



Reflections from Rev. Stephanie Letting Go, Looking Ahead

"It's important in life to conclude things properly. Only then can you let go."

-Yann Martel, Life of Pi

After nine years of ministry, I am learning something new each day as I figure out how to conclude my time at First Parish. I've been reflecting a lot on the office of minister. Sometimes we ministers refer to the pulpit as both a place and a role—as in “she is the first solo woman minister in the Wayland pulpit.” I have always felt like a steward of a pulpit and a role that preceded me and will continue on beyond my time. Being able to be in such strong relationship with my predecessor, the Rev. Ken Sawyer, reinforced that sense of continuity, of a baton hand-off from one person to the next to assume the office of minister. And now it is my turn to hand off to your interim minister, the Rev. Deborah Bennett.

Admittedly, I am finding it harder than I anticipated to let go. Caring for you as individuals and as a congregation has been an enormous part of my life for most of a decade. While ending my ministry here means handing over the office of minister to Rev. Deborah, please know that I will always care about you and your well-being.

As part of the process of ministerial transition, Rev. Deborah and I will develop a Letter of Understanding that articulates the ways that we can be of support to one another and to the congregation. Typically, this will mean the creation of space and time between me and First Parish so that you can live towards the evolving future

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Kate Holland was celebrated during the May 21 service for her ten years of service to First Parish, with ten reasons that “Kate is Great!” For more, see page 11.



A Fond Farewell to Turning Point

First Parish prepared and delivered its last chili meal to Turning Point on Indigenous People's Day, 2022.

Things have changed a lot in the 30 years that First Parish has been involved with Turning Point. Back then, at the woefully underfunded men's emergency shelter, a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, or two pieces of bread and a single slice

of baloney often had to suffice as dinner.

When Suzanne Reitz delivered her meal

to Turning Point in September, she learned

that it would be served as lunch since dinners were being donated by local restaurants. Pam Dearborn, the Turning Point Director, confirmed that four dinners are being restaurant-catered every week, often with enough leftovers to go in the freezer for an additional lunch or dinner. The meals just aren't as necessary as they once were.



Turning Point resident Paulo, Case Manager Terry, and Director Pam receive the final delivery of goods from First Parish.

The shelter is smaller, too, providing a home and more intensive services, including case management, job training and preparedness, and life skills coaching, to a smaller number of single adult male clients (18 in the emergency portion downstairs and 10 in transitional housing upstairs). First Parish has seen and supported that transition, too, over the years,

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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.



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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 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.

June 4
Gone Camping
Rev. Dr. Stephanie May
SEEK Class

June 11
Multi-Age Flower Sunday Service
Celebration of Rev. Dr. Stephanie May
Rev. Dr. Stephanie May
Homily: In Shared Joy and Sorrow

June 18
Juneteenth Celebration and Reflection
See below for details

June 25
Possibilities
Laurel Whitehouse
See Summer Service schedule, p. 8

Sharing Our Plate
MetroWest Climate Solutions

On Sunday, June 4, half of our collection plate will go to support the work of [MetroWest Climate Solutions](#). This partnership of organizations and congregations, including First Parish, works to build sustainable, resilient and equitable communities.

June's Lay Minister

June's Lay Minister is Roger Horine. Contact Roger 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 need the password to the Parish Directory. The link to the Directory is available on our website [members' page](#).

Juneteenth Celebration and Reflection
Sunday, June 18, 10 a.m.



Commemorating Juneteenth was one of the priorities the congregation identified through our visioning work. Join us for our first Juneteenth gathering on Sunday, June 18.

Juneteenth was declared a national holiday in 2021 to commemorate Freedom Day of Freedom Day of American slaves. It falls annually on June 19. It is a day of celebration, and a day that represents our complicated history and highlights uncomfortable truths. Although President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on Jan. 1, 1863, the proclamation did not lead to a universal or immediate end to slavery in the United States. More than 25 months after legally declaring slaves free from bondage, American troops marched into Galveston Texas on June 19, 1865 to enforce the freedom the slaves there had not been allowed to claim on their own.

Let us come together to celebrate, to remember and to reflect, and to acknowledge our history and renew our commitment to support the work that still needs to be done.

The Juneteenth flag will fly on First Parish's front lawn the weekend of Juneteenth to acknowledge our nation's history and show our congregation's commitment to do our part to support racial equity. First Parish's inaugural Juneteenth effort has been organized by Melanie Larson, Jay Woodruff, Nancy Fewell, and Roger Horine, and generously supported by the Lydia Maria Child Fund.



Reflections, continued from page 1

of the congregation. In the month of June, I hope to connect with many of you to say goodbye and to celebrate all we have done together. And, during July, I will still be on call for any emergencies that may arise.

In a lot of ways, First Parish is just the same as when I arrived. On Sundays from September to mid-June, we gather for worship and the sacred rite of coffee hour. Committees meet. Plans get made and projects enacted. Cards are sent. Meals dropped off. Kids race through the building chasing a friend. For all that remains “church,” I am so grateful. Of course, some of these most basic elements were not present there for a time during the worst of the pandemic. I am exceedingly glad that we have been able to enjoy a return to “normal” in so many ways this year. Being able to successfully lead us through the pandemic with the shared effort of staff, lay leaders, choir members, and you logging in will remain one my proudest parts of my time here.

I am also proud of the many ways First Parish has become more engaged in social justice over my tenure. We have deepened our understanding that we can engage in advocacy and political issues as part of what we do to live out our values (although no partisan politics). Another significant change to support social action arrived with the creation of the Lydia Maria Child Fund for social activism in 2017. This Fund has significantly expanded how we work together with each other and outside groups to promote our values and a better world. While seeded by a generous matching grant, many of you also gave to the LMCF to create this resource. In this way, the LMCF is collaborative in its fund as well as in its projects. If you were considering any gift or token of appreciation for my ministry here, I invite you to make a gift to the Lydia Maria Child Fund so that this important work might continue.

I hope to see many of you at one of the remaining services this month. On June 4, I will tackle the mystery many of you have asked me about—why do you love camping?!? Drawing on camping metaphors, I will also reflect on the adventure of life and religious community more broadly. Continuing the camping

If you were considering any gift or token of appreciation for my ministry here, I invite you to make a gift to the Lydia Maria Child Fund so that this important work might continue.

theme, we’ll have a joyful coffee hour with s’mores to celebrate Alyssa Lee’s graduation and time with us. **Then, on June 11, we will celebrate Flower Sunday with the usual ritual of gratitude and abundance of flowers.**

Following the service, a special brunch and festivities are planned to celebrate our time together. While June 11 will my last Sunday leading worship, the following Sunday is another important gathering as a lay-led team leads a service on Juneteenth, the newest federal holiday that commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. This service is one of many examples of how First Parish continues to grow in its commitment to social action, multi-cultural community, and a more just, equitable world for all. While I may no longer hold the office of your minister on August 1, I will remain your fan and follower as you continue to be a vibrant, multi-generational religious community for those now present and those yet to come.

In peace,
Rev. Stephanie

To make a gift to the Lydia Maria Child Fund in Rev. Stephanie’s honor, you can send a check to First Parish marked for the Lydia Maria Child Fund, or you may give online at www.uuwayland.org/donate, selecting the Fund.

Rev. Deborah Bennett Chosen as First Parish's Interim Minister

The Interim Minister Search Committee is pleased to announce that we have completed our search and delighted to introduce Rev. Deborah Bennett to serve as our Interim Minister beginning in August. Rev. Bennett comes to us from Emerson Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Marietta, Georgia, where she served as Minister for the past four years. She and her husband Jim lived in Western Massachusetts for many years before being called to Emerson and are happy to be returning to Massachusetts to be closer to their children and first grandchild.



Rev. Deborah Bennett

Following over a decade as Executive Chef and Director of Food Service at Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health, her career took a turn towards ministry. Rev. Bennett received her Master of Divinity from Starr King School for the Ministry in 2018 and was ordained in 2019. She was a ministerial intern and summer minister in Winchester MA and was then called to her first solo ministry job at Emerson. She has served very successfully there for four years, working in shared ministry with her congregation to keep it vibrant and growing despite the many challenges of the Covid pandemic. She is described as a strong worship leader; her sermons are engaging, poignant and thoughtful. She is an able administrator and creative leader who works to build consensus and values relationships where trust and communication are the cornerstones. She was described by one leader in her congregation as "a strong and popular leader...creative and generous of heart, and able to bring people along by listening to them and letting them come to consensus."

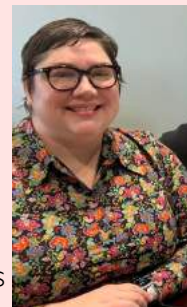
Soon after the news in early April of Reverend Stephanie's candidacy for the position of Settled Minister at First Church in Boston, the Parish Committee formed an Interim Minister Search Committee. Unlike the process to choose a Settled Minister, which is a 'call' by the congregation, the Interim Minister is hired by the Parish Committee. As chair of our Parish Committee Lea Anderson led the search team, working with Nathalie Thompson, Clare Lewis and Robert Baker. Applicants' names were released on May 1st allowing two weeks to interview, check references, and rank candidates.

On May 15 the committee sent a ranked list of candidates who in our opinion could do the job. The UUA uses a matching system

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Celebrating Alyssa Lee Sunday, June 4

During the service on Sunday, June 4, and during Coffee Hour afterwards, we will celebrate, thank, and say goodbye to Intern Minister Alyssa Lee. For two years, Alyssa has shared with us her warmth, her humor, her compassion and her gentle insights into the human condition. Please come offer her your best wishes as she continues her journey toward ministry.



Celebrate Rev. Stephanie Flower Sunday Potluck Sunday, June 11

Don your best florals, bring a flower, and join us for our last service with Rev. Stephanie. Please plan to stay after church for a festive picnic and help us celebrate our amazing nine years together.



Good food, good fun, and good friends! We will provide sandwiches, but we could use your help with side dishes and set up. Please come and bring something to share*... salads (green, pasta, bean, chicken, etc.), dessert (cookies, squares, etc. or fruit (platter or fruit salad).

[Click here for on-line sign up](#) or contact Lynne Lipcon and let us know what you would like to bring or how you can help. You won't want to miss this celebration!

**Widely known fact: Rev. Stephanie is a big fan of deviled eggs and pies!*

Come to the First Parish Yard Sale

Saturday, June 3, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

The First Parish Yard Sale will be held on Saturday, June 3, 9-1 p.m.

If you have items to contribute to the sale in any of these categories — Antiques, Books, Decor, Housewares, and Jewelry — please drop them off between Tuesday, May 30 and Friday, June 2 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The format will be much like last year's — mostly outdoors — with the exception of antiques and books, which will once again be located in the Commons. We'll have an additional 10x20 tent this year, along with last year's tent, generously donated by Suzanne Reitz and family.



Celebrity sighting at last year's Yard Sale (l to r): Rev. Stephanie, Alyssa Lee, and Kate Holland

If you'd like to host your own table to benefit First Parish — terrific! We'll supply the table. Please plan to take any of your unsold items home with you on Saturday afternoon.

If you have furniture, please contact Barb Heffner. Having sold lots of furniture online last spring to clear out the older furniture in the sheds, we now have a good sense of what sells. We also want to be mindful of our aging backs.

We need volunteers for set-up during the week leading up to the sale and for the day of sale. After the sale, we'll need help tearing down tables and for trips to Savers. If you'd like to volunteer, please email Suzanne Tiberii.

Thanks,
Barb Heffner and Suzanne Tiberii

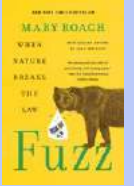
Men's Book Club

Thursday, June 1, 8 p.m. on Zoom

How do politics, climate change, and religion affect our relationships with other fauna?

Join us when we discuss *Fuzz: When Nature Breaks the Law*, by Mary Roach.

All who identify as male are welcome. Questions? Contact Keith Sims.



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.

A Busy and Bittersweet Agenda at Year's End

This is a bittersweet time for First Parish as we approach the end of this church year. We have survived Covid 19 largely intact, thanks to the leadership provided by the Rev. Stephanie May, our intern, Alyssa Lee and Kate Holland, and to the hard work of the Parish Committee and other lay leaders. Our finances are in good shape, and the future looks bright, as we have added many new members and we have begun the new initiatives resulting from our visioning exercises headed by Lynne Lipcon, Jay Woodruff, and Ted Barnes.

Unfortunately, as you all know, Rev. Stephanie, our beloved minister and spiritual leader for the past nine years, is leaving. Also, June marks the end of Alyssa's two-year internship. Both will be greatly missed. We want to thank both for their invaluable contributions to First Parish and we wish them well.

We hope that many of you will attend Flower Sunday and the picnic following the service to say your goodbyes.

The process of replacing Stephanie began in early April and is almost complete. The first step is to find an interim minister to serve for the next two years to allow us time to install a new permanent minister. The Parish Committee formed a committee to perform this task. This committee is comprised of Lea Anderson, Nathalie Thompson, Clare Lewis and Robert Baker. The search committee conducted 5 interviews, and completed the next step of winnowing and ranking the candidates. **We learned at our May 18 meeting that an Interim Minister has been selected** (see page 5). We are very grateful for the leadership provided by Lea and Nathalie in this process.

The Parish Committee is also losing three members who have completed their terms. Deb Stubeda, Lynne Lipcon and our treasurer Heather Felton are stepping down. We thank all of them for their contributions over the past three years, especially during Covid. They will be replaced by Jim Grumbach and Laurel Whitehouse as members at large, and Christopher Cullen, as the new treasurer. We look forward to welcoming them next year.

It is the time of year when we prepare the budget for the next church year. Thus, the last Parish Committee meeting on May 11 was mostly about money. I am sure for many, that would elicit a

big yawn. However, for me, it was quite fascinating. **As part of budgeting process, we must review all the activities that occur at First Parish and how much to fund them.** I discovered some budgeted activities and sources of money to fund them of which I was previously unaware. As another example of how much Stephanie will be missed, she was the only one who could answer some of the questions that we asked.

The first step in the budgeting process is to figure out how much money we will have to work with. Most of our money comes from stewardship, while other sources of money include our lease with the preschool, the auction, the annual allocation from the trustees of the endowment, the weekly collection at the services, special event income, and non-pledged donations.

I was pleased to report that we had a successful stewardship campaign, with about \$333,000 in pledges from 116 families at the time of the meeting. I expect to receive additional pledges of about \$20,000, for a final count of about \$353,000. The Trustees committed to providing about \$25,000 for the FY 2024 budget. Deb Subeda reported that a new lease had been signed for FY 2024 that included a 5% increase in rent over the present year. Deb also reported that the proceeds from this year's auction were about \$23,000 before expenses. This figure provides us with some indication about how much money we can expect to receive from the auction next year. The other sources of income were based upon historical averages.

With this information about income, the task of preparing a budget fell to Susie

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

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Parish Committee, continued from p. 7

Keyes and Heather Felton who had to allocate money to each expense item in a way that meets the needs of the church without exceeding the total expected income. Final approval of the budget was voted at our meeting on May 18, and the budget will be presented at the annual meeting on May 21.

Other matters that were discussed at the last Parish Committee meeting include the announcement from the trustees that **about 80% of the endowment funds that are currently being managed by the UUA will be withdrawn from that fund and be placed in mutual funds to be selected by the trustees.** That process will begin immediately. The trustees reported that we are currently paying about \$25,000 in management fees and that the recent returns from the endowment have been below the returns from previous years. This is due in part to the fluctuations in the stock market and in part to the UUA's decision to invest in socially responsible vehicles with a very low return. The Trustees unanimously voted to make this change to avoid the large management fees and to hopefully create better returns.

We also discussed the new Article II revision and the upcoming General Assembly. **We have several people attending General Assembly as delegates, including Matt Shear, Nathalie Thompson, and Susie Keyes.** Nathalie reported on the planning for lay-led summer services. All the July slots are filled, but there are still Sundays available in August. We also discussed the repairs needed to the Parish House, including replacement of the windows. Bids have been received for replacing the windows that range from \$70,000 to \$138,000.

A vote was taken to approve the proposed list of new people seeking membership at First Parish. Many of these people will sign the membership book at a ceremony at the service on May 21. These new members are: Christopher Cullen, Patrick Foley, Kate Giudice, Paul Giudice, Neil Gordon, Courtney Jorgeson, Nathan Jorgeson, Karen Knowlton, Melody Knowlton, Rena Van Haren and Simon Van Haren.

As we look to the future, **we are grateful for the many strengths of our community** that will carry us on through this time of ministerial transition.

Larry Green for the Parish Committee



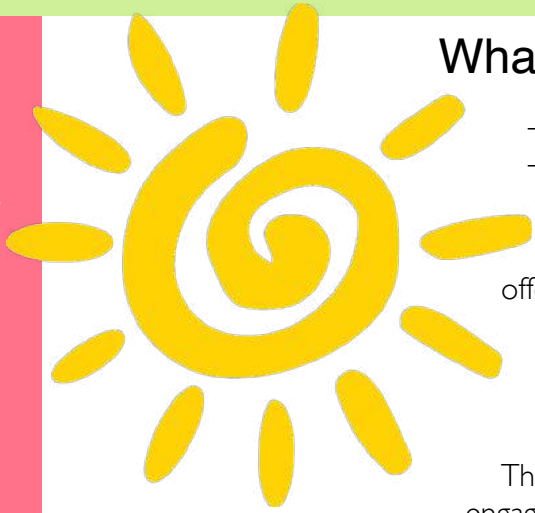
Scones with Stephanie Tues, June 6, 8:30 - 10 a.m., Commons

Swing by for some scrumptious homemade scones and conversation with Rev. Stephanie. Gluten-free options too. RSVP to [Rev. Stephanie](#) requested but not necessary.



Sip and Seek Friday, June 9, 7 - 9 p.m., Rev. Stephanie's House

A final gathering around the campfire of meaningful discussion while sipping a favorite beverage. Hosted by Rev. Stephanie and her partner Bill at their home in Lincoln, please email for address or see directory. Bring a beverage. Snacks, chairs, and fire provided. RSVP requested but not required. Questions or RSVP to [Rev. Stephanie](#).



What the Summer Holds in Store at First Parish

Thanks to the generosity and willingness of so many fellow parishioners, Ted Barnes and Nathalie Thompson have lined up an engaging series of summer gatherings (otherwise referred to as summer services) to be held June 25 – August 20. These services, typically led by parishioners, offer a chance to come together for informal discussion and reflection on different topics and experiences. They include a presentation, readings, prayers, meditations, the sharing of joys and sorrows and, we hope, some lively discussion.

The gatherings will be held in the Vestry Sundays at 10 a.m. Come and engage in the discussion. Zoom access will be available, but we hope you will give us the gift of your presence — it makes a difference. Covid risk is currently low and masking is optional. Keep an eye out for any updates on the First Parish website, eblast or UUSocial.

We have one spot open: July 9. Contact Ted or Nathalie if you have a topic you would like to share.

June 25: Possibilities

Join us for a summer service on the challenges and opportunities afforded by the ambiguity of liminal space as our congregation begins to move beyond Rev. Stephanie's ministry. At the end of the summer we will move into an interim time of delineating our three spheres of need: programming for the next two years, evolving and deepening the congregational vision of what is possible for our future together, and calling a new minister. Led by Laurel Whitehouse; Lay Minister Roger Horine.

July 2: Addiction and Recovery

We will examine the roots of addiction and paths of recovery. For many people, addiction begins at the edges of pain, and whatever we use to ease that pain may lead to addiction. Too often, the path of recovery is full of shame and isolation. This service will bring light and love to this journey. "How can we recover?" and "How can we support those in recovery?" are key questions that will be raised. This examination is not limited to substance addiction but all forms of addiction. "The opposite of addiction is not sobriety; the opposite of sobriety is human connection." (J Hari). Led by Patrick Foley, Lay minister TBD.

July 9 – OPEN

July 16: Can We Find Meaning in Making and Mending?

For almost all of our history, since humans wove their first basket, we made much of what we used, and the things we didn't make were made by someone we knew. Today we make very little and mend less. And moreover, we don't even understand how the things in our lives were made or how to fix them if they break. Does it matter? Is there a spiritual cost to this dissociation? We will read and discuss a few passages from Nina MacLaughlin's *Hammer Head*, *The Making of a Carpenter*, Sandra Goldmark's *Fixation*, and Matthew Crawford's *Shop Class as Soulcraft*. Joel will also share his experience as a member of the Fixit First team at the Weston Art and Innovation Center. Led by Joel Angiolillo; Lay Minister Roger Horine.

July 23: I Know There's AN Answer

A service based around the idea that those of us who would practice a liberal form religion recognize that there can be many paths to becoming the fullest expression of our ideals, as individuals and as a society. We

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Summer Gatherings, continued from page 9

may be “a faith without a creed” but we must nevertheless have faith that our Principles, Sources, and practices will lead us to an answer, maybe more than one, that will serve us well at each moment on our way “to that high cause of greater understanding.” Led by Dr. Matthew Shear; Lay Minister Debbie Levens.

July 30: Ukraine and China: Similarities and Differences

In the twentieth century, Ukraine and China attempted to establish Marxist-Leninist-style socialism in a Cold War alliance with Soviet Russia against the United States. In the twenty-first century, both polities are trying to implement market socialism in cooperation and competition with the United States. The ironic result has been open warfare between Ukraine and Russia over some Russian-speaking parts of Ukraine and the risk of warfare between China and the United States over the status of the island of Taiwan. Under these conditions, what are the prospects for peace in these two world regions? Led by Roger Des Forges; Lay Minister TBD.

August 6: Earth Based Rituals and Meditation

Led by Suzanne Reitz. Lay Minister Julia Kenney

August 13: The Evolution of AI and its Impact on Social Justice

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has come a long way since its inception in the 1950s. Since then, it has transformed various aspects of our society, like medical diagnosis and criminal sentencing. We will discuss how AI can be both a catalyst for progress and a source of concern as we strive to create a more just and equitable world. As we delve into the rapid evolution of tools like ChatGPT, we will identify opportunities for leveraging this technology to promote social justice. We will reflect on the complex relationships between AI and social justice, emphasizing the importance of ethical considerations, accountability, and transparency in the development of AI systems. We'll conclude the service with a balanced summary of the promise and pitfalls of AI. Led by Chauncey Wilson; Lay Minister Erik Felton.

August 20: First Parish Military Veterans (topic TBD)



Summer Staff Schedules

Rev. Stephanie will be working until June 30. She will be at General Assembly from June 19-26. She will remain on staff until July 31, but will be on vacation during July.

Kate Holland will be away on vacation/study leave from July 1 - Aug. 1. She will be at GA from June 19 - 25.

Polly Oliver will be on break from Jun 12 until Aug 27.

Leo Monzon (bookkeeper) will continue to work part-time to answer questions about pledges, contributions, and other financial matters.

Karen Plaskon will be working summer hours from June 19 - Aug. 25. Email and voicemail will be monitored, so please leave a message and she will get back to you. Please note her hours are limited in the summer so response time may be slower than usual.

Summer Pastoral Care

The Lay Minister of the month for June, July and August are available for calls, visits, and assistance. Please contact them if you need care over the summer. (See summer eblasts for contact info.)

June: Roger Horine

July: Kathie Schmidt

August: Debbie Levens

For more critical pastoral care, you can contact the minister on call through the main office (508-358-6133) or with the contact information below:

June: [Rev. Stephanie](#)

July: Phyllis O'Connell

Aug. 1-14: Alyssa Lee

Aug. 15 - 31: Interim Minister Rev. Deborah Bennett



Gratitude and Anticipation

In this month of June, I feel that I am in a strange place of looking both to the past and the future. Thinking back on this programming year, I am so very grateful to the many volunteers who have helped me in the work that I do. There have been many folks who have taught in SEEK, helped keep the nursery a welcoming place when we have little folks visit, our OWL facilitators and the folks who work with me on the Lifespan Education committee. Our SEEK program could not function without their support. This helps our program shine and continue to attract new faces.

I am so very grateful to the many volunteers who have helped me in the work that I do.

I am also grateful to all the folks who help me with the engagement of folks that are already part of our First Parish community, reaching out to make connections with each other and the lead greeters and the unofficial greeters who give visitors a warm welcome to our community and help them make connections, so we enjoy new faces on Sunday mornings.

This year has also brought us the big change of Rev. Stephanie moving to a new congregation. We will be welcoming an interim minister for the next two years. I have great faith that this wonderful community will welcome the new interim warmly and make them feel like a part of our community.

I too will have a bit of a change going into next year. I will concentrate on my role as Director of Lifespan Education and the Engagement part of my job will be taken on by a volunteer team. This change is one I thought was important for both the congregation and me. It will allow me to have a better focus on our SEEK program instead of sharing my time on two jobs.

In June I will be heading off to General Assembly to take some great workshops to learn some new and innovative skills to bring to my work here. I also am excited to be a part of the vote on Article Two. In July I will enjoy some vacation and study leave and in August I look forward to coming back to work with the new interim to make next year a great year for First Parish.

I am grateful to work with such a wonderful community and I look forward to moving on to new adventures together.

Kate Holland

Director of Education and Engagement

SEEK Classes in June

June 4: Pride

This is our last SEEK class of the year. We will be talking about Pride month and what that means and why it is important to us as Unitarian Universalists.

June 11: Flower Sunday

There will be no SEEK or Nursery care this Sunday. Please join us for our Multi-age Flower Sunday Service.



On Sunday, May 21, the congregation, led by its children, presented Kate Holland with gifts and balloons to celebrate her ten years with First Parish. She was hailed as a creative, warm and inventive educational leader, and a great storyteller. Thank you, Kate, for all you have given First Parish. We look forward to more adventures and stories in the years to come!



Until We Meet Again

I have struggled a bit with how to write this column. How do I say goodbye to a place, to a people, that have made such an impact on my life? In the long and storied life of this congregation, I know my tenure at First Parish is but a blip, but in my life, it is the first, significant step on a path to deeper understanding of myself and hopefully those around me.

I do not think I will be able to adequately express my gratitude for all that I have learned here at First Parish, nor can I thank you all enough for the gentle kindnesses you have given me and my family over the past two years. I joined you during the middle of a pandemic, when I was restarting my professional life, and uprooting my personal life and that of my family. You all gave me grace when I was still trying to figure out all the new normals I was embarking upon.

I have spent years thinking about being a minister and the type of minister I think I might be, but you all gave me the place to work these ideas out in real time and kind feedback when I did not always get it right. You let me try programs that did not always land and spoke encouraging words to me when I was secretly kicking myself inside when I felt I had made a misstep.

Separate and apart from gaining new ministry skills and the learning we all did together, I am grateful for the opportunity to get to know all of you. I will confess that I was nervous when I began my internship here at First Parish as my cultural context is quite different than many of yours, but you all embraced me with compassion and made me feel welcomed with a sense of joy and warmth that I was not expecting. I was able to report back home, "People in Massachusetts really are nice! Don't believe the stereotype!"

I am going to miss each and every one of you but I am grateful for the time we have had together. I will be praying for your community, and I am excited to watch from afar what you all will do with the new ministry you are about to embark upon together. Please know that though we will be separated, you all will always be in my heart. I have learned so much from you, but mostly I have learned what a warm and kind congregation can be, and I hope you do not forget about that best part of yourselves. Until we meet again, I will be thinking of you with love.

Alyssa Lee
Intern Minister

How do I say goodbye to a place, to a people, that have made such an impact on my life?

Question of the Month from the Office:

With Summer drawing near and the regular church year drawing to a close, what should I do if I need something from the office? Pastoral care? Some spiritual assistance?



Karen Plaskon

No worries! Send an email or leave a voicemail for Karen in the office. She will be monitoring them throughout the summer and will get back to you as soon as possible.

If you need spiritual assistance or pastoral care there will be a Lay Minister available for each of June, July and August. Rev. Stephanie will be available until the end of June for critical pastoral care. See p. 10 for details about Lay Ministry and critical pastoral care throughout the summer, and watch the eblast for updates.

If you have financial questions about your pledge, payments, or reimbursements, you can contact the office, our bookkeeper, Leo (lmonzon@uuwayland.org), or our Treasurer, Chris Cullen (treasurer@uuwayland.org). Also if you have set up automatic pledge payments through our system or your own, and your pledge amount has changed for 2023-2024, please remember to update the automatic amount for the new fiscal year, which begins on July 1.

Have a great summer and stay safe and healthy!

Turning Point, continued from p. 1

with two house fires, a flood that soaked all the mattresses, and the Covid emergency paring down Turning Point's emergency occupancy from its winter peak of 60. At the same time, more understanding of homelessness and eventually more availability of resources gradually expanded Turning Point's focus beyond a bed and a meal.

When the Turning Point Committee considered the new situation, we decided it was time to bow out of the monthly meals with heartfelt good wishes and a final Special Gift to spend down the Turning Point reserve - which the First Parish Community has generously donated over the years. In my initial conversation with Pam about this, nothing was decided except that she wanted a plaque from us to put on the wall of the Common Room at Turning Point. Pam told me she gives each newcomer to the shelter a brand-new sheet set for him to use at Turning Point and take when he leaves. She suggested that First Parish donate these since they matter a lot to the men and can strain her regular budget.

Suzanne Reitz prepared three legends which we might put on the plaque, and the committee amended and voted on them. The completed plaque reads:

For 30 years of food and fellowship
warmed by smiles
FP UU CHURCH IN WAYLAND
May we all find nourishment
May we all find shelter
May we all give and receive kindness
TURNING POINT



Penny Wilson delivers a last load of gifts to Turning Point, and takes a last look at the sheltering place First Parish has served for 30 years.

I called Pam Dearborn again a few weeks ago to discuss the Special Gift. When I reminded Pam that we had about \$2000 to spend (\$2,094.70 exactly - thanks, Leo!), I heard a quick intake of breath, and then she gasped "Shower shoes!" I had to smile. Years ago, when Amy Washek was head of the Turning Point Committee, she found out that homeless shelters always needed shower shoes, and they were one of the first Special Gifts we gave Turning Point. "And too many," Pam said, "are never enough," we finished together, laughing. "Do you still need twin sheet sets?" I asked. "Yes," she said, talking fast, "and towels, and extra washcloths, and extra pillowcases, and new pillows, and gift cards. Walmart is best because you can buy food there as well as other things." On May 3, Chauncey Wilson stuffed our SUV with \$1,429.40 worth of towels, washcloths, twin sheet sets and pillowcases. There was barely room for the plaque. Pam, Terry, the Turning Point case manager, and Paulo, one of the residents, came out to unload and pose for a last Turning Point picture.

At their next house gathering, Pam presented our plaque to the residents and staff and explained Turning Point's long history with First Parish. Many of them had not been there even for our last chili batch in the fall - a success, since Turning Point now succeeds in placing residents in permanent shelter more quickly than it used to. She invited both residents and staff to sign thank-you cards for First Parish as they chose to and were able. The cards arrived at First Parish almost immediately. Karen has posted them on the Vestry bulletin board. Blessings abounded. (Turning Point is non-sectarian, but many of the residents and staff are in Twelve Steps programs or something similar.) They even sent a card to me and Chauncey. That plaque and those cards seemed to make the residents proud.

continued on p. 14

SpringUP 2023 Was a Great Success!

The Uganda Project thanks all who volunteered, donated, or came out in community to join in festivities and games on May 6. We collected, sorted, packed, and sent for shipping a record amount of donations this year, and the goods that FP members and friends donated will be of significant value and use to schools, communities, and trusted organizations in Uganda when they arrive at the end of the summer or early fall. We will be sure to share pictures of our shipment's arrival and distribution in a few months! Congratulations, First Parish, on a very successful drive.



First Parish volunteers who helped sort and pack goods for shipment to Uganda gather for a group photo and a moment to celebrate their work. Thanks to all who helped, and to the leaders of the Uganda Project for forging this partnership across nations and communities.

Turning Point, continued from p. 13

On May 11, I drove down for the last time, clutching our card, to deliver two cases of shower shoes and nine Walmart gift cards bought with the balance of the Turning Point reserve fund. Broad smiles, enthusiastic waves, thank-you's and blessings filled my rearview mirror as I drove away, along with Pam's quiet, "Don't be a stranger." I will miss them.

Turning Point is in a much better place than it was 30 years ago, when Dick and Sandy Hoyt first began the church-wide effort to support them. It is a victory for Turning Point and a victory we all share. Thanks to past Chairs — Dick Hoyt, Sandy Hoyt, and Amy Washek. Thanks to the Turning Point Committee whose amazing teamwork and dedication made this our longest continuous Social Action project — Lois Doerr, Peggy Holland, Mamey Ives, Marty McCullough, Melinda Morgan, Suzanne Reitz, Pat Sims, Chauncey Wilson, and to all the friends of Turning Point who have supported the shelter so generously over the years. Thank you all! The residents' smiles, the staff's gratitude, the varied thank-yous and blessings on the cards are all for you.

Respectfully submitted, one last time,
Penny Wilson for the Turning Point Committee



ANTI-BIAS WORKSHOP FOR CAREGIVERS	
SAVE THE DATE	14 OCTOBER
 IDEAS Strength in Diversity Rebecca Smoler & TBD	  VESTRY & ZOOM

Anti-Bias Workshop Sat., Oct. 14

Mark your calendars and stay tuned for details about this anti-bias workshop that will be offered in the fall.

City & Suburbs: Addressing Climate Change and Equity Together

NEW DATE: Tuesday, June 6, 7:30 p.m.
At First Parish in Weston, or on Zoom

This session, originally scheduled for May, was rescheduled due to illness. Join MetroWest Climate Solutions and special guest the Rev. Mariama White-Hammond for a discussion on the intersection of climate change and questions of equity. As a lifelong resident, pastor, and activist in Boston, Rev. Mariama will explore the question of how residents of the suburbs can most effectively take action to promote greater climate equity.



Rev. Mariama White-Hammond

The session will be offered at First Parish Church in Weston, 349 Boston Post Rd, Weston. If you prefer to join us online, register at <https://tinyurl.com/CitySuburbs2>.

Rev. Mariama White-Hammond was appointed as Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Space in April 2021. In this role, she oversees policy and programs on energy, climate change, sustainability, historic preservation, and open space. Over the course of her time with the City, she has supported the amendment of the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO) to set carbon targets for existing large buildings and convened a city-led green jobs program.

Rev. Mariama uses an intersectional lens in her ecological work, challenging folks to see the connections between immigration and climate change or the relationship between energy policy and economic justice. She has received numerous awards, including the Barr Fellowship, the Celtics Heroes Among Us, The Roxbury Founders Day Award and the Boston NAACP Image award.

UUUM Walking Tour, June 17, 9:30 - 11:00 a.m.

Learn more about the neighborhood of the UU Urban Ministry through this Educational Institutions tour. The tour will highlight the many educational institutions in the neighborhood and look at the importance of access to education. Hear stories of activism influencing the generations of youth learning within them. Following the 90-minute tour, there is an option to enjoy lunch in the neighborhood and some browsing at the Frugal Bookstore or other local businesses. Carpooling will be arranged. Suggested donation of \$10-\$30 per person to the UUUM. Please contact Rev. Stephanie if interested or with any questions.

Pantry Garden Benefits When You Buy Stop & Shop Flowers

The First Parish Pantry Garden has been selected as a beneficiary of the Stop & Shop Bloomin' 4 Good Program for the month of June.

During June, when you buy a \$10.99 bouquet in the sleeve marked "Bloomin' 4 Good," the Pantry Garden will receive a \$1 donation. The Pantry Garden, led by Molly Faulkner and her stalwart crew of gardeners — Rita Anderson, Suzanne Woodruff, Laurel Whitehouse and Lucy Pease — supplies fresh produce and flowers to a number of local food pantries and shelters.

The Pantry Gardeners would like to thank Richard Robinson of Hopestill Farm in Sherborn for lettuce seedlings.



Bounty from the First Parish Pantry Garden, 2018

At Annual Meeting, 2023, Members Approve Nominees and Budget

At its Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 21, 2023, the Congregation of First Parish in Wayland disposed of all items in the notice published in last month's Unitarian.

Nominations

Those present unanimously approved the slate of nominations put forward by the Nominating Committee, as follows (all positions carry one-year terms except the two Parish Committee position, which expire in 2027):

Moderator: Elizabeth Cullen

Treasurer: Christopher Cullen

Clerk: Nan Jahnke

Parish Committee: Jim Grumbach, Laurel Whitehouse

Trustees: Charlie Anderson, Barbara Buell, Neil Gordon, Bill Jacques, Chris Nelson

Nominating Committee: Leah Levine (Chair), Jim Kitendaugh, Lynne Lipcon, Kathie Schmidt

Budget

Those present unanimously approved the FY 2023-2024 budget, which was presented by Finance Committee Chair Susan Keyes and approved by the Parish Committee. The budget shows a surplus of \$3,635 ahead of any one-time special expenses related to the hiring of an interim minister. A summary

budget is available online; for the long version, contact Susie.

Reports

Among the reports delivered orally:

- Lea Anderson reviewed the work of the Parish Committee and announced the selection of the Rev. Deborah Bennett to be our Interim Minister after the departure of our settled minister of nine years, the Rev. Dr. Stephanie May.
- Charlie Anderson, speaking for the Trustees, reported on the value of the funds under its stewardship as of March 31, 2023, and announced a change in investment strategy.
- In her Minister's Report, Stephanie May reviewed the year's work in ministry, our many technology advances, and the congregation's growing strength in social justice witness; she also shared some kind words about working with Intern Minister Alyssa Lee, and warm words of appreciation to First Parish ahead of her departure in July.
- The Treasurer, Heather Felton, reported a third year of deficit spending (as expected) and a resulting loss of equity, but pointed to some encouraging fundraising results.

These speakers' full reports are available online, along with the reports of many other committees.

Other business

In other business, those present unanimously affirmed the standing of the Rev. Deborah Pope-Lance as Affiliate Minister.

Nan Jahnke
Clerk, First Parish in Wayland.



Interim Minister, continued from p. 5

similar to that used by medical schools. If our first choice selected First Parish as their first choice, then there would be a match. On May 16 we learned that we had a match. An offer was made to our first choice, Rev. Deborah Bennett, on May 17, and was accepted.

Many of you have asked, “Why do we need a two-year interim period instead of just one?” Transitions take time. During the last three years under the stresses and strains of Covid, we have had to redirect our energies in many ways. Now we need to take time and consider who we are as a congregation in this changing world. Another question many have asked is, “Do we need to sign a two-year contract with the Interim Minister?” All interim contracts are now one year at a time.



Take a tour of Roxbury!

We need time this Spring to say goodbye to Rev. Stephanie appropriately, to experience all those feelings of loss, nervousness, and of course gratitude for her ministry with us. We will enter the Fall with all sorts of questions. In the first year of interim, the new minister is just getting to know us. It is a luxury to be able to take that time - time to think about how we want to put together our search committee, what is the process we will use to select the committee, what vehicle do we want to use to assess what we are looking for in our next minister? Survey? Cottage meetings? Who are we without Stephanie? Who are we post-Covid?

The Parish Committee in consultation with our Interim Minister will appoint a Transitions Team of congregational members who are well-known, respected, and not members or spouses/partners of the current Parish Committee. The Transitions Team will help facilitate the work that the congregation will undertake during this interim period. Please let the Parish Committee know if you are interested in being on the Transitions Team.

By early Spring 2024, we will have put together a Settled Minister Search Committee that will begin their year-long intensive process. The Interim Minister and Congregation go on working together, having learned from whatever has come up in that discernment process, moving forward to strengthen and enliven our community.

Gratefully,

Lea Anderson, Robert Baker, Clare Lewis, Nathalie Thompson

June News from the UU Urban Ministry



Tour of Roxbury – Saturday, June 17, 9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

You are invited to join us on a walking tour celebrating the educational institutions that surround First Church Roxbury. Rev. Stephanie, Susan Crowley-Bechtel, and Lea Anderson will arrange carpools for anyone interested. We will gather at First Parish in Wayland at 8:40 a.m. to carpool. Or meet us at the UU Urban Ministry at 10 Putnam Street, Roxbury at 9:30 a.m. While the tour ends at 11:00 a.m., there will be opportunity to stay and shop or eat lunch at local businesses. Please let us know if you are interested in joining the tour! [Click this link](#) to learn more about tours being offered through the summer.

Please read the Annual Report from your delegates to the UUUM [here](#). It summarizes the many ways we engaged with the Urban Ministry this past church year. We hope that you will think about participating in the coming year!

Boston Landmark Celebration Thursday, June 8. Friends of the UUUM will gather to celebrate Boston’s newest landmark – the Meetinghouse at the First Church in Roxbury. Celebrants will gather in the peace garden for an evening of food and fun and will end the evening with “Arias on the Steps,” a world-class musical performance that will be held in front of the Meetinghouse.

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

Lea Anderson

Family Promise Metrowest Update

Four hundred people joined the official Natick Walkathon on a rainy April 30. Meanwhile, five hardy First Parish folks (Suzanne Tiberii, Donna Olmstead, Suzanne Reitz, Pat Sims, Lois Doerr) walked the alternative Wayland Rail Trail. First Parish people contributed about \$1,000, beating a goal of \$100, helping the Walkathon surpass its goal of \$160,000.



Recent Volunteering: On May 18 two UU congregations, Framingham and Wayland, completed a joint week of hosting the families in shelter at the Family Promise Day Center in Natick. Suzanne Reitz, Pat Sims, and Lois Doerr were chefs and dinner hosts on two evenings. We got to enjoy spending time with the three mothers, and the four children (ages: 4 weeks, 2 years, 4 years, and 18 years) in the remarkable new Mulligan Street shelter.

Watch for the September Unitarian notice for Fall events. Our next on-site shelter opportunity will be October 2-5. Completion of an online training is required in advance of active volunteering. [Click here](#) for more information.

Meanwhile this summer we can still help local families in the program. There's an urgent request for donations of gift cards.

Gift cards offer essential support when families enter shelter, and help address unexpected—and unbudgeted—needs for families in other programs. They help buy PJs and sneakers for kids, work boots for a new job, medical supplies for an unexpected illness, or simply supplement a tight food budget. Please consider donating a gift card to Target, Stop n' Shop, or Market Basket if you can! You can mail cards to Family Promise Metrowest, 6 Mulligan St., Natick, MA 01760.

[Here's how to donate gift cards.](#)

Have a good summer everyone!

Lois Doerr, First Parish's Coordinator for FPMW

Special Thank Yous from the Office This Year!

My job would be much more difficult without the support of so many of you. This past year especially has been so busy due to coming out of COVID, wanting to return to "normal" yet wanting to keep some of the changes that were useful! I am so appreciative of everyone's assistance, patience and joyful support! There are many more people than I will list here (sometimes, just a pleasant voice on the phone or email makes my day!), but I do want to highlight these folks especially:

Rita Anderson and Suzanne Woodruff for handling all aspects of procuring flowers for every Sunday.

Jim Kitendaugh for updating the outside sermon sign every week.

Ann Moses (and a few other helpers) for posting the monthly Unitarian on the bulletin board every month.

Ann Gordon and Barb Heffner for consulting and assisting with (and often DOING) our external publicity including local news outlets, website blog posts and social media.

Heather Felton for always being so willing to work on, simplify, and document our financial procedures as Treasurer this year.

Gratefully,
Karen Plaskon

First Parish's next onsite shelter opportunity will be October 2 - 5. Contact Lois Doerr to help.

JUNE

- 1** **Men's Book Club**
Thurs., June 1, 8:00 p.m., on Zoom, p. 6
- 3** **Yard Sale!**
Sat., June 3, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., p. 6
- 4** **Celebrating Alyssa**
Sunday, June 4, Coffee Hour, p. 5
- 6** **Scones with Stephanie**
Tuesday, June 6, 8:30 - 10 a.m., p. 8
- 6** **MetroWest Climate Event**
Tuesday, June 6, 7:30 p.m., p. 15
- 9** **Sip and Seek**
Friday, June 9, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., p. 8
- 11** **Flower Sunday, Celebrating Rev. Stephanie**
Sunday, June 11, Coffee Hour, p. 5
- 17** **UUUM Walking Tour**
Sat., June 17, 9:30 - 11:00 a.m., p. 15, 17
- 18** **Juneteenth Recognition**
Sunday, June 18, 10:00 a.m., p. 3

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!

