

THE FOCALPOINT

FIRST PARISH IN LEXINGTON

FALL 2019

From Your Minister: Lessons from Nola

This summer my dog, Nola, has taught me many things. She spends most of her waning years either sitting as close to me or Simon as she can, or snoring gently on her bed. Yet in-between those moments, she has shared these tidbits of wisdom, which I think she'd appreciate my passing along to you.

1. Look for every crumb of deliciousness, wherever it may land.
2. Appreciate each morsel, sniff the breeze purposefully, and watch carefully for rabbits. Only chase them if you feel like it.
3. Life is too short to chase rabbits.
4. Accept your lessening abilities with grace. Know that there are some things which simply cannot be done. Trust others to do what you cannot do alone.
5. Bring a loving heart into every conflicted moment of life.
6. Comfort those who suffer simply by sitting nearby and being ready to listen. Pant if you must.

My friends, this has been a summer of frustration and anger with the growing language of hatred all around us. Our work ahead is clear - we must not only proclaim our message of love and understanding to those around us, but we must choose to live our UU values. We will work together to dismantle the systems of oppression in our society. We will strive to lower our carbon footprint and affect legislation to slow the climate change emergency. And together we will strengthen the bonds of this loving community by helping each other and opening wide our circle of love and welcome.

If any of Nola's teachings resonate with you, I hope that we can meet, dog-lovers or not, at the point of love and comfort as we work together to bring respect and radical hospitality into this weary world.

I am looking forward to our fall together. There are many new programs and opportunities awaiting us all. So get ready to dive in, savor your delicious morsels, and let's commit to another fulfilling year in beloved community.

In faith,

Rev. Anne

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Ingathering Sunday

**September 8th at
10:30am**

In celebration of a First Parish tradition, please bring water from your summer travels, whether from across the country or your own back yard.

Sanctuary Choir



Music is an important part of our worship, and our Adult Choir sings at most Sunday services from September through June. Choir rehearsals at First Parish Church will start on the Wednesday after Labor Day, September 4th. We rehearse from 7:30-9:30 on Wednesdays and sing on Sunday mornings at the 10:30 service. The Sanctuary Choir also takes part in the annual Candlelight Services on Christmas Eve, and plays a lead role in two exciting and creative concerts each year. If you would like to try us out, please feel free to start coming to our fun and inspiring rehearsals. We sing music from a huge variety of genres. All are welcome!

Start-up Dates

Wednesday, September 4, 7:30-9:30 PM – weekly choir rehearsals resume

Saturday, September 7 — Retreat with guest artists Elise Witt (has sung with Bobby McFerrin) and guests. Rehearsal 2:30-6; dinner break; then 7:30 concert

Sunday, September 8, 9:30 AM – Weekly Sunday services resume

Welcome Nate Ramsayer



We are excited to announce that Nate Ramsayer will be First Parish's new Tenor soloist! Nate Ramsayer hails from the gorgeous (but cold!) land of northern Minnesota. Now a professional singer in the Boston area, Nate performs regularly with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Boston Pops. As a freelance artist he has sung backup for classical and Broadway greats such as Andrea Bocelli, Sarah Brightman, Audra McDonald, Heather Headley, and multiple tours for Josh Groban. He has also performed as a singer for the international tours

of *The Legend of Zelda: Symphony of the Goddesses*, *Game of Thrones: Live Concert Experience*, and *Star Wars: In Concert*. An avid lover of musical theater, Nate has been a part of seven productions of the show *Les Misérables* in the Boston area—landing DASH Award nominations for Best Supporting Actor twice (roles of Enjolras and Marius); he now serves nationally as a consultant for *Les Mis* productions. Other recent shows include Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, *Into the Woods*, *Bonnie & Clyde*, and three productions of Disney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR OUR 2019-2020 CONCERT SERIES

Natural Rhythms
With Elise Witt, Terry Garthwaite and Becky Reardon
First Parish Sanctuary Choir
Saturday, September 7, 2019 at 7:30 PM
Free Will Offering

Imagine Janis Joplin, Joan Baez, Annie Ross and Edith Piaf taking a turn from Barbara Kingsolver and Dr. Seuss and you'll have some idea of these mad and moving musical adventures! Whether it's a plaintive cry for families at the border, a polyrhythmic improvisation on the physics of sound, an anthem to the preservation of wild rivers and oceans, or a musical ride on the love train, Terry, Becky & Elise cook from the minute they hit the stage. Bringing three radically different voices to the blend, their voices find each other in that mysterious world of harmony in diversity. The trio's concerts are also famous for getting the audience singing, and even self-professed "non-singers" find themselves part of an Impromptu Glorious Chorus.

Elise Witt, who has sung with Bobby McFerrin, along with Terry Garthwaite and Becky Reardon, will also collaborate with Rip Jackson and the First Parish sanctuary choir during part of the concert. A free will offering will be taken to defray concert costs. For more information call the church at 781-862-8200 or visit www.fplex.org.

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Julia Jaffe Solo Concert

Sunday, October 6, 2019 at 3:30 PM

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Fall Concert - Andrew Lloyd Webber Celebration

Sunday, November 10, 2019 at 3:30 PM

First Parish Children's and Sanctuary Choirs

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Spring Concert - Peace Concert

Saturday, May 2, 2020 at 7:30 PM (UU Urban Ministry, Roxbury)

Sunday, May 3, 2020 at 3:30 PM (First Parish)

First Parish Children's and Sanctuary Choirs  
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Children's Choir Rehearsals Begin September 16th

Beginning on Sunday, September 15, the First Parish Children's Choir will meet on Sunday mornings from 11:45 to 12:45 in the Yellow Room (downstairs). They will sing in the morning church services every 6 weeks or so. They will also sing on Christmas Eve, Easter and in both the Fall and Spring concerts at the church.

To contact Rip Jackson, email music@fplex.org or call 781-862-8200 x4

News from Lisa Maria Steinberg, Director of Religious Education & Family Ministry

Happy September!

Whether you are a new or returning family to First Parish, I extend to you a warm welcome. Below are all the details about programming for this year, and links for returning families (update/registration) and new families (enrollment/registration).

If you are a returning family to First Parish with children or youth from birth to grade 12, please fill out this Family Update Form located at <https://bit.ly/2KWp5dR>

If you are brand new to First Parish, or you are a returning family have a new grandchild or other special young person occasionally attending on Sundays with you, please fill out our Family Enrollment Form located at <https://bit.ly/343g5Lt>

What does programming look like this year?

For preK-8th Grade:

PreK-2nd Graders will depart earlier in the service for the Primary Class with our Staff Teacher, Annelie Nygren-Mitchell, returning for her third year with us. 3rd-8th graders will depart later in the service, with 3rd-5th graders meeting with our Staff Teacher John Roop, and our 6th-8th graders meeting with me. All classes will utilize age-appropriate lessons from the Soul Matters curriculum to work with our monthly themes and topics in worship. About once a month, we'll have an All Ages Worship Service.

For Junior High:

JHYG, 6th-8th Grades, will meet three times during the church year- fall, winter, spring- for Youth Group activities, two of which will be social justice in focus.

For High School:

SHYG will continue to meet on Sunday evenings 7:00-9:00, led by John Roop our Youth Coordinator and our volunteer advisors. SHYG will meet most Sunday evenings. If you are interested in working with our youth as a volunteer- please contact me or John!

Coming of Age for 9th and 10th Grade will be led by me and volunteer mentors. The group will meet once a month on Sunday's after service, and once a month on a weekday afternoon/evening (TBA). Contact me for more information!

Our Whole Lives

We will be offering Our Whole Lives, the Unitarian Universalist Association's comprehensive sexuality health education program, for both 7th/8th Graders and 4th/5th Graders this year.

7th/8th Grade OWL will have an info session on Sunday, September 15th at 12:00, and the Mandatory Orientation is on Friday September 20th at 6:00. Sessions begin on Sunday September 29 4:00-6:00, and continue on most Sundays until April 5, and there will be two Saturday retreats, one in January and one in March.

4th/5th Grade OWL will run from January 12th through April 5th, except for MLK weekend and February vacation adjacent Sundays. Mandatory Orientation on Friday January 3rd at 6:00, Info Session in December TBA.

Parents' Group

Our Parents' Group will continue this year. It is an opportunity to meet with other parents at First Parish to learn more together about parenting from a UU perspective, ways to enrich your children and youth's spiritual lives at home.

Our first meeting will be on September 22nd at 11:45-12:45. If you need childcare to attend, please contact me so arrangements can be made.



To contact Lisa Maria Steinberg, email dre@fplex.org or call 781-862-8200 x3

To contact John Roop, email youth@fplex.org

Care to Join Us?

Soul Matters

One of the most important ways that we connect with each other here at First Parish is through our small group ministry. In groups of 10, we meet with a facilitator once a month to explore our curriculum called "Soul Matters." This has been a meaningful way for people to explore themes of spirituality and personal growth using material that is crowd-sourced by Unitarian Universalists across the country. Our worship service themes are also based on this material, as is our Sunday morning faith development. Are you curious to learn more about this program? Would you like to participate?

Please be in touch with Rev. Anne who will try to connect you with an existing group or start a new one! Our themes this year ask what it would mean to be a people of....'Expectation, Belonging, Attention, Awe....' etc. Please consider joining this important part of our Parish life.

Unity Group

Women of all ages are welcome to come to the Unity Group! We meet on the second Monday of each month except for the first meeting of autumn, this year on October 7th, in Parker Hall from October to May. We gather at noon to socialize before lunch at 12:30pm, and a program at 1:30pm. Bring a bag lunch, we provide beverages and dessert.

The Unity Group is a women's organization created from a merger of First Parish Alliance and the Lend-A-Hand Society. The purpose of the Unity Group is to provide companionship and mutual support for its members, sponsor programs of interest to women, raise money for charitable purposes, and serve the larger community.

Please join us as we start our new year! Contact Jan Bjorklund for info at jmborkl@aol.com

Thursday Afternoon Meditation Group

As the earth turns toward the golden hues of autumn, consider joining a small group of fellow wanderers who gather on Thursday afternoons in the Parlor for candlelit meditation, quiet conversation, and shared reflection. This is a drop-in group with no long term commitment; just come on the days when your schedule allows and your spirit moves. We meet each week from 4:00-5:00 which includes quiet meditation for 30 minutes, a brief reading offered voluntarily, and time for conversation. If no one brings a reading, there are books available so a passage may be chosen by those present.

Please join us for this time of silence and contemplation. Meditation will begin at 4:05, but if you arrive later just slip in quietly and find a place to sit. There always will be open chairs for those who wish to come. Please direct questions to Dori Reuss at bdreuss@earthlink.net

Upcoming Events—Save the Dates

Small Group Potluck Dinners

Beginning Sunday, September 8, sign up at the piano in Parish Hall after church for the fall series of our popular Small Group Potluck Dinners.

Those who sign up are assigned to one of several groups of 8-12 people who gather for a potluck dinner in a member's home on a weekday or weekend evening once a month for four months. The dinners are a great way for newcomers to get acquainted with others in the church.

Sign-ups continue through September 30. The small groups will be formed in October and will run through January. Contact Linda Coyne for more information.

Great Fall Auction November 16th

The Great Fall Auction -- an amazingly fun church-wide event and important fundraiser for the church -- will be on Saturday, November 16th, at the church. The evening includes a silent auction (from 6-7:30 PM), a live auction (starting at 7:30 PM), highly entertaining guest auctioneers, and food and beverages.

There are an assortment of opportunities to help with the auction, including helping with food and beverages, setup, logistics during the auction, and cleanup.

Stay tuned for more information on the auction. See you on November 16th!

Want to help at the Interfaith Garden this fall?

The Garden is in full production as we enter the fall. First Parish has several openings for volunteers to garden before the Garden wraps up its season at the end of October. It's fun; the weather is cooler; and no experience is necessary. Children over 5 are welcome. Community service hours are available for high schoolers.

Please email Marty Kvaal at kvaalm@gmail.com.



Memorial Garden Service

The annual Memorial Garden Service will take place on Sunday, October 6 at noon. This year we will be remembering, in word and song and prayer, the following former parishioners:

Elizabeth Kennedy Knuth, M.D.
(mother of Mary Knuth)

Naji P. Maloof
(brother of Mouna Anderson)

The Green Action Corner
News & Action from the
Climate Action Team (CAT)



This fall the First Parish Climate Action Team (CAT) invites you join its

2019 Planet for the Children Initiative.

by participating in these actions (details will appear in the FP Weekly Update):

Sunday September 15—make or renew your climate action pledge. Come to the CAT table after worship and select action that will make a difference. If you made a pledge last February to plan to take your next step---an electric car? --New eating habits? this will be an ideal time for you to decide what you will do next.

Friday, September 20—support the Global Climate Strike (www.globalclimatestrike.net) by Lexington High School Students from 10:00am to 11:00am on the Lexington High School football field. Please confirm your attendance at <http://bit.ly/LexStrikeRSVP>. CAT members have been working in support of this student-lead effort and more help will be needed in the coming weeks.

Sunday October 6th—Climate Change Legislative Action Post Card Campaign. Join us for this well focus action taken in cooperation with UUMass Action and MassPowerForward.

CAT continues to work to make First Parish's building and grounds energy neutral and our daily operations totally recyclable and compostable. Please join us in these efforts.

CAT Meetings this fall:

Monday September 9th. 7 pm at FP

Tuesday October 15. 7 pm at FP

Tuesday November 12. 7 pm at FP

Words to Move the Spirit

"You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make." -- Jane Goodall

"The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything." -- Albert Einstein

First Parish Lexington Social Hour Host List

September 2019 to January 2020

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. 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 (or posted in the kitchenette). The table below lists your invitations for this fall and early winter. Please find your name, mark your calendar and save this list for future reference.

Date	Lead Host	Invitees
9/8	Fleiss, C	Fleiss, D, D'Andrea, L, Egan, I
9/15	Eisenstein, K	Dahlbom, D, Eisenstein, R, Filletti, N & Gemelli, E
9/22	Falkowski, M	Erickson, P & Flentje, A, Falkowski, J
9/29	Gibbons, M	French, J, Gibbons, B, Goodell, T & Goodell, C
10/6	Goodell, N	Griffiths T, & Trudeau, J, Goodell, K
10/13	Lapides, D	Gross, J & Matthews, S, Hardiman, V
10/20	Jobling, R	Hartmann, L, Heghinian-Walzer, S & Boutaud, F
10/27	Herrick, K	Herrick, B, Hess C & Aliber, J
11/3	Noe, C	Hopkinson, R, Horton, D, Hylek, E
11/10	Howell, J	Howell, A, Jackson, M, Jacobson, T
11/17	Jamison, A	Jameson, M, Keenan, C, Koch, J
11/24	Khudari, A	Khudari, O, Knuth, M, Cole, J
12/1	Kvaal, M	Kvaal, B, MacClary, M, McGrail, K
12/8	Kvaal, A	Kvaal, A, Mannix, S & Wanderer, T,
12/15	Meharry, M	McKenney, B & McKenney, J, Meharry, D.
12/22	Morse-Fortier, L	Moffatt, P, Morse-Fortier, S, Murray, C
12/29	Hodson, R	Mulready-Shick, J & Shick, S, Muscolo, G,
1/5	Oberteuffer, J	Myer, A & Myer, D, Newhouse, M
1/12	O'Brien, R	O'Brien, J, O'Hare-Gibson, R & O'Hare-Gibson, K
1/19	Fox, M	Fortin, M & Fortin D, Giauque, A
1/26	Guo, V	O'Connor, S, Olson, M, Ostrander, L

Voices on the Green



Voices on the Green, the First Parish community series that features stories and music on a theme of personal, social, or spiritual interest, will present its first of three programs this year on Friday night, October 18, from 7-9 p.m. at the church. The theme is: “Belonging.”

“If you have a personal story you would like to tell inspired by this theme, please contact David Rose <drose@cast.org>, or catch him at coffee hour, to discuss with him what you would like to talk about, or to learn how the program works. Voices on the Green is entering its third year – with average attendance now of 200 people - and is an exciting way to help the congregation get to know one another and to reach out to the larger community. It provides us all an opportunity to explore and share our values. It includes refreshments and general conversation and a program for children. So: Please Speak Up!

Details about the evening schedule and tickets will appear in an upcoming Weekly Update. The VOG committee also invites you to bring food or to usher. The other dates for this year are Friday, February 7th, and Friday, April 10th.

Buildings & Grounds Update

Although summer is a quieter time for the church, it's a perfect opportunity for Building and Grounds to get big projects done! When you return to church, take a look at the shining, newly re-finished floor in Parish Hall. Check out the polished floors and washed carpets around the building that Bob has restored. Subtle as it may be, notice the new lighting around the church that Lew Counts has upgraded. And marvel at the newly-painted front doors—inside and out—thanks again to Lew Counts. Always appreciated is the ongoing upkeep of the kitchen by the kitchen team: Amy Breiting, Carolyn Fleiss, Marty Kvaal, and Sara Mannix.

In process, but not yet completed, is the repair of the porte-cochere (hit by a truck exiting the lot—again!), completing the roofing over the parlor, installing a new window in the steeple, improving the efficiency of the parking lot lighting, and installing the remaining interior storm windows in the sanctuary.

You will also notice a change at coffee hour: the Climate Action Team has been making the move to all-compostable “glassware”, “silverware” and plates, so look forward to eating on and with utensils that will be re-purposed into compost! Stay tuned for more information from this team.

The Building and Grounds team needs you! Please consider lending a hand in keeping our church functioning well. This is a team that does things, and we can use your talents.

Thank you!

Toni Tasker, Chair

Building and Grounds

Art Committee Update

Are you interested in joining the Art Committee at First Parish? We welcome all in the FP community to attend our meetings and see if you'd like to join our team.

What do we do? We offer inclusive opportunities to display art in Parish Hall created by our members and friends. Rotating exhibits hung by the Art Committee inspire, start conversations, celebrate creativity, and bring us together through sharing perhaps unseen parts of who we are.

Upcoming meetings — from 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm in the Parlor:

Sunday, October 13, 2019
Sunday, December 1, 2019
Sunday, February 2, 2020
Sunday, April 26, 2020
Sunday, June 14, 2020

For more information, please contact Maureen Bovet at mwbovet@aol.com.

Gallery News

Barbara Hills

September 8 - November 3, 2019

Reception is Sunday, October 6, 4:30- 5:30 after Julia Jaffe's concert

"I have enjoyed drawing and painting all my life. Although I did not attend art school, I did take classes at the Albright Museum in Buffalo. After I moved to the Boston area, I took classes at the Cambridge Center for Adult Education, the De Cordova Museum, and the Lexington Arts and Crafts Society. I have also taken workshops with various artists, including Robert Douglas Hunter and Connie Pratt.

There are always challenges and something new to learn and explore...currently I'm exploring watercolor with Linda Dunn out here at Carleton-Willard. I just keep going." ~Barbara Hills



An Open Call for Art Created by Children in the FP Community



Imagine the gallery walls in Parish Hall filled with children's art — created over the years by the youth at First Parish. Do you have anything to share? Art created last week? Last year? Last decade? We want it! It can be framed or unframed; we can mat it for you — just bring in what you have. We hope to include as many of our young artists as we can, including art created by FP youth from years gone by.

The Children's Art Exhibition will run from **November 10 through January 20** with a reception for the artists to follow the concert on **November 10**. **Work will be accepted October 13 - 27**. Stay tuned for more details.

Contact Carolyn Fleiss (carolynfleiss@gmail.com) or Margie Gibbons (gibbons5@rcn.com) for more information or with questions.



Contact Us

Contact us for more information about our services and programs.

First Parish in Lexington

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Lexington, MA 02421
781-862-8200
admin@fplex.org

Visit us on the web at
www.fplex.org

On Facebook & Instagram
@fplex

LOVE...SEEK...SERVE

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PLACE
STAMP
HERE