



Weekly Update Wednesday, December 12, 2018 First Parish in Lexington

Worship Service at 10:30 AM

Sunday, December 16, 2018

"Temple of Leaves, Church of Grass"



Please join us this Sunday when we welcome guests Sven Hansen and Aboud Agha, who are traveling here from the Midwest. Sven will share poetry of Walt Whitman, which travels through many emotions and ideas—until it reaches Whitman's ultimate vision of unity and the universality that lies within the diversity of humankind. The morning begins and ends with a deep and inspiring musical performance on the Oud (Middle Eastern lute) by master player Aboud Agha, that utilizes Near Eastern melodies and grooves. The unique sound of this instrument is the perfect compliment to Whitman's poetry.

There will be Sunday school classes for grades Pre-K through eight. The nursery will be open for infants and toddlers.

Sven Hansen is a health and wellness practitioner who was born to Norwegian immigrants in the American Midwest, where he raised four children and still owns a greenhouse and florist shop. Sven has lived and studied in Norway and India, and is a yoga teacher and sound healer. He is certified in several healing methods and is a meditation instructor with over 20,000 hours experience in meditation and yoga practice. He also plays tabla and percussion in the band MahaRa. Sven has studied Vedic science and holds a degree in world literature from Maharishi International University in Fairfield, Iowa.

Aboud Agha, who grew up in Lexington, is a PhD candidate in ethnomusicology at UCLA, teaching and performing world music throughout the country. He is a master performer of the Oud (Middle Eastern lute) as well several vocal and instrumental styles from the Arab world. Aboud's music flows directly from the heart, is often deeply introspective and with a rich spiritual flavor. He has conducted music workshops and seminars throughout the U.S and Canada and performed at prestigious venues like the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington DC, Sanders Theater at Harvard University, and the Berklee Performance Center in Boston.

[Click Here](#) to listen to last week's sermon by Rev. Anne Mason, "In the Presence of Light."

Holiday Workshop a Success!

Thank you to the over 100 people who participated in Saturday's Holiday Workshop. Cookies, crafts, ornaments, toys, and holiday decor were created. Sixty holiday bags were filled with small toiletries, warm socks, hand-knit washcloths with fragrant soaps, and hand-decorated boxes filled with cookies and candy, and on Tuesday they were delivered to families who are supported through the UU Urban Ministry at Renewal House. And to top it off, almost \$1,000 in gift cards were donated for the International Immigrants of New England organization!

Big thank you to organizers Dori Reuss, Marty Kvaal, Debbie Armstrong, Joanne Poage, Deb Lapides, and Brenda Prusak.

Update on Special Plate Collection



More money was donated for December's special plate collection, and just over \$1,800 will be split between our neighbors and friends at Temple Emunah and Temple Isaiah. These funds will help the Temples offset the expenses needed to secure their buildings.

Thank you for your generosity!

"A Christmas Carol"

Please come! The annual reading of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* will take place on **Sunday, December 16th at 4:00pm**. Dan Fenn will read this classic tale by the roaring fire in Parker Hall. Refreshments will be served. Please invite friends and families to this all-ages event.

"Marley was dead, to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it."



Climate Action Team

Keep your holidays green! The Climate Action Team reminds you that it's not too late to give the gift of a more-sustainable Earth. As you celebrate this festive season, remember:

- You can reduce the amount of energy you use by opting for LED lights over incandescent bulbs and by turning off lighted decorations during the day and as you go to bed.
- You can save paper and reduce use of fossil fuels by sending your holiday greetings as e-cards rather than through the mail.
- You can lower your carbon footprint by walking between local shops to select gifts already in inventory rather than having online purchases boxed and shipped to your door.
- You can reduce landfill waste by selecting recyclable rechargeable batteries over alkaline batteries.
- You can cut down on waste by making your own gift wrap from cloth and other materials you already have and saving the store-bought wrapping paper you receive to use next year.
- You can reduce pollution by limiting the number of fires you light, and you can save energy by closing the damper once the fire is completely out.



Most importantly, we should all remember the words of the great philosopher Dr. Suess, who observed that Christmas can come without packages, boxes, or bags. Handmade gifts, baked goods, carol singing, and hugs all carry great holiday impact with low impact to the environment.

The Senate Committee on Global Warming and Climate Change will conduct an important oversight hearing with testimony from key experts and advocacy organizations on **Tuesday, December 18 at 11:00 am** on room 428 of the statehouse. If you are interested in attending, please email Bob Kvaal at bkvaal@gmail.com.

Winter Solstice Experience

On **Friday, December 21**, First Parish in Lexington will present a Winter Solstice Experience at 7:00 pm. With music, ritual, candles, dancing and darkness, we will experience the quiet of the longest night, and welcome the sun as we wait for her return. Led by Rev. Anne Mason and Music Director Rip Jackson, this will be a worship service exploring earth-centered imagery, with an invitation to cherish the darkness. You are invited to set aside your frenetic everyday concerns and take this hour for your own inward journey. The Solstice is honored by indigenous religions around the world and we will have music, dance and poetry which honor many traditions. The interfaith sacred dance group Skyloom will offer two dances as they bring light into our shared space. We are honored to also present Don Alberto Taxo, who is a Master Iachak from the Andes of Ecuador, a high-ranking shaman or medicine man, recognized for this highest honor by the Shamanic Council of South America. He is an elder of the Pre-Incan Kichwa, one of the many indigenous peoples of Ecuador, who teaches how to develop an intimate relationship with the elements of nature with a view to receiving their gifts of power and support in daily life. A diverse group of musicians will provide beautiful Solstice-themed music including soprano sax, vocal soloists, string bass, piano, organ, electronic synthesizer, rain stick, gong, Tibetan singing bowl and other atmospheric musical instruments. They will sing music from diverse genres including music by Hildegard Von Bingen, Paul Winter, Loreena McKennitt and original music by Rip Jackson. Also participating will be Lisa Maria Steinberg, Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry, with other youth and adult volunteers. Free and open to the public parking is in the rear of the church. For more information call 781-862-8200 or visit www.fplex.org.



Adult Program Offering



"Since What We Choose" — A Course on Ethics

Offered by Rev. Anne Mason

Thursdays, January 17, 24, 31, and February 7

Before we need to make a choice in the midst of crisis, wouldn't it be better to take time to explore what our ethical positions are, how we arrived at them, and what decisions we make because of them? Unitarian Universalism is grounded in the understanding that our actions speak louder than our words or beliefs. Faithful living for us includes discerning the course of action that best reflects our beliefs and values and then acting or choosing accordingly. To do this we engage in ethical reflection so that we can live in a way that truly reflects our values.

In this four-week course, Rev. Anne will offer an opportunity to examine ethical concepts, work through ethical dilemmas as presented in exercises, identify areas for further questions and exploration, and perhaps more fully embrace ethical positions we reach through careful discernment. This curriculum is taken from the ten-week UUA Tapestry of Faith program, the rest of which we could offer at another time.

The course will be given on four Thursdays, January 17–Feb 7, either in the afternoon or the evening. Please sign up and indicate your preference at the piano starting this Sunday, December 2, or online at www.bit.ly/WhatWeChoose.

Notecards for Sale

Now on sale during social hour and at the office are notecards of First Parish's Memorial Garden. Thank you to Margaret Brooke for the thoughtful idea of creating cards specifically for First Parish, and to Helen Lutton Cohen for the beautiful watercolor painting.

Margaret is selling the cards during social hour, with proceeds going to the church. The cost is \$10 for a pack of 8.



Calling All Artists



Attention all First Parish artists! We encourage you to be thinking about entering a piece of your work for the first exhibit of our revamped gallery in Parish Hall starting in mid January. More details will follow. For more information, contact one of these members of the Art Committee:

Margie Gibbons, Maureen Bovet, Carolyn Fleiss, Lew Counts.



First Parish is an accredited Green Sanctuary and a Welcoming Congregation.

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First Parish in Lexington
7 Harrington Road, Lexington, MA 02421
781-862-8200/fplex.org

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Please email submissions or inquiries to admin@fplex.org.

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