

THE FOCALPOINT

FIRST PARISH IN LEXINGTON
UNITARIAN  UNIVERSALIST

October 2017 – What Does It Mean to be a Community of Courage?

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Deadline for November issue: Monday, October 23rd

Worship Services for October
What Does it Mean to be a Community of Courage?

October 1, Rev. Anne Mason
"If Not Now, When?"

Every day people are being challenged to look beyond the safety of their own private world, and pay attention the experience of our companions on the journey. Here at First Parish the scaffolding is coming down from our steeple. What will this newly restored icon mean for us and for our community in the months to come?

October 1
Memorial Garden Service

All are invited to a short Memorial Garden service at noon to dedicate new memorial bricks and to honor our loved ones who are no longer present on earth, but who live on in our hearts and memories. Weather permitting, the service will be in the Memorial Garden, which has been maintained over the summer by the Memorial Garden Committee and a group of faithful volunteers.

October 8, Rev. Anne Mason
"Brave Space"

In these days of cultural change and volatility, we realize that in this world of ours, we all carry scars and we have all caused wounds. Instead of seeking 'safe space', let us consider creating 'brave space' where, as Micky ScottBey Jones calls us to do, we can amplify voices that fight to be heard elsewhere, and call each other to more truth and more love.

All services begin a 10:30am in the Sanctuary.

Worship Services for October
What Does it Mean to be a Community of Courage?

October 15, Peter Bowden
"Friendship in the Digital Age"

Today people are more "connected" than ever thanks to smart phones, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media. Yet American's are statistically some of the loneliest people on Earth! In this talk Peter Bowden, a Unitarian Universalist and popular speaker on digital life, community building, and spirituality, will share how we can bridge our online and offline communities, better welcome people into the heart of our congregation, and bring our values more fully into the world.

October 22, Rev. Anne Mason
"Nailed It"

500 years ago in October, Martin Luther spoke truth to power. In protest, this monk nailed 99 theses on the door of the Wittenburg Castle Church, articulating what he believed the Catholic Church was doing wrong by selling indulgences. Today we celebrate the legacy of his courageous act which began the Protestant Reformation, and explore how this is still important for us as heirs of a faith which asks us to question authority and find a true religious path.

October 29
Lisa Maria Steinberg, DLRE & Cammy Thomas
All Souls' Day

In this all ages worship service, we will observe All Souls' Day acknowledging the gifts we receive in life from our parents, teachers, spouses, friends, heroes, and what gifts we have to give. What gifts have you received? What do you hope to share?

**The Reverend Anne Mason
Minister**

From Your Minister

This month we explore together what it means to be a people of courage. For 325 years we have been a congregation in the center of Lexington. Forged in the crucible of the American Revolution, we have withstood the test of time and are still here, speaking truth to power. We will be celebrating our history this fall, examining the stances, the theology, and the actions we have taken as a congregation. We will also be taking time to explore who we are as individual members of this church. How do we speak truth to power in our own lives?

In a world which is becoming more and more divisive, we must pay attention to not only the grand sweep of history and the role of our church in matters of state - we must pay attention to our own hearts, our own lives, and our own actions. As our Soul Matters curriculum encourages us this month: "Battling evil and bending the arc of the universe toward justice deserves praise, but there's also the ordinary work of integrity and not allowing yourself to be bent."

If we can find a way to persevere and hold fast to the truths we know— truths of justice and kindness and equal treatment for all, perhaps we will find ourselves standing straighter and resisting the racist and oppressive language which is filling our airwaves. Perhaps we will find the courage to explore how we have been a part of the problem, and take steps to change ourselves so that we can continue to speak truth to power. As Cornell West says: "Justice is what love looks like in public." Let us take the love we experience here in this congregation into the world, and work for justice in all that we do.

In faith,
Rev. Anne



**A Note from the Board
Katie O'Hare Gibson and David Rose, co-chairs**

Happy New Year! It is a new church year for First Parish, and your Board is looking forward to an exciting year ahead in our ministry. All members of the Board have been reading *Governance and Ministry* by Dan Hotchkiss. Dan met with the Board last year, and his consultation with us resulted in our plan for the VERY successful Phase One of our Capital Campaign. We are excited to be working with him again this year, as he helps us continue to refine our identity as a church and our vision for the future.

Many of us on the Board were on the Ministerial Search committee or the Transition Team, and we look forward to furthering our work with the congregation that started two years ago. We will be engaging you, the congregation, in conversations to help the church focus its energy toward actions that will meet the needs of our current and future members, and of the greater community. Please look for more information in the coming months about how you can lift your voice and vision to help us articulate who we are and what we stand for, then align our actions to that mission.

Keep an eye on the Board reports in the Weekly Updates and Focalpoint to learn about how you can help First Parish Lexington in serving our community.

In Faith,

Katie O'Hare Gibson and David Rose, on behalf of the First Parish Lexington Board

BOARD

Adult Programs

Come out on October 5th at 7:00pm for the first in our UU History movie series! Popcorn and fun await you, and after the movie there will be a discussion facilitated by Rev. Anne Mason and Lisa Maria Steinberg.

We are also putting together a Sunday morning series from 9:00am to 10:15am to engage with current events, TED talks, podcasts, and other emerging ideas that speak to the spiritual paths we walk together. We are looking for facilitators! If you are interested, please contact Lisa Maria Steinberg. Training for facilitators will be provided.

We are continuing Chalice Circles, our Small Group Ministry. This is a great way to develop deeper connections with the members and friends of First Parish and to dive deeper into how our monthly themes inform us as a community while supporting you on your personal spiritual journey. If you are not currently in a Chalice Circle and wish to be, contact Lisa Maria Steinberg.

For information on other Adult Programs, including Meditation Groups, Non-Fiction Book Group, Creative Callings (Fiber Arts Group), and Affinity Groups (Over 80s Group, Unity Group), please contact Lisa Maria Steinberg.

New Spaces!

After a busy early September of floors being washed, rugs getting cleaned, and walls being painted, we are settling back into the church's lower-level spaces. A big thank you to Lew and Connee Counts for their generous donation to

furnish the Youth Room. We are making plans for all the spaces— the Primary Classroom in Staples Hall, the Adult Program Space in Robinson, and the Chapel Space in Robinson. We are still looking for large rugs and small circular rugs. Please be in touch if you have items like this.

Family Enrollment

Are you new to First Parish, or just not sure if you ever enrolled last year? For all families with children from birth to 12th grade, we ask for you to fill out a family enrollment form. Do your kids usually stay in the service with you? We'd still like to have the enrollment from your family just in case for a day they decide go to a program. Do you regularly (once a month or so?) bring a grandchild with you for the nursery or Sunday School?

Please fill out the enrollment form so we can best welcome your young person.



Music Sunday at First Parish

Sunday, November 5 at 10:30 AM

The music program at First Parish will be presenting a special "Music Sunday" celebration on Sunday morning, November 5th as part of the church's 325th anniversary year. The sanctuary choir with guest soloists and instrumentalists will sing diverse music celebrating the sacred spirit and lasting legacy of First Parish's outreach to the community through music. Music from diverse musical traditions will be presented as well as a new choral composition composed by our director of music Rip Jackson. For more information, visit www.fplex.org.

The Sarasa Ensemble Concerts

Last Sunday, the Sarasa Ensemble presented a terrific concert of Baroque music at First Parish. The event was well-attended and the group will be presenting 4 more concerts this year as well as playing instrumental music during worship at times. Mark your calendar for the next concert which is November 19th at 3:30 at First Parish. Sarasa's November program will offer a wonderful contrast of works that connect to our pious and secular natures and include music by Antonio Vivaldi, Arvo Pärt, Johann Heinrich Schmelzer, Dieterich Buxtehude and Franz Schubert.



The Great Fall Auction -- an amazingly fun church-wide event and important fundraiser for the church -- will be on Saturday, November 18th, 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. Contact Lisa Maria to reserve childcare.



To donate an item, email FallAuction@fplex.org.

Popular items include dinners and tastings hosted at parishioner's homes, stays at parishioner vacation homes, and hosted special events. Please make your donation by October 22nd.

To volunteer to help with the auction or if you have any questions, email FallAuction@fplex.org. 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 18th!

Tom Rich

On behalf of The Great Fall Auction team -- Toni and Pete Tasker, Margie and Bob Gibbons, and Tom Rich

Voices on the Green Opening Program

Voices on the Green was introduced last year as an opportunity for the congregation and the larger community to experience and reflect on important individual and community issues through story, music, and conversation. The theme of this year's opening program, which will be held on Saturday, October 28th, is "I Protest!" - a lively evening of local protest stories and songs, big and small, old and new.

Here's a taste of the variety we will hear that night. First Parish member Nancy Earsy will tell the story of her arrest in 1971 (along with 400 others) protesting the Viet Nam War right here on the Green. Bestor Cram, prominent PBS filmmaker, who was also there on the Green that day, will show archival film from that nationally famous protest that involved many Lexington and First Parish community members. Sam Berman, a long-time active and productive Lexington citizen, will recount the history of his role in the writing and first singing of "Charlie and the MTA," a protest song later made famous by the Kingston Trio.

First Parish member Suzanne Adams will tell us about leading her first (successful!) protest and changing school policy when she was in middle school, and Michelle Olsen will share the story of her transformation from Wall Street analyst to Minuteman Indivisible founder here in Lexington.

Music for "I Protest!" will be provided and led by Nick Page, the nationally-known UU musician, choral director, composer, author, and prophet who grew up here at First Parish and is currently director of the Mystic Choral. Welcome, Nick! The inimitable Regie O'Hare Gibson will host the evening. Plus other surprises.

Voices on the Green Opening Program

Our partner for the event will be Communities for Restorative Justice, an organization that works with criminal offenders and their victims to find ways for the offenders to provide some kind of meaningful recompense for the victims that will make the community whole again: an implicit protest against mass incarceration. The organization is a community-police partnership that includes Lexington and 16 surrounding communities.

Please see upcoming Weekly Updates and announcements to learn how you can reserve seats and support the evening. Proceeds will be shared by the church and our partner. There will be an intermission in the program for refreshments and conversation.



**Get Ready to Celebrate:
First Parish turns 325!**

In September's Focalpoint, there was an introduction to events being planned to celebrate the fact that First Parish and the Town of Lexington turn 325 this year! We will be exploring our history, honoring our tradition, and asking ourselves where are we going now? What do we want our church to be and to do as we continue our journey into the future? An adult education course begins on Thursday, October 5, with a curriculum on Unitarian Universalism, which will cover the sweep of our denominational history and provide a context for these events.

The major events of the celebration begin with a Music Service on November 5, led by Rip Jackson. An exhibition of historical documents will be mounted in the Parish Hall for the month of November through early December, and there will be a reception for the Exhibition on Thursday evening, November 9, from 5 to 9 p.m., featuring a Question and Answer session led by Lexington historian Sam Doran early in the evening and a lecture by Sam at 7:30, with refreshments.

On Thursday, November 16 in the evening, there will be a dialogue between George Washington and James Madison (represented by outstanding professional portrayers of these two founding fathers) on the issues of church and state—not to be missed!

On Sunday, December 3, Rev. Anne Mason will lead a worship of celebration. At 12:00pm, we will join together in a colonial-style lunch, catered by Chris Batemen of the Lexx restaurant. At 2:00, we will gather at the town belfry, where we will participate in a bell-ringing and litany, and

**Get Ready to Celebrate:
First Parish Turns 325!**

then process to the church for a 3:00 program featuring a dramatic presentation by Don Cohen of the events at the beginning of our history, with music and a brief overview of our history in these 325 years.

Please check the next three Focalpoints and the Weekly Updates for ongoing reports about these events, and for information about volunteering and sign-up sheets for events. And plan to shower your family and friends at the holidays with beautiful suncatchers featuring our First Parish newly renovated historic building!

Speak to any of the committee members with questions and suggestions: the Rev. Anne Mason, Lisa Maria Steinberg, Rip Jackson, Maureen Bovet, Lee Brami, Don Cohen, Helen Cohen, Anne Collins, Lew Counts, Tish Callanan, Dan Fenn, Polly Erickson, Amy Jamison, Elisabeth Jas, Bill Smith, Elaine Turano.



Update from the Ad Hoc Temporary Kitchen Committee

Now that church is back in full swing, our kitchens are in full use. The Ad Hoc Temporary Kitchen Committee is on the job to help assure that the kitchen/kitchenette are tidy and sanitary. We need the help of everyone in making this happen.

How you can help (whether you're cooking in the kitchen, eating something, drinking something, and/or storing food in the fridges/freezer)?

- Will YOU please: Wash the dishes, dry them, and put them away...all 3 steps. We often check on the kitchen/kitchenette to find dirty dishes in the sink and drying ones in the dish strainers. This means that someone other than the eater/drinker has to do the cleanup. That's usually us, and we don't like that.

US: We urge folks to use the bio scrubbers and the sturdy paper towels to both wash and dry. Gone are the germ factories called sponges and cloth dish towels.

- Will YOU please: Sanitize the counters, sinks, and table tops after use?

US: We will keep the kitchen/kitchenette stocked with sanitizer spray and paper towels.

- Will YOU please: Label any food/drink put in the fridges/freezers with your name, date.

US: We check this weekly. Unlabeled food gets tossed.

- Will YOU please: Keep oven and microwave and dumb waiter wiped clean.

US: If the users don't do it, we will have to.

Update from the Ad Hoc Temporary Kitchen Committee

The church has approved funds for a cleaning company to deep clean the kitchen/kitchenette 3-4 times each year. This is expensive. In between times, it's up to all of us. Let's help each other in keeping these much-used spaces tidy and sanitary.

Many thanks. And we welcome your questions and feedback.

Ad Hoc Temporary Kitchen Committee,

Amy Breiting
Carolyn Fleiss
Marty Kvaal
Sara Mannix



**Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities
at the UU Urban Ministry**

The Mendelsohn Lecture Series: "Passage at St. Augustine"
Documentary and Panel Discussion Featuring filmmaker
Clennon L. King and community activist Mimi Jones

Sunday, October 15, 2017 at 4PM

This compelling documentary tells the story of the violent and bloody civil rights campaign in deeply segregated St. Augustine, Florida that led to the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Following the film, Clennon L. King and Mimi Jones will lead a guided discussion that interrogates the questions: what is our civic engagement role in moving justice forward? While it can feel like we're slipping backwards on race issues, are there ways society is moving forward in a positive way? How do we maintain hope that things can change for the better? More about the film can be found here: www.passageatstaugustine.com Event is free and all are welcome. UU Urban Ministry 10 Putnam Street Roxbury, MA 02119 www.uuum.org

FAIR FOODS

Elaine Hylek will be organizing groups of volunteers to unload a food truck, package the food, and distribute the food to residents for \$2 per bag. This is a great opportunity for all of us to lend our support. Three Saturdays have now been assigned to First Parish Lexington from 10:30-2:30: Oct 28, Nov 18, and Dec 9. Please put these dates on your calendar. We need your help!! More information will be provided in the coming weeks.

All are welcome to the first Unity Group luncheon of the year on Monday, October 2nd at Noon! This gathering of (mostly) women (though men are welcome) meets on the second Monday of each month (excepting October) for socializing, lunch, and a program.

We've change it up a bit this year and are asking people to please bring your own sandwich or salad. Dessert will be shared. If your last name begins with J, M, or P, please bring in dessert to share on Monday.

This month's program is "*This is Who We Are!*" Would you be willing to tell us something about yourself? ...a memory from your childhood? ...a favorite pet? ...a special relationship? ...an adventure? It doesn't need to be happy; it can be happy, or sad, or even scary!

Please join us at noon in Parker Hall.

2017-2018 Schedule

November 13th—Cammy Thomas
December 11th—Christmas Readings
January 8th—Bill Blout, LYFS
February 12th—Book Exchange
March 12—Austin Burns
April 9th—TBD
May 14th—Planning for 2018-2019

Recurring Events

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, 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, 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, at 1:30 p.m.
Thursday Meditation, Thursdays, at 4:00 p.m.



Sunday, October 1st
Memorial Garden Service, 12:00pm, Garden
Monday, October 2nd
Unity Group Luncheon, 12:00pm, Parker Hall
Minuteman Indivisible Program, 7:00pm, Sanctuary
Tuesday, October 3rd
OWL Parent Orientation, 7:00pm, Parker Hall
Thursday, October 5th
UU History Adult Program, 7:00pm, Parish Hall
Saturday, October 7th
Memorial Service for Satt Oishi, 4:00pm, Sanctuary
Sunday, October 8th
Newcomer Drop In, 11:30am, Parlor
Thursday, October 12th
UU History Adult Program, 7:00pm, Parish Hall
Saturday, October 14th
Star Island Corporation, Council of Conferences Meeting,
10:00am, Parker Hall
Thursday, October 19th
UU History Adult Program, 7:00pm, Parish Hall
Friday, October 20th
Roaring Jelly Contra Dancing, 7:00pm, Parish Hall
Saturday, October 21st
Munroe Saturday Night, 7:00pm, Sanctuary
Sunday, October 22nd
Semi-Annual Meeting, 11:30am, Sanctuary
Tuesday, October 24th
80+ Luncheon, 12:30pm, Parker Hall
Thursday, October 26th
UU History Adult Program, 7:00pm, Parish Hall
Saturday, October 28th
Voices on the Green, 7:00pm, Sanctuary
Sunday, October 29th
Communities Without Borders Program, 12:00pm,
Parker Hall