

**No matter who you are or  
where you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome here.**



**50 Church St, Waltham MA 02452 | 781.893.6240  
office@walthamuu.org | www.walthamuu.org**



### **Upcoming Services**

#### **"Sitting at the Welcome Table: An All-Church Thanksgiving Service" Nov 19th - 10:30 AM**

For many of us, Thanksgiving is a time to be together, enjoy family connection and eat delicious foods. Not all of us observe this holiday, nor observe it in the same ways...but as we focus on what it means to offer welcome to both loved ones and strangers outside the door, this holiday is a time for generosity. Our service will tell the story of "The Mitten Tree" and we'll hear voices from our community sharing about their own varied traditions of this holiday.

Come one, come all and join in taking your seat "at the welcome table" with us. **You are encouraged to bring a dish that you would share at the welcome table - which we will enjoy at our community social hour! We'll be lifted by music from Donnell Patterson and the Joyful Voices of Inspiration - you won't want to miss this service!** Rev. Megan Lynes and Deb Weiner will lead our celebrations.

#### **"Home for the Holidays" Nov. 26th - 10:30 AM Led by Rev. Megan Lynes**

Some of us love the holidays, and some of us grit our teeth through the whole season. The poem by Jeredith Merrin, "Family Reunion," names a part of the struggle, while uplifting the beauty and hope of this time as well. Families are complicated. Come explore themes of connection and opportunity, in a room of



**Minister's Musings:  
From Rev. Megan Lynes, Parish Minister**

Dear First Parish Community,

Sometimes someone asks me what Unitarian Universalists believe, and it never fails to catch me off guard. How I want to be able to succinctly sum up our faith! And how very much I want to avoid saying that we can all believe whatever we want. (That just feels vapid to me, and I'd rather say something about how our faith invites us into a lifelong quest for truth and meaning, and that one of the ways we do that, is here in community.) I must admit though, that despite being a minister, I don't often feel I have just the right reply at my fingertips.

What helps me, and perhaps it helps you too, when faced with a question about what we believe, is to discern the underlying curiosity of the person who's asking. Are they seeking a comparison with their religious upbringing, curious about what a service might be like, or perhaps wondering whether atheists (or theists!) are welcome among us? Maybe they want to know if we're judging them. Like addressing sensitive topics with a child, understanding the heart of the question can guide our response. Say too much and the eyes glaze over. Say too little and an opportunity is wasted.

The good news is that pretty much every Sunday at First Parish we have new visitors. We get to practice! This is not the ministry of the soap box. It's an act of genuine curiosity about the other. Who is this person beside me? What brought them to church? Certainly they came here seeking something; did they find it? Can I help them find it here?

This past week I found myself talking with a visitor about how poverty keeps us all separated from one another. She told me that she loved seeing an unhoused person reading a poem during the service, and that she felt safe because she hadn't known that a church would value the contribution of someone without money. In my mind, I thought I could hear the question she'd found an answer to: will you treat me with respect? The profound intention from the depths of our faith tradition, is a resounding yes. The lived experience of each human among us, will always be our litmus test.

Within our diverse community, our goal is to celebrate the uniqueness of each person's life, and to honor their personhood. We do all we can to create an environment where individuals can think for themselves about life's mysteries, wonders, pains, and joys. We lean on one another when life is too hard to bear. We make each other laugh just to feel alive together. We fight for each other within the broader context of justice. We allow ourselves to feel, to learn and be transformed. We seek to live a life that matters, and to be of use. Perhaps it could even be said that how we live our faith is more important than how we explain it.

Or, in the words of A. Powell Davies, "Life is just a chance to grow a soul."

With love for the journey,

Rev. Megan

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**Office Administrator (and Music Director) are on vacation!**

Our hardworking Office Administrator and Music Director, Emma Campbell, is on vacation through November 21st. Messages and voicemail are being checked regularly, but if you want to see Emma, please wait till next week! For other matters please email [office@walthamuu.org](mailto:office@walthamuu.org) or contact Deb Weiner or Rev. Megan Lynes.

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## **Reminder: Special Coffee Hour Featuring Your Favorite Holiday Dishes on Sunday November 19th!**

We invite everyone to join us in spreading a "Welcome Table" for Coffee Hour on November 19th. Bring a dish that is special and iconic for you, for the holiday. Make a little tag for it to tell us what it is (also whether it's vegan, vegetarian or gluten free) and why you brought it. We will enjoy the bounty of our contributions together after worship!

-Rev. Megan and Deb

## **In This Time of Giving...**

The First Parish in Waltham Minister's Discretionary Fund Offers financial support to those in the congregation and in the wider Waltham community in times of need. We welcome your gifts to this fund. If you wish to contribute please send your checks to First Parish in Waltham, with "Minister's Discretionary Fund" in the memo line, or drop your check in the offering plate during Sunday services. Thank you!

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## **News from the Search Committee:**

Our last cottage meeting, to share your thoughts with the Search Committee on several important topics, will be held in the Harrington Room on **Sunday, November 19, at noon**. Meanwhile, we've been working hard to compile information from the congregational survey and the cottage meetings. So many people have different parts of the First Parish story - we're trying to put them together! We're looking forward to sharing what we've learned with you after we're done.

We're also still pondering the lessons from Beyond Categorical Thinking. Stay tuned for more soon. Questions or comments? Email us at [search@walthamuu.org](mailto:search@walthamuu.org)

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## **UU and You! Dec 3rd, 11:45 am Harrington Room**

Are you new to First Parish in Waltham (or do you feel like you are?) Are you interested in learning more about First Parish and how to get on board the moving train here? Are you seeking a little more info about what Unitarian Universalism is all about? Come meet with Rev. Megan Lynes and Deb Weiner as well as representatives from our Membership and Hospitality teams over tea and cookies. Bring your questions, come as you are - all are welcome!

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## **Keys!**

Our front door has been converted to an electronic locking system. If you have a key to the front door it will no longer be working when you read this newsletter. Dan Taylor is responsible for ensuring that people who had keys have been issued with a 4-digit code so that they can enter the building. If you have not received yours, or it is not working, please contact Dan via [property@walthamuu.org](mailto:property@walthamuu.org) or drop by the church office during office hours.



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## Writing Group

A writing group has been formed at First Parish in Waltham. As one participant put it: *"Writing can put a little distance between you and your thoughts and sharing that can lead to even more interesting reflections."*



We had our first meeting recently and plan to meet every other week from 4:00 pm until 5:30 pm on Saturdays. We will rotate these in-person meetings at members' homes. For more information, contact **Brenda Asis**.

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## One Thing You Can Do

"Eating Less Red Meat Is Something Individuals Can Do to Help the Climate Crisis" is the title of **an article in Scientific American by Naomi Oreskes**.

One thing you can do this week to help the climate crisis and to improve your health is to participate in the **UU Plant-Based Eating Club** Potluck on Sunday, November 19 at 6pm in Whitcomb Hall. The event is hosted by Brenda Asis and Andy LeCompte. To participate, **Sign Up here**.

- Elisse Ghitelman, Outreach Commissioner

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## UU Plant-based Potluck this Sunday at 6 PM!

The UU Plant-based Eating Club will have its next potluck dinner on Sunday, November 19, at 6:00 pm. We welcome all; newbies, wannabes, and those who are just curious about what this plant-based eating thing is all about. You do not have to be a plant-based eater to join us, as long as you are interested in incorporating more plant-based whole foods into your diet and supporting others who are doing the same. For more details and to sign up, visit our **Signup Genius page**.



Organizer Brenda Asis says, "We are particularly excited to gather at First Parish in Waltham! Andy and I have been steering committee members since the group started 5 years ago. During this time, the group grew from 8 people to over 80! Over the years, we have learned the powerful ways food can sustain and improve the health and vitality of people and the planet." For more information and to see upcoming events, go to **<https://bit.ly/49afIQM>**

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## Make (and Bake) Bread for Sunday's service at First Parish - Together!

Are you making a bread to bring to our "welcome table" feast for this Sunday's service? Would you like to make bread together? Bring your ingredients to the First Parish kitchen on **Saturday, Nov 18th between 9-12** Enter through the kitchen door (rear of the church, up the stairs) and join us! For more info reach out to **Pam Penton!**

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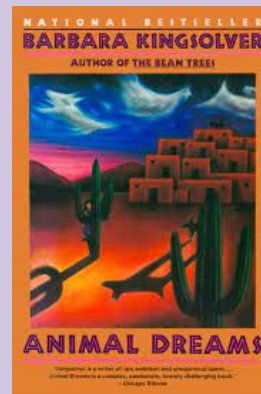
## First Parish Book Club

**November 16, Harrington Room at 1:00 pm**  
**"Animal Dreams" by Barbara Kingsolver**

From Barbara Kingsolver, the acclaimed author of *Flight Behavior*, *The Lacuna*, *The Bean Trees*, and other modern classics, *Animal Dreams* is a passionate and complex novel about love, forgiveness, and one woman's struggle to find her place in the world.

At the end of her rope, Codi Noline returns to her Arizona home to face her ailing father, with whom she has a difficult, distant relationship. There she meets handsome Apache trainman Loyd Peregrina, who tells her, "If you want sweet dreams, you've got to live a sweet life."

Filled with lyrical writing, Native American legends, a tender love story, and Codi's quest for identity, *Animal Dreams* is literary fiction at its very best.



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### What are you doing for Thanksgiving, on November 23rd?

Come and join old friends and new in Whitcomb Hall, as Chaplains on the Way serves breakfast to our housed and un-housed neighbors. Extra helping hands are always welcome, anytime between 8am-noon on 11/23. To volunteer your time or food donations, please contact Jill ([jill@chaplainsontheway.org](mailto:jill@chaplainsontheway.org)).

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### Holiday Marketplace Returns!

Would you like an easy way to shop for holiday gift items, decorations for your home, or baked goods or other food items for your holiday meals? The First Parish Holiday Marketplace is returning soon. This year we'll be operating on a pop-up basis; you'll be able to shop in person after church on the first 3 Sundays in December.

Will you support First Parish and share your cooking, sewing, crafting or other talents by donating items to be sold? Perhaps you make a really good pie or cake, cookies, cranberry relish, soup or something else that's delicious. We welcome all contributions!

Please email [gildersleeveleslie@gmail.com](mailto:gildersleeveleslie@gmail.com) or [donavanderclock@gmail.com](mailto:donavanderclock@gmail.com) if you'd like to donate something to sell. All proceeds will benefit First Parish.

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### Pastoral Care in Our Congregation - We're here for you!

Are you struggling with issues that could use the support of another member of our congregation as a listening ear or to offer support? In addition to Rev. Megan Lynes and Deb Weiner, who provide pastoral care to our community, our Lay Pastoral Care Team is available to you.

Please reach out to us if you believe we can help: [pastoralcare@walthamuu.org](mailto:pastoralcare@walthamuu.org) - and a member of our team will respond to you in a timely manner!

Our 'point person' each month is as follows:

November: Andy LeCompte  
December: Plum Kennard  
January: Nancy Lawrence  
February: Plum Kennard

### Quick, Easy and Important: The Care Crew Needs YOU!

Do you like people? Are you able to lend a hand occasionally to offer a ride to someone, or make them a casserole or soup? If so, you could be part of our Care Crew. This is a low stress, high satisfaction way to support the First Parish community. Are you willing to help?

Please contact **Rev. Megan Lynes** or Plum Kennard (Chair of Lay Pastoral) if you're interested.

### Light the Steeple

Honor  
a person, occasion,  
event, or idea

Contact the Office

✉ [office@walthamuu.org](mailto:office@walthamuu.org)

☎ 781.893.6240



### When's Your Birthday?

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The Membership Committee is helping us celebrate birthdays as a congregation! Let us know your birthday so we can all honor you!

Email the dates to Gary Morrison.  
[membership.commissioner@walthamuu.org](mailto:membership.commissioner@walthamuu.org)

### Happy Birthday this Month to:

- Deb Weiner 11/9
- Michael Carmody 11/4
- Andy Lowe 11/16
- Carla Hillyard 11/16
- Kris DiNardo 11/18
- Mary Ahrens 11/23
- Plum Kennard 11/27
- Ashley Kamal 11/30

*Please feel free to send a card or an email to these good people!*

Make an offering plate  
donation before, during, or  
after the service!



<http://tiny.cc/Donate2FPW>



## Ministry Staff Team

### Parish Minister

Rev. Megan Lynes  
617.276.7655  
[revmeganlynes@walthamuu.org](mailto:revmeganlynes@walthamuu.org)

### Transitional Ministry Associate

Deborah Weiner  
617.513.6614  
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### Office Administrator / Music and Choir Director

Emma Campbell  
781.893.6240  
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or  
[musicdirector@walthamuu.org](mailto:musicdirector@walthamuu.org)

## Board Members

### President, Board of Managers

Deb Jose  
[president@walthamuu.org](mailto:president@walthamuu.org)

### Membership

Gary Morrison  
[gary.morrison@walthamuu.org](mailto:gary.morrison@walthamuu.org)

**Assistant Treasurer**

Dan DeHainaut  
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**Clerk**

Peter Duane  
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**Community Outreach  
Commissioner**

Elisse Ghitelman  
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**Finance**

Donna VanderClock  
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**Music and Worship Commissioner**

Bethany Templeton Klem  
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**Property**

Dan Taylor  
[property@walthamuu.org](mailto:property@walthamuu.org)

**Religious Education Commissioner**

Pam Penton  
[pam.penton@walthamuu.org](mailto:pam.penton@walthamuu.org)

**Treasurer**

Janet Riley  
[treasurer@walthamuu.org](mailto:treasurer@walthamuu.org)

## Our Mission Statement

The mission of First Parish in Waltham is to be a caring, inclusive, spiritual community committed to using free inquiry and the power of love to achieve peace, justice, and a sustainable world.

First Parish in Waltham | 50 Church St., Waltham, MA 02452

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