gather in community to meditate. All are welcome whether you meditate often or are new to the practice. Contact [Kate Holland](#) with questions.

Knit One, Laugh Two!

Most Wednesdays, 7 p.m. on Zoom

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.

The Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry (UUUM) offers meaningful opportunities for First Parish participation. Last month we heard from Executive Director and Senior Minister Rev. Mary Margaret Earl through her sermon "The Gardener's Guide to Justice" on dismantling racism: reflections on trying, failing, and learning from it all. She talked about the racial wealth gap and ways of supporting local minority-owned businesses, a topic explored through our Visioning process here at First Parish.

"Community Conversations" Watch Party

Tuesday, Dec. 6, 5:45 p.m. in the Vestry and Online

You are invited to join your UUUM delegates (Rev. Stephanie, Susan Crowley Bechtel, and Lea Anderson) on Tuesday, December 6 at 5:45 p.m. in the Vestry and [on Zoom](#) at a watch party for the next "Community Conversation" on "Supporting Small Business in the City: Barriers and Opportunities" with Rev. Willie Bodrick, 14th Senior Pastor of the Historic Twelfth Baptist Church in Roxbury. Join us to discuss ways to support small and minority owned businesses in the Boston area. Beverages and light fare provided. Contact Lea Anderson or Rev. Stephanie with questions or to RSVP.

And speaking of small business in the city, the Urban Ministry is supporting [Live Like A Local Tours Boston](#). If you always wanted to explore great food and historical neighborhoods, please take a look at four tours offered through this local business.

- Nubian Square Walking Tour
- 21+ Roxbury Food and Liquor Walking Tour
- 21+ JP Food & Brew Walking Tour
- JP Food & Culture Walking Tour

Meetinghouse Campaign Update

Dream Collaborative, the architectural firm working with many local and minority owned contractors on the restoration of the UUUM Meetinghouse, has produced a [1-minute-long video](#). It inspires and informs about the work remaining to turn the

historic Meetinghouse into a multi-purpose community gathering space and cultural center alive with the artistic, educational, civic, intellectual and community life of Roxbury and beyond.

A Morning in the Peace Garden

Thank you, Lynne Lipcon and Susan Crowley Bechtel, for helping to plant 200+ bulbs that will bloom in the spring!

To find out more about the UUUM, please visit uuum.org.



Susan Crowley-Bechtel (top) and Lynne Lipcon planted bulbs in the UUUM garden.

Lea Anderson

Family Promise, continued from p. 10

First Parish volunteers are scheduled to cook and deliver dinner on Wednesday November 30. Two of us will provide dinner support in person at the Natick shelter that evening. Others can help by donating gift cards to Stop and Shop.

Our next dates for volunteering are the weeks of February 12, May 14, and August 6.

In the meantime, please keep Family Promise on your end-of-the-year gift giving list.

Thank you,
Lois Doerr, First Parish in Wayland
Coordinator for FPMW





Question of the Month: *How do I make a donation to First Parish?*

As we approach the end of the calendar year, now is a good time to bump up your tax deductions by making a donation (or early pledge payment) to First Parish! NOTE: The office will be closed over Christmas week, so **please get donations in by Dec. 19 to have them noted for calendar year 2022!**

There are several easy ways to make your donation:

1. Send a check (as always) to PO Box 397, Wayland MA 01778. Please put in the memo what the donation is for (pledge, additional donation, Sunday plate with date or plate share organization, or other First Parish fund).
2. Give online at www.uuwayland.org/donate. Here you can make a single donation via credit card or directly from your bank OR set up automatic payments to be taken weekly, monthly, etc.

NOTE: If you're already making automatic payments and need to change your payment information:

- Go to our website donations page (www.uuwayland.org/donate).
- There's a login link at the top right of the page.
- Once you login, there is a "Profile" link at the top right.
- If you click on that, you will see a left side menu with "Transactions", "Payment Methods", etc.
- Clicking on "Payment Methods" will let you see or change your payment methods
- Clicking on "Transactions" gives you two tabs: "Scheduled" (where you can see and change scheduled payments) and "History"
- Download the Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement app to your smartphone and make a payment from there.
- Text your payment to 833-264-0104. Just send the amount (no \$ sign). Have your credit card available the first time you do this.

Contact me (office@uuwayland.org, 508-358-6133) if you have any questions.

A Note From Your Editor

The Unitarian is for the community and by the community. All the news and columns you find in each monthly issue are labors of love contributed by your fellow parishioners or by the wonderful First Parish staff.



Although we have many other means of communication — such as our website, eblasts, Facebook, the social email network — *The Unitarian* remains our publication of record. It is where we are recording the day-to-day history of First Parish life. In 100 years, when parishioners wonder how we handled the Covid-19 pandemic, they will learn a lot from reading archived copies of *The Unitarian*. Thank you to everyone who makes it what it is today.

A couple of reminders and requests from your humble editor:

- **Deadlines this year are always the 20th of the month.** We hope this consistency will make it easy to remember.
- **Thank you for doing your best to honor the deadline.** In the ten days between your submission and the newsletter's distribution, a lot has to happen, from copyediting to layout to artwork, and careful proofreading by our crackerjack team — they read every word — and by staff and lay leaders for accuracy.
- **Please submit your article in its final form.** Make sure others on your team review it before you submit it.

Contact me if you have feedback or questions. And thank you to everyone who makes *The Unitarian* possible!

Ann Gordon, *editor*
Barbara Heffner, Nathalie Thompson,
Chauncey Wilson, *copyediting team*

DECEMBER

- 1** Men's Book Group
Thursday, Dec. 1, 8:00 p.m. on Zoom, p. 12
- 2** Spaghetti and Hide & Seek
Friday, Dec. 2, 6:00 p.m., p. 6
- 4** Community Carol Sing
Sunday, Dec. 4, 4:30 p.m., p. 1
- 6** UUUM Watch Party
Tuesday, Dec. 6, 5:45 p.m., p. 4 & 13
- 11** Music Sunday
Sunday, Dec. 11, 10:00 a.m., p. 8
- 11** Ugly, Festive and Extra Festive Sweaters
Sunday, Dec. 11, 10:00 a.m., p. 6
- 13** Blue Holiday Gathering
Tuesday, Dec. 13, 7:00 p.m., p. 1
- 14** Minister's Lunch
Wednesday, Dec. 14, 11:30 a.m., p. 12
- 18** Visioning Fair
Sunday, Dec. 18, 11:00 a.m., p. 1 & 5
- 21** Winter Solstice Fire
Sunday, Dec. 21, 4:30 p.m., p. 1
- 24** Christmas Eve Services
Saturday, Dec. 24, 4 and 7:00 p.m., p. 1
- 28** Read Along With the Rev.
Wednesday, Dec. 28, 7:00 p.m., p. 4 & 6

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. 3**

Our Ministers

The Rev. Dr. [Stephanie May](#), Minister
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
Emma Silberman, Childcare Provider

Unitarian Newsletter Team

Ann Gordon, Barb Heffner, Nathalie Thompson, Chauncey Wilson

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



What's Happening?

Find all First Parish activities on [our website calendar](#).
Check it out!

