

***Wherever you are in your spiritual journey,
you are welcome here.***



**Everyone is
Welcome!**



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



Theme for the Month: The Path of Vulnerability

"The Richness of Imagination Found Amongst the Ruins"

In a time where hope is in and out of people's hearts, we search for ways to make it stay. We search to find that sustaining hope, to make it a permanent part of our lives. In this search, imagination can play a rich role allowing us to not only access hope, but to imagine fully what it could be and look like.

Join our guest minister, Rev. Jo Murphy, to find out more

Please sign up for roles on Sunday morning - greeters, coffee makers, sound engineers, camera operators, Zoom hosts by clicking on the link [here](#).

If you would like to join virtually, see the email distribution on Thursday afternoon, or email office@walthamuu.org for login instructions.

A Service to Celebrate the Life of Kimberly Strafford

Saturday, March 18th at 11am First Parish Waltham

To view the service please click on this link:
<https://my.gather.app/remember/kimberly-strafford>

Kimberly brought joy and light to our congregation and to her world. Her death is heartbreaking for so many. But soon we will gather, to celebrate that light and to surround her family in our love.

Please mark your calendars and plan to join us. There are many ways to help, including



bringing food for the reception that will follow in Whitcomb Hall, help setting up or help taking down. If you can assist in any of that, please email Martha Gallagher at Meadegalla@gmail.com

A GoFundMe page to support the Strafford family and medical expenses has been established. If you would like to contribute, please visit the page:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-the-strafford-family>

Kimberly's obituary can be found by clicking [here](#) along with details of her wake.



"For This Time" - Thoughts from Deborah Weiner Transitional Ministry Associate

Stability and Change

There are times in the life of congregations when things feel like they are shifting rapidly. I suppose that for many of you, you might respond that my comment sounds like it's "Just another day ending in 'y'" as in, there's been so darned *much* change, a little more doesn't seem unusual at this point.

Well, true. And at the same time, there are so many places where I can hear people calling out and saying "please, just give us something that feels familiar and reliable... something we can count on."

Both things are true, and both exist at the same time. One of the things that is a sign of hope is the coming of the congregation's stewardship campaign. While this time of year can cause some folks to dive for the covers of the bed, I love it: it's a time to dream BIG about the future, to imagine what the possibilities are for the coming year, and to truly put our money where our dreams are.

And what a time this is: we once again had more than forty participants (in Whitcomb Hall and on Zoom) joining for our March 12 transitions workshop. We shared great food, visited draft #5 of the congregation's new mission statement, draft #1.2 of a new relational covenant, and then set to work on imagining what a vision statement for the congregation might look like.

Vision: the imaginings - informed by the church's mission - of our priorities and aspirations for the next 3-5 years. Many ideas were floated; after conversation all participants had the opportunity to identify the three top priorities they held for the congregation. Then we tallied up those with the most votes, and lo and behold, five key elements emerged:

They are (in no particular order):

- * GROWTH: In five to ten years, the congregation will have grown to reflect Waltham, and we'll have 'critical mass' to keep going. Our building should be overflowing with people because everyone in Waltham wants to be here!
- * CARE and SUPPORT: Supporting the nurturance of a Caring Commission to sustain pastoral care, outreach to members and friends, spiritual growth and connection.
- * BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: Restoring our grounds, caring for our gardens, sidewalks, and building, advocating for sustainability in the immediate environment in which we gather to worship.
- * COOKING in a CLEAN AND UPDATED SPACE: Supporting a newly updated and working kitchen to help us enjoy meals, nurture connection, and celebrate in a welcoming, clean facility.
- * BUILD A COMMUNITY of COMMUNITIES: Support a multicultural community that welcomes families of all kinds and nurtures connections between groups and individuals

What a great group of visions to hold! We, your staff and ministry team, are here to partner with you -- the members and friends of the congregation -- in creating dynamic and transformative ministry. We are here to use our expertise, our skills, our particular ministries, to help this wonderful congregation achieve the best -- for its families and individual members. We are here to listen to your memories of what has been important to you, what it is you hope to build in the future. In turn, we hope that you will engage with us as we share our vision, experience and perspectives.

Beloveds, we are here to build and rebuild a faith community that shines in all ways possible -- for right now, and for the future. The future is now. I can't wait to see what's next!

In faith, with love --

Add your thoughts to the Vision-building process!

On Sunday, March 12, about forty First Parishioners gathered to share thoughts on the ways we can build a new vision for First Parish - one connected to our new draft mission statement. Well over 20 ideas were presented, and the participants voted on those that they felt were most significant. YOU can add your comments to the process! We've posted a series of Jamboards online for those who want to comment on the vision ideas.

Please share your thoughts - through April 5 - to contribute to the process! https://jamboard.google.com/d/1C-qbXNsMXm9tIM8qnjcuM64_qwQtWbIJFKBAm-t081o/viewer?f=0

Ideas and suggestions will be reviewed, and vision statements refined, before being offered to the Board of Managers for further action. Questions? contact Deborah Weiner, Transitional Ministry Associate: deb.weiner@walthamuu.org

Friendship Finders in March

The Friendship Finders are studying about the Path of Vulnerability like the rest of the church. On March 12th we talked about the definition of vulnerability and how it relates to friendships. The class used it's favorite puppet, the Frog. We talked about what frogs are good at - leaping and jumping. There's a phrase about leaping called "A leap of faith." Frogs take leaps of faith all the time. They may not quite know where they are going. But they take a leap anyway, trusting that they will land on solid and safe ground, hoping they don't land on dangerous rocks or miss the log they are trying to jump on to. The class discussed how taking a leap of faith or a risk is related to asking someone to be your friend. We colored bookmarks with inspirational sayings while we read the book "The Other Side" by Woodson. The story is about two girls who strike up a friendship in a segregated neighborhood and get around the grown-ups' rules by sitting on top of the fence together." We handed out our bookmarks at coffee hour.



On March 19th, we will explore the times when life asks us to be vulnerable because we need help, feel worried, or can't do something on our own. In these moments, we are asked to vulnerably say, "I need help." The class will read the book "The Worry Box" by Chew. There will be a discussion about worry boxes and worry dolls. The class will decorate their own boxes and add something that is bothering them inside.

The March 26 class will talk about the "The Trans Day of Visibility". What does it mean to be able to show your true self. The book for the day will be "When Aiden became a Brother" by Lukoff. We will discuss what it feels like when people don't see you the way you want and how to be true to yourself. We will continue to color bookmarks and hand them out.

Stewardship Potluck Dinner March 25

5:30pm Doors open

The date is approaching fast! It's time to RSVP and decide what you will be bringing to the potluck. We'll need entrees, sides, salads, bread, beverages, and desserts, each serving 10-12 people. You can use the Sign up Genius [here](#) or the paper sheets at coffee hour or give Leslie a call (781 891 7115) or email gildersleeveleslie@gmail.com.

There will be entertainment! The Revels Singers chorus under the direction of Elijah Botkin will be performing for us. There will be some talk of finances! Well, of course....

As a former stewardship campaign slogan says, come "Care, Commit, Connect.

We look forward to seeing you on the 25th

Ferry Beach Registration is open!

Ferry Beach needs a good headcount from us by mid-March, if you're staying over. There is a 10% Discount for early registration—this will end Sunday, March 19. There is also a 20% Discount for first-time attendees—this is available until the retreat fills up.

The info packet attached will tell you all about the retreat, or contact Sue Genser at fpw.retreat@gmail.com.

It's a good idea to read the info packet even if you have gone before, because things do change.

Registration links are here!

[WEEKEND Ferry Beach attendees](#)

[DAY VISITORS \(Saturday, June 3\)](#)

News Flashes!!!

From the Trustees of the Permanent Funds: First Parish recently received a significant legacy gift from the estate of beloved First Parish member Deborah Wild. She loved First Parish, had various involvements in the activities of our community, and demonstrated that love by leaving First Parish a significant final donation in her will. We were among a number of groups and organizations she took the time to honor.

We are grateful for all donations to First Parish, be they pledges, gifts, legacies, or non-financial (time, thought and effort of all types). If you would like further information on providing a legacy gift, please contact one of us.

[David Wilbourn, Joel Weddig, Barry Stearns](#)

Trustees of the Permanent Funds, First Parish in Waltham UU

The **Waltham Clothing Exchange** has opened its spring sale, Tuesdays only, from 10 to 4:30. Clothing, household items, toys, stuffed animals, hardware, electronics, and more at ridiculous prices! Of special interest may be the American Girl doll collection we received, clothes and accessories. If you can't make it, tell a friend! Visit the Waltham Clothing Exchange, you will love it!

Dialogue with Rev. Dr. Sofía Betancourt

candidate for UUA President

Saturday March 18
UU Church of Arlington, VA
1pm Eastern

attend in person or online

Find out more and register:
tinyurl.com/sofia-for-uua



NEW DATE: MARCH 21, 2023 5:00-7:30 PM AT FIRST PARISH WALTHAM



WALTHAM COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP GROUP HOUSING SUMMIT



Housing Summit Agenda

- 5:00pm** Welcome and introductions
- 5:30pm** First set of speakers
- 6:20pm** 10 minute break
- 6:30pm** Second set of speakers
- 7:20pm** Next steps and closing

Many of our friends can be seen, explaining why this is a topic of great importance to them by clicking on this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjQsFIR_yp8

Dismantling Racism and Bias - Learning Opportunities

Randee Wilding is the Chief Operating Officer for the Dock C. Bracy Center for Human Reconciliation. It is a non profit non religious learning organization, focused on the eradication of racism and other forms of human oppression.

It has two upcoming Center events to share with you:

Eradicating Racism: A Path Forward Learning Series

Session 1: The Complexity of Systemic Racism, Thursday, April 13, 2023, 7-9pm

EDT (UTC-4)
Session 2: The Notion of White Privilege, Thursday, April 20, 2023, 7-9pm EDT (UTC-4)
Session 3: The Personal Impact of Racism, Thursday, April 27, 2023, 7-9pm EDT (UTC-4)
Session 4: Finding Your Voice, Thursday, May 4, 2023, 7-9pm EDT (UTC-4)
<https://www.dcbcenter.org/post/april-2023-eradicating-racism-a-path-forward>
REGISTER: **<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/468722530707>**

Let's Talk Series: Antisemitism is Everyone's Concern
Wednesday, April 19, 2023, 7-9 p.m. EDT (UTC-4)
<https://www.dcbcenter.org/post/antisemitism-is-everyone-s-concern>
REGISTER: **<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/558702282567>**

All of the center's events are listed here: **<https://www.dcbcenter.org/events>**

Coffee Hour Schedule

When it is your turn to bring a snack for coffee hour, please bring a snack either in a container it can be served from, or on your own dish, which you bring home and clean yourself. Please don't bring snacks with nuts, to help those with allergies. Thanks.

Here is the Coffee Hour Schedule:

A - E first Sunday

F - L second Sunday

M - S third Sunday

T - Z fourth Sunday

Special arrangements will be made for fifth Sundays.



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

First Parish
in Waltham

A Welcoming
Unitarian Universalist Congregation

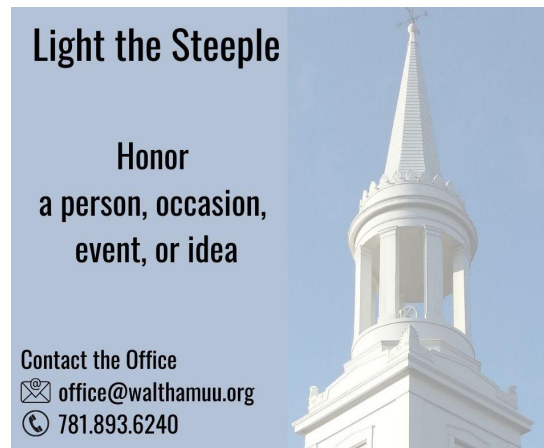
<http://tiny.cc/Donate2FPW>

The advertisement features a background image of a church steeple and a logo with a stylized tree.

When is Your Birthday?

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The Membership Committee is looking to recreate the celebration of birthdays! Whose birthdays? Everyone's birthdays! Yours, your partner's and your children's birthdays. Help us to celebrate each important day. Let us know those important dates. We will add the dates to the newsletter so we can all honor and celebrate our community. Email the dates to Martha Gallagher.

membership.commissioner@walthamuu.org



Light the Steeple

Honor
a person, occasion,
event, or idea

Contact the Office
✉ office@walthamuu.org
☎ 781.893.6240

The advertisement features a background image of a church steeple.

Happy Birthday this Month to:

Dan Dehainaut 3/3
Nora Strafford 3/10
Rachel Learned 3/10
Alan Bone 3/11
Joan Bone 3/14
Cynthia Salamanis 3/26
Brenda Asis 3/28
Duncan Remage-Healy 3/30
Send a card or an email to these members!

Ministry Staff Team

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Transitional Ministry Associate

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Religious Education Commissioner

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Treasurer

Janet Riley
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Our Church Covenant

Love is the spirit of this church and service its law.

This is our great covenant:

*to dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love, and to help
one another.*

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

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