

# THE WAYLAND UNITARIAN

APRIL 2024



FIRST PARISH IN WAYLAND  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

## A Touch of Mediterranean Magic

We are grateful to the many people who braved the wet weather to attend this year's auction. We also appreciate those of you who bid in advance on online auction items. Thanks to your generosity in support of First Parish, the auction raised approximately \$29,000.

Thanks to our volunteer chefs, the food was marvelous. As always, David O'Leary did a wonderful job of keeping the bidding lively. Emily Mlcak entertained us with a spicy version of "Never On Sunday," expertly accompanied by Polly Oliver on piano.

The bartending team kept pace with demand for the specialty cocktail -- The Bocce Ball -- and other beverages. A highlight of the evening was Lynne Cavanaugh's selection of the coveted costume contest awards. Most Creative Costume went to Lynne Lipcon (sporting a chef's hat), while Polly Oliver -- sporting an elegant black and silver scarf her father brought from Rhodes -- won Most Beautiful.

Thank you to the many, many parishioners who donated items or experiences and to those who invested so much time in tasks ranging from transforming the Vestry into a Greek village to putting away every last table and chair at the end of the evening.

With gratitude,  
Lynn Trimby, Deb Stubeda, Jan Miner, and Barb Heffner



*Clockwise from top: Melanie Larson and Jada Williams; Lynne Lipcon and Jan Miner; Doug Levine and Leah Levine; Polly Oliver (winner of Most Beautiful costume); Lynne Cavanaugh, dressed as "Mediterranean Diet," sporting healthy foods*

## Gloria: One of Vivaldi's Greatest Sacred Works Has a Unique Background Music Sunday, April 28

On Music Sunday, April 28, the First Parish Choir, along with an orchestra of First Parish and guest musicians, will present Antonio Vivaldi's *Gloria*, one of the most performed Baroque sacred music masterpieces.

Vivaldi wrote as many as 50 operas, countless concerti, and around 40 religious works. For the majority of his career, he was employed in Venice as a violin teacher -- and as a composer in residence -- at Ospedale della Pietà, a combined orphanage, convent and music school, where he had earlier been ordained as a priest.



Ospedale della Pietà was one of four rather grand ospedali in Venice. Each was populated in great part by abandoned children of the local aristocracy and professional community. Babies male and female could be left there anonymously, and they were well financed by the families

*continued on p. 8*

## 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** Auction Aftermath, Music Sunday
- 2** Our Mission
- 2** How to Connect With First Parish
- 3** A Month of Sundays
- 3** Our Offering Gift
- 3** Lay Minister of the Month
- 4** Greetings from Rev. Deborah
- 5** Parish Committee Report
- 7** Stewardship Highlights
- 7** Minister's Lunch
- 8** Yard Sale
- 9** Pop-Up for Pride, Ongoing Programs
- 10** Spring U.P.!, Fellowship Dinners
- 11** Adult OWL
- 12** Lifespan Education
- 13** Bee Team, SEEK
- 14** UUUM Update, Office Question
- 15** Family Promise News
- 16** April Calendar



## How to Connect With First Parish

Attend Sunday services and other events: Come in person, or when available, attend via Zoom. 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 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.

**April 7**  
**Council of All Beings**  
 Rev. Deborah Bennett

**April 14**  
**The Illusion of Nationalism**  
 Rev. Deborah Bennett

**April 21**  
**Because We Need Each Other**  
 Rev. Deborah Bennett

**April 28**  
**Music Sunday**  
**Vivaldi's *Gloria***  
 The First Parish Choir and Orchestra

### April's Lay Minister

April's Lay Minister is Julia Kenney. Contact Julia 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](#).

### April Theme:

*The Gift of  
 Interdependence*

## Sharing Our Offering: *MetroWest Climate Solutions*

On April 7 and 21, half the Sunday offering will be donated to [MetroWest Climate Solutions](#), a partnership of organizations and congregations whose mission is to inspire sustainable, resilient, and equitable communities and to host timely and relevant programs that encourage people and organizations to get involved in bringing about solutions.

Member organizations include First Parish in Wayland, First Parish Church in Weston, First Parish in Lincoln, First Parish in Framingham, CFREE (Lincoln), Energize Wayland, Sustainable Weston Action Group (SWAG), and a growing list of communities and individuals.

The next MetroWest Climate Solutions program will be the first in a series on climate impacts in Massachusetts. On May 1 at 7 p.m., MCS will host [Edwin Sumargo](#), the head of the climate science office at the Mass. Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Mr. Sumargo is on the [Climate Adaptation and Resilience Team](#).



## How Much of the Planet Are We Really Entitled To?

Welcome to Spring! What a perfect month to explore the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. We begin this month with what is perhaps the best first step on any journey: listening. In our multigenerational Meaning Matters service on April 7 we will take time to ask a few important questions about our part of the web. Questions such as:

*Could our collective failure to confront the climate crisis be rooted in our lost ability to listen?*

*What if the quickly-going-extinct creatures don't want our sympathy, but our ear?*

*What if the fraying of the web isn't just about us failing to act, but also about us having forgotten who we are?*

*And what if nature itself is the only one who can help us remember?*

In this special ritual called the "Council of All Beings," created by the famed activist Joanna Macy, we will invite a few people to represent the human race and listen deeply as everyone else takes on the voice of the non-human creatures and species of the planet. What would Oak Tree say to us humans? What would Polar Bear or Tree Frog? How about Ocean or River or Breeze? This is a powerful process and I hope you all prioritize attending.

Later in the month we will explore the "Illusion of Nationalism" and then celebrate the interconnection of us all by welcoming new members to First Parish during a service titled, "Because We Need Each Other."

And there is more! To close out our month we will be treated to the interdependence of voice and instrument as Polly Oliver leads our choir and guest musicians in a beautiful Music Sunday.

In addition to our offerings on Sundays, I hope you also enjoy the many other opportunities the congregation offers to deepen your connections to each other, to nature and to the greater community.

Please enjoy this poem (right) by Rev. Kaaren Anderson.

In Light and with Love,  
Rev. Deborah

### We Are One

by Rev. Kaaren Anderson

Perhaps if I could pull my senses back to the scraping squeak of the window opening that welcomes in the pasture's chorus of peepers, whose resonate tones glide over my bed sheet and mental haze, I'd be able to hear my amphibian friends' primordial call:

*We are one, we are one, we are one*

Perhaps if I could recall the rapid thrum of the nine hummingbirds beating wings, whipping in and out around the feeder, with a thrummm, thrummm, thrummm on that cold Montana morning in May, I'd remember that my heart beat synched with metronomic ease to their tiny thrumming selves and rhythmic reminder:

*We are one, we are one, we are one*

Perhaps if I could be real still and lay my body on the syrupy mud along the creek behind the wood and hear the ferns unfurling in unison and the roots of the poplar stretching toward the spring, I'd remember that the universe sings a song to us, each minute, of every hour, of every day, of every year:

*We are one, we are one, we are one*

Perhaps if I made it a priority to listen to that siren song, I'd ask the right questions, and make the right statements; and return to the communion of creatures of which I am a part.

The truth is we make this planet about us, and only us and when we do, the earth calls our separate selves back, singing:

"Ask yourself, you beautiful, thoughtful, gorgeous species,

How much of the planet are you really entitled to?"

And with the peepers, and the hummingbirds and the ferns and the roots, I would respond:  
*We are one, we are one, we are one.*

## Spring is Busy at First Parish

It is almost April and everyone is looking forward to spring. There are already signs of spring, such as the peepers, which are out, and tree allergens, which are already afflicting allergy sufferers. Spring also brings Stewardship and the annual auction and fellowship dinners.

While March was a busy month, April will seem just as busy, at least for the Parish Committee, as discussed below.

### Upcoming Events

In the coming weeks, First Parish will be offering a class on membership, an adult OWL program, a celebration of the 20th anniversary of marriage equality in Massachusetts, and a celebration of Juneteenth. The Juneteenth celebration will involve three UU congregations. It was decided to cancel the *Let's Talk About...* program related to gender. These programs are meant to be hard discussions and not teaching opportunities. As this is a sensitive topic for many, Rev. Deborah and Kate wanted to ensure that ample educational opportunities were made available to avoid misinformation. They hope many people join in adult OWL.

*In mid-February, a letter and survey were sent to all parishioners seeking recommendations for people to serve on the Search Committee. We are pleased to report that we received 82 responses with 302 suggestions in which many very capable people were nominated.*

### Ministerial Search Committee

In mid-February, a letter and survey were sent to all parishioners seeking recommendations for people to serve on the Search Committee and asking whether each recipient would agree to serve, if nominated. We are pleased to report that we received 82 responses with 302 suggestions in which many very capable people were nominated. The top vote getter received 17 votes. In

addition, there was a good match between the people who agreed to serve and those who received the most votes. The Parish Committee will now carefully review the results of the survey and pick the Search Committee, which will be presented to the congregation for a vote at the Annual Meeting (May 19). The Search Committee likely will have about 7 or 8 members. It is important that each member of the committee represent First Parish as a whole and not just one faction or interest group.

### Stewardship

The stewardship dinners and brunches were a great success. Not only did we fill all of slots at each host's house, we had to add several additional hosts at the last minute to accommodate the demand. Everyone had a great time and delighted in getting to know new friends and to socialize with old friends.

On March 17, the congregation celebrated Stewardship. Rev. Deborah led an inspiring service. Each parishioner (including children) was given a gift bag with two \$1 bills, candy and a pledge card.

There was a procession in which each person returned their gift bag containing a signed pledge card and dollar bills to a large jar. Afterward, everyone adjourned to the Vestry for a delicious brunch.

The Stewardship committee will now tally the results and remind those who have yet to pledge to do so as soon as possible.

### The Auction

The auction catalog went online March 1, and nearly all online items sold out.

2023–2024 Parish Committee: Lea Anderson (Chair), Chris Cullen (Treasurer), Larry Green, Jim Grumbach, Barbara Heffner, Nan Jahnke (Clerk), Nathalie Thompson (Vice Chair), Laurel Whitehouse, Jada Williams, Jay Woodruff

*continued on p. 6*

*Parish Committee, continued from page 5*

Everyone enjoyed the party on March 23, where bidding on silent and live items was robust (see p. 1).

### **Tenant Relations**

The tenant relations committee was tasked with negotiating a new contract with the Wayland Creative Preschool. While the details still must be worked out, the Parish Committee authorized a five-year lease, which was appreciated by the preschool. This long-term lease will allow the preschool to make improvements to its space and to work with First Parish to make changes that better serve its needs and the needs of First Parish. It was agreed that Kate and Karen be involved in any space planning. The Parish Committee agreed that the preschool be assured that any resumption of rummage or expansion of the yard sale would not interfere with its use of the Parish House.

### **Budget**

The time has arrived when we must begin preparation of the budget for the fiscal year 2024-2025. This process will continue throughout the month of April and will be informed by the results of Stewardship. At its most recent meeting, the Parish Committee received a report of salaries recommended by the UUA and compared those with existing salaries. Staff salaries for the new fiscal year were suggested.

### **The Health Advisory Team**

The Health Advisory Team issued an advisory in which it simplified and adjusted the First Parish protocols to reflect the evolving societal context in which First Parish exists. In short, if you are sick, stay home. If you are recovering or have minor symptoms, wear a mask. As before, if the Covid risk level in Middlesex County is low, masking is optional, if the risk level is medium, masking is recommended, and if the risk level is high, masking is required. There is no distinction between large and small groups. The team will continue to monitor Covid data, but will only meet on an ad hoc basis. The team is seeking a member of the congregation who is a medical professional and who can advise on health trends and risks.

### **Visioning Committee Update**

The Visioning Committee (Ted Barnes, Lynne Lipcon, and Jay Woodruff) met with the Parish Committee to provide an update. A very thorough report was submitted, which listed each project, its goals, and its status. There are 17 projects in all, some of which have been implemented in full and some of which have seen little or no activity. The committee was

thanked for its hard work and successes. The committee expressed an intent to back away from its work and turn over the various projects to others to implement, while only providing advice when needed. It was always the goal of the committee to launch and support activities but not to run them. The committee suggested that a core group be formed to hold the vision, but that new leadership and Parish Committee involvement were needed.

### **Social Action**

The Uganda project is now looking for additional sources of money now that it is no longer eligible for funding by the Lydia Maria Child fund. It was suggested that a discussion among the congregation was needed with respect to social justice ministry at First Parish to consider how we should decide which social justice projects receive funding through the budget and how much each project should get.

*Larry Green for the Parish Committee*

## Sunday Support

Many hands make light work, even on Sunday mornings at First Parish. If you're able, please consider signing up to help with Coffee Hour (it's easy, really), or to be a greeter before the service or an usher.

You could also sign up to bring flowers for the Sanctuary.

Every small contribution from helping hands is appreciated!



## Stewardship Season Highlights

Over the past month, 75 of us have celebrated community at brunches and suppers in various homes. One lucky diner won the door prize at each event: four weeks of reserved parking by the shed on Sunday mornings over the coming year.

During March Sunday worship services, we had a testimonial exploring the dimensions of stewardship with some hard-hitting questions, including why Larry and I would ever sign



up to be co-chairs, what the point was of a Bible story on generosity and whether there would be bacon at the celebration brunch.

Six names were drawn from a list of past pledging members who continue to donate their time and talents to First Parish Wayland. These six received small gifts in recognition of their generosity on behalf of the congregation. It is amazing to tally up the dozens of ways folks help throughout the year.

All of which led up to Celebration Sunday on March 17. The worship service explored the theme of Centering Our Gifts of Time, Talent, and Treasure. Rev. Deborah's homily skillfully braided together three stories of generosity. A time of meditation focused on what First Parish meant to each person, followed by pew conversations to share those things with others. We had a pledge parade to bring forward our individual pledge gift bags containing forms indicating how each of us would



contribute to our community life with our time and talents in addition to a monetary pledge of whatever size their circumstances made possible (including one small bright blue frog).

The brunch that followed was a joyous acknowledgment of our collective generosity and commitment to the congregation's future. That commitment resulted in dozens of pledges totaling over \$110,000. Combined with pledges received before the service, we have achieved 61% of our fundraising goal. Thank you to all those who pledged their treasure, and to all who committed their time and talent. We need all three to remain the vibrant, caring and financially secure congregation we are.

Those who have yet to send in their pledges, may do so by returning their pledge card to the office or by donating online at [uuwayland.org/pledge](http://uuwayland.org/pledge). We have a strong start on funding our annual operating budget, but we rely on everyone's help to achieve that goal, giving as generously as you can.

Your Stewardship team:

*Larry Green and Laurel Whitehouse*

### Minister's Lunch Thursday, April 4, 11:30 a.m.



Gather for soup, salad, and good company and conversation in the Sunroom.

We appreciate RSVPs so we can plan, but they are not required. Please come! Email us at [ministerslunch@uuwayland.org](mailto:ministerslunch@uuwayland.org).

## Yard Sale – June 1 – Reuse Central!

The First Parish Yard Sale will be held on June 1, 9-1 p.m. (For those of you with influence, it is not too early to start asking Mother Nature for a sunny, 70-degree day.) The format will be much like last year's – mostly outdoors – except for antiques and books/puzzles, which will once again be located in the Commons. Jewelry and native plants will also return. We expect to have the Home Goods department once again, which will feature items such as framed artwork, mirrors, lamps, fancy vases, etc. We'll have a rented 10x20 ft. tent, plus the tent generously donated by Suzanne Reitz and her family.



*Jean Milburn offered native plants and sustainable gardening advice at last year's Yard Sale (top). John Thompson took a break on a donated lounge, while Molly Faulkner coaxed him back to work.*

We'll also welcome community groups as we have in the past. We're in the process of reaching out to them.

Please save any items you'd like to donate in the above categories. And if you'd like to host your own table to benefit First Parish – terrific! We'll supply the table.

If you have furniture – please write to Barb Heffner. Having sold lots of furniture online over the last few years, we now have a good sense of what sells. We also want to be mindful of our aging backs.

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

Thanks,  
Suzanne Tiberii,  
Kathie Schmidt,  
Deb Stubeda  
and Barb Heffner



*Music Sunday, continued from p. 1*

who gave them up. The Ospedale della Pietà was distinguished from the other ospedali by its extraordinary, all-female ensembles of up to 60 players and singers. This may have influenced Vivaldi to score his Gloria, written and performed at the Ospedale in the early 1700s, for soprano and mezzo-soprano soloists.

Female students who showed a high aptitude for music were given what was regarded as one of the best musical educations available in Europe. In exchange many of them remained, essentially as indentured servants, for the rest of their lives, performing in the Ospedale church to enthusiastic audiences from across Europe.

They never traveled and could only be heard at the Ospedale, performing unseen in galleries overlooking the floor, obscured by metal screens. The mystery surrounding their identities further fueled their appeal. But when you join us on Music Sunday, April 28, you'll identify us easily enough as we perform at the front of the Sanctuary – singers and instrumentalists – led by Music Director Polly Oliver.

*Jay Woodruff, for the Music Committee*



## Pop-Up For Pride

*Friday, April 26, Following Spaghetti Dinner*

One of my favorite stories I've heard about First Parish involves a bunch of parishioners twenty years ago who knew that love is love and marriage should be for everyone, handmade signs, and a road trip — complete with a van — destined for the steps of the State House. How I wish I had been there!

May 17 marks the 20th anniversary of the legalization of same-sex marriage in Massachusetts, a milestone step forward for LGBTQ+ civil rights, and one that many folks at First Parish actively supported into law. At Weston Pride, we are celebrating by coordinating a series of spring pop-up events at community partners intended to set off a ripple of love and affirmation. I am so excited to count First Parish as one of our hosts!

Join us after the church spaghetti dinner to make a handmade pride card to give to someone special to you. Then make a couple more for us to give away to LGBTQ+ serving people and groups across the region. You're never fully dressed without your pride, so we will also have all the materials to make beautiful custom buttons, too.



We promise a fun and crafty evening, (no artistry skills needed!), honoring this important anniversary, and a joyful reminder of how much can be achieved when we stand beside one another in love and allyship.

*Melanie Larson*



## Spaghetti Dinner

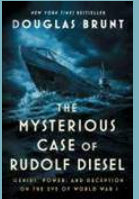
*Friday, April 26, 6:30 p.m.  
In the Vestry*

Join [Kate Holland](#) and other friends for a delicious spaghetti dinner, the perfect way to finish up the work and school week. Then plan to stay for fun and meaningful activities afterwards. See above for details. Join us!

## Men's Book Club

*Thursday, April 4, 8 p.m.  
on Zoom*

Join us as we try to solve the mystery of *The Mysterious Case of Rudolph Diesel*, by Douglas Brunt. All who identify as male are welcome. Questions? Contact Keith Sims.



## First Parish Book Club

*Tuesday, April 9, 7:30 p.m.  
on Zoom*

Join together on Zoom to discuss *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, by Taylor Jenkins Reid. Questions? Contact [Kate Holland](#).



## 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!

*Third Sunday Afternoon  
At a Knitter's Home*

Do you love to knit or want to learn? The knitters are always happy to see new faces. They meet on the third Sunday afternoon of each month. Come knit yourself into a new community. Contact Jean Milburn for more information.

## Spring U.P.! Bring Your Donations Saturday, May 4, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

The third annual Spring U.P.! celebration is coming soon! On Saturday, May 4, The Uganda Project will host an opportunity for First Parish to come together in support of people in need in Uganda. Come to drop off gently used toys, children's books, shoes, school supplies, sporting goods, and other items that will be much appreciated when delivered in several months to the schools, communities, and institutions known to our Ugandan First Parish members. Please consult [HERE](#) for a list of items that can be shipped and that are needed most. We hope to see you on May 4!

If you'd like to know more or to get involved with The Uganda Project, reach out to [UP@uuwayland.org](mailto:UP@uuwayland.org). Volunteer opportunities abound, particularly around the time of Spring U.P.!



*In spring 2023, First Parish volunteers packed up gently used clothes and household items for shipment to Uganda (top). The shipment took several months to arrive at its destination in Uganda (bottom).*

## In-Home Fellowship Dinners Saturday, April 27

First Parishioners love getting together over a good meal. Who doesn't?

Plan to take part in Fellowship Dinners, and enjoy the sustenance of good food and good company. It's pot luck, so you can sign up to be a guest and bring a dish, or be a host and receive your guests and their gifts of food. [Sign up here.](#)

Contact Becky Leonard if you have questions.

**JOIN US!**  
*spring*  
**FELLOWSHIP  
DINNERS**  
**Saturday, April 27, 2024**

Take part in one of our favorite traditions:  
Friendly, pot luck dinners together.  
Sign up to attend or host.  
Don't miss out!

[www.uuwayland.org/  
community-dinner-hosting](http://www.uuwayland.org/community-dinner-hosting)  
Or contact Becky Leonard  
**First Parish in Wayland**



# Join us for OWL for Adults

Two sessions on April 25 and May 2 at 7:00 pm  
In person at First Parish in Wayland

Did you know that our bodies and sexuality change our whole lives not just during puberty?

What are the changes in how people think of gender?

How is my body image now that I am an adult and aging?



How do I navigate intimate and long term relationships as I get older?

## WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU TALKED ABOUT "THE BIRDS AND THE BEES"?

Contact Kate Holland  
For more information  
at [kholland@uwayland.org](mailto:kholland@uwayland.org)



## Making Connections, One Game or Craft at a Time

Have you ever been in social hour after the Sunday service and seen a child running around with a sculpture made from cardboard, clothes pins, and lots of tape? Or maybe you heard a few kids talking about playing a game called “The Floor is Lava” in their SEEK class and wondered what that could possibly have to do with religious exploration. This month I want to share some of the topics we discuss in SEEK classrooms as well as the crafts and games that we use to support those lessons.

In October our theme was heritage, and we talked about our UU history of supporting the LGBTQ+ community -- how it is important that each person is treated with dignity no matter how they express their gender

or who they are or who they love. We had fun making chimera butterflies that don't have symmetrical wings but have unique colors or patterns on each wing. Differences can be beautiful!

In November our theme was generosity. We talked about giving generously, and not to just our family and friends, but widening the circles of generosity that we give to. We made a set of meditation beads and did a loving kindness meditation that gave us time to think about giving love and kindness to the world that we live in.

In December our theme was mystery. We talked about the mystery in the world all around us. We learned about Wilson Bentley who found mystery in snowflakes. In a time when there were no digital cameras or electricity, he took pictures of individual snowflakes. Afterwards we made snowstorms in a bottle.

In February our theme was transformation and in March our theme was equity and justice. With both themes we talked about the importance of working together to make change.



*How do you move eight balloons from one place to another without using your hands? Children in the SEEK program don't just talk about the importance of working together — they practice it!*

We played some great games to help us explore working together, including a game where we all needed to get our balloons down the hallway by pressing them to the back of the person in front of us (see photo). No hands were allowed to keep the balloons in place. We also played “The Floor is Lava,” in which each child has one round spot to use to get across the lava. The kids had to work together to get everyone to safety across the imaginary lava.

We have lots of fun in our SEEK classrooms as we learn about the values that Unitarian Universalists hold dear. Right now, I hope you are also thinking that all of this sounds like fun, too. The spring tends to find our lives getting busier and it can be hard to find people to craft and play games with us in the SEEK program.

If you have some time on a Sunday to bounce a baby or play with a toddler, play games or make some meditation beads, please consider volunteering some time in our SEEK classes. We

have made the financial commitment to hire Deirdre Neylon as a paid teacher so we could have two SEEK classrooms, but we still need volunteers to make that work. It takes all of us to support our SEEK program and to help it thrive.

If you would like to volunteer in either the nursery or in one of our SEEK classroom please check the dates on the grid and sign up to help.

[Nursery Volunteer Spring 2024](#)

[SEEK Volunteers Spring 2024](#)

*Kate Holland*  
Director, Lifespan Education

## First Parish Bee Team Shares the Lessons of Bees

Members of the First Parish Bee Team recently visited the three- and four-year-old “Cricket” class at Creative Preschool to present a lesson about honey bees: how they live and work cooperatively, and how they pollinate food and flowers. The children were each given a “bee job” to perform, and demonstrated just how busy a beehive can be when all the bees are at work simultaneously.



Nan Jahnke, Jill Grenon, and Ann Gordon described the ways that individual honey bees accomplish different tasks for the benefit of the entire colony. Then they assigned a “bee job” to each child, along with instructions and tools or props to help in their work.



To simulate a colony of bees, children acted as builders (making the honeycomb), housekeepers (keeping the hive tidy), scouts (finding sources of food and telling the colony using the “waggle dance”), foragers (gathering pollen and nectar), nurses (caring for the baby bees), guards (keeping predators out), and — of course — the queen, who lays all the eggs and is the mother of all the bees.



*From top: Nan Jahnke talks with the children about pollination; Jill Grenon helps the Nurse Bees feed the baby bees; Ann Gordon shows the Builder Bees how to build their honeycomb using cups.*

Creative Preschool, which uses the First Parish classrooms during weekdays, teaches a week-long unit on insects every spring. This is the second year the First Parish Bee Team has visited the school to talk about honey bees.

When the Lydia Maria Child Committee decided in 2017 to fund the establishment of beehives for First Parish, the Committee agreed that education should be part of the team’s

mission. Since then, members of the Bee Team have shared information in various settings about the role of honey bees, including preschool, summer camp, presentations and summer services at First Parish, and at the Wayland Council on Aging.

The beekeeping season will begin in earnest when consistently warm temperatures arrive, and the team will turn its attention to managing and supporting the Parish’s three hives. The Team includes Nan Jahnke, Jill Grenon, Amanda Ciaccio, Phil Giudice, David Bechtel, Clare Lewis, and Ann Gordon.

If you have questions about bees or beekeeping, please don’t hesitate to ask a member of the team. We love to talk about bees!

*Ann Gordon, for the Bee Team*

### SEEK in April 2024

**April 7**  
Multigenerational service: Council of All Beings

**April 14**  
We will explore interdependence and the web of life and how it connects us to our community.

**April 21**  
We will look at how we can care for our earth that we are a part of.



**April 28**  
We will explore how the web of life on our planet cares for us.

## UU Urban Ministry: April News

Rev. Mary Margaret Earl, minister and executive director at the UU Urban Ministry who recently preached from our pulpit, writes, "As the weather gets warmer the work to restore the interior of our historic Meetinghouse moves nearer to completion." Even though this is our April update, we want to make sure you have time to schedule a terrific event in early May.



We are invited to join the UUUM team and program participants on Thursday, May 2 at 5:00-7:00 p.m. for a tour and program spotlight at First Church in Roxbury, 10 Putnam St. Please notify Lea Anderson if you would like a ride.



**Community Conversations:** Continuing with the focus on housing, students in Roxbury Youth Programs (RYP) are organizing the next Community Conversation on Tuesday, April 9 at 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. [on Zoom](#). The topic is *Gate-keeping, Generational Wealth, and Collective Liberation*. Join us to examine the issue of housing in the neighborhoods the RYP students call home. If you missed recent Community Conversations, recordings are available at the [UUUM video library](#).

*Pew restoration project (top).  
Roxbury Youth Programs (bottom).*

To find out more about the UUUM, please visit [uuum.org](http://uuum.org). Or contact your delegates,

*Lea Anderson and Susan Crowley-Bechtel*



### Question of the Month from the Office What Should I Know That I Don't?

Here are some tidbits you should know if you want to be a First Parish "expert!"

- We now have a recycle bin! Please use it in addition to the dumpster when you are cleaning up First Parish.
- Zoom rooms are still available from the office for online and hybrid meetings. Speaking of meetings....Please go to the calendar page of the website ([www.uuwayland.org/first-parish-calendar/](http://www.uuwayland.org/first-parish-calendar/)) to view the calendar and make a room/Zoom request.

*continued next column*

### Question of the Month, continued

- We have an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) in the Commons in case of emergency. Everyone should know where it is. It has instructions and a voice walks you through the process of using it if you ever need to (and it won't let you do anything very wrong to hurt someone).
- We have a public WIFI. Its name and password are posted in various locations around the building (in the Vestry, in Stokey, in the Parish Office, in the Sunroom).
- There is a bunch of useful information outside the Parish Office, including:
  - Reimbursement forms
  - Lydia Maria Child Fund reimbursement and grant forms
  - Pledge forms and donation envelopes
  - Last year's annual report
- We have a Member's page on our website with lots of information, sign ups, directory, etc. ([uuwayland.org/members](http://uuwayland.org/members))
- There is a locked mailbox outside the east, Parish House door for donations, pledge cards, etc.
- There is a coded lock on the back, east, Parish House door if you need to get into the building. (Ask Karen for the code.)
- There is a First Aid box AND a tool-box in the kitchen closet.

Contact me at 508-358-6133 or [office@uuwayland.org](mailto:office@uuwayland.org) if you have any questions.

*Karen Plaskon*

## Family Promise is Undergoing Changes, But the Need for Volunteers Remains



Family Promise Executive Director, Danielle Conti, called a meeting of coordinators of participating congregations on March 19.

She highlighted the organization's impact for 2023:

- 220 families served (including 153 adults and 208 children). This was a 25% increase in the number of families served in 2022.
- 100% of shelter families moved from shelter into affordable apartments.
- 100% of SAIL families established and maintained safe, stable housing.
- 100% of LIFE families avoided shelter entry and remained in their homes.
- Other achievements included marked increases in families reducing their overall debt, finding full-time employment, finding safe, affordable childcare, and increasing their income.

Danielle commented on the hardships experienced by children after losing their homes and facing increased insecurity. (Children continue to attend school in the town where they last lived, with that town/city providing transportation.)



Coordinators each spoke about how our congregations are unsure about the roles we play given all the recent changes and are therefore becoming less involved.

Since the original pre-pandemic model we all engaged in is no longer practical, the staff and board are reviewing the need for further changes, including how to meet the challenge of little affordable housing in the Metrowest area.

We met a new member of staff, Amy Miller, Director of Communications and Development. Both Danielle and Amy offer to meet with congregations.

**Meanwhile volunteers are still needed.** We expect assigned weeks of providing dinners and groceries to shelter families to

continue for now. Additionally, what is needed are people with skills and willingness to help, including:

- Ambassadors in the communities to help find affordable housing
- Help for parents with housing applications
- People with language skills in Spanish and Portuguese
- Moving day support
- Babysitters for children in the shelter while parents attend to continuing education
- Teen volunteers to entertain the shelter children late afternoons and weekends

Coming up:

First Parish in Wayland's **next host week is April 15-19** (school vacation week). Wayland will coordinate efforts with First Parish in Framingham.

Wayland will provide the groceries requested by the Shelter families for the week. I will post these requests to our community.

**The Walk to End Homelessness** is planned for Sunday, May 5. If you are interested in participating (and who wouldn't be?), we have a choice of venue: We can join the large community event in Natick, or have a more intimate jaunt on the Wayland Rail Trail following our service. More details to come.

*Lois Doerr*

*continued*

# April

- 4** **Minister's Lunch**  
Thursday, April 4, 11:30 a.m., p. 7
- 4** **Men's Book Group**  
Thurs., April 4, 8:00 p.m., p. 9
- 9** **First Parish Book Club**  
Tuesday, April 9, 7:30 p.m., p. 9
- 9** **UUUM Community Conversation**  
Tuesday, April 9, 6:00 p.m., p. 14
- 26** **Spaghetti Dinner & Pop-Up Craft Night**  
Friday, April 26, 6:30 p.m., p. 9, 12
- 27** **In-Home Fellowship Dinners**  
Sat., April 27, p. 10
- 28** **Music Sunday: Vivaldi's Gloria**  
Sunday, April 28, 10 a.m., p. 1



*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](http://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. Deborah Bennett](#), Interim Minister  
The Rev. Dr. [Deborah Pope-Lance](#), Affiliate Minister

**Our Staff**

[Kate Holland](#), Director of Lifespan Education  
[Polly Oliver](#), Music Director and Organist  
[Karen Plaskon](#), Parish Administrator  
[Leo Monzon](#), Bookkeeper  
Deirdre Neylon, SEEK Teacher  
Chris Bracken, 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!

