

# THE FOCALPOINT

FIRST PARISH IN LEXINGTON  
UNITARIAN  UNIVERSALIST

## *January 2018 – What Does It Mean to be a Community of Intention?*

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**Deadline for February issue: Wednesday, January 24th**

## Worship Services for January

### What Does it Mean to be a Community of Intention?

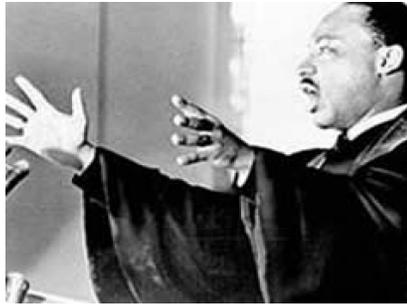


**January 7**

**Dan Fenn**

**"Epiphanies Then and Now"**

Dan Fenn will ponder the human phenomenon of epiphanies - those sudden, unexpected flashes of new insights - which come upon all of us once in a while. This Sunday, which marks the Feast of Epiphany in many faith traditions, seems like an appropriate time for such thoughts.



**January 14**

**Rev. Anne Mason**

**"The Myth of Exaggerated Progress"**

In 1966, the Reverend Martin Luther King delivered the Ware Lecture to the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association. He encouraged us not to sleep through the revolution. Rev. Anne will explore the meaning his words still have for us today.



**January 21**

**Rev. Anne Mason**

**"Up Periscope"**

As we begin our congregation-wide conversation about who we are and who we want to become, we need to lift ourselves up from the everyday concerns of our lives. Let's shift our perspective a bit and get a wider view, so that we can begin to dream together.

## Worship Services for January

### What Does it Mean to be a Community of Intention?



**January 28**

**Rev. Helen Lutton Cohen,**

**Minister Emerita**

**"Giving Up Power"**

2018 marks the 170th year of our current building, built after the previous building, on the Town Green, burned down in 1846. In 1833, Massachusetts had become the last state to recognize the separation of church and state. What did it mean to our spiritual ancestors, who until 1833 had been the only religious congregation in Lexington, basically synonymous with the town itself, to give up its place on the Green in response to new churches, Follen and First Baptist, and to this state decision?

All Sunday services begin at 10:30am in the Sanctuary.



What a year this has been. Together we have weathered the storms of this nation, and together we prepare for a continued resistance to the erosion of values that we hold dear. Our Unitarian Universalist faith encourages us to treat everyone with respect and with dignity while we continue to search for truth and meaning. This may lead us into difficult conversations between those of differing points of view, but we are dedicated to working to build understanding and we are compelled to work towards a more just society. We commit to upholding the democratic process in our church and in our country, even as we see barriers erected all around us.

For all of you justice-builders who are reaching the point of fatigue, I encourage you to take time in this New Year to step back for a moment and focus on your own self-care.

Our sacred community is just such a place. When you enter our doors, I hope that you will find the space to open your hearts to renewal.

I offer us all the following prayer for the New Year.

In faith,  
*Rev. Anne*

O Spirit of Life and Renewal

Receive our painful worries.

Take from us, even for a moment, our care and concern.

Help us to drop, even for a moment, our cynicism and our fear.

In the freshness of this New Year, may we find again  
that which has sustained us over the years of our lives:

A deeper love,

Connection with each other,

and a heightened sense of purpose.

We dedicate ourselves to the sustaining work of our faith:

to uproot the stain of racial oppression,

to open our arms with radical hospitality,

and to the renewal of our spirits, again and yet again.

Let us Love

Let us Seek

Let us Serve.

With Gratitude and with Hope.





With sadness we mourn the passing of Phyllis Whitman on Sunday, December 10th. Please hold Susanna and Jonathan, David, Jeremy, and Liz in your hearts as they face this first Christmas without their beloved family member. Phyllis was a long time member of First Parish, and will be much remembered for her poetry, her singing in the choir, and her wonderful presence at church over the years. The date for the memorial service will be announced when it has been determined.

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We also hold Ruth and David Rose in our hearts as they wait, with their family, with hope for recovery for their young granddaughter, Lindsay Rose. She had open heart surgery last week, which at only 3 months old is a dangerous thing. You may visit this Caring Bridge site to get updates. <https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/lindsaymargaretrose>

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The memorial service for Bill Smith will take place on Saturday, January 6th at 2:00pm. All are welcome to join Bill's family as they celebrate and honor his life.

You are invited to a workshop on Jan. 21 at 2:00pm, hosted by Hancock UCC. Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis is co-chair of the Poor People's Campaign, which is strongly supported by Rev. William Barber and the UUA.

Inspired by the 1968 Poor People's Campaign led by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, the leaders of this revival believe we need a movement led by a united force of the "poor and dispossessed" in order to confront the triplet evils of racism, poverty, and militarism.

The worship will be held in Clark Hall at Hancock UCC. Admission is \$10, and no one will be turned away due to inability to pay. Questions can be directed to 781-862-4220 or [office@hancockchurch.org](mailto:office@hancockchurch.org)



## A Note from the Board

Katie O'Hare Gibson and David Rose, co-chairs

# BOARD

Happy New Year! New year's celebrations around the world and from a variety of cultures all share one important aspect: they all invite people to sit and reflect on the year past, and imagine the year ahead.

Day to day it is difficult to see growth and change, as we are "in the thick of it", making those changes happen. In looking over the minutes from this time last year, some of the things the Board was wrestling with were the Historic Structures report, and how we would fund the necessary improvements to keep our building strong. Now, one year later, we see the beauty of the new windows, the improved facade of the building, and we are experiencing excitement to continue the work to shine our beacon brightly into the world! We were also discussing some new initiatives of our members, including Minuteman Indivisible and Voices on the Green. These two groups now are flourishing and have attracted much attention from the community at large (did you see the advertisement for the next Voices on the Green event in the Lexington Community Education catalog?!).

In reflecting on this past year, I am in awe of all the work that has been done by ALL members of this congregation, and am excited at the possibilities going forward into

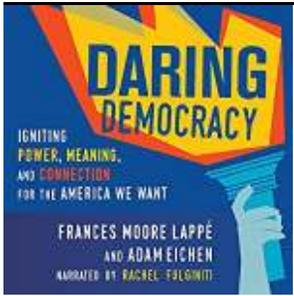
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2018. One year from now, I will be reflecting on the fact that the Board was making plans for Imagination Cafe meetings and Beloved Conversations. I wonder what I will think as I try to remember what it meant to have these new initiatives be just in the planning stages in our church.

We invite you all to join us in Imagining what the year ahead and beyond holds for us! Look for more information, coming soon, about the Imagination Cafe meetings that will be held this winter to imagine new possibilities for our church as we grow our impact in the world.





Daring Democracy, UUA Common Read Book ~ Discussion and Interfaith Panel Response

In partnership with Minuteman Indivisible we invite you to reflect on the state of our democracy a year into the Trump Administration when we will discuss the UUA

Common Read, *Daring Democracy*, by Frances Moore Lappé and Adam Eichen.

Every year there is a UUA Common Read that invites Unitarian Universalist communities to read a book together that is relevant to our faith and our time. This year, we are excited to be offering two opportunities to engage with this wonderful book, both in partnership with Minuteman Indivisible.

On January 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm we will have a book discussion facilitated by First Parish's Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Lisa Maria Steinberg, in collaboration with Marci Cemenska and Lisa Baci of Minuteman Indivisible. Although reading the book in advance will make the most of your attendance, it is not required.

Two weeks later, on January 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm, Lisa Maria will moderate an Interfaith panel of lay people in sharing how their personal faith tradition calls them to respond to the issues raised in Lappé and Eichen's book. Come and hear how UUs, Catholics, Hindus, Jews, and others experience their spiritual practices calling them to act in our community in support of democracy.

Copies of *Daring Democracy*, by Frances Moore Lappé and Adam Eichen are available for sale at a discounted price of \$12 each at the church office on weekdays, and during coffee hour on Sundays in January. If you need assistance with purchasing a book, please contact Lisa Maria Steinberg at dre@fplex.org.

**Are we still the  
Green Church on the  
Green?**

**18 members of First Parish**

**Answered Yes on December 17**

**by Joining the**

**First Parish Climate Action Team**

**Join the First Parish Climate Action Team** and help imagine what we can do together in the coming year. For more info contact Dave Pollack (joananddavid3@verizon.net), or Stephen Shick (stephenshick04@gmail.com), or Bob Kvaal (bkvaal@gmail.com)

**Attend the January Organizing Meeting** (date to be announced)

**Learn more** about Massachusetts Carbon Pricing Legislation at <https://climate-xchange.org/>

**Come to Worship on February 11** and hear Rev. Fred Small, Climate Activist and one of the initiators of the Green Sanctuary movement.

**Find out what others are doing :**

Massachusetts Campaign for a Clean Energy Future

<https://campaignforcleanenergyfuture.org/>

350.org Massachusetts—<http://350mass.betterfutureproject.org/>

Climate Exchange Massachusetts—<https://climate-xchange.org/>

UU Ministry for Earth—<https://uuministryforearth.org/>

UU Mass Action—<http://www.uumassaction.org/>

**Music from the Gilded Age**  
**Sunday, January 28 at 2:30 PM**  
**Freewill Donation**

On Sunday afternoon, January 28 at 2:30, tenor Austin Burns and pianist Rip Jackson will present a concert of music from the "Gilded Age." The Gilded Age was a term coined by Mark Twain and refers to a society which is "gilded" or thinly coated with a gold layer while under the surface lies the poor working conditions of the lower class. This program will draw striking parallels to today's economic and political climate. Sets from the program reflect not only the struggle of the 99% but also the forgotten voices of women, African Americans, and refugees. It confronts the history of oppressed groups but also acknowledges the white privilege so many of us take for granted. A freewill offering will be taken. For more information, call 781-862-8200 or visit [www.fplex.org](http://www.fplex.org).



**Sound Journey with Nirmal Chandraratna**  
**Saturday, February 24 at 7:30 PM**  
**Free Will Offering**



First Parish welcomes Nirmal Chandraratna, a New York City-based Kirtan artist and composer with a passion for nurturing connection – to spirit, to community, and to one's deeper self—through music. Using the voice, the harmonium,

and the cello, he creates music for Kirtan and meditation, and works for communal performance. He will collaborate with our director of music Rip Jackson. In this evening experience, set in a dynamic, meditative environment, you are invited to connect with your intentions, both for yourself and for the world, and to let them take flight using the transformative power of sound. Layered textures of the human voice, cello, and percussion will weave a tapestry of music and mantra. At the beginning of the evening, we'll come together as a community, singing together and sharing our intentions. We'll raise the intensity, and then you'll be invited to settle into a comfortable position to meditate in a darkened, candle-lit environment as a concert of expansive music and textures unfolds.

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**Missa Gaia at First Parish**  
**April 13 and 14 at 7:30 PM**

**Sanctuary**



The First Parish music program is gearing up for its spring production of Paul Winter's *Missa Gaia*. This masterpiece is a mass for the Earth with a professional dance company, large chorus, world music ensemble, and children's choir. The rehearsals and performances will be April 8 and 11-14 plus Wednesday nights in late

March and early April. For the children, rehearsal will be on Sundays after church. This is a big project with lights, sound, a full stage in the sanctuary, props, costumes and a lot of the community will come out to experience this artistic and important work. If you are interested in helping out or sing, please email Rip Jackson at [music.fplex@gmail.com](mailto:music.fplex@gmail.com).

**Social Action Ministry  
The Good Samaritan Fund**

Through the generosity of Bruce and Eva Gordon, long-time Lexington residents, humanitarians, and members of First Parish in Lexington, the Good Samaritan Fund was established "...to provide financial awards to needy individuals." In offering guidance on the selection of individuals to receive these awards, the donors stipulate that the major beneficiaries be those people whose lives would be significantly improved with modest amounts of money, such as senior persons needing specific medical aids or other items, refugees needing a first month's rent or food, a special gift for a disabled child, or a first year scholarship for a person who would otherwise be unable to attend college or technical school.

The Social Action Committee of First Parish would like to announce the first wave of these awards with an application deadline of February 1st. Selected recipients will be notified by March 15th. Late applications will be considered in the subsequent grant cycle. The deadline for this second wave of awards is May 1 with notification by June 15th. If you are aware of any individuals or families who qualify based on the Gordon terms reproduced above, please encourage them to apply.

To be considered, completed applications must include the following: a detailed description of the need, a valid cost estimate with supporting document, a personal financial statement such as the first page of last year's tax return, and a letter confirming the need/financial eligibility from an independent authoritative source such as a representative from the local human services department or senior center, social worker, physician, or religious leader. The supporting letter must be received on the individual's institution/department letterhead.

**Social Action Ministry  
First Sunday Food Collection**

Applications will be held in strict confidence and can be found either online at <http://fplex.org/index.php/faith-in-action/good-samaritan-fund/> or at First Parish Church during office hours Monday through Thursday 8:30am—4:00pm.

Questions should be directed to:

[goodsamaritanfund@FPLex.org](mailto:goodsamaritanfund@FPLex.org).

Completed applications should be mailed to:

Good Samaritan Fund, Attention: Chair, Social Action Committee, First Parish Church of Lexington, 7 Harrington Road, Lexington, MA 02421



This is a reminder to bring in non-perishable food donation on the first Sunday of the month, January 7th, for our food drive to help those hungry in Lexington. Please bring a donation to the basket at the front of the sanctuary. You may also leave donations in the basket outside of the main office. Thank you for supporting the Lexington Interfaith Food Pantry.



Many people at First Parish participate every year in the Lexington Martin Luther King Day of Service. Following is the introductory announcement to the nature and events of the Day put out by the town-wide MLK Day of Service Committee:

**5th Annual Lexington MLK Day of Service**  
**Monday, January 15, 2018**

The Town of Lexington will hold its 25th commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day with its 5th Annual MLK Day of Service by shepherding our community to take part in assisting those in need. Our objective is to engage and mobilize people of all ages to participate in events and activities to serve others. United in philanthropy under the auspices of the Town Celebrations Committee, our target this year is to serve 2,000+ people through 400+ volunteers.

**Program and Activities:**

9–10:30 a.m. at Grace Chapel – Lexington Human Rights Council sponsor a Community Dialogue on Race. An opportunity to discuss in small groups ways to employ Dr. King's principles, tactics and strategies to achieve greater equality & justice.

11 a.m. Unity Walk from the Lexington Battle Green to Cary Hall. Come and join our community in this fun and symbolic show of unity and solidarity in the name of equality and social justice.

11:30 a.m. at Cary Hall Commemoration Program and Musical Performances – Brief and uplifting performances by Lexington literary performer Regie O'Hare Gibson, Lexington Student presentations and Special Needs Arts Program (SNAP) Sing Along Chorus.

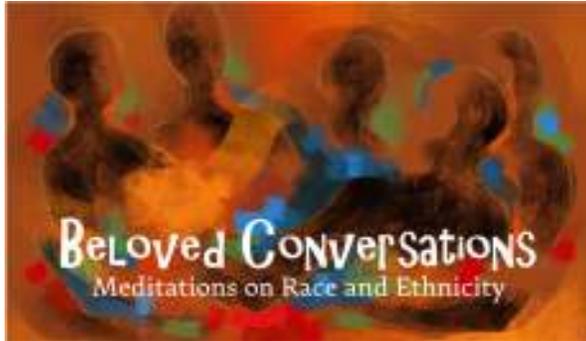
Volunteer activities throughout Lexington, Waltham (YMCA) and Brighton (Boston):

Activities include card-making for hospitalized children and veterans, meeting with homeless families at the Waltham YMCA for a day of activities, an invitation to Lexington Seniors to gather at Brookhaven for music, refreshments, and reflections on King's legacy while donating to the new Bedford Green Apartments for previously homeless veterans, fleecemaking of blankets, scarves, and hats, and a variety of opportunities for donations to places like the Lexington Food Pantry.

**Evening concert:**

At 5:00 p.m. come to First Parish in Lexington when Opera unMet presents, *The Ties that Bind: A different kind of musical celebration for Black History Month.*

Please go to the website <[lexingtonmlk.org](http://lexingtonmlk.org)> for further details and to sign up for activities. You can also email <[lexingtoncommunity@gmail.com](mailto:lexingtoncommunity@gmail.com)> with questions, or speak to Helen Cohen.



First Parish in Concord and First Parish in Lexington are collaborating on an experiential curriculum, Beloved Conversations.

Developed by the Fahs Collaborative at Meadville Lombard UU Theological School, this highly acclaimed program begins with a thought-provoking 1.5 day retreat facilitated by trained Fahs Collaborative staff, which will take place on February 2nd and 3rd.

Small groups of 8-10 members from both congregations will then meet together for eight biweekly facilitated discussions to promote new patterns of thought and behavior that connect both the sources of inspiration as well as the challenges of race/ethnicity. Beloved Conversations will provide a space to re-form/fuse the brokenness of racism into new patterns of thought and behavior ushering in social and spiritual healing.

Registration begins January 7th (limited availability, full commitment required).

For more information about Beloved Conversations, visit the Meadville website at [meadville.org/beloved](http://meadville.org/beloved) or email Elisabeth Jas ([svenjas@msn.com](mailto:svenjas@msn.com)) or Rev. Anne Mason ([minister@fplex.org](mailto:minister@fplex.org)).

Co-coordinators of the Caring Community of First Parish Church in Lexington, Deborah Beers and Celine Nussbaum, remind parishioners that our community is here to lend a hand if someone is in need of a meal or a ride.

Debbie and Celine receive requests for help through email at [caringcommunity@fplex.org](mailto:caringcommunity@fplex.org). They also coordinate volunteers through our community's page on [lotsahelpinghands.com/](http://lotsahelpinghands.com/)

Volunteers who have accepted our invitation to join our [lotsahelpinghands.com](http://lotsahelpinghands.com) community are sent announcements through this website about opportunities to help as they arise, and they can choose to sign up for these opportunities on the website if and when they wish.

Please be in touch with [caringcommunity@fplex.org](mailto:caringcommunity@fplex.org) if you would like us to coordinate help for you through the website when you are in need, or if you are interested in receiving an invitation to be listed as one of our volunteers.



**Social Hour Hosts  
February through June**

Dear Members and Friends of First Parish Church,

First Parish invites each of you to participate in hospitality by hosting our Sunday morning social hour one time each year. Hosts need to arrive about 9:45 and stay till about 12:45. (If you can't get there for the prep, maybe let your team know you can stay for the clean up.)

The lead host brings milk for coffee or tea and coordinates with the team; the other invitees each bring refreshments for 30 to 40: (cut up fruit or veggies, crackers & cheese, or sweets. Full instructions are available on our website [fplex.org](http://fplex.org) (or posted in the kitchenette).

The table below lists your invitations for this winter and spring. Please find your name, mark your calendar and save this list for future reference. (Please double check to see if you will need a sub near the end of the church year! It gets busy with graduations and weddings, etc.)

Thank you!



**Social Hour Hosts  
February through June**

DATE	LEAD HOST	INVITEES
2/4	Svenson, E	Jas, E, Erickson, P, Hylek, E
2/11	Eisenstein, K	Eisenstein, R, Edelman, M, Fleiss C & Fleiss, D,
2/18	Giauque, A	Flentje, A, Gibbons, B & Gibbons, M
2/25	Herrick, B	Herrick, K, Heghinian-Walzer S & Bou-taud, F
3/4	Fox, M	Fortin, M & Fortin, D French, J,
3/11	Goodell, N	Goodell, K, Foster, J & Foster, E
3/18	Trudeau, J	Goodell, T & Goodell, C., Hartmann, L & Jobling, R, Griffiths, T
3/25	Howell, J	Howell, A, Hess C, & Aliber, J, Hopkin-son, R,
4/1	Jamison, A	Juitt, L & Juitt, D, Khudari, O and Khudari, A
4/8	Kvaal, B	Kvaal, M, Levine, D, Nolden, S, & Nolden, T
4/15	Lapides D	Gross, J. & Matthews, S, Jacobson, T. Newhouse, M
4/22	Jackson, M	McKenney, B. & McKenney, J, Millane, J
4/29	Meharry, M,	Meharry, D, Morse-Fortier, S. & Morse-Fortier, L, Jameson, M
5/6	Mulready-Shick, J	Shick, S Keenan, C Pedulla, D & Spring-er, S,
5/13	Noe, C.,	Nussbaum, C & Nussbaum, S, Myer, A & Myer, D
5/20	O'Brien, R	O'Brien, J, O'Connor, S Lai Becker, M. & Becker, S
5/27	Oberteuffer, J	O'Hare-Gibson, R & O'Hare-Gibson, K, Moffatt, P
6/3	Pittore, R	Pittore, B, Myerberg, A & Myerberg, J, Egan, I
6/10	Perry-Wood, Z	LeSchack, M, McGrail, K, Olson, M
6/17	Mannix, S	Muscolo, G, Wanderer, T (parish picnic today?)

## Special Events Calendar January 2018

## Recurring Events January 2018

### Saturday, January 6th

Memorial Service for Bill Smith, 2:00pm, Sanctuary,

### Sunday, January 7th

OWL, 4:00pm, Parker Hall; SHYG, 7:00pm, Youth Room

### Monday, January 8th

Unity Group Luncheon, 12:00pm, Parker Hall

### Thursday, January 11th

Adult Program—Daring Democracy, 7:00pm, Parish Hall

### Monday, January 15th

Opera unMet Concert, 5:00pm, Sanctuary; LYFS Board Meeting, 7:00pm, Parker Hall

### Tuesday, January 16th

80+ Luncheon, 12:30pm, Parker Hall

### Saturday, January 20th

OWL Retreat, 9:00am, Parker Hall

### Sunday, January 21st

Poor People's Campaign, 2:00pm, Hancock Church

### Tuesday, January 23rd

LYFS—SOS, 6:30pm, Parker Hall

### Thursday, January 25th

Adult Program—Daring Democracy, 7:00pm, Parish Hall

### Sunday, January 28th

Austin Burns Concert, 2:30pm, Sanctuary

Choir Warm-up, Sundays, at 9:30 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, 4th Monday, 7:30 p.m.

Music Committee, 1st Tuesday, at 2:00 p.m.

Parish Board, 2nd Tuesday, at 7:00 p.m.

Finance Committee, 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, 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, at 1:30 p.m.

Thursday Meditation, Thursdays, at 4:00 p.m.

