



First Parish in Waltham Newsletter

*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:

Feb 18 - 10:30 AM

"The Stories We Tell: Living the Beloved Community"
Rev. Christana Wille McKnight preaching

The Beloved Community is a dream that the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King made famous, but it is also an inspiration to who we can become - individually and together. This Sunday we will be reflecting on how the stories we tell shape our understandings of where we have come from, and how we can bring our values more fully into the communities we are building for the future. (Rev. Christana Wille McKnight is the Island Minister and Beloved Community Project Manager at Star Island, a UU/UCC Conference Center off the coast of New Hampshire.)

Feb 25 - 10:30 AM

Regie O'Hare Gibson preaching

Poet, Performance Artist and Playwright Regie O'Hare Gibson, a frequent and beloved pulpit guest, will lead our worship service as we close out February.

Following the service, Regie O'Hare Gibson will lead a participatory workshop open to all, that will include storytelling, writing and music making. The RE Committee has brought Regie's workshop back by popular demand, and we very much hope you can come!

Mar 3 - 10:30 AM

Rev. Megan Lynes preaching

A memorial service to honor the life of Roland Peterson will be held in our sanctuary and on Zoom on Sunday, February 25th at 3 PM, officiated by Rev. Megan Lynes. A reception will follow in Whitcomb Hall.

Roland became a member of First Parish with his wife Lois and their children in the early 70's. He was a faithful participant in all aspects of parish life through the years, and is already greatly missed. The family warmly invites you to a celebration of his life.

Minister's Musings
A Message from Rev. Megan Lynes

Living the Parable
by Neal Bowers



*Wanting to be helpful, we all
see ourselves as the Samaritan
rather than the priest or his assistant,
and never as the bruised man in the ditch,
stripped and penniless, taken
to a room smelling of figs and tallow,
where he turns painfully in bed,
tonguing his chipped tooth,
touching his swollen eye.*

*After all, who would imagine himself
mugged somewhere between Jerusalem and Jericho
when he could ride in like some minor deity
on a donkey packed with oil and wine,
his fat purse tucked away, credit unlimited?
Better to be the one without cracked ribs,
safe on the hard-packed road,
pausing long enough to help
some creature with no luck—
a dog, a sheep, a beaten man—
not one of us.*

Not long ago I was at an outdoor church on the Boston Common and an offering basket was passed. Someone put in a dollar. The next person put in an orange. The plate went a little farther around. Someone removed the orange and began to peel it. No one stared. The plate passed around the circle twice, as everyone had a chance to give and to take. A dollar swapped in for a five, and no one batted an eye. The need to give and the need to receive balanced perfectly.

This week I attended a meeting with our Stewardship Committee, now gearing up for the annual stewardship campaign which sustains the life of this congregation. We tossed around some phrases that might encapsulate our congregation's current "state of mind" - having made it through the pandemic, and being eager to call a new minister. The phrase that resonated this first go around, was "resilient and ready!" In other words, what greatness can we achieve if we bond together to support one another?

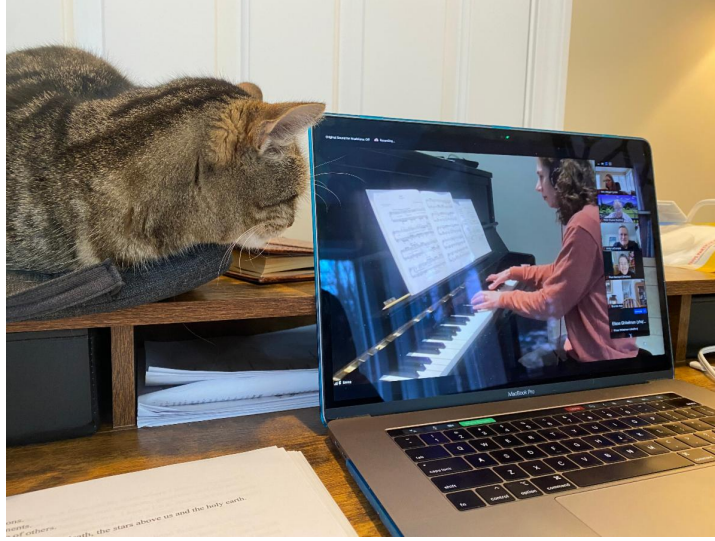
Sometimes when a stewardship team is trying to make inclusive plans that leave no one out, but do not put undo pressures on anyone, the phrase "those of limited means" comes up. The aim is to articulate the belief that everyone has something to give, and that love takes many forms. Two weeks ago someone stopped me in the hall after church to tell me she'd put 51 cents in the offering plate. She said it with pride. It was all she had. And she gave it to us.

Our community is like the road to Jericho, with travelers along the way who can help, and those who need a hand. The mystery at work is how the roles can change each year. The challenge is to be honest with yourself about the role you are meant to play this time around the sun.

*From you I receive,
To you I give,
Together we share,
And by this we live...*

With you on the journey,

Rev. Megan



From the Music and Choir Director, Emma Campbell

While some of us were interrupted while enjoying last Sunday's service, Rev. Megan's cat, Mina, was still quite pleased with the show! Why the interruptions couldn't have happened during my violin playing I do not know.

I love playing the violin, but it's not something I've done much of since finishing High School (over 30 years ago.) Covid started me on a journey of re-discovery, as my elder stepdaughter brought her ukulele over and we got to play together on a regular basis.

I have taken some lessons and joined Waltham Philharmonic Orchestra, one of our Jones Partnership recipients. It is one of the highlights of my week - making music with a group of other enthusiastic music lovers.

If music is your passion, please consider putting the weekend of **April 6th / 7th** in your diary. On the Saturday morning at 11am you are invited to attend a FREE recital into the Sanctuary by a Wind Septet made up of players from Waltham Philharmonic Orchestra. In the afternoon, Joyful Voices of Inspiration are offering a free concert at a time that is yet to be confirmed. In the evening, TNR are inviting you to join them in Whitcomb Hall for an evening of traditional Balkan Dancing - no experience necessary. However, the highlight of the weekend for me is **Music Sunday** taking place at 10.30am on Sunday 7th April. It will feature our choir and the Worship Committee, who will be joined by other members of our congregation.

All we need now is a music-related event on the Friday evening and we can have our first Music Festival at First Parish in Waltham! If you have any ideas of what could be fun please get in touch: a sing through the first verse of every hymn; a talk about a favorite composer; a karaoke night... You don't have to organize it - I just need your ideas!

Yours Musically,
Emma

musicdirector@walthamuu.org

Share the Plate - Serving Needs Greater than our Own

This Sunday, Feb. 18, we will share our plate with the Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry of Roxbury, MA, a non-sectarian, non-profit, social justice organization that operates out of the historic First Church in Roxbury. Rev. Mary Margaret Earl, who has spoken to us often at FPW, is their executive director.

The Urban Ministry's history of social justice work



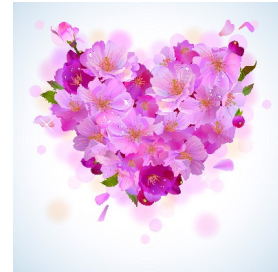
includes settlement houses and chapels, affordable housing, community centers and service programs. Today they focus on three issues: shelter and workforce development for survivors of domestic violence, academic enrichment for Boston-area youth of color, and arts and humanities programming that amplifies the work of Roxbury artists and historians of color. Special programs include walking tours of Roxbury historical locations, and invitations to youth from other UU congregations to discuss the history of segregation and race in Greater Boston.

The Urban Ministry also serves as a local social action assignee for approximately 50 Unitarian Universalist congregations that provide both financial and volunteer support.

For more information, visit their website at <https://www.uuum.org/>

Valentine Pop-Up Thanks!

The Valentine pop-up market made \$407 for the benefit of First Parish! Many thanks to mastermind, organizer, and creator Plum Kennard, along with her associates and contributors Martha Gallagher, Deb and Annie Jose, Leslie Gildersleeve, and Donna VanderClock.



Thanks also to those of you who purchased items.



One Thing You Can Do

On Jan. 2, I shared this quote from Dan Rather:
"It is my feeling, and my hope, that we all realize we have to do something to make sure we don't lose our constitutional republic based on the principles of freedom and democracy."

The UUA is launching its [Good Trouble Congregation program for 2024](#) to encourage congregations to do this work together. If you'd like to join a team at First Parish in Waltham to do some democracy work, please contact me via email or in person! community.outreach@walthamuu.org

- Elisse Ghitelman, Outreach Commissioner

Would you like to join a short term Small Group? Led by Rev. Megan Lynes

March 13, 20, 27, April 3rd

This group is designed to meet for four consecutive Wednesdays in the Chapel from noon to 1:30

The theme will be exploring what it means to live our "one wild and precious life" (Mary Oliver) all while being mortal. Attendance at all sessions is highly recommended, but not required. If you would like to attend, please email RevMeganLynes@walthamUU.org

Double the Love...

This Valentine's Day, double the love by donating to Chaplains on the Way. We will send your loved one a postcard with your personal message AND you help our unhoused neighbors at the same time!

Make your donation by February 14th and your loved one will receive a Valentine on "Cupid's Day" (February 14th) via email with an acknowledgement of your generosity and a personalized message to them.

The needs of our program have skyrocketed and we are seeing up to 50 people per day at our daily breakfast. This is a 50% increase in people seeking our daily breakfast and chaplaincy services.

In these difficult times, we need you more than ever!!

Your generous donation of \$25, \$50, \$250 or more will go towards providing a hot meal and other services to our unhoused friends.



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

Sometimes the listening ear or kind and confidential support of a fellow parishioner can make all the difference. 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 are in need of support: pastoralcare@walthamuu.org - and we will respond to you in a timely manner!

Our 'point person' for February is Plum Kennard

Plum Kennard (Chair,) Andy LeCompte, Nancy Lawrence, and Bill VanderClock



Holding your phone's camera over the QR codes above will take you to either the First Parish in Waltham webpage or our Facebook page where we hope that you will "like" and follow us! These are great ways to stay connected!



Inclement Weather Procedures for Sundays

In case of dangerous weather conditions which occurs on or leading up to Sunday, we will follow these procedures:

1. A determination on canceling Sunday worship services will be made by the worship leader (or, in the case of a pulpit guest, the staff worship coordinator) in consultation with the congregation president, by 7:30 AM on Sunday.
2. Upon consultation with other worship staff, the service may be moved to zoom-only (originating from the homes of worship leaders).
3. If worship is canceled or if it will be held on zoom, a message will be sent to all on the church mailing list, no later than 8:30 AM.
4. If worship is canceled or will be held on zoom, an update to the church's website, giving information and (if relevant) a zoom link, will be made by 9 AM.
5. In the case of a cancelation of in person worship, all afternoon and evening activities at the church that are sponsored by the church, will also be canceled (and may be rescheduled).

Light the Steeple

Honor
a person, occasion,
event, or idea

Contact the Office
✉ office@walthamuu.org
☎ 781.893.6240



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'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!

Please email the dates to Gary Morrison:
membership.commissioner@walthamuu.org

- Justine Watt 2/3
- Jane True 2/4
- Jim Ohm 2/4
- Bethany Klem 2/9
- Brian Anderson 2/11
- Maeve Strafford 2/18
- Leslie Gildersleeve 2/20
- Jim Griffith 2/20

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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.

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

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