

***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 at 10.30am:

**September 17th:
"Renewal and the Promise of the Coming Day"
Deborah Weiner preaching**

It's fall, and we gather again in exploration, celebration and connection. There are things in church that are the same, and things that are different, among them a new ministry team, a focus on building community and welcome, and energy directed toward searching for a new minister for the congregation. The days grow shorter, but the energy builds. In this time of Rosh Hashanah, how do we welcome the new year, and what lies ahead? Come and join us in worship, song and exploration!

**September 24th:
"Nose to the Trail"
Rev. Megan Lynes preaching**

Theologian Frederick Buechner writes "your vocation in life comes from where your greatest joy meets world's greatest needs." How do we know when we are on the right path for us as individuals or as a community of faith? What signs in your life have helped you understand your calling?

**October 1st:
"State of the Parish Address"
Rev. Megan Lynes and Deborah Weiner preaching**

This congregation, in all its iterations, has existed for almost 350 years. What a long and persevering journey! What tales from the archives, and stories from among us help guide us into health today? Where are we now and where are we going? Let's stand on the balcony and take a good look at the state of the parish, as it was, and as it is today.



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

Passing it On

I had an amazing experience the other day. My younger daughter, Abby, is 29 and a sexuality educator and full spectrum doula. She works for the NYC Health Department, focused on educating and supporting women through the pregnancy, birth, and post-partum phases, focused on reducing the incidences of maternal and infant mortality that are part of the unfortunate health statistics of New York City and many other parts of the US. It's good and important work, and I admire her for it.

But this past weekend, Abby - 29 and never having spent a day in seminary - officiated the wedding of two of her closest friends from Star Island. The mostly college-aged young adults who work on Star each summer are known as "Pelicans" (ask me why if you are curious) and they live in a tight-knit community all summer. And if they are lucky and caring, they make lifelong friends, just as my spouse Ben and I did, decades ago. Two of those friends had asked Abby to officiate their wedding, and she - and I - was thrilled.

Abby's smart and capable, but...a wedding? Well, it turns out she was more than ready for that. The wedding she carefully planned with the couple was absolutely a knockout ...I read it and re-read it, bursting into tears at the beauty and the values expressed. Loving the image of her standing there, handing on to the wedding couple and all those gathered, her young wisdom, insight, care, and a bit of humor, to make this occasion glorious. WOW, I thought, this is *my* kid, doing something that many of us in the 'religion business' struggle with - offering a moving and meaningful and personal service at what is, for many, the most important day of their lives. And doing it with ease, with inspiration, with care. Just WOW.

In churches and in our lives, we make choices each day about what is valuable and perhaps, about what is worth keeping. Marie Kondo encourages us to ask, "does it bring me joy?" and that is a good question. Another is, 'what will be the value of this thing that I'm holding, to others?' and perhaps, 'what is the legacy I want to pass on to others who will come this way - some day?'

Here at church, many people have been putting in a lot of that same kind of thought (and effort) to figure out what we want new people coming in the doors of the church to see... what is valuable to hold on to...what we say and do with people after we say 'hello.' There is change here, but also an embrace of the questions that are in front of us, around what we offer to others, and how we welcome and celebrate them after they walk or roll in the door.

What do *you* want to pass on, and how can you help First Parish in Waltham build a future that will bless those who have not arrived? It's food for thought!

In faith, with love,
Deb



From Your Director of Religious Education: Yvonne Andrews

Fall is a time of new beginnings. The new school year comes with both excitement and anxiety for both children and parents alike. Any challenges that we may have faced last year haunt us and we fear them occurring again though that may not be the case. As you know, adjusting to the new schedule is a big step in the right direction. By now, school has been in session for over two weeks for most kids. Hopefully this is going well.

From my experience as a child therapist, I've learned just how important communication between you and your child really is. Let the child express their feelings openly and validate the feelings that are expressed. Minimizing those feelings will make the child feel unheard and that their feelings are not important. Talk to a teacher about any concerns

that you may have or that your child may be expressing. Being proactive will let the school know that you are involved in your child's school success and would like to be kept informed of your child's progress. Spend quality time with your child. Playtime will let your child speak more openly and honestly because the discussion is more spontaneous. My practice as a child therapist is to integrate play into my sessions so that the time we spend together can be both fun and therapeutic.

Encourage getting together with school friends outside of the school day and get to know the parents of their friends. Keep routines going; children feel comfort in knowing what to expect. Prioritize sleep for your child and you as well. Remember adjusting to a new school year can take up to a month for elementary students and two months for adolescents. Adolescents are more self conscious and worry about fitting in. I say all these things because the life of our young people at church takes a similar path as they reintegrate into a community. Covid changed so much for so many, and our life together in person is beginning anew! It's up to all of us to support our children. I encourage all of us to take a deep breath and have a great school and church year!

With that in mind, religious education begins this Sunday. Each week we need at least one helper to join me in leading our group of children. If you are able to volunteer on Sunday or a Sunday soon, let the office know, or text /call me 978-235-1266. I am looking forward to hearing from you!

- Yvonne

Religious Education is Starting this Sunday.

Here's what we're up to in the month of September:

Sunday, September 16th: This first Sunday together we'll explore our space, create our Covenant, enjoy fun and interactive games, and do a craft project!

Sunday, September 24th: This week marks the start of our new curriculum, "Gather the Spirit" You can read about the curriculum here:

<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/multigenerational/gather>

Through stories and hands on activities we'll learn about stewardship of the Earth.

Sunday, September 30th: This week's topic in our curriculum is "Gather in Sympathy." Our children will experience a water meditation, and enjoy acting out the story of "The Rain God."

Without You...it's not possible!

Over the summer our new Director of Religious Education has been hard at work with the RE team, getting the classrooms and a children's library/activity space scrubbed, painted and decorated. Curriculum is chosen, fun is planned! And at long last, after our Covid hiatus of in person Sunday School, we are almost ready to go. But we have to be honest. We need volunteers. We know that religious education for children and youth as a keystone to the long-term vitality of the congregation. **Can you give us one Sunday a month** this year to help us offer a great religious education program? You'll be giving to our community in a very tangible way, and it will make a huge difference! Please reach out to Yvonne Andrews, DRE right away if you are able to help. We can't do it without you!

Living Our Mission, Embracing Our Vision: A Transitions Workshop

September 17, 12-3pm in Whitcomb Hall, Lunch provided

Led by Deborah Weiner and members of the Ministerial Search Committee

Welcome to this new church year! Last year in our transitions workshops we explored our history, developed a new mission statement and a relational covenant, and began work on articulating a vision for First Parish in Waltham. As this year begins we have a search

committee already hard at work as they prepare to look for a new minister. It's time for us to resume the work of embracing a vision for the present and future of the congregation. YOU are the ones who will make this happen - we need to have your voice in the mix! Please come to the Transitions Workshop and join in the experience. Lunch will be served. Sign up [here](#) to tell us you're coming.



A message from your Music and Choir Director: Emma Campbell

Dear Friends,

I really hope that you enjoyed the Jamaica Plain Honk Band - our September music guests - and they helped smooth over the transition back to early Sunday mornings when being present may be a challenge.

If you would like to help the Music Committee plan for guest musicians, schedule instrument maintenance, and organize programs for others to be involved in, we are looking for new members. We have a meeting on Wednesday September 20th 7-8pm over Zoom, and would be delighted if you wanted to join us. You do not have to be in the choir, or be musical in any way - you just need some passion (and we know there is a lot of that here!) Feel free to drop me an email to find out more musicdirector@walthamuu.org.

While I have headed back to the church year, my eldest step-daughter has become a senior at high school. I am feeling old! I don't seem to feel any different than I did 30 years ago, though, and am still hoping to work out what I want to do 'when I grow up'!

If you are young in years, you may want to consider taking a look at "[Sweet Potato](#)" - a Unitarian Universalist newsletter aimed at young adults. The most recent edition mentions Sanctuary Boston and offers the chance to join them for online worship. Whatever your age, I can recommend the experience as I love their musical offerings and they meet every other Wednesday night, meaning you can experience awesome music twice in a week.

Yours musically,
Emma

Water Communion - Where did our water come from? Here's what we wrote on our paper droplets during the Ingathering service ...

This is water is from Waquoit Bay, Mashpee, MA. ... Water from my sink at home where I have been caring for my new baby. ... From the places Dad and I found the best lobster rolls this summer. ... From the streams that runs through our property in East Otis, MA in the Berkshires. ... From Star Island where we built tiny boats and floated them. ... From the lovely beaches in Southern CA. ... From plants and flowers. ...Water from Cherwell River, Oxford where we spent an afternoon with friends I haven't seen in years. ... A family trip to Cape Cod. Water from the fountains in Spain as we visited family for the first time. ... From the hose where my students engage in water play. ... Blessed water for my son and grandson - healing them. ... Water from Hannaford Market in Waltham. ... Family tears of joy and sadness for new transitions in Westfield, MA. ... From my home. ... From Ferry Beach. ... From our brook in Otis which never was completely dry this summer - even in August! ... From the shores of New Bedford. ... The rain that fell at home, that filled the bird bath. ... Pacific ocean. ... From the St. Lawrence River in Montreal. ... Family and friends and the flow of life. ... Erie Canal. ... Rome. ... New York. ... Water from the Boston Harbor while sailing on a beautiful day! ... Rising waters in VT - the closest I've ever come to being in danger from water. ... Water from home - I am grateful to have safe public water. ... Water from our kitchen sink, soon to be replaced with a better one! ...Water from the Cape of Good Hope, Africa - to me it shows how huge our earth and seas are and how awesome they are! ... Water from our church kitchen - church is a grounding place for me.

From our hearts' journeys near and far this summer, we unite as one gathered body once again. Welcome home, one and all!

Tea, Treats, and Conversation!

Come meet Rev. Megan, and spend time with beloved Emma Campbell too, all while seeing old friends, and meeting new ones. Join us in the Harrington room on Thursday, September 21st from 1 to 2 PM. The Book Club will meet in person and online just following this meeting in the same space.



If you would have liked to attend, but are not free then, please shoot Megan an email, (revmeganlynes@walthamuu.org) and we will arrange a time to connect, or to gather a small group at a time that works for you!

Bring nothing, come as you are, leave fulfilled. Hope to see you there!
Megan

Let's Spiff this Place Up! - Your Help is Needed! Saturday, September 30th 9-1:

It takes a village to raise a Church Building and Grounds! and we need the village to come out and help us spruce up the grounds and do our best to keep the building in tip top shape for ourselves, our renters and our community. Please come and join us. Lunch will be provided (let me know if you have any dietary needs). **9am - 1pm** (you do not need to come for the entire time). Contact Dan Taylor if you have any questions: property@walthamuu.org .

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. Current members are Plum Kennard, Andy LeCompte, Nancy Lawrence, and Bill VanderClock. Please reach out to us if you believe we can help: pastoralcare@walthamuu.org - a member of our team will respond to you in a timely manner!

We have wheels for you!

We are thrilled to have a wheelchair available at the church for use by anyone who would find it helpful! Thanks to the Waltham Council on Aging for the loan of this important assistive device. If you are coming to church and would find it helpful to use the wheelchair to get into/around the church, please contact Emma Campbell in the Office (Monday-Thursday) or a member of the Lay Pastoral Care team (pastoralcare@walthamuu.org).

First Parish Book Club is Back

We meet via Zoom on the third Thursday of each month. Email Martha Gallagher via the office at office@walthamuu.org for the link.

Thursday, September 21 at 2pm
Book: Tom Lake, by Ann Patchett





From the Community

The Women's Sacred Circle at First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Cambridge will be opening to new members on September 30, at 7:15 p.m. Meetings will take place monthly thereafter.

The Women's Circle is a women's ritual and spiritual practice group designed to be a space for self-reflection and growth. In the circle we celebrate feminine archetypes, goddesses, mythologies, folklore, and representation of femininity in the divine. Circles often include such activities as meditation, intention setting, yoga / movement, burning of sacred herbs, art-making, journaling, singing and sitting with an altar of meaningful objects. Following the circle we often share food and discussion.

To register please complete the google form at this link.

[Women's Sacred Circle Registration Form](#)

Once you register, you will receive a complete list of all the dates.

Meetings are free, but donations to First Parish Cambridge Unitarian Universalist are welcomed.

First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Cambridge is located at 3 Church Street, Cambridge, MA (Adjacent to the Harvard Square Red Line T Stop.)

This is the first time the group has opened to new participants since the beginning of the pandemic and we are greatly looking forward to welcoming new members.

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



First Parish
in Waltham

*A Welcoming
Unitarian Universalist Congregation*

<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 Gary Morrison.
membership.commissioner@walthamuu.org

Light the Steeple

Honor
a person, occasion,
event, or idea

Contact the Office
✉ office@walthamuu.org
☎ 781.893.6240



Happy Birthday this Month to:

- Frank Orvitz 9/2
- Manny Kamal 9/12
- Pam Penton 9/15
- Jade Taylor 9/15
- Donna Vanderclark 9/16
- Shirley Traite 9/9
- Evan Taylor 9/22
- Dylan Remage-Healy 9/30
- Roland Peterson 9/30

Send a card or an email to these members!

Ministry Staff Team

Parish Minister
Rev Megan Lynes
617.276.7655
revmeganlynnes@walthamuu.org

Director of Religious Education
Yvonne Andrews
987.235.1266
dre@walthamuu.org

Transitional Ministry Associate
Deborah Weiner
617.513.6614
deb.weiner@walthamuu.org

Office Administrator / Music and Choir Director
Emma Campbell
781.893.6240
office@walthamuu.org
or
musicdirector@walthamuu.org

Board Members

President, Board of Managers
Deb Jose
president@walthamuu.org

Membership
Gary Morrison
membership.commissioner@walthamuu.org

Assistant Treasurer
Dan DeHainaut
asst.treasurer@walthamuu.org

Music and Worship Commissioner
Bethany Templeton Klem
bethany.klem@walthamuu.org

Clerk
Peter Duane
clerk@walthamuu.org

Property
Dan Taylor
property@walthamuu.org

Community Outreach Commissioner

Elisse Ghitelman
commissioner.outreach@walthamuu.org

Finance
Donna VanderClock
donna.vanderclock@walthamuu.org

Constant Contact
Religious Education Commissioner
Pam Penton
pam.penton@walthamuu.org

Treasurer
Janet Riley
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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