

First Parish in Waltham Newsletter

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

This Week at . . .



Upcoming Sunday Services

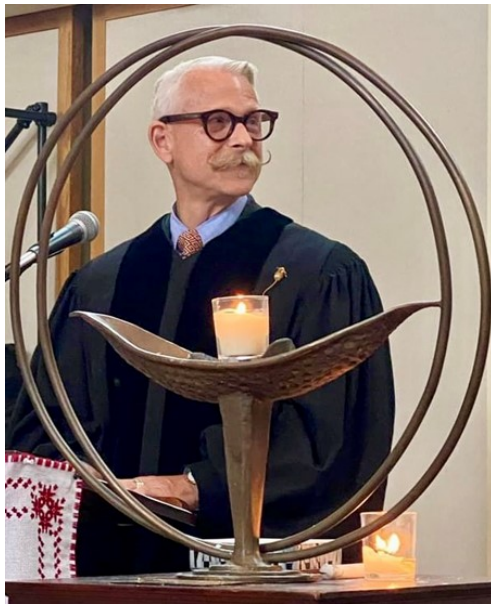
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Upcoming Sunday Services



Welcome In The Unexpected

Rev. John O'Connor

September 29, 10.30am

Lessons and reflections from some of our source traditions that can help us invite in and welcome the unexpected so that we can live more fully and joyfully into the present – especially when it feels like the world has turned upside down.

Rev. John has been an active member of Arlington Street Church since 1990 and graduated from Harvard Divinity School in 2022. He then served as the Intern Minister at First Church in Belmont and was ordained at Arlington Street Church on April 7, 2024. Rev. John currently serves as the Community Minister for Good Works at Arlington Street Church, where he is also a member of the Among Team, which is part of the Beloved Conversations program with Rev. Elka. Recently, John served as the guest preacher at the UU Meeting House of Provincetown during the month of May while Rev. Kate Wilkinson was on sabbatical.

This Week in Youth Faith Formation

This week, our **Chalice Children** and **Jr. Youth** groups each close out our theme of The Practice of Invitation by diving into games and group discussions as a tool to help explore how we can invite in change and new ways of thinking and acting.

Our Jr. Youth group will take it a step further by talking about how, as UUs, the idea of inviting in the new is an ancient practice and how ours is a faith tradition that lifts up the idea that revelation is not sealed, and truth/understanding is ever-evolving. This means that we are challenged to change as the world around us changes.



Leading Chalice Children: Vivian Siegfried and Elisse Ghitelman
Leading Jr. Youth: April Rosario and Deb Jose

If you wish to join services virtually, please contact our Office Administrator.
office@walthamuu.org

Upcoming Events



All are welcome and invited to join us for our Adult Faith Formation Small Group: Soul Matters Sharing Circle.

**Wednesday Evenings
Oct 2- Oct 30 from 6-7:30 pm in the Chapel**

Soul Matters differs from other small groups in that it is designed to help us experience our monthly spiritual themes, not just talk about them! Its structure also helps us avoid the safety of shallow analysis and instead invites us to courageously dive into the work of vulnerable, honest, and heart-centered sharing. **Think of Soul Matters as an invitation to listen more deeply and intentionally in three distinct ways: We listen to each other, our lives, and our deepest selves.**

Soul Matters' distinguishing characteristic is a focus on deep listening. But the way Soul Matters goes about that is also unique. Here's how: Soul Matters invites us to listen to each other deeply and with discipline. Soul Matters invites group members to practice three distinct disciplines of deep listening during their meeting time using this three-part mantra:

- Hold still – the practice of offering an inviting presence.
- Hold at bay – the practice of offering safe space.
- Hold up and hold out – the practice of responding with gratitude and noting meaningful connections.

Childcare is available upon request. Please don't hesitate to contact April Rosario, our Director of Lifespan Faith Formation, at april.rosario@walthamuu.org with any questions.

Register for Soul Matter [Here](https://forms.gle/e3LGHrXJPqjDJa48A)
<https://forms.gle/e3LGHrXJPqjDJa48A>

**Book Group
October 17, 2024 - 1:00 pm Harrington Room and online**

"Touch" by Olaf Olafsson

A mesmerizing, panoramic story of one man's search to find a lover who suddenly disappeared decades before.

When the pandemic hits, Kristofer is forced to shutter his successful restaurant in Reykjavik, sending him into a spiral of uncertainty, even as his memory seems to be failing. But an uncanny bolt from the blue—a message from Miko Nakamura, a woman whom he'd known in the sixties when they were students in London—both inspires and rattles him as he is drawn inexorably back into a love story that has marked him for life. Even as the pandemic upends his world, Kristofer finds himself pulled toward an answer to the mystery of Miko's

sudden departure decades before, compelling him to travel to London and Japan as the virus threatens to shut everything down.

A heart-wrenching love story and an absorbing mystery, *Touch* delves into the secrets of the past to explore the hidden lives that we all possess, the pain and beauty of our past loves and friendships that continue to leave their mark on us. Searching and lyrically rendered by acclaimed author Olaf Olafsson, *Touch* is a stunning tribute to the weight of history and the complexities of the human heart.



Messages from our Community

**You are cordially invited to meet with
Your Minister, Rev. Elka!**

Dear Ones,

It is my goal to meet with everyone in the congregation one-on-one at least once this year. I want to give each of you my full attention as I get to know you for an hour because relationships are the most important building block for ministry. My goal is to ask you the following questions: What brought you to First Parish Waltham? What keeps you engaged and brings you joy here? What dreams do you have for this place? And we will see where that conversation takes us.



I want to hear a bit about your spiritual journey, what has given you life and broken your heart here in this spiritual home, and get to know you.

You can make an appointment with me at www.calendly.com/revelka, or you can email me with some suggested good times at revelka@walthamuu.org. If you don't see a time that works for you on Calendly, definitely send me an email. I can make another space appear.

I can't wait to settle in with you and get to know you better!



New Hymnal - Research volunteers wanted

The 'Grey' hymnal, used by UU congregations all over the world, was compiled by a small team of volunteers. The leader of the team was **Larry Phillips**, and at the time he was the Music Director for First Parish in Waltham. The 'teal' hymnal has since been published, and includes some hymns in a more contemporary style. However, the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association) is planning on releasing a **brand new hymnal** that will never need to be replaced.

The new hymnal will be a 'virtual hymnal'. It will feature many of our favorite hymns but will also include new songs that can be used as hymns, anthems, introits, and Chalice Lightings... The format of the new hymnal needs to be road-tested. **Emma Campbell**, our Music Director, successfully applied on behalf of our congregation to be one of these important people. She will be putting together a group of people who are interested in accessing and critiquing the way the new hymnal works / doesn't work. Whether you are a singer, musician, hymn-lover, or think you are tone-deaf, this is your opportunity to make a lasting mark on the musical landscape of UU congregations across the world. First Parish in Waltham is one of around 100 congregations that have been selected with this privilege, and Emma wants to

hear from you if you are interested in being part of the discussion group whose feedback will be shared with the UUA. Please email her via musicdirector@walthamuu.org or speak to her during coffee hour after a service.



One Thing You Can Do:

How can I help with election work? Thirteen folks checked in around what they have done this past Sunday. UU

the Vote hosts weekly online phonebanks. Let's be brave (and supported), getting together in Whitcomb Hall on Tuesday, October 1, at 6:30 PM to join a phonebank to Texas.

Feel free to email me at

outreach.commissioner@walthamuu.org

with questions.

Elisse Ghitelman

Meet with the Minister & President

Got something to talk about?

Second Monday of every month

1-3pm

"The Fika Spot"

619 Main Street



Find out more at walthamuu.org

Partner Organizations and Other News



Coffee Hour Treats!

With your help we can make our coffee hour a truly warm and welcoming event! When it's your turn to bring a snack for coffee hour, please bring it either in a container it can be served from, or on your own dish, which you bring home and clean yourself.

No nuts please, to help those with allergies.

A - E first Sunday

F - L second Sunday

M - S third Sunday

T - Z fourth Sunday



Birthdays Among Us!

The Membership Committee is helping us celebrate birthdays as a congregation! Please let us know yours by emailing Brenda Asis: membership.commissioner@walthamuu.org

Dylan Remage-Healy 9/30

Dimitry Zarkh 10/2

Marianne Cutter 10/5

Joan Smith 10/10

Daniel Strafford 10/17

Susan Weddig 10/19

Sue Adams 10/28

Ron Adams 10/31

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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.

Stay connected on our Website, Facebook Page, or on Instagram!
Like and follow us to get updates and news!



Waltham UU Facebook Page



Waltham UU Webpage



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

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