

THE FOCALPOINT

FIRST PARISH ^{IN} LEXINGTON
UNITARIAN  UNIVERSALIST

April 2017—What Does It Mean to be a Community of Transformation?

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Deadline for May issue: Friday, April 21st

Worship Services for April What Does it Mean to be a Community of Transformation?



"Curiouser and Curiouser"

April 2, Senior High Youth Group "Chalice in Wonderland"

Our annual Youth Service Sunday, crafted by our talented and imaginative Senior High Youth Group, promises to be "curiouser and curiouser". Come along as the youth guide us on a vibrant and thought-provoking exploration of the transformative powers of taking risks.

April 9, Rev. Anne Mason "Stay Awake With Me"



In the story of Holy Week, Jesus looked to his disciples for companionship while he struggled with the fate he knew was to be his. Yet his friends were so heavy with grief they could not keep their eyes open. Our world is so full of sadness that sometimes we yearn to close our eyes against the suffering around us. Rev. Anne will ask this morning, "What will it take for us to stay awake?"

April 16, Rev. Anne Mason Easter Sunday



What a joy that our faith leads us to rejoice in the midst of despair! Come to church this morning to be uplifted by the choir and by Rev. Anne's message of hope. New life springs from the depths of the earth, and new hope rises from our belief in the victory of love over hate. Come and celebrate the joy of Easter.

Worship Services for April What Does it Mean to be a Community of Transformation?

April 23, Rev. Anne Mason "What On Earth Were We Thinking?"



Today we celebrate Earth Day, both rejoicing in the beauty of the Earth, and looking at our responsibility to care for the Earth. Members of the Climate Justice Team will be participating with Rev. Anne today as we explore our connection to the Earth.

April 30, Rev. Mary Margaret Earl "Making Beloved Community Real"



We often dream of creating a community where people across race and faith and neighborhood can build relationships and work together for a better world. But that is easier said than done. For white communities, the first step is reckoning with the reality of racism.

The Rev. Mary Margaret Earl began serving as Executive Director and Senior Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry in 2014. During her time, she has worked to strengthen bonds between UUs and the Roxbury neighborhood where the UUUM operates. She is on the leadership team of the Moral Revival Massachusetts, working with a coalition reclaiming what it means to be religious in the public square.

Prior to her arrival at the UU Urban Ministry, she spent 10 years at McAuley Ministries, a faith-based nonprofit in Providence, RI that provides food, shelter, and clothing to those who were homeless or at risk of becoming so. She is past president of the Board of the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless and was recipient of the 2014 Heroes of Faith Award from the Rhode Island State Council of Churches for her inter-faith work.

From Your Minister

This month we allow ourselves to peek over the edge. We have wintered together. We have shivered and shoveled and shuddered together. It is time to begin to thaw out our hearts along with our gardens. We will explore together what it might look like to see ourselves as a community of Transformation.

There is much in the world around us that needs the warmth of light and love. There is too much in this world that has suffered with the coldness of this year. We will continue to pay attention to what is going on all around us, as our brothers and sisters live in fear of deportation and loss of funding in healthcare and education. We will continue to rail against discrimination based on race or gender or class or religion. As Unitarian Universalists we will always work for a world in which everyone is valued, because we believe in the power of Love to transform ourselves and each other. We believe that Love is a radical, life altering force which can sustain us in our efforts to connect across the chasm of our political divide.

To sustain us in this belief, it is important to make sure that we connect with that same power of Love in our own lives. That we give ourselves permission to experience that gentle glow of Love in our own hearts. And that we nurture it within ourselves and within each other. For it would be far too easy to allow the bombastic language of sarcasm and fear to rule our hearts.

In the weeks ahead, take some time to notice the first signs of new life, courageously poking their tender shoots through the snow. Be sure to listen to the tiny birds as they wing their way north once again, and allow your hearts to be captured by their song. And if you feel your wintered hearts begun to slowly unfurl, know that you, too, are sustained by the power of Love. We can be transformed by Love. And we can share that Love in this world of ours.

With gratitude,

Rev. Anne



In early February, I wrote in my Weekly Update column that your First Parish Board had hired Dan Hotchkiss, an expert in church governance and management, to help draft the outline of a five-year plan for First Parish, including a plan for meeting the short- and long-term funding needs of our church. Following a half-day meeting with Dan and representatives of the Finance Committee, and subsequent discussions at our March Board meeting, the Board has endorsed a two-phase Capital Campaign. Phase I will focus on immediate and critical building needs, some of which were identified in the Historic Structures Report and discussed at last October's Semi-Annual Meeting. Phase II will follow a congregation-wide discussion starting next fall on what we as a congregation want to be; that is, First Parish's mission and vision for the future. Achieving that long-term vision will require changes and improvements to the building, which will be a focus of Phase II of the Capital Campaign, along with other measures — such as growing the endowment — that will help secure the long-term financial health of our church.

For Phase I, the Board has formed a working group, chaired by David Bovet, to plan Phase I and to hold discussions with potential lead donors. Our vision is a very short — and successful — Phase I campaign that can be completed by this coming June. The Board feels this is the right time to move ahead quickly: we know what the critical building needs are and we want to capitalize on the momentum from our successful Annual Pledge Drive.

In the spirit of community,
Tom Rich
Board Chair



Join Rev. Anne and Lisa Maria Steinberg for an interactive discussion and process for end of life planning using the popular Five Wishes® Program. You may have made financial and other legal arrangements for when you die, but have you planned for your end of life care decisions, comfort, and treatment? This program is designed to help you understand the value in answering these questions, record them in writing, and have them available to your loved ones when they are needed, however far down the road that may be.

The program will be offered as a two part series on Thursdays April 6th and 13th from 11:30am—2:00pm and will include lunch. RSVP is required so we can have the right amount of materials and food. Please sign up with Lisa Maria by April 3rd by email at dre@fplex.org or call 781-862-8200 x3. If you cannot attend this daytime weekday offering, let Lisa Maria know you would be interested in this program being offered again at a different time.

Voices on the Green
Friday, April 7th

Voices on the Green
Friday, April 7th

“Balancing on the Hyphen: Living Multiculturally in Lexington”

On Friday, April 7, Voices on the Green, our bi-monthly community series to celebrate the 325th anniversary of the congregation, will present a program entitled “Balancing on the Hyphen,” exploring the challenges and rewards for people of multicultural heritages, of all ages, living or studying in Lexington. The co-sponsor of this event is Lexington Youth and Family Services LYFS, which meets in First Parish and is run by its director, Erin Deery, serves the youth of the Lexington community, providing opportunities for counseling, growth, and leadership. First Parish members Connee Counts and Anne Khudari serve on the LYFS board.

The program will take place at the church and is open to all. The doors will open at 6:30 p.m., and the program will begin at 7:00.

There will be five short personal stories on the theme by Lexington residents Lawrence Prusak (management consultant), Shawna Yen (attorney), Marjan Kamali (author of Together Tea), and Mona Tavangar (LYFS board member), and Austin Fowlkes (METCO student from Boston at Lexington High School). Lexington resident Dr. Mary Brinton (sociologist, Harvard University) will complete the presentations with a Ted-type talk expanding on the overall theme. Larry, Shawna, and Mary are members of First Parish.

Woven through the program will be musical performances and sing-alongs of thematically-related songs led by Geoff

Keith, LYFS board member. Students from several Lexington High choral groups will be participating.

To reserve tickets for the evening (highly recommended), go to VoicesOnTheGreen.eventbrite.com. Suggested donations are \$20 for Donors, \$10 for general admission, and \$5 for students. Tickets will also be available for purchase during coffee hour on April 6th and at the door. Donations will be shared between First Parish and LYFS.

If you have a question, or a suggestion for future programs or speakers, please contact David Rose at First Parish. The next program in the series, “I Protest,” will take place in early October.



The Unity Group invites you to their monthly luncheon and program on Monday, April 11th. Refreshments and social time begin at 12:00pm, followed by lunch and program.

April is National Poetry Month, and the Unity Group is celebrating! Do you love the cadence of May Sarton's *Bliss*? Does Edgar Allen Poe's narrative, dark poetry send chills up your spine? Are you a lover of the ballad? Ode? Haiku? Sonnet? Please bring a favorite poem to share.

BLISS

In the middle of the night,
My bedroom washed in moonlight
And outside
The faint hush-hushing
Of an ebbing tide,
I see Venus
Close to
The waning moon.
I hear the bubbling hoot
Of a playful owl.
Pierrot's purrs
Ripple under my hand,
And all this is bathed
In the scent of roses
By my bed
Where there are always
Books and flowers.

In the middle of the night,
The bliss of being alive!



All are welcome to join Dan Fenn, a longtime member of the Lexington Minute Men Company, on Monday, April 17th at noon when he will present, "What Really Happened That Day?", the fascinating real story of the events on April 19, 1775. Free and open to the public.

For information on all of the events that happen on Patriot's Day in Lexington, as well as road closures and parking information, [click on this link](#).

*Listen my children and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five,
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.
~Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*



Moving on up!

After conversation with the LRE Committee, it was decided to move the Chapel group (2nd to 8th graders) up to the Common Room on Sunday morning. A calmer space with more natural light than Parker Hall, and a better fit for sitting in a circle on the floor, the Common Room is also distraction-free: no poles in the middle of the space for swinging.

I wanted to create a new space for the Chapel group that would foster a feeling of calm, reflection, and peacefulness. Over the winter, the group has had some challenges in remembering that we are gathered together for learning and growth, and it is our hope that through intentionally creating new space for our gatherings, the group will remember for what purpose we are gathered. Brightly colored individual cushions for seating have been ordered, and each child will be provided with "fidget items" during Chapel. We hope that these small, welcoming, adjustments will promote an environment that will provide the children with a sense of ownership, responsibility, and respect – all conditions that support a fruitful and fun time for faith development.

~Lisa Maria Steinberg



A Broadway Cabaret

Sunday, May 7, 2017, at 3:30 PM

First Parish Sanctuary



First Parish in Lexington will present a Broadway Cabaret on Sunday, May 7, 2017 at 3:30 PM, in the sanctuary. The concert will feature the First Parish sanctuary and children's choirs and soloists, guest singers, and a pit band (piano, drums, electric guitar, acoustic guitar, contrabass, trumpets, horns, flute and clarinet) performing solo and choral music from Broadway including selections from *Rent*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Annie*, *West Side Story* and *Show Boat*. For more information call the church at [781-862-8200](tel:781-862-8200) or visit www.fplex.org.

Open to All! Invite your friends!

Donations Gratefully Accepted

MAYFAIR is COMING!

Mayfair is coming on Saturday, May 13! We invite you to come, to help, and to bring your stuff!

[SIGN UP ONLINE HERE](#)

Or please visit the piano on Sundays to sign-up to share your talents: Do you dig plants? Help at the Plant table. Like to dress up? Help at the Jewelry table. Savor good coffee? Brew the best at the Coffee bar. Are you a neat-nik? Push a broom during clean up. There's something for each of us.

We are looking, too, for irresistible items in these categories:

1. **Treasures and Collectibles:** china, artworks, silver, furniture, fine art
2. **Jewelry:** jewelry of all kinds, handbags, scarves, and small purses
3. **Books** (all types except textbooks): current fiction & nonfiction, art books, children's books, cookbooks, gardening, field, and travel guides, books on CD
4. **Music:** CDs, DVDs, instruments in good working order
5. **White Elephants:** Pottery, kitchenware, linens, small furniture, knickknacks, frames, small appliances, tools, electronic goods in working order, art & craft supplies, gift items, holiday decorations
6. **Toys, Games, and Puzzles:** clean & in good condition
7. **Plants:** plants that you're thinning or have grown from

seed

8. **Home-baked and other homemade items:** your favorite breads, muffins, cookies, brownies/bars, biscotti, cupcakes, granola/muesli, fudge, etc.

But please :

- No firearms
- No exercise equipment
- No worn-out or outdated sporting goods
- No large pieces of furniture
- No broken items
- No household chemicals
- No clothing or shoes
- No televisions
- No monitors, desk-model, or old computers
- No air conditioners
- No tape cassettes or videotapes
- No magazines or textbooks

Let's join together for this fun-filled, spring tradition at First Parish. Mark your calendars! Collect your donations! And COME!!

Amy Breiting and
Marty Kvaal

Mayfair co-chairs



The recipient of the special plate collection for April will be the Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry.

On Sunday, April 30th, Rev. Mary Margaret Earl, Executive Director and Senior Minister of the UUUM, will join us in the pulpit where she will preach on, "Making Beloved Community Real."

"Headquartered at the First Church in Roxbury campus, the UU Urban Ministry operates programs that provide education and enrichment programming for children and youth, emergency shelter for individuals and families fleeing from domestic violence, affordable housing and intentional community for young women, and volunteer-based capacity-building services for Roxbury-serving nonprofits. We make use of an extensive pool of volunteers from Boston-area UU congregations, colleges/universities, and the Roxbury community to offer a greater level of programming than our staff alone could provide. An important part of our mission is bringing together people from different walks of life to work together toward justice and equality." For more information, visit their [website](#).



UU Mass Action



We hope you will join others from First Parish as we put our faith into action by gathering with UUs from across the state for UU Mass Action Advocacy Day.

Tuesday, April 11th, 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Arlington Street Church & The State House

Keynote speaker: Rev. Paul Robeson Ford, Senior Pastor of the Union Baptist Church, Cambridge

Worship leader: Rev. John Gibbons, Senior Minister at First Parish in Bedford

Musician: Rev. Fred Small, Climate Justice Minister, Arlington Street Church

For more information go to the [UU Mass Action](#) website.

To connect with other First Parish folks who are attending contact [Stephen Shick](#).

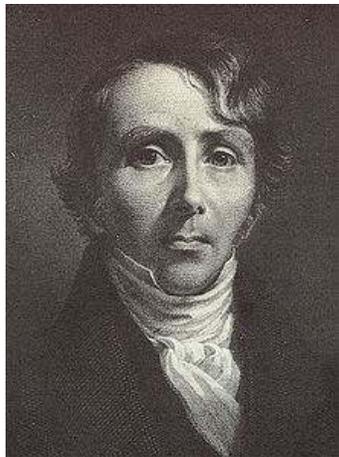
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Please come to a free film screening of *Before the Flood* on Saturday, April 15th from 10:00am - 12:00pm. With Evan Seitz of UUMass Action and others.



"Addressing climate change is the biggest challenge of our time. Come together in community to learn and be inspired to take action on behalf of our common home."

The Venue Theater, 1799 Massachusetts Ave, Lexington, MA. Doors open at 9:45am. Sponsored by First Parish Arlington, First Parish Bedford, First Parish Concord, First Parish Lexington, and Follen Church. Contact [Stephen Shick](#) for more information.



The Unitarian Universalist History and Heritage Society is raising money to restore the memorial for the Rev. William Ellery Channing at Mt. Auburn Cemetery. Channing was minister of the Federal Street Church in Boston, now the Arlington Street Church, and his statue stands in the Public Garden at the corner of Arlington and Boylston Street. He was the vital founding

leader of the American Unitarian story. His sermon "Unitarian Christianity" in 1819 defined and advocated for the new liberal brand of Christianity, based on an open-minded and reasoned approach to religion, on the dignity of all human beings, and on the value of education in helping us all fulfill our possibilities and responsibilities. Another of his sermons, "Likeness to God," celebrated the innate powers of human beings to be creative and compassionate. These sermons and his other writings (including his rejection of slavery and advocacy of abolition) are among the best introductions to how the Unitarian denomination came into existence.

The goal for the fund is \$7500, and the deadline for donations is April 26. Donations can be sent to UUHHS, 670 High Street, Dedham, MA 02066 (checks made out to UUHHS, with a note "Channing Preservation"), or you can pay on the website of [Faithify](#). Brochures for the restoration project will be available starting on April 2. If you have any questions, please contact Helen Cohen.

Saturday, April 1st

Memorial Service for Jan Aldrich, 11:30am, Sanctuary; Munroe Saturday Nights, 7:30pm, Sanctuary

Sunday, April 2nd

OWL, 6:30pm, Parker Hall

Thursday, April 6th

Five Wishes program, 11:30am, Parish Hall

Friday, April 7th

Voices on the Green, 7:00pm, Sanctuary

Sunday, April 9th

Drop-in UU Info Session, 11:45am, Minister's Office; Coming of Age, 5:45pm, Parker Hall; OWL, 6:30pm, Parker Hall; SHYG, 7:00pm, Common Room & Parish Hall

Monday, April 10th

Unity Group, 12:00pm, Parker Hall

Thursday, April 13th

Five Wishes program, 11:30am, Parish Hall

Monday, April 17th

Dan Fenn talk, 12:00pm, Sanctuary

Thursday, April 20th

80+ Luncheon, 12:30pm, Parker Hall

Saturday, April 22nd

New UU Workshop, 9:00am, Parlor

Sunday, April 23rd

Coming of Age, 5:45pm, Parker Hall; Ferry Beach Committee, 7:00pm, Parker Hall; SHYG, 7:00pm, Common Room

Sunday, April 30th

JHYG, 3:00pm, Parker Hall; Coming of Age, 5:45pm, Parker Hall; SHYG, 7:00pm, Common Room & Parish Hall

## Calendar April 2017

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### Recurring Events

Choir Warm-up, Sundays, at 9:45 a.m.  
Worship Service, Sundays, at 10:30 a.m.  
Children's Choir Rehearsal, Sundays, at 11:45 a.m.  
Social Action, monthly, 3rd Sunday, at 11:45 a.m.  
Sr. High Youth Group, Sundays, at 7 p.m.  
Members & Friends, monthly, 4th Monday, 7:30 p.m.  
Music Committee, monthly, 1st Tuesday, at 3:00 p.m.  
Parish Board, monthly, 2nd Tuesday, at 7:00 p.m.  
Insight Meditation, Tuesdays, at 7:30 p.m.  
Finance Committee, monthly, 1st Tuesday, at 7:30 p.m.  
Building & Grounds, 3rd Tuesday, at 7:30 p.m.  
History Committee, 2nd Wednesday, at 1:30 p.m.  
Choir Rehearsal, Wednesdays, at 7:30 p.m.  
Creative Callings, 2nd and 4th Thursdays, at 2:00 p.m.  
Thursday Meditation, Thursdays, at 4:00 p.m.



## The Installation of Rev. Anne H. Mason 24th Settled Minister First Parish in Lexington

Thanks to Lew Counts for the capturing  
in images the wonderful celebration of  
Rev. Anne's Installation. Enjoy!



