

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



**Everyone is  
Welcome!**



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office@walthamuu.org | www.walthamuu.org**



## **Theme for the Month: The Path of Vulnerability**

**“Give It Away!”**

Our American society teaches us to accumulate, to keep a firm grasp on what we consider to be ours, whether it be money, property or privilege. Most of us have been well trained in this form of scarcity thinking. We worry, if we give it away will there still be enough for ourselves? This causes all kinds of suffering.

Abundant thinking teaches us to look differently at the same amount of resources. When we see ourselves connected to all things on the web of life, then we know that the flow of giving and receiving is not a mathematical equation. Join Rev. Becky this Sunday as we kick off FPW’s Stewardship Campaign by leaning into our abundance.

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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](mailto:office@walthamuu.org) for login instructions.

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## **This is a long newsletter!**

To read it all, please click on the highlighted, underlined text saying **“View entire message”**

***“For This Time” - Thoughts from Deborah Weiner  
Transitional Ministry Associate***

## The Interim Leader's Tasks: All About Leadership

The interim time is all about leadership transition - among members of the staff and sometimes, members of the congregation. Among the highlighted changes that this interim religious professional is focusing on are the following key elements:



- Helping to identify changes needed in program structure and staffing
- Clarifying the multiple dimensions of programmatic leadership and helping to navigate the shifts in leadership that accompany times of transition
- Helping to empower the congregation in developing strength in systems and leadership
- Modeling new approaches, practices and procedures
- Helping the congregation focus on a set of quantifiable, achievable goals and objectives for the next several years
- (Still to come this year): Beginning to organize for a search for a new settled religious leader

Often these leadership changes are viewed, during interim times, as 'spring house cleaning' because frequently, the arrival of interim leadership is an opportunity for the congregation or its professional leaders to re-examine existing behaviors and job profiles and recalibrate for the future. It is also true that during this period, the changes that come are experienced much like an extended case of influenza: "Why are all these changes happening? What was wrong with the way we've always done it?"

During the time I've been at First Parish in Waltham we've seen many changes in the ways in which we do, and think, about different parts of the congregation's life. We are blessed with the half-time ministry, focused on pastoral care and worship, of Rev. Becky and will soon bid her a fond farewell as she goes off to pursue areas of ministry that connect with her passions for chaplaincy and pastoral care. Our amazing Office Manager/Music Director, Emma Campbell, has moved so many elements to help institute organizational change and growth in our administrative systems - and the music provided through a Hymn of the Month, our growing choir, our guest musicians, and care of the congregation's musical instruments - has been noteworthy (pun intended!) The addition of Kevin (KJ) Robertson Jr. to our staff as Acting Facilities Coordinator has further supported our return to consistent, reliable care of the church and its possessions with a friendly face connected to all that is done in care of our property.

What about other leadership structures and issues? First Parish in Waltham has had to function much like a lay led congregation for several years. Returning to systems that bring the calling, talents and gifts of a professional staff with the dedication and love of you, the congregation's members and friends - is a dance where we are trying to both find the balance - and not step on each others' toes. Like any congregation that is small to mid-sized, leadership has shifted depending on the church's leadership and governance structures and those involved in the congregation.

The current system involving a board of managers who work as 'champions' in different areas, while challenged in some ways, is functioning more effectively these days, and you all should consider yourselves warmly encouraged to engage with programs and activities of the church where your engagement could make an essential difference!

All of this congregation's leaders - professional and lay - are focused on fulfilling the congregation's mission and vision - the one that you, the members are working to set - and carry it forward, partnering with you to build a church that will provide hope, inspiration, programs, and support. It is absolutely true that we share this ministry together.

All these elements are part of the tapestry of First Parish in Waltham, and they contribute to the gifts that both lay and professional leaders can offer to Waltham and to the wider UU community.

In faith, with love -  
Deb

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## From the Music and Choir Director

Ireland is a tourist destination for many different reasons - the landscapes, the food, the beverages, the compact cities, wonderful music, a style of dancing that (frankly) looks like some type of self-defense training where you learn to ankle-sweep your opponents in multiple rather

vious ways. There are so many different reasons for visiting Ireland that I am in danger of turning into a travel guide. However, I am fairly certain that White Mountain is not on many peoples' bucket list.



At just 326 meters high (1070 feet) it is more of an afternoon stroll to the top than a mountain climb. Located in County Wexford, it doesn't seem to feature on any websites as a tourist attraction and this seems a little strange to me. Why? It is the title of a well-known Irish folk melody.

The arrangement being played as Sunday's Prelude is by Ernest John Moeran (1894-1950). The title given by him is '**The White Mountain**' – as if this is particular White Mountain is the best. (There are other White Mountains in Alaska, Australia, Hawaii, India, and probably many more). Considered an Anglo-Celtic composer, due to his half-English and half-Irish background, Moeran's music is little known, even inside the UK. His output consists mainly of songs and piano music, as well as a few chamber works.

At First Parish we are beginning to think about stewardship, and all that it means and entails for our community. Moeran chose to ensure that the things he loved would be preserved and available for future generations by writing them down and capturing them in music. Similar thoughts might be in your minds and hearts as you listen to Moeran's music. How will you be sharing your love for all that is – and all that can be -- First Parish in Waltham?

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### **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](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](mailto:deb.weiner@walthamuu.org)

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### **Invitation to Join a Grief Circle Gathering - April 8th**

Our lives are filled with both laughter and tears, and the death of Kimberly Strafford, a much-loved member of the First Parish in Waltham community, has elevated our feelings of loss and grief. This loss has been particularly felt by those who are actively parenting smaller children, but these feelings are not only held by one group - but by many.

Rev. Becky Sheble-Hall and Deb Weiner invited you to a grief circle gathering to share these feelings, and gain support from others in the First Parish Community. Come to the Game Night potluck on April 8th at 5:30 and enjoy some food; while some join in playing games after supper, our circle will gather in the parlor of the church at 6:15. We will light candles, sing a little, meditate or pray, and together, build community and strength. You are welcome!



- Deborah Weiner, Transitional Ministry Associate

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### **Meet Our New Pastoral Care Team!**

One of the 'rebuilding' efforts our church has been embracing this year is a re-visioned lay Pastoral Care Team. Supported and trained by Rev.

Becky Sheble-Hall with Deborah Weiner, pastoral care team members work to reach out to First Parishioners in need of support during times of illness, loss, stress or change. Members of the team are Daphne Blount, Deb Jose, Plum Kennard, Andy LeCompte, and Bill VanderClock. Members of the team will be alternating on a month-by-month basis for 'on call' response - more information will be coming soon. In the meantime, if you are in need of support, please feel free to reach out to any member of the team.



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## Stewardship Potluck Dinner March 25

**5:30pm Doors open**

It's time to make a decision. Will you be joining us this Saturday for the potluck dinner? What will you bring? Or would you feel more comfortable showing up around 7, masked up, but ready to engage with the music and talk of First Parish finances?

Whatever you decide, please let your organizers know by emailing Leslie ([gildersleeveleslie@gmail.com](mailto:gildersleeveleslie@gmail.com)) or using the sign up genius [here](#). And if you can help with set up, clean up, liaison with the performers, parking, please let Leslie know as well.

Thank you.

**Hope to see you there!**

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## Friendship Finders in March

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.



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## 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](mailto: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 \(Saturday, June 3\)](#)**

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## Fifth Friday - March 31st

In every month that has a Fifth Friday, we meet for a Shabbat potluck dinner. We **include anyone** who wants to come; all, whatever your religious background or lack of it, are welcome.

The potluck supper starts at 6:30 pm in Whitcomb Hall.

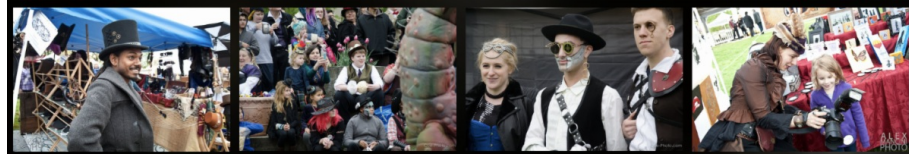
Friday is the evening that celebrates Shabbat, the Sabbath, with great food, traditional wine and challah blessings, camaraderie of friends old and new. Please come, bring family members, friends, and something to share either food or beverage.



Let us know if you are coming and what you are able to bring by emailing Joan Bone at [bonehaus207@yahoo.com](mailto:bonehaus207@yahoo.com).

Joan keeps the list and can answer questions you might have.

Whether you've come before and are a 'regular' or it's your first time attending, you are welcome. Happy to see you!!!



Previous Jones Partnership Fund recipient, the **Watch City Steampunk Festival**, is back again this year on **Saturday, May 13**.

Established in 2010, The Watch City Steampunk Festival brings steampunks and people of all ages and interests into Waltham, MA for a day of artisan and craft vendors, spectacular entertainment, food, fun and more! They are looking for volunteers, please join in the fun and lend a hand to keep this Waltham tradition free and open to all.

Sign up here:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe32l3S\\_aha7qUAb2k7A7AczPAL8Ys5n8K1wVCONO\\_8-gvi-Q/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe32l3S_aha7qUAb2k7A7AczPAL8Ys5n8K1wVCONO_8-gvi-Q/viewform)

## News Flashes!!!

The **Waltham Clothing Exchange** is having a Saturday opening on April 8th, 9am to 1pm. Come and pick up a bargain, or two! All profits support the administration of our building and congregation.

**Christmas** may feel like a long time ago, but we opened our doors during advent for a concert by **Joyce Anderson and Harvey Reid**. We received a lovely write-up by Maureen King, who has given permission for me to share a link to her published article. Scroll past the pictures and you will be able to read her 'glowing' report of the experience - click [here](#).

The **Social Action Team** will not be meeting on April 2nd due to a conflict of interests, otherwise known as a Pastoral Care Team meeting.

### *A Message from our UUA President:*

#### **Showing Up for Trans, Nonbinary+, and LGBTQIA+ Community**

Dear Friends,

You all are so much in my heart. These are heartbreaking and terrifying times. An onslaught of oppressive laws and policies are threatening the well-being of our children, young people and adults, and the very fabric of communities. I know how hard you all are working to care for your people and communities while also organizing for justice. I see you. I love you. And you inspire me in your witness and your depth of pastoral care and commitment.

I am praying especially for all our trans and nonbinary+ kids and adults, their families, and the communities supporting them. Too many trans and nonbinary+ people are living in an environment where policy makers are criminalizing their very existence.



My heart is also with all of you in frontline communities and states. I know you are holding so much – too much. We are in the fight to provide support and safe harbor with you, as we have been so many times throughout our history. We may not win every battle but we are in this work for the long haul. And we are digging deeper to expand our partnerships, find new ways to support people, and organize for a future where everyone can fully be who they are and flourish in their identities.

As Unitarian Universalists, we are clear and unapologetic. Our LGBTQIA+ siblings are sacred, whole, and divine. We understand the full expression of the diversity of gender and sexuality is a gift. As progressive people of faith, we know this is a fight for everyone's humanity.

As an Association, we have shown up for trans and nonbinary+ youth and individuals through words and actions. I want to make sure you are aware of these resources for your own efforts and as additional support for members of your communities. Please visit Side With Love's **UPLIFT Action webpage** to see our ongoing work and ways your congregation can participate. UPLIFT also sponsors **monthly gatherings** for trans and nonbinary+ people of all ages. You can also stay connected to this work, and receive pastoral messages and opportunities to take action by joining our **UPLIFT newsletter** and following the **blog**. Also please visit the UUA's **Five Practices of Welcome Renewal** for Welcoming Congregations page for ways to ensure that members of the LGBTQIA+ community can feel fully welcomed, centered, and embraced in your congregation.

I am with you as we confront these devastating challenges – and hold you all close as we work to protect our loved ones, our families, our communities and neighbors.

I pray that each of you, in your own way, is doing something to care for your spirit, to lean into community and love, to tend to your own need for gentleness and care – that we might be nourished for the work that continues.

Yours in love and faith,  
**Susan**

P.S. Here are some additional resources that may be helpful:

From Side With Love

- Webinar recordings on **combatting anti-trans legislation** and **spokesperson training**
- Upcoming training on **showing up for trans justice** and a **Trans Day of Visibility party** for trans/nonbinary families
- **Video blessing** of solidarity with trans and nonbinary people

From the UUA

- **UUA statement** in response to attacks on trans, nonbinary and LGBTQIA+ community
- UUA publisher Skinner House Books will release the groundbreaking book *Authentic Selves* in May. A visually moving celebration of trans and nonbinary+ people and their families, **it can be pre-ordered at UUA's inSpirit UU Book and Gift Shop.**

**Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray** spends her days strengthening the thriving mission of this faith. In her spare time, she enjoys being with her family and playing with their dog, Hercules.

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## **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

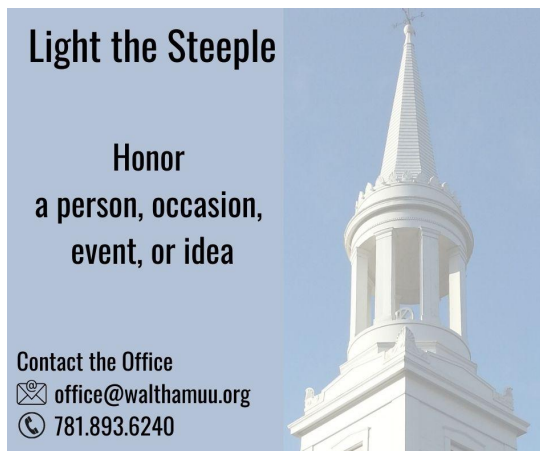
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<http://tiny.cc/Donate2FPW>

**When is Your Birthday?**

.....  
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](mailto:membership.commissioner@walthamuu.org)



**Light the Steeple**

Honor a person, occasion, event, or idea

Contact the Office  
✉ [office@walthamuu.org](mailto:office@walthamuu.org)  
☎ 781.893.6240

***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 Ramage-Healy 3/30
- Send a card or an email to these members!*

**Ministry Staff Team**

**Acting Minister**  
The Rev. Rebecca Sheble-Hall  
508.479.7570

**Office Manager / Music and Choir Director**  
Emma Campbell

[Revbecky@walthamuu.org](mailto:Revbecky@walthamuu.org)

**Transitional Ministry Associate**

Deborah Weiner  
617.513.6614

[deb.weiner@walthamuu.org](mailto:deb.weiner@walthamuu.org)

781.893.6240

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or

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## Board Members

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**Treasurer**

Janet Riley

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

## 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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