

# THE FOCALPOINT

FIRST PARISH IN LEXINGTON  
UNITARIAN  UNIVERSALIST

*June 2018 — What Does It Mean to be a  
Community of Blessing?*

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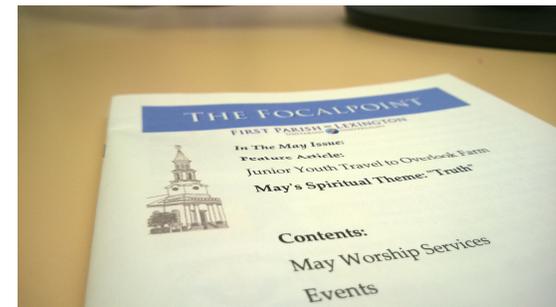
## Changes to The Focalpoint Summer 2018

# THE FOCALPOINT

This is the first quarterly publication of The Focalpoint. It will be published on the 1st day of the months of June, September, December, and March, and will include information about upcoming programs and events, as well as feature pictures and highlights from past events. Deadline for submissions is the 23rd of the month prior to publication.

The Weekly Update, which is sent electronically every Wednesday afternoon at 4pm, will be the main communication tool and will provide current events and notices. Submissions should be sent to the office by Monday at 12:00pm.

Want to receive all of the news to your email? Contact Jane Foley to sign up for electronic issues of The Focalpoint and Weekly Update.



## Upcoming Events & Save the Dates Summer 2018

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Saturday, June 2 - Day of Service - 8:00am - Parker Hall

Sunday, June 3 - Lisa Perry Wood's Ordination - 3:00pm -  
Sanctuary

Friday, June 8 - Voices on the Green - 7:00pm - Sanctuary  
(for tickets go to [voicesonthegreen.brownpaperticket.com](http://voicesonthegreen.brownpaperticket.com))

Saturday, June 9 - Memorial Service for Al Jacobson -  
11:00am - Sanctuary

Sunday, June 10 - Rally for Gun Violence Prevention -  
1:00pm - Battle Green

Wednesday, June 20 to Sunday, June 25 - General Assem-  
bly of the UUA - Kansas City, MO

(go to [www.uua.org/ga](http://www.uua.org/ga) for more information)

### Save the Dates

Sunday, September 9th - Ingathering Sunday

Saturday, November 17th - Church Auction

## Worship Services for June What Does It Mean to be a Community of Blessing?

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### June 3 - "Refuge from an Indifferent World"

Rev. Anne Mason

The Jewish tradition of offering blessings is a way to notice the holy in the midst of the ordinary. Rachael Naomi Remen writes that offering a blessing is about our relationship to the spark of God in one another. "Everyone in the world matters, and so do their blessings. When we bless others, we offer them refuge from an indifferent world."

### June 10 - "We Who Bless the World"

Rev. Anne Mason

Come to worship today, bringing a flower to share. In the beauty of our flower communion ritual we will bless each other as we celebrate the unique gift each one of us brings to this community of faith and hope. We will also join in a baby dedication as we recognize the incredible gifts of life and love contained within each one of us.

### June 17 - Summer Services Begin!

We will gather in Parish Hall this summer as we engage in interactive worship, spoken joys and sorrows, with time to listen and be listened to. Worship this summer will offer us all the opportunity to deepen our connection to each other. Let us remember that strangers are just friends we haven't met.

Ben Soule will get us off to a great start with an interactive, all age friendly service about telling our stories with puppets.

**Memorial Service for  
Al Jacobson**

**June 24 - General Assembly Worship Livestream**

This morning we will gather to watch together the closing worship of this year's General Assembly taking place in Kansas City. Witness the power of thousands of UUs gathered together in worship and in song. May this shared experience help us to feel the connection we have to UUs across the country, and help us to feel the strength our denomination has in this world.

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The Memorial Service for beloved, long-time member of First Parish, Al Jacobson, will take place on Saturday, June 9th at 11am in the Sanctuary. All are invited to join Teresa and the rest of Al's family and friends as they celebrate his life and legacy. A reception will follow. If you would like to help, please contact Judy Sinnett at [peace220@comcast.net](mailto:peace220@comcast.net).

**From Your Minister  
Rev. Anne Mason**

As we begin to explore what it means to be 'a people of Blessing' in June, let us pause for a moment and consider what a blessing it is to be a part of this community. It has been an incredibly active year at First Parish, and we have had many wonderful opportunities to be together, to sing together, to explore questions together, and to engage in service together. Our volunteers have been generous with their time taking care of our historic building, planning for events, cooking delicious meals and coffee hour delights, and supporting the work of the church. We are all grateful for the hard work everyone did to make Missa Gaia such a success, and we look forward to our last Voices on the Green for the year, knowing that more are being planned for next year!



As we move forward in our community life, I'd like us to take time over the summer to learn together. We will be sharing a Common Read this fall, and I'd love for you all to either purchase or borrow a copy of the book *Justice on Earth: People of Faith Working at the Intersections of Race, Class, and the Environment*. This is a collection of essays by activist Unitarian Universalist writers, and I hope that it will give us all some language to explore a new approach to justice work at First Parish. I am excited to engage with you on these topics, and I hope that having a 'summer read' will keep you connected to the important work we hope to do in the fall.

May the warmth of summer fill you with relaxation and peace.

In faith,  
*Rev. Anne*

## Summer Services July 1—September 2

All are welcome to our summer services in Parish Hall at 10:30. Detailed information about the services can be found on the church's website, [www.fplex.org](http://www.fplex.org).

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Worship Leader</u>           |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| July 1      | Lisa Maria Steinberg            |
| July 8      | Jane Beswick & Debbie Armstrong |
| July 15     | Suzanne Adams                   |
| July 22     | Bill McKenney                   |
| July 29     | Regie O'Hare Gibson             |
| August 5    | Bobbie Hodson                   |
| August 12   | Don Cohen                       |
| August 19   | Brenda Prusak                   |
| August 26   | Elisabeth Jas                   |
| September 2 | Cammy Thomas                    |

The Pastoral Associates will be available throughout the summer. Please email them as indicated.

The week of:

June 17 - Bob Stone—[stone.bobstone@gmail.com](mailto:stone.bobstone@gmail.com)  
June 24 - Joanne Poage—[jepoage@gmail.com](mailto:jepoage@gmail.com)  
July 1 - Joanne Poage  
July 8 - Lydia D'Andrea—[dandrea77@verizon.net](mailto:dandrea77@verizon.net)  
July 15 - Bob Stone  
July 22 - Bob Stone  
July 29 - Lydia D'Andrea  
August 5 - Bob Stone  
August 12 - Lydia D'Andrea  
August 19 - Joanne Poage  
August 26 - Joanne Poage  
September 2 - Lydia D'Andrea

## Summer Hours For Minister & Staff

**Rev. Anne Mason:** During July and August, I will be taking time off for both study leave and vacation. I plan to use my study time to tackle the stack of books I've gathered this year, and to spend some vacation time in England visiting family. Below you will find the list of the Pastoral Associates who will be on-call throughout the summer. If I am in town I will be able to respond to pastoral emergencies. I look forward to returning in September with renewed energy and spirit, happy to be back with you again!

**Lisa Maria Steinberg:** I will be attending the LREDA (Liberal Religious Education Association) Professional Days at General Assembly in Kansas City from June 18 to June 20. I'll be working through mid July, available by appointment and in the office as needed. My vacation runs from the week of July 15 through August 5. I will be back in the office on August 6.

**Rip Jackson:** I will be working through June 17th and then will begin my summer period where I will be away quite a bit. For some of the time, I will be offline enjoying vacation and comp time. I will be attending two continuing education workshops between late July and early September. And finally, I will be doing some work off-site beginning to prepare and plan for next year's music and concerts. I am available via email between July 19 and August 5th. I am looking forward to another wonderful year at First Parish beginning in September!

**Jane Foley:** This year, I will be attending the Professional Days of the AUUA (Association of UU Administrators) at General Assembly starting June 19, returning to the office on Tuesday, June 26. At that time, my reduced summer hours begin. I will be working 20 hours per week, Monday through Thursday from 9am to 2pm through August 16. The office will be closed on Fridays.

**A Note from Rip Jackson**  
**Director of Music**

**Bob Coughlin:** I will be on vacation the week of July 1 through 7. Beginning on Sunday, July 8, I will be off every Sunday through August 26. I will continue to have Wednesdays and Saturdays off as usual. I return to my regular schedule (Sunday through Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday) beginning the week of September 2.

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Thank you again from the bottom of my heart to everyone who worked on Missa Gaia both on stage and behind the scenes! I am still in awe the performances! Many people from our church put so much effort into this project and it showed! Your talent, creativity, time, and spirit shined brightly in our celebration of Mother Earth!! Friday night was nearly full and Saturday evening was sold out with lines of people turned away. The audiences on both nights were blown away and gave the performers standing ovations! Blessings to Mother Earth!

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**Choir Start Dates**

After a period of rest this summer, the music program at First Parish will start up again in September. The sanctuary choir will resume rehearsing on Wednesday, September 5th and the children's choir will start up on Sunday, September 16th. More information will be in the fall issue of the Focalpoint.

**A Note from Lisa Maria Steinberg**  
**Director of Lifespan Religious Education**



I am excited to share with you that I have been nominated to serve on the continental LREDA Board!

LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association) is the professional association for Unitarian Universalist religious educators in the United States and Canada. I will be attending Board Meetings and Professional Day for LREDA in mid June in Kansas City where I will be voted into the position of At-Large Member with the portfolio of Leadership Development. Rev. Anne has been supportive of me accepting this volunteer role, as part of my professional development.

Through my service, I will have opportunity to grow professionally as well as raise the profile of First Parish in Lexington in the wider UU world. The LREDA Board currently has a focus, in partnership with other UU-related organizations, on dismantling white supremacy and the patriarchy in our faith. I look forward to sharing with First Parish in Lexington current trends and best practices in justice work and religious education- two areas that are closely tied in the life of churches.

To make time for this important position, I will be stepping away from my roles on the LREDA Endowment Committee, and the New England Chapter of LREDA's Executive Team. I am honored that my work as a religious professional and a leader amongst my colleagues has been recognized and I will have the opportunity to continue to be put to good use in service to my colleagues.

## Transition to Family Ministry For Lisa Maria Steinberg

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In response to ideas shared at the Imagination Cafés this year, which highlighted First Parish’s commitment and interest in becoming a community that directs resources to multigenerational engagement and to supporting youth, we are taking steps in the next year to transition Lisa Maria’s position to be one focused on Family Ministry instead of Religious Education Programs across the Lifespan.

The key difference is that Family Ministry holds an emphasis on building relational connections with families - both with and without children - with attention to creating multigenerational opportunities in all ministries of the church. By approaching her work through a lens of family ministry, Lisa Maria will be better positioned to support the building of connections between families with young children and other families in the congregation (whether you are a family of one adult or more), as well as connections between youth and adults in the congregation.

Two additions to Lisa Maria’s work next year will see her personally leading the Coming of Age program for our youth, as well as leading a parent group to support them in being the primary religious educators for their children. While Lisa Maria will be stepping back from organizing some of our adult programs, she will continue to support and lead multigenerational opportunities for connection, spiritual growth, and faith development.

