

THE FOCALPOINT

FIRST PARISH IN LEXINGTON

FALL 2018

It is good to be back! After weeks of traveling to see friends and family, and some restorative time in my garden, it feels wonderful to be back in Lexington, getting ready for a meaningful fall with all of you. I am especially grateful for all the worship leaders who volunteered their creativity and experience to lead Sunday morning worship this summer. Attendance has doubled for our summer services, and from what I hear, everyone loved the interactive nature of Sunday worship. We are so fortunate to have so many incredible leaders in our congregation!

In spite of my excitement about returning to First Parish, I am aware that this has been a difficult summer for many of us. The high summer heat, the political drama, heightened racism and xenophobia, and the devastating stories of continued sexual abuse in the Catholic Church have challenged us morally, physically, and spiritually. It will be important for us to come together in community, to worship together and uplift those parts of our lives which give us hope. We need each other as we weather these storms together. It is my highest hope that we can model a way of being in community in which all people will feel welcome to be their unique and beautiful selves; that we will speak our truth in love; and that we will find new ways in which to engage in meaningful service to our community. Our religious expression of love for all beings is needed more now than ever!

In faith,

Rev. Anne

In This Issue

- Religious Education & Music News
- Memorial Services
- Save the Dates — Public Forum, Fall Potlucks, and The Great Fall Auction
- Climate Action Team
- Social Hour Host List
- Voices on the Green
- Restoration Project
- Thank you from Marianne DiBlasi
- SHYG Service Trip
- Interfaith Garden



Ingathering Service, Sunday, September 9th 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, for the Ingathering ceremony.

In celebration of a *new* First Parish tradition, please bring your swim suits and towels to slide into the new church year on a water slide after worship!

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

I am so excited to start my 4th year at First Parish with all our wonderful kids, youth, and families of all sizes (from families of one to families of many!).

Before we dive into this year, some bits of housekeeping.

If you are a returning family to First Parish with children or youth from birth to grade 12, please fill out the Family Update Form at <https://goo.gl/forms/eXj63IxCT4vQRLMB2>.

If you are brand new to First Parish, or you are a returning family with a new grandchild or other special young person occasionally attending on Sundays with you, please fill out our Family Enrollment Form at <http://goo.gl/forms/BLMw9A07Ro>

What does Sunday 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. We are so happy to have Annelie returning for a second year! I will continue to lead the 3rd-8th Graders for Chapel, with those kids departing later in the service. Both classes will utilize age-appropriate lessons from the Soul Matters curriculum with monthly themes and topics in worship. About once a month, we'll have an All Ages Worship Service.

For High School:

SHYG will continue to meet on Sunday evenings 7:00-9:00, led by Katie Camire, Youth Coordinator, and volunteer advisors. SHYG will meet about twice a month, and additionally have about one special activity or social justice activity a month. Here is the link to the calendar: <https://goo.gl/6mhSGe>

If you are interested in working with our youth as a volunteer please contact me or Katie!

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



We're Making a Labyrinth!

Mark your calendars now for this amazing All Ages event this Fall! On Saturdays September 29 and October 20 at 4:00-6:00, we'll gather together with Artist Educator Laura Evonne Steinman to learn about why people use labyrinths, and how to create our own! At the end of these two workshops we'll have a custom made (by us!!!) 30'x30' painted canvas Labyrinth. After the All Ages All Souls Worship Service on Sunday October 28th, we will debut our new Labyrinth for use by our community.

About Laura Evonne Steinman:

Laura Evonne Steinman is a community artist / educator / activist who collaborates with people of all abilities. She has created labyrinths in the earth, with tape on canvas and paper, in cities and the countryside, in and outside the United States. She loves creating a piece of art that is then used for meditation, ritual, and reflection. Laura Evonne is excited to be collaborating with First Parish on this art piece! You can see some of Laura's Evonne's work on her website, www.handinhandarts.com.

All Ages Interfaith Engagement

I am working with a team of parents, Nita Sturiale, Amy Kvaal, Marisa MacClary, and Jon Trementozzi to engage with at least two different faith groups in our community during the 2018-2019 Church Year. We will be setting up visits with other faith groups, meeting in advance to prepare, and then afterwards to process our experiences together. Look for more details in the Weekly Updates this fall, as we are planning our first engagement for November. All Ages welcome - kids, youth, adults. If you have questions or would like to join the team, please contact me!



Parents' Group

Join our new Parents' Group! Stay tuned for details on when, but here are the details on what:

This group is for Parents with kids/youth at First Parish. We'll be starting our first sessions with a book discussion of *Tending the Flame: The Art of Unitarian Universalist Parenting* by Michelle Richards (check Amazon for inexpensive used copies and in ebook form). Join our discussion, facilitated by Lisa Maria, on parenting as a Unitarian Universalist through basing your parenting in your family's values. This group will meet monthly in person here at First Parish, but also be accessible remotely through Zoom Video Conferencing, if you are traveling for work, at home with a sick kid, or just prefer to not leave your house after a long day of working and parenting!

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

To contact Katie Camire, email youthcoordinatorfpl@gmail.com

Sanctuary Choir Start Up



In September, the sanctuary choir will resume rehearsing and singing on Sunday mornings. Below is the September choir schedule. If you would like to “try us out,” please feel free to start coming to rehearsals or the choir retreat and feel free to contact me if you have any questions about our program. Our choir rehearsals will be fun and full of music from many genres. All are welcome!

I am always interested in learning who plays instruments in the congregation (as well as singing!). I am available by phone, email, or appointment if you would like to share your musical talents in worship and concerts!

Peace and blessings,
Rip Jackson, Director of Music

Children's Choir Rehearsals Begin September 16th



Beginning on Sunday, September 16, 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. The music for the children will be both beautiful and fun and will include music from Broadway, folk, pop, classical and traditional genres.

First Parish Sanctuary Choir Schedule September 2018

Wednesday, September 5—7:30-9:30 PM - first choir rehearsal in the sanctuary

Saturday, September 8—3:00-7:30 PM - **Mini Choir Retreat** with potluck supper

Sunday, September 9—9:30 AM - warm up and 10:30 AM service (Ingathering Sunday)

Wednesday, September 12—7:30-9:30 PM - choir rehearsal in the sanctuary

Sunday, September 16— 9:30 AM warm up and 10:30 AM service

Wednesday, September 19—7:30-9:30 PM - choir rehearsal in the sanctuary

Sunday, September 23—9:30 AM warm up and 10:30 AM service

Wednesday, September 26—7:30-9:30 PM - choir rehearsal in the sanctuary

Sunday, September 30—9:30 AM warm up and 10:30 AM service

First Parish Choir Schedule advance dates

Fall Concert (Gala Concert of Gospel and Broadway w/ Pit Band)

Saturday, November 3, 2018— 2-5 PM rehearsal

Sunday, November 4, 2018—1:30 PM run-through; 3:30 PM Concert

Christmas Eve - Monday, December 24, 2018

6 PM run-through

7 PM Candlelight Service

Easter Sunday - April 21, 2019

9:15 AM rehearsal

10:30 service

Spring Concert (Vivaldi "Gloria w/ Period Orchestra)

Saturday, April 6, 2019—3-5 PM rehearsal

Sunday, April 7, 2019—1:30 run-through; 3:30 concert

Among Our Own

The memorial services for two longtime and beloved members of First Parish will take place in September.

Barbara Ciampa Saturday, September 15 at 11:00 am

Doris Bjorklund Saturday, September 22 at 2:00 pm

The families invite all to come to honor and celebrate the lives of Barbara and Doris. A reception will follow.



Memorial Garden Service

The annual Memorial Garden Service will take place on Sunday, October 7 at noon. This year we will be remembering, in word and song and prayer, the following former parishioners:

Doris Bjorklund

Barbara Ciampa

Carol Janota

Francois Henri Jas

June Smith

Robert Smith



*May the truth that sets us free
and the hope that never dies,
and the love that casts out fear,
lead us forward together,
until the Dayspring breaks
and the shadows flee away.*

Upcoming Events—Save the Dates

Small Group Potluck Dinners

Beginning September 9, 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 17th

The Great Fall Auction -- an amazingly fun church-wide event and important fundraiser for the church -- will be on Saturday, November 17th, 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.

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 17th!

Join Us for a Public Forum on Medical Aid in Dying Sponsored by the First Parish Church of Lexington

Have you ever considered what your end of life options might be if you were facing a life-threatening illness? Are you worried about facing pain and suffering while you try to navigate the medical system? Have you watched a loved one suffer as their life comes to a close, and wished that there was another way for them to face their end with dignity?

On Thursday, October 4th at 7:30 we will be holding a Forum to learn about legislation pending in MA to offer Medical Aid in Dying. Speaking from First Parish will be Rev. Anne Mason and Dr. Cherie Noe. Our guests will include Marie Manis, Compassion and Choices MA Representative, and Amanda Baudanze who will share her experience as a widow. The event will be moderated by Sen. Mike Barrett and there will be plenty of time for questions.

First Parish has been asked to consider adding our name to the list of signatures in support for this bill. Please plan to come and find out about this bill, and discover for yourself whether you might want to support the legislation. Should the congregation desire, we will be able to vote together at our semi-annual meeting on October 14.

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



Join us this year as we respond to urgent climate change issues. With your help we will be part of critical national, state and local actions.

September events you won't want to miss!

September 8th - Boston RISE for Climate, Jobs, Justice: Rally & People's School
American Legion Playground, 25 Glendon Street, East Boston, MA

First Parish's Summer Common Read, *Justice on Earth*, highlights the intersectionality of race, class and the environment. East Boston is an Environmental Justice community, with majority Latinx and immigrant residents facing severe climate impacts from being surrounded by water, environmental burdens from Logan Airport, gentrification and displacement, and challenges due to immigration status--AND a long history of powerful organizing, resistance, and resilience.

Contact Stephen Shick if you would like to go to this event with the CAT. Event Link & sign up: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/peoples-climate-movement-boston>

September 16th - CAT monthly meeting after worship. Now that the intense legislative year is over we will set our priorities including Justice on Earth conversations and renewal of Green Sanctuary status. Future meetings
On the third Sunday of the month (October 21st and November 18).

September 23rd - *Justice on Earth* discussion after worship. Rev. Anne will lead this discussion. Grounded in our UU faith and values, with essays by educators and activists, this book provides a good takeoff point for future actions based on an awareness of the connection of race, class, and environmental issues.

For October and November events and actions see the Weekly Update or contact Stephen Shick or Bob Kvaal.

First Parish Lexington Social Hour Host List

September 2018 to January 2019

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
9/9	Anderson, C	Kreutzinger, K, Anderson, M, Beers-Jones, D & Jones, J
9/16	Adams L	Adams, S & Rich, T, Afshartous, S
9/23	Benson, L	Smith, P, Armstrong, D, Beutell, S & K
9/30	Bourne, R	Bjorklund, J, Bovet, M & D, Brami, L
10/7	Breiting A	Brinton, M, Brooke, M, Brouillette, P, Callanan, T
10/14	Cannon, D	Chu, L, Clark, J & S
10/21	Cole, J	Corning, E, Counts, C & Counts, L, Counts-Klebe, M
10/28	Cowen, N	Theriahult, M, Coyne, B & L
11/4	D'Andrea, L	Dahlbom, D, Daly, J, Deily, D
11/11	Eisenstein, K	Demarest, M, Edelman, M, Egan, I, Eisenstein, R
11/18	Fortin, D	Falkowski, J & M, Fortin, M, French, J
11/25	Flentje, A	Fleiss, C & D, Kvaal, A & A
12/2	Fox, M	Giauque, A, Gibbons, B & M, Erickson, P
12/9	Goodell, N	Goodell, K, Goodell, C & T
12/16	Lapides, D	Griffiths, T & Trudeau, J, Gross, J. & Matthews, S
12/23	Hodson, R,	Hopkinson, R, Kvaal, A, Kvaal, B & M
12/30	Herrick, K	Herrick, B, Hess C, & Aliber, J
1/6	Howell, J	Howell, A, Hartmann, L & Jobling, R
1/13	Jackson, M	Horton, D, Hylek, E, Jacobson, T, Jameson, M
1/20	Juitt, D	Johnson, A & M, Juitt, L
1/27	Khudari, O	Khudari, A, Heghinian-Walzer, S & Boutaud, F

Voices on the Green



Voices on the Green, First Parish's highly successful live performance series, begins its third season this fall. With audiences that now average over 200 people—and its own recently created children's program—Voices has become an important part of First Parish's role in the community.

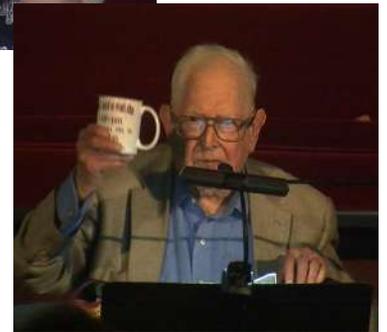
In case you haven't attended a Voices on the Green event yourself, each one is centered on a single theme. That theme is explored through different kinds of voices during the evening: expert TED-type talks, vividly moving personal stories, evocative music or songs, original poetry, and visual art on the walls or on screens.

The richness and impact of the evening comes not just in the interplay among these different *types* of voices but also in *diversity* of the voices: speakers during the most recent night ranged from a 15-year-old high school junior to a 95-year-old Harvard Kennedy School professor.

An intermission with free refreshments encourages conversation among the performers and audience members.



Chelsea Cannon



Dan Fenn

This season we have three performances with the following themes:

November 30: Journeys to Justice

January 25: Secrets and Lies

May 10: My Best Mistake

Join us for any or all of these evenings. More important, join us on stage. If you have a story, we want to hear from you, and we are happy to work with you to make your story sparkle. If you know a neighbor with a great story or want to suggest an expert, a perfect song, or an artist, please contact us at <Drose@cast.org> as soon as possible.

The VOG Committee looks forward to another exciting year of providing a place for all voices—including yours—for strengthening the First Parish community as we listen and get to know one another, and for reaching out to the larger community with the values and concerns we share.

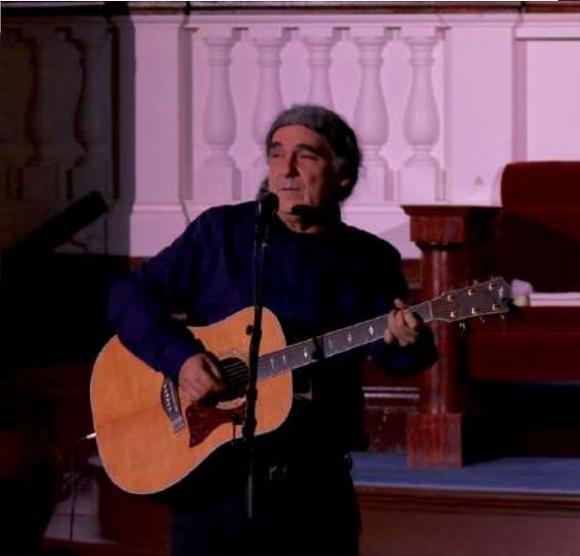


Don Yansen

Highlights from recent Voices on the Green



Lisa Maria Steinberg



Don White



Regie O'Hare Gibson



Shawna Yen



Amy Johnson



Amy and Cecilia Kvaal



Paul Brouillette

Restoration Project Complete



Perhaps you have noticed your newly-painted church shining in the summer sun? The start of this church year marks the end of the painting and restoration work that has gone on for nearly two years, thanks entirely to your generous contributions to the Capital Campaign.

From the steeple down to the granite foundation, old paint has been stripped, holes patched, rotten corbels, pilasters and pediments have been removed and re-constructed, the lead-clad spire restored, and all the sanctuary windows have been removed, rebuilt, and painted.

Thanks to the skilled work of Painter's Pride--whose company specializes in restoring old churches--the outside and inside look wonderful! The rear entry, Parish Hall and the Common Room upstairs have a new coat of paint, and the downstairs rooms are bright and clean and free of any of the old lead-based paint, thanks to the Alpine Environmental company.

Matthew Construction was involved in many of the projects, including installing and painting the many new basement windows, and repairing and painting the front door of the church. The "sunken" front deck and a new door to the boiler room were constructed by them as well.

Sweet Plumbing was responsible for the women's room improvements of new toilets, stalls, paint, and flooring, helped by Bob and members of Building and Grounds. And GutterPro replaced fascia boards and gutters, as well as removed some of the tree seedlings taking hold! Building and Grounds has been fortunate to have worked with such reliable, talented, and pleasant people.

Take a walk around and appreciate what you have made possible: a physically well-maintained and inviting place of worship reflective of the care the church offers to the community. Thank you!

*Toni Tasker, Chair
Buildings & Grounds Committee*

Dear Beloved Friends,

As many of you know, I am in seminary to become a UU minister. Seminary is a wild and crazy and all-consuming adventure! So many academic classes and so many internship experiences. Last year, I did a community ministry internship at a non-profit, the Refugee Immigration Ministry in Malden, MA. This summer, I did my Clinical Pastoral Education unit (CPE) and was a full-time hospital chaplain intern at Holy Family Hospital in Methuen, MA. I was humbled and honored to provide pastoral care to patients when they are feeling vulnerable and afraid. When I've asked ministers, "When did you know you were a minister?" Many of them say it was when they did CPE. It was a powerful and transformative experience for me, so I may end up adding my voice to that chorus.

In September, I begin the next phase of my journey of becoming a UU minister; a two-year ministerial internship at the Winchester Unitarian Society. As an intern I will be participating in Sunday morning worship services and providing ministerial support to committees, so I will be spending less time at First Parish. However, I am still living nearby and look forward to seeing you at some of the fabulous First Parish special events!

This is a bittersweet moment of my ministerial formation. Sadness of being less connected with First Parish and also excited to put into practice the leadership and community building skills I was blessed to develop with you at First Parish. First Parish is, and always will be, the beloved community of my heart. My call to ministry was birthed in the sacred space of taking risks and being supported by the ministers and members of this faith community. It's the most precious gift I have ever received and I thank you for loving me, celebrating with me, challenging me, and being part of my spiritual journey.

Wishing you every blessing of joy and spiritual fulfillment.

With great love and deep gratitude,

Marianne DiBlasi



SHYG Service Trip Recap from Lisa Maria Steinberg



Our Senior High Youth Group spent all of last year fundraising and preparing for an intensive service learning trip to Pine Ridge, a Sioux Reservation in South Dakota. Our Youth Coordinator, Katie Camire, was the lead chaperone on the trip, and we are so blessed to have Katie working with our youth. I want to thank everyone at First Parish who supported our youth financially in being able to go on this trip - whether you bought soup or coffee from them on Sunday morning, attended their special

Sioux dinner, or otherwise gave generously. I also want to thank Deb Weiner Soule, whose master chef talents made the fundraising dinner possible. And finally, a HUGE THANK YOU to Ben Soule, Meg Jackson, and Anne Khudari for chaperoning the trip and accompanying our youth on such a profound and valuable growth experience.

Join us in worship on Sunday, October 7, 2018, to hear from the youth and their advisors about their experiences at Pine Ridge, but for now, read more about their trip here, from Katie Camire:

"While out at Pine Ridge we assisted with three different projects. First, we helped in the gardens – weeding and insulating the potato plants with hay. The gardens are a part of the Pine Ridge Agricultural Initiative's mission to provide fresh food and move toward creating a self-sustaining community. Second, we worked on preparing the Sundance grounds. We put up poles that were made into an arbor to provide a shaded spot for Sundance supporters to observe the dancing. Third, we built a porch on a cabin that is used for rituals and sometimes provides shelter for people that have lost their homes.



In addition to the service work we did we had several opportunities to learn about Lakota culture. We took trips to the site of the Wounded Knee Massacre and to Wind Cave, the center

of the Lakota creation story. We tried our hands at beadwork which is a source of income for many Lakota people. Several members of our group raised a tipi and spent the night in it. We also learned a traditional Lakota hand game, music, and dancing.



For me, one of the most incredible experiences of this trip was being able to bear witness to how transformative it was for our youth. The youth will have opportunities to share their experiences with you themselves, I encourage you to ask them questions! For now here is one take-away that Aidan Fox, one of the youth that went on the trip, shared with me: "After reflecting on the trip I believe that it is possible to modernize while holding on to ancient cultural rituals and values."

This balance between modernizing and holding on to traditional culture is an integral component of the vision the people of Pine Ridge have for their future. The plans the Pine Ridge Agricultural Initiative has to move forward with their vision of making Pine Ridge a self-sustaining community seeks to embody this balance. First, they are hoping to buy a tractor which would allow them to significantly expand their gardens; connecting them to their land and their culture while also being able to get fresh food to many more people. Second, they would like to start a buffalo ranch. A buffalo ranch would serve a dual purpose of creating income for the people of Pine Ridge and connecting them with their traditions."



Want to garden 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 or sign up at the Doodle poll at <https://goo.gl/xDjE9C>.



LOVE...SEEK...SERVE

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Contact Us

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STAMP
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